Advanced Oral History Training for Arts, Humanities, and Social Science PhD Students
(SGSAH/SS ‘Spring into Methods’ Programme, May 2019)

Training Manual

Scottish Oral History Centre, University of Strathclyde
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The Scottish Oral History Centre

The Scottish Oral History Centre (SOHC) was established at the University of Strathclyde in 1995 and acts as a hub for community and academic oral history. The Centre is involved in a wide range of teaching, research and outreach activities designed primarily to encourage the use of ‘best practice’ oral history methodology in Scotland and beyond. Professor Arthur McIvor has been Director of the Centre since 2005 and currently works with ten colleagues: Lorna Barton, Dr Eleanor Bell, Dr Alison Chand, Prof Phil Cooke, Dr Laura Kelly, Dr Emma Newlands, Dr Jesse Olszynko-Gryn, Prof Matt Smith, Dr Angela Turner, and Dr David Walker. As a group we have a substantial publication and research record, we teach an undergraduate / postgraduate oral history pathway in the History / Humanities BA degree and in several taught Masters programmes, supervise a large number of undergraduate and postgraduate students using oral history techniques and provide a wide range of training and support to community, local, heritage and academic groups. The Centre is supported by a network of external Research Affiliates (including Dr Erin Jessee of Glasgow University who works closely with the SOHC) and has a thriving postgraduate community. There are currently 14 PhD research students affiliated to the SOHC utilising oral history methods in their research. The SOHC also has a growing archive of recorded oral history interviews from the projects it has been associated with.

The SOHC has developed a strong profile in Scotland and the UK and has growing international links. We have a transatlantic collaborative relationship with the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS), Concordia University, Montreal, Canada which includes a joint summer advanced oral history training institute. A co-director of COHDS, Professor Steven High, was the SOHC’s first Visiting Professor in 2012.

Aims and Objectives

- To be an international centre for oral history study, research, teaching and training.
- To promote collaborative research in oral history across disciplinary and geographical boundaries.
- To develop knowledge exchange, encouraging networking in the area of oral history with other scholars and organisations, including local government, museums, the heritage sector and community oral history groups.
- To facilitate capacity-building and the intellectual development of the next generation of scholars/researchers in oral history.
- To attract external funding to support the above aims.

For more information:

See our website: [www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/research/history/sohc/](http://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/research/history/sohc/)
Contact us: sohc@strath.ac.uk
Facebook: ‘Scottish Oral History Centre’
Twitter: @ScotOralHist
Training Programme

Trainers:
Lorna Barton & Arthur McIvor, Scottish Oral History Centre, University of Strathclyde; Erin Jessee, University of Glasgow (SOHC Research Affiliate)
Contact details: lorna.c.barton@strath.ac.uk; a.mcivor@strath.ac.uk

Location: Scottish Oral History Centre, 222 Graham Hills Bld, 40 George St, Glasgow, G1 12E

Day One (half day) — Weds 8 May 2019
An Introduction to Oral History Practice (optional)

9.15 Registration
9.30-11.00 What is oral history? Research project planning; interviewing techniques
11.00-11.15 Break
11.30-12.30 Summarizing, transcribing & archiving.
12.30 Review & discussion (finish time 1pm)

Day 2 – 9 May 2019
Issues in Oral History Theory and Methodology

9.30 start – 4.30 finish
9.30 – 10.45 Understanding memory
10.45 tea break
11-1 Subjectivity and intersubjectivity; Oral narrative methods and narrative analysis
1-2 Lunch break
2-3 Ethical issues in oral history
3 tea break
3.15-4 Navigating trauma
4-4.30 Review & discussion (finish time 4.30)

Day 3 – 10 May 2019
Methodological Problems and Scenarios (student led)

9.30-12.30 Individual participant overview of specific student oral history projects (students will be asked to identify a strength and a weakness of their projects whether from a practical, theoretical or methodological standpoint).
11.00 tea break
Group discussion and reflection on difficulties and challenges in relation to participant recordings (5-10 minute clips) as provided in advance to course trainers.
12.30 – 1.30 Lunch break
1.30-3.30 Small group discussion around problematic oral history project scenarios
Tea break
3.45-4.30 Discussion; feedback, Q & A and evaluation (finish time 4.30)
The Advanced Oral History Theory and Practice workshop builds on our Oral History training delivered in May 2018 for the SGSAH/SS. It will provide Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences doctoral students with an opportunity to focus in more depth on some of the key theoretical issues in oral interviewing and develop their interviewing practice through focusing on specific problem issues and scenarios. The 2019 workshop is designed for those PG students using oral interviewing techniques who have already accrued some practice in interviewing, having undertaken a minimum of 5 interviews as a prerequisite. They should also have undertaken prior oral history practical training, although there will be an ‘Introduction to Oral History’ over the first half day to bring students up to speed on the practicalities of undertaking an oral history project.

Additionally, students will be given opportunities to vet their research designs, conceptual frameworks and discuss key theoretical, ethical, and methodological concerns with experienced oral historians who work in a range of communities within and beyond the United Kingdom, and who have expertise on such areas of study as working class lives, gender history, war and genocide studies, Scottish and British history, and African oral traditions.

Aims, objectives and learning outcomes:
The workshop’s primary objective is to hone and develop student’s knowledge of the key theoretical issues associated with oral interviewing, including memory, subjectivity and intersubjectivity, ethics and introduce them to oral narrative methods and narrative analysis. And the 2019 training provides an opportunity for students to focus on the specific issues arising in their interview practice, providing a forum to critically reflect on interviews undertaken thus far in a group setting. For instance, with a view to improving interview skills and / or linking theory to practice. Participants are required to send in a project overview and a 5 to 10-minute excerpt of an interview, which contains a particular issue they would like to discuss and are happy to share and learn from. This must be submitted at least 10 days in advance of the day.

The last session in the day will focus on problematic project scenarios as requested beforehand from participants. Scenarios should reflect participants own challenges and difficulties in undertaking oral history: for example, developing rapport, transference of trauma, gate keeping, insider/outsider positionality, ethical issues, third party copyright issues (including the challenges of GDPR 2018), or recruitment. The scenarios will be discussed in small groups ending in a plenary feedback session providing proposed solutions and / or advice.

Its intended learning outcomes include providing students with deeper knowledge of oral history theory; a more critical awareness of the theoretical challenges that oral historians navigate in their research; an appreciation of the legal and ethical obligations they have surrounding oral historical research; an appreciation of oral narrative methods and different approaches for analysing and disseminating interviews and related data; and opportunities to discuss their research plans—from the initial research design to dissemination—with seasoned experts and each
other. Most importantly, the final day is geared towards the specific analysis and discussion in a group setting of issues and problems that students are currently grappling with in their interview-based research studies.

PRIOR INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM PARTICIPANTS

1. **Send to us a short statement** (no longer than one page) on your oral history project and your interviewing experience so far.

2. **Identify a strength and a weakness** in your interviewing practice and any problems, challenges and difficulties you have encountered.

3. **Identify a segment of an interview (5-10 min maximum) which you would like to critically review and discuss on day 3.** Send this to us ideally at least 10 days before the training both in audio (by *We Transfer*, identifying the segment by time code, eg min. 32-37, if you send the full interview) and as transcript (by email, again identifying the segment for review by time code or page numbers).

4. If you can’t manage this or you prefer not to submit, don’t worry! **You can bring material along to the training, or not, as you wish.** However, it will help us prepare if we have material and you will get more from the programme if you can critically reflect on your own practice beforehand and share issues, scenarios, challenges and problems with the group.

5. **Attendance:** Please let us know if you will be attending the first half day (morning of 8 May) of ‘refresher’ practical training.

Please correspond / send material by emailing BOTH:

lorna.c.barton@strath.ac.uk
a.mcivor@strath.ac.uk

*Note: We are aware of data protection, privacy and GDPR (2018) issues. All interview material sent will be treated in the strictest confidence, used solely for this training session and will be deleted immediately after.*
Recommended Preparatory Reading

For those with no or little experience of oral history a good starting point is:


The definitive guide to oral history theory is:


For those with some experience, you might enjoy the stimulating series of essays in


For a very brief piece that covers some of the key issues see:


For a general overview of oral history in Scotland see:


For the practical aspects see:


Note: There is a full bibliography included at the end of this Handbook
SESSION 1: Oral History Practice

INTRODUCTION TO ORAL HISTORY

Oral history is a unique way of doing history, involving the reconstruction and interpretation of the past based upon people's memories, usually via a planned interview, using a sound recorder or filmed.

This first session provides an introduction to the development of oral history as a methodology in academia and beyond and some of its key features.

- What is oral history and why do we do it?
- How has the discipline and methodology of oral history changed over time?
- What are the pros and cons of an oral history approach?

Oral history is an increasingly popular way of doing history (see *Oral History* journal), proliferating at many different levels:

- Community projects (archived; pamphlets; books)
- Museum & Archive projects (exhibitions; archived)
- Media projects & programmes (STV WW2; BBC archive; sports history)
- Academic research projects (theses; articles; books)
- Organisations are increasingly recording and archiving their own past (for example the Trade Union Congress; the Royal College of Nursing; the Scottish Football Association; Scottish Council on Deafness; University of Strathclyde; private companies).

Through our training and support work we try to promote best practice in doing oral history to the highest possible interviewing, technical and ethical standards. We would encourage you:

- to be reflective / self-critical about your role & work
- to be well prepared
- and to feed your experience back into your practice as interviewers and oral historians

PLANNING AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Key Things to Think About
- Aims and objectives of your project
- Timescales and budget
- Number of interviews you wish to conduct
- Who you would like to interview, and why – content and format of interviews
- What information you wish to collect – what will the interviews be used for?
- Finding and recruiting interviewees

Aims & Objectives
- Why do you want to use oral history? Importance of having clear idea of key focus/themes
- Proportion of project that is OH – research project with OH element; community OH project focused on memories and experiences; exhibition with excerpts
- Utilising existing testimony
- Knock-on effect on other factors

Timescales & Budget
- How much time do you have to complete the project?
- Other commitments – classes, research/teaching, work/life balance
- No of interviews, length, repeat visits
- Open-ended project? (archive/community)
- Location of interviewees (travelling time/budget)
- Transcribing/summarising – returning to interviewees to check. Administration!
A BEGINNERS’ GUIDE TO INTERVIEWING

‘The qualities a successful interviewer must possess: ‘an interest and respect for people as individuals, and flexibility in response to them; an ability to show understanding and sympathy for their point of view; and, above all, a willingness to sit quietly and listen.’


BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Prepare for the interview

- NB this does not necessarily mean knowing lots about the subject since interviews may be conducted as information gathering exercises. However, as Thompson puts it, it is ‘generally true that the more one knows, the more likely one is to elicit significant historical information from an interview’.
- Try to develop some knowledge of local practices and/or terminology as quickly as possible.
- Think about questions you might wish to ask. This may depend on the type of project you are conducting – bear in mind the need to respond to the interviewee’s testimony. You may decide to note themes rather than questions and adopt a semi- or relatively unstructured approach to your questioning. You will need to think about the kinds of questions that will be most appropriate for your particular oral history projects. Your key questions are likely to evolve as your project develops so be flexible with these. You can find a detailed Life-Story Interview Guide in Paul Thompson, The Voice of the Past: Oral History (Third Ed.), (2000), pp. 309-323. This is a good starting point for ideas about the content and wording of questions for your interviews. Try out or discuss the sorts of questions you have in mind with friends/colleagues to help assess their suitability. This process may even prompt new questions you hadn't thought about.
- Check your equipment and make sure you have spare tapes/disks/memory cards as well as batteries.

In advance of the interview

- Call the day before to confirm?
- Don’t postpone without very good reason
- Check directions; travel plans, etc.
• **Think about personal safety!** – Oral history is not a dangerous activity but it is important to take sensible steps to ensure your own safety e.g. check the person you are going to interview is who they say they are (this usually known due to method of recruitment however if you have any doubt, telephone their office/home or check their name/address in a telephone directory); tell someone who you are going to see, where you are meeting them, roughly when your interview session will end (perhaps agree a latest time for you to get in touch); a telephone number you can be contacted on.

• Arriving on time makes meeting someone easier!

### THE INTERVIEW

#### Before you begin
- Do a sound check! Use the sound levels on the recording equipment or your headphones to check
- Make sure you can see your interviewee and access your recording equipment without having to get up and move about
- Do what you can to minimise sound interruptions

#### Questions
- Ask open-ended questions (Tell me about...? Why...? How...?)
- Avoid leading or closed questions
- Ask one question at a time
- Engage actively with information being given: follow up leads with supplementary, probing questions

#### Interacting/Responding
- Show that you are listening - empathise (with body language); show interest and encourage (nod, smile, etc.); maintain eye contact
- Assess and adjust pace of interview: no rush; allow time for silences and gaps (try not to interrupt silences – interviewee may think of something else to add); memory recall can be strenuous and take time. Be patient with digressions!
- Respect the wishes of the narrator and don’t be judgemental
- Do not contradict the interviewee, even when they say something that is historically incorrect – ask follow up questions to gently probe
- Drop in ‘time locators’ (e.g. asking ‘what year was that?’ or ‘was this during your apprenticeship?’)
- Watch for fatigue and trauma/upset: 1-2 hours max?
- Keep the recorder running! Use record pause for short breaks from the interview and only stop for very long breaks (as this creates separate tracks). Periodically check that you are still recording
- End interview with an expression of appreciation
SOME GENERAL POINTS

- Show respect to persons’ environment and lifestyle (unless offensive)
- Give time before and after interview
- Accept hospitality: cup of tea?
- Re-confirm what happens next (return of transcript, copyright form etc.)
- Make sure interviewee has your contact details
- Send thank you card/correspondence after interview
- Think about completing a research diary, or jotting notes, immediately after the interview: your comments on context of interview, character of informant, additional remarks made off the tape, what gaps you sense, your feelings about the interview/ee, etc.
GETTING STARTED WITH DIGITAL RECORDER

There are lots of options in terms of digital recording equipment, with recorders available with a bewildering array of features and at a wide range of prices. A lot depends on your budget, but if you want to record high quality interviews that will stand the test of time, you need to opt for a recorder with the following minimum specifications (as advised by the UK Oral History Society):

- Be able to record in stereo using two external microphones (preferably with professional XLR sockets)
- Be able to record uncompressed PCM WAV (or .wav) files at 44.1kHz 16 bit and/or 48kHz 16bit. This is a good standard of recording quality using a widely-recognised format. 3 hours of stereo audio at 48kHz/16bit roughly equates to 2GB of storage space on a memory card (different recorders use different types of card).
- Have a USB2 connection to allow the recorded files to be uploaded easily to a computer for renaming, security copying and long-term storage.
- Be capable of being powered by both rechargeable batteries and mains supply.

As these recorders create digital files rather than physical objects that sit on shelves, it is vital that all your computer systems are capable of dealing with large audio files, and are secure and backed up. Careful thought needs to be given to naming the audio files with unique numbers so they can be easily located later. Expert advice about backing-up digital files has changed in recent years and multiple computer external hard disc drives are now favoured over CD-Rs and DVD-Rs for long-term storage.

More Tips and Advice:

- East Midlands Oral History Archive (EMOHA) [http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/training/equipment.html]
- Oral History Association (USA) [http://www.oralhistory.org/technology/]
- Inquit Audio (discount for UK OHS members). Nick at Inquit Audio is a friendly and helpful adviser who can talk you through various options: [http://inquitaudi.co.uk]
- Inquit also has advice on various aspects of digital recording: [http://www.inquitaudio.co.uk/html/recording_technique.html]

Speak to others doing oral history and ask their opinions – this is the best way to find out about the pros and cons of different recorders, though bear in mind that it’s often down to personal preference.

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1 Though note that a number of archives are now recording in 24 bit/48 kHz
Recording Equipment Checklist

These are intended to give you some guidance only. You will develop your own checklist as you get used to your recorder and gain more experience.

1. Check sound card is in recorder (log track number if appropriate).

2. Check that fully charged batteries are inserted (and that recorder is plugged in, if you’re using mains power)

3. Connect microphones (if using) - depending on the type of microphones and recorder you will need to check whether the phantom power is on or off (some microphones use phantom power i.e. they draw their power from the recorder), and, if the microphones use their own power, that they are switched on.
   a. If you have everything set up and you still aren’t getting any sound when you record, double-check your microphone settings as they are often the culprits

4. Turn down speaker volume (to avoid feedback when you start rec.)

5. Press REC PAUSE button to check recording levels once the mikes have been pinned in place. Explain to interviewee that you are just testing the sound levels and ask him/her something simple like ‘what did you have for your breakfast?’ to put them at ease and for you to check. Note that different recorders use different ways of showing the recording levels.
   i. For those using lights, if the green lights go into the red at the end of the line of lights, you know the volume is too high and you need to turn the Rec. Level volume knob down.
   ii. For those using blocks on the screen, don’t allow them to go above about two thirds of the way along repeatedly – if they do, you need to readjust your levels.

6. When levels are OK, press REC to start recording a track. [keep an eye on the levels during the recording, as people often change the volume of their voice depending on what they are talking about]

7. NB to pause during a track, press REC PAUSE and afterwards continue same track by pressing REC. Use REC PAUSE if you and/or the interviewee need a short break during the recording (toilet, telephone, drink etc) and only use STOP if you are stopping for a long time (a meal with the family, for example).

8. At the end of recording session, press STOP; next time you make a recording, a new track will be started.
Interview Recording Checklist

It is important to regularly review and revise your interviews to help develop your skills and to pinpoint areas for improvement or problems that arise. The table below is an example of an interviewing checklist – it is illustrative rather than exhaustive. Take some time to develop your own checklist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewing Checklist – the interviewee…</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No/Not Enough</th>
<th>Further comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Checked sound levels of recorder prior to beginning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Included interview ID statement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked interviewee for place and year/o/birth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listened carefully (and showed this)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked clear questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asked neutral (rather than leading) questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mostly used open questioning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided asking multiple questions at the same time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not interrupt the interviewee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave the interviewee time for reflection between questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responded to what the interviewee said with further questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoided inferring something the interviewee had not actually said</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Included time locators if needed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showed empathy where appropriate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matched interviewee’s pace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ended interview at appropriate point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanked interviewee/showed appreciation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AFTER THE INTERVIEW: SAFEGUARDING, SUMMARISING AND TRANSCRIBING

(A) Safeguarding

Download

- Download the interview from the digital recorder onto your computer as soon as possible after the interview has taken place. Do not change the name of the file while it is still stored on your recorder.

Save

- Once the interview has been transferred to your computer, save a backup copy in another location
- ONLY once you have saved and backed-up your interview should you (a) rename the file and/or (b) delete the interview from your digital recorder

Convert

- If you have recorded your interview in .wav format, then you can convert a copy to .mp3 for:
  - summarising/transcribing
  - burning onto CD to send to your interviewees
  - using in outputs like presentations, on websites, in exhibitions, and on CDs
(b) Summarising and Transcribing

‘Full verbatim transcription of recordings is hugely time-consuming and expensive, but transcripts do provide an excellent guide to your recordings [...] As a minimum it is essential to write a synopsis or summary of the interview which briefly lists in order all the main themes, topics and stories discussed. This will come in useful if you want to use the interview in an exhibition, or book, or radio programme.’


Hints on Writing Interview Summaries

- Summaries should outline key basic information about the interview, including names, places, events and topics, and convey the order and timing of these in the interview.
- Each summary should include accompanying information to identify the interviewee (e.g. name, place and d/o/b, date/place of recording, name of interviewer, details of recording equipment used, and copyright & access status).
- Provide an outline of what is talked about in the interview rather than specific things that were said – e.g. description of childhood in Brighton; story about first job; comments upon post-war rationing, etc
- Make sure that if you use abbreviations, you give the long version the first time you mention it
- Aim to use no more than 250 words per 30 minutes of recording

You can see examples of detailed interview summaries on the British Library Sound Archive catalogue: [http://cadensa.bl.uk](http://cadensa.bl.uk)

The East Midlands Oral History Association (EMOHA) suggests producing a standardised interview summary worksheet for your project e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01:30</td>
<td>Discusses parents’ wedding and first home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05:45</td>
<td>Describes family home and first days at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07:58</td>
<td>Anecdote about birth of new sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:13</td>
<td>Covers family life in rural Ayrshire, including chores, neighbours, animals on the smallholding, and family gatherings and local festivities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:12</td>
<td>Recalls leaving school and first days in work as farmhand (etc etc)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University in Montréal, Canada recommends the following template for time-coded summaries and transcripts, in keeping with current archiving standards:

---

2 These guidelines are drawn from those of the British Library Sound Archive.
TIME-CODED SUMMARY/ TRANSCRIPT EXAMPLE
INTERVIEW WITH PEDRO JIMENEZ
MONTREAL LIFE STORIES
ORAL HISTORY AND PERFORMANCE WORKING GROUP

Interview Status:  X open to public  _ confidential  _ anonymous
Name of interviewee: Pedro Jimenez (P.J.)
Date of birth: TBD.
Name of interviewer: Clara Gomez (C.G.)
Name of videographer: N/A
Number of sessions: 3 Session # 1 (November 21, 2008)
Length of interview: 7h32
Place of interview: Interviewee’s home
Dates of interview: November 21 and 29, 2008 and January 16, 2009
Language of interview: English
Name of transcriber: Jose Garcia
Date of transcription: 9-11 November, 2009
Software used to read DVD: Windows Media Player

Editorial Note:
The interview was easy to transcribe, though sometimes the sound is not clear enough…

Interviewee’s Biographical Details:
Mr. Jimenez was born in Argentina in 1960…

Time-Coded Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Summary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>00:00:00</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:00:55</td>
<td>Family background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:02:54</td>
<td>Education – subjects studied and enjoyed; inspiring teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:05:14</td>
<td>Comments on relative poverty in his community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00:09:00</td>
<td>Higher education in engineering, leading to current career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Etc…</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcript

00:00:02 Clara Gomez (CG): So to begin, could you tell us your name and where you’re from?

00:00:07 Pedro Jimenez (PJ): So my name is Pedro Jimenez and I was born in Argentina in 1960. This was before the start of the Junta… the Dirty War as they call it… so I had a fairly normal childhood. I got an education. I studied engineering at [unclear] university. I can’t recall why I chose engineering [laughs] – it seemed like a good idea at the time, if I wanted to have a career and start a family some day…
Some Processes and Conventions in Transcribing

Head the transcripts with context information (as in the above Montreal Lives example)
- Name of interviewee (or anonymous)
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Date of interview
- Name of interviewer
- Other information where relevant e.g. marital status; place of birth; place of interview, etc.
- And / or refer to ‘Interview Information Sheet'/Questionnaire if used

Style/Layout
- Transcribe in question and answer format - can be Q: and A: or use initials of interviewer(s) and interviewee(s)
- Include everything that is heard – asides, hesitations, repetitions, use of phrases like ‘you know’, ‘isn’t it’, ‘see’ and ‘sort of’ should be included. Brief and repetitive ‘ums’ and ‘ers’ may be omitted unless they are significant (e.g. if they are indicative of evasion)
- Leave the original word order as spoken
- Render punctuation according to the emphasis on the recording – use to indicate the pace and rhythm of speech
- Use quote marks where narrator quotes other people’s dialogue
- End incomplete sentences with ---, or … (though be consistent)
- Note any interview interruptions (using [square brackets])
- Always note other vocal noises and silences as accurately as possible using square brackets e.g. [laughs]; [sighs]; [whispers]; [pause]; [paused for 5 seconds] etc
- Note actions where possible e.g. [indicated about ten centimetres]; [produced a photo]; [nodded headed to affirm]
- Carefully consider whether you should render the dialect fully
- Consider transcription language and whether to translate

Before Returning the Transcript
- Denote any words or phrases that cannot be heard or deciphered with [?]
- Check name/place spellings – put in [square brackets] if you are unsure (to highlight these for your interviewee to check)
- Think about whether you may need to make anonymous names of people mentioned in the interview (potential defamation?)
- CHECK over the transcript after completion

Golden Rule: BE CONSISTENT
Hugh Cairney interviewed by Neil Rafeek, Glasgow, 26/3/2005 (extract)

Q: When you were young was there much of a gang culture in Glasgow

A: Yes

Q: There was

A: Where I was the place I stayed it’s a shopping centre it was called the ______________________________________ that came from there you were the Bundy Boys and there was the__________________________________________ gang there was a chain gang __________________________ everywhere had their _____________ gangs you know they had even women gang  in Kinning Park they ______________________________ must have been because they threw pepper in guys faces I don’t know but everything was gangs

Q: How bad was it

A: There ___________ so much weaponry __________________________________ your fist or your boot but there ___________________________ so much stabbing because at that time Lord Cameron he was a judge you were seven years if you were caught with a weapon in __________________________ at that time if you ____________ anybody you got hung you know so that was a wee bit of a ___________________________ I suppose but the ________________________________ never any razors or knives __________________________________________ and fight like everybody else done but as I said getting called away at eighteen to the army you __________________________ really __________ a long teenage life before you were away you know
SESSION 2: Theoretical issues in oral history

MEMORY

Memory is at the heart of all oral history. In this session you will be introduced to some of the key ways in which oral historians consider memory, both in terms of how memory works and memory theories. Themes include:

- How do people remember?
- Is memory fallible or verifiable?
- Can any individual memory be understood outside collective memory?
- What is the meaning of misremembering or forgetting?
- What purposes do official and public memory serve?

Preparatory Reading:
Abrams, Oral History Theory chapter 5
Thompson, ‘Anzac Memories’ in Perks and Thomson (eds) Oral History Reader
Anna Green, ‘Individual remembering and collective memory: theoretical presuppositions and contemporary debates’, Oral History 32 2004
SUBJECTIVITY AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

The interview generally involves two subjectivities (possibly more) – this session examines the outcomes of the intersubjectivities in the interview space – in other words the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee and between the interviewee and public discourse – effectively a three-way conversation. Historians have drawn extensively on theories of intersubjectivity to understand what is happening in an interview, why people formulate their stories in certain ways, why they include some things and not others and so on.

Preparatory Reading:

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory*, chapter 4
Penny Summerfield, *Reconstructing Women’s Wartime Lives*, Introduction
NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

Historians utilise oral history interviewing in their research toolkit to help reconstruct the past. However, it is important not just to take what is being related to us uncritically. Stories are told to us for a reason and are often sieved, ordered and selected (with narrators exerting control) to construct a sense of self or identity. In interviews, narrators are informing us about their past, but also actively and creatively reinterpreting their lives. Oral history theorists have demonstrated how in interviews stories are told or narrated in certain ways and that awareness of this is important in understanding how, what and why we are being told the things we are. Thus oral historians have drawn upon ideas and theories drawn from linguistics, anthropology, literature and media studies to better understand ways of narrating the past. Better oral history will result from us being aware of, sensitive to and capable of critically analysing the language and narrative structure(s) within our interviews. This session introduces students to some of the key ideas in narrative analysis and the role this can play in oral history.

Reading:
C. K. Riessman, ‘Strategic uses of narrative in the presentation of self and illness: a research note’, *Social Science Medicine, 30*, No.11 (1990), pp.1195-1200
Alessandro Portelli, *They Say in Harlan County* (2011)
Callum Brown, *The Death of Christian Britain*
Daniel James, *Dona Maria’s Story*

*And see Oral History, OHR and Journal of Narrative and Life History*
LEGAL & ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITIES
CONSENT, COPYRIGHT & ETHICS


‘Interviewing people serves very little purpose unless the interviews become available for use. It is unethical, and in many cases [now under GDPR 2018 almost all – see below] illegal, to use interviews without the informed consent of the interviewee, in which the nature of the use or uses is clear and explicit.’

Informed Consent

Prior to your interview, you should send your interviewee a Participant Information Sheet / Informed Consent statement with a tear-off slip, which you ask them to complete, sign and return to you. This is now a legal requirement under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR: May 2018). Your participant Information Sheet / Informed Consent statement should include the following information:

1. The background of the oral history project – who you are and what the project is broadly about

2. The aims/purpose of your project

3. What will happen during the interview as well as after the interview

4. Details of the interviewee’s rights

5. Assurances for the interviewee in relation to the above.

See next page for a sample Participant Info. Sheet / Informed Consent statement

It is highly likely that you will have to produce an Informed Consent statement for your employer, educational institutions or funder given the emphasis on ethics in research. In most cases it is illegal not to do so under the new GDPR (May 2018). It is your responsibility to ensure that you have checked what the ethics procedures are for your employer, educational institutions or funder and given yourself sufficient time to complete any applications you may need to.

While the specific requirements of these will differ in some details, the main legal and ethical procedures you need to follow in your oral history research will be broadly the same – use ‘Is your oral history legal and ethical? Practical steps’ (UK OHS) at http://www.oralhistory.org.uk/ethics.php to ensure that you know what is expected of you.
Participant Information Sheet (Consent for Interview)

Project title: Research on the History of xxxxxx

My name is XXXXX and I am a researcher / student in XXX at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow (‘University’). [You can add further background information here if you wish]

What does taking part in the study involve?

I am hoping to interview people who have memories of xxxxxx / undertake a life story interview [delete as necessary]. If you agree to take part in the study, an oral history interview with us would involve spending as little or as much time as you are comfortable with talking about your memories. The interview will be conducted face-to-face with me at a mutually convenient location. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to, and you may stop the interview at any time. You can also change your mind and decide not to take part at any time, if you wish, without giving a reason.

What will happen to your interview?

Your interview will be recorded then written down (transcribed) exactly as spoken on to paper or a time-coded summary will be prepared. You have the right to put your own name to your interview recording and transcript or, if you prefer, to be anonymous (in which case your name will never be used in any publication). In order to use your material in any publications we must ask you to sign a Recording Agreement Form. If you wish, your memories can also be used by subsequent historians and researchers who might wish to consult the archived interviews (subject to your further agreement via the Recording Agreement Form completed at the conclusion of the interview). The University will be processing the personal data within your interview and transcripts/summaries thereof as part of the performance of a task carried out in the public interest in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR May 2018). The University’s public task is set out in the University’s Charter. Where more sensitive or “special category” data is contained within your interview and transcript thereof it is processed because it is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, and for historical research purposes. Please also read our Data Protection Privacy Notice (overleaf).

We ask that you consider these issues and if you agree to be interviewed and for your memories to be so used, we ask you to complete a Recording Agreement Form prior to the interview taking place. This protects your legal rights, ensures that your interview recording and transcript are properly and professionally archived and looked after and enables us as researchers (and subsequent researchers if you wish) to utilise your memories in any future research. A copy of your interview will also be sent to you (securely under arrangements agreed with yourself), for listening to and checking giving you the opportunity to indicate if
you wish anything to be taken out or changed. This procedure is in line with your legal rights and we operate strictly to the moral, ethical and legal requirements laid down by the UK Oral History Society.

You should be made aware that in rare circumstances where criminality is suspected or indicated (and where there is a police investigation for example) your archived testimony can be accessed by the force of law even if you have asked for it to be closed or restricted (as in the Boston College Belfast Project case in 2014 – for more information see below). The project cannot accept information concerning unprocessed illegal activity and the latter will usually be redacted from the interview for your protection.

This investigation was granted ethical approval by the University of Strathclyde Ethics Committee (History/Humanities).

Thank you for reading this information: If you have any specific questions about what is written here, about the research, about what taking part in an oral history interview involves or about what happens after the interview, please contact either me or the SOHC Director, Professor Arthur McIvor

My Contact Details:
ADD YOUR NAME AND FULL CONTACT DETAILS

SOHC Director:
Prof. Arthur McIvor
Scottish Oral History Centre
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Strathclyde
Lord Hope
141 St James Road
Glasgow G4 0LT
Tel: 0141 444 8364/8389
a.mcivor@strath.ac.uk

If you have any questions/concerns, during or after the investigation, or wish to contact an independent person to whom any questions may be directed or further information may be sought from, please contact:

Secretary to the University Ethics Committee
Research & Knowledge Exchange Services
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE
Telephone: 0141 548 3707
Email: ethics@strath.ac.uk
Informed Consent Return Slip

[ADD PROJECT / DISSERTATION TITLE]

Interviewees are asked to sign and return this slip to the researcher

I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above project and the researcher has answered any queries to my satisfaction.

I understand that if I wish to be anonymous, any information recorded in the investigation will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be made publicly available.

I consent to be interviewed for the purpose of the above project and for my interview to be recorded

I,

(PRINT NAME OR PSEUDONYM)
hereby agree to take part in the above project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of Participant:</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS SLIP TO:

Researchers
name.............................................................................................................
 ..........Address.............................................................................................................
.............................................................................................................
                                                  ........

Researchers
name.............................................................................................................
 ..........Address.............................................................................................................
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                                                  ........
University of Strathclyde Archives (Oral Interviews) Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Strathclyde is a data controller under data protection legislation. We are committed to transparency and to complying with our responsibilities under data protection legislation. This privacy notice sets out important information regarding how we will use your information and your rights under the legislation. It is important that you read this notice prior to providing your information. Any enquiries regarding data protection should be made to the Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@strath.ac.uk.

How we use your personal data
We will use your information only for the purposes set out above, i.e. to archive your oral history recording and make it publically accessible to researchers according to your wishes. It may be retained in perpetuity in the University Archives.

Legal basis for processing
Under data protection legislation we are required to identify our legal basis for processing. In this situation your data will be processed for the following stated purposes:

The University will be processing the personal data within your interview and transcripts thereof as part of the performance of a task carried out in the public interest in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR May 2018). Where more sensitive or "special category" data is contained within your interview and transcript thereof it is processed because it is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, and for historical research purposes.

Retention Period
The oral history recording, summary and/or transcription may be retained in perpetuity in the University Archives.

Your rights in relation to personal data
Data Protection legislation sets out a number of rights for individuals in relation to how their personal data is processed, but these do not apply in all circumstances, and will depend on the legal basis for processing. In this case, the following rights may not apply where we have adequate safeguards in place to protect your data, or where the application of such rights would prevent or severely impair the achievement of the purpose of archiving in the public interest or historical research.

In some circumstances you may be able to:

- access your personal data held by the University.
- ask for personal data to be rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- ask us to restrict the use of your data (for example, if you have raised concerns about the accuracy or use of your personal data) until we have investigated and responded to you.
- object to the processing of your personal data.
- ask us to erase your personal data.

To exercise these rights, or if you have any concerns/issues with the way the University has processed your personal data you can contact the Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@strath.ac.uk.

You also have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner’s Office (https://ico.org.uk/concerns/).
COPYRIGHT: The following extract details the crux of copyright in relation to oral history in the UK. We cannot emphasise enough the need to follow the correct procedures in relation to copyright and ethics in your oral history projects. Full details are set out in “Is your oral history legal and ethical? Practical steps.” Oral History Society of Great Britain (R. Perks and J.Bornat). Available in full on the UK Oral History Society website: http://www.oralhistory.org.uk/ethics.php and information on the new General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018) can be found at the UK OHS website at: http://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/data-protection/

Ownership of copyright

When an interview is recorded, separate copyrights in

1. the words spoken
2. the recording

are created.

Initially the owner of the copyright in the words is the speaker, while the copyright in the recording belongs to the person(s) or organisation(s) which arranged for the recording to be made. Recordists working as individuals own the copyright in their recordings, but where the recordist is a student or employed (staff), the employer usually owns copyright (e.g. the University).

Copyright in written transcripts of interviews, usually made verbatim subsequently from recordings, is best regarded as belonging to the owner of the copyright in the words transcribed.

Copyright is a form of property and its ownership and operation are subject to contract. In the UK most features of copyright can be altered or set aside if the copyright owner agrees. In particular, the copyright in an interview can be assigned or bequeathed by the owner to another person or organisation; or the owner can agree that the interview can be used for various purposes without permission, or impose restrictions on access and use; or if an interview is jointly owned by two or more people or organisations, they can make an agreement which clarifies their respective roles and obligations. There is no requirement under British law for copyright to be registered in some way, or for copyright material to be marked as such. Some countries require copyright material to be marked with the © symbol followed by the owner's name, and copyright owners are advised to do this in conjunction with material placed on the Internet.

It IS necessary for copyright material to include a statement giving permission for copying and dissemination before copies can be made without the specific permission of the copyright owner(s) or licence holder(s). For instance if permission is not included with material on the Internet, it cannot be assumed that it is legal to copy more than an insubstantial extract from it.
Recording Agreement Form
A sample Recording Agreement (copyright and clearance) Form, which you can get your interviewee to sign at the interview, or immediately after, or send to your interviewee along with a copy of the interview (sound and/or transcript) to check before completing, signing and returning, follows:

RECORDING AGREEMENT FORM

The purpose of this recording agreement is to ensure that your contribution is added to the collections of the Scottish Oral History Centre Archive held by Archives and Special Collections at the University of Strathclyde in strict accordance with your wishes. All material may be preserved in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations (May 2018) as a permanent public reference resource for use in research, publication, education, lectures, broadcasting and web archiving, and made available on an open access basis unless you state otherwise.

1. May the stated recording(s) and any summaries or transcriptions of them be used in the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences/Scottish Oral History Centre for authorised research or consultation? Yes/No

2. May a copy of the stated recording(s)/transcription be made for the use of authorised researchers and other interested parties? Yes/No

3. May the stated recording(s)/transcription be used for educational purposes, educational publications, talks or educational broadcasts, including on the University of Strathclyde website? Yes/No

4. May the stated recording(s)/transcription be used for marketing, fundraising, public broadcast and/or publication? Yes/No

5. May the recording(s)/transcription be made available online on an ‘open access’ basis without any restrictions? Yes/No

6. May the name of the contributor be used (you can choose to be anonymous)? Yes/No

7. Do you wish to add any other instructions or restrictions in relation to your contribution? Yes/No
If **Yes**, please give details (continue on another page if needed):………………………………………………………………

I hereby give you all the permissions you need from me, including the waiver of any moral rights in my contribution, in order to make the recording and use the recording and transcripts thereof as detailed herein. I hereby assign the performance rights in my contribution to the University of Strathclyde. I understand that it will be stored and used as detailed here.

Signed:…………………………………………………………………….. Date………………

Name (print):………………………………………………………………………………

Address:………………………………………………………………………………

Postcode………………………… Tel no.……………… Date………………

Signed (for SOHCA) …………………………………………… Archive ref. no………………

Note: We will be processing your data in accordance with our **Data Protection Privacy Notice** (overleaf / below).

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**University of Strathclyde Archives (Oral Interviews) Data Protection Privacy Notice**

The University of Strathclyde is a data controller under data protection legislation. We are committed to transparency and to complying with our responsibilities under data protection legislation. This privacy notice sets out important information regarding how we will use your information and your rights under the legislation. It is important that you read this notice prior to providing your information. Any enquiries regarding data protection should be made to the Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@strath.ac.uk.

**How we use your personal data**

We will use your information only for the purposes set out above, i.e. to archive your oral history recording and make it publicly accessible to researchers according to your wishes. It may be retained in perpetuity in the University Archives.

**Legal basis for processing**

Under data protection legislation we are required to identify our legal basis for processing. In this situation your data will be processed for the following stated purposes:

The University will be processing the personal data within your interview and transcripts thereof as part of the performance of a task carried out in the public interest in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR May 2018). Where more sensitive or “special category” data is contained within your interview and transcript thereof it is processed because it is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, and for historical research purposes.
Retention Period
The oral history recording, summary and/or transcription may be retained in perpetuity in the University Archives.

Your rights in relation to personal data
Data Protection legislation sets out a number of rights for individuals in relation to how their personal data is processed, but these do not apply in all circumstances, and will depend on the legal basis for processing. In this case, the following rights may not apply where we have adequate safeguards in place to protect your data, or where the application of such rights would prevent or severely impair the achievement of the purpose of archiving in the public interest or historical research.

In some circumstances you may be able to:

- access your personal data held by the University.
- ask for personal data to be rectified if it is inaccurate or incomplete.
- ask us to restrict the use of your data (for example, if you have raised concerns about the accuracy or use of your personal data) until we have investigated and responded to you.
- object to the processing of your personal data.
- ask us to erase your personal data.

To exercise these rights, or if you have any concerns/issues with the way the University has processed your personal data you can contact the Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@strath.ac.uk.

You also have the right to lodge a complaint against the University regarding data protection issues with the Information Commissioner's Office (https://ico.org.uk/concerns/).
Boston College Belfast Project Controversy (2014)


- Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) secured court orders granting them access to oral interviews with Irish Republicans that were carried out during the Boston College Belfast Project (BCBP).

- Their request was made on the grounds that these recordings might contain material of relevance to the ongoing investigations into unsolved crimes committed during the Northern Ireland Troubles.

- These orders were granted despite opposition from the BCBP who argued that they had given categorical undertakings to interviewees that their interviews would remain closed until their deaths.

- The release of these recordings has serious personal implications for both the researchers and the participants involved as well as for the broader oral history community.

- Legally interviews can be accessed by the forces of the state despite any assurances of closure and anonymity through court orders where there are criminal investigations ongoing.

‘Inevitably, the PSNI’s actions have had an impact on the future of oral history, in particular the collection of personal narratives that concern what may be perceived as ‘difficult’ or ‘sensitive’ topics. Rather than preventing the collection of post-conflict narratives, the Boston College Belfast Project case challenges practitioners of oral history to engage in more ethically sound and more legally aware oral histories in order to ensure the preservation of a rich, detailed archive that both illuminates and preserves our history and our heritage for future generations. The best way to achieve this is to adhere to the highest internationally recognised standards of both legal and ethical principles.’

The Steering Group of the Oral History Network of Ireland, 2104

Note: See clause added in our SOHC informed consent sheet relating to this.
General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), 2018

- GDPR is a recent regulation in force from May 2018 designed to strengthen and combine the existing data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU). It replaces the Data Protection Directive 95/46/EC of 1995 (which the UK Data Protection Act 1998 was based on). The primary aim is to protect EU citizens from privacy and data breaches in an increasingly data-driven world. It came into effect on 25 May 2018 and will continue after the UK leaves the EU in March 2019. The new UK Data Protection Act 2018 embraces GDPR.

  OHS main advice page also links to revised sample British Library consent and recording agreement forms (with an accompanying leaflet), and oral history sensitivity review guidelines which are new and still in development.

- Issues for OH around a) informed consent (legal basis for collection) and b) reviewing data prior to public access (third party disclosures)

  a) We indicate in the consent form / recording agreement that the legal basis for collection of personal data in the interview is 1.) for ‘archiving purposes in the public interest’ or 2.) for ‘scientific, historical or statistical purposes’, or some such similar legally justifiable basis (see recording agreement wording on this for an example). Ask your Archive.

  b) Whilst the interviewee may have signed off on it in the recording agreement it is still potentially illegal under GDPR to publish information about a third party non-signatory if that individual is still alive and the information is slanderous / damaging to their reputation – and may cause ‘substantial damage or distress’ to any person. That is ‘financial loss’ or ‘physical harm or a level of upset or emotional or mental pain’.

- And there are moral and ethical responsibilities here aside from the legal position.
NAVIGATING TRAUMA

This session will discuss trauma in oral interviewing and how we deal with it.

Reading:

K. Rogers & S. Leydesdorff (eds), *Trauma: Life Stories of Survivors* (2009)
*Research in Difficult Settings* working paper series:
http://conflictfieldresearch.colgate.edu/
Problematic project scenarios & critical evaluation of student interviewing practice

The training provides an opportunity for students to focus on the specific issues arising in their interview practice, providing a forum to critically reflect on interviews undertaken thus far in a group setting. For instance, with a view to improving interview skills and/or linking theory to practice. Participants are required to send in advance (see information below) a project overview and a 5 to 10-minute excerpt of an interview, which contains a particular issue they would like to discuss and are happy to share and learn from.

This focus on problematic project scenarios should reflect participants' own challenges and difficulties in undertaking oral history: for example, developing rapport, transference of trauma, gate keeping, insider/outsider positionality, ethical issues, third party copyright issues (including the challenges of GDPR 2018), or recruitment. The scenarios will be discussed in small groups ending in a plenary feedback session providing proposed solutions and/or advice.

PRIOR INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

1. Send to us a short statement (no longer than one page) on your PhD project and your interviewing experience so far.

2. Identify a strength and a weakness in your interviewing practice and any problems, challenges and difficulties you have encountered.

3. Identify a segment of an interview (5-10 min maximum) which you would like to critically review and discuss on day 3. Send this to us ideally both in audio (by We Transfer, identifying the segment by time code, eg min. 32-37, if you send the full interview) and where possible as transcript (by email identifying the segment for review by time code or page numbers).

4. If you can’t manage this or you prefer not to submit, don’t worry! You can bring material along to the training, or not, as you wish. However, it will help us prepare if we have material beforehand and you will get more from the programme if you can critically reflect on your own practice a little beforehand and share issues, scenarios, and challenges with the group.

Please correspond / send material by emailing BOTH:

lorna.c.barton@strath.ac.uk
a.mcivor@strath.ac.uk

Note: We are aware of data protection, privacy and GDPR (2018) issues. All interview material sent will be treated in the strictest confidence, used solely for this training session and for this purpose and will be deleted immediately after.
GOING PUBLIC: USING & INTERPRETING ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS

What do we do with oral testimony beyond its capture? Oral history is deployed in academic research in theses, articles and monographs. However, of increasing importance in academic research is showing the PUBLIC IMPACT of our research. How has oral history been used in public history, in museums, community projects, theatre and the media? How might you develop the PUBLIC IMPACT of your research?

Reading

H. Kean and Paul Martin (eds), *The Public History Reader* (2013)

The *Oral History* journal also consistently devotes a section to ‘public history’ and is well worth browsing. Examples include:
FINAL COMMENTS:

- The training is designed to raise awareness of the theory and practice of oral history and encourage a critically reflexive approach to oral history.

- Memory is a vitally important historical resource and deserves to be utilised widely in contemporary history

- Doing oral history is important and can be massively rewarding, great fun and esteem-enhancing for the narrator – facilitating social inclusion / community integration.

- Oral history can aid our understanding of the interaction between the past and the present & has the potential to not only evoke and elucidate, but also to add to our understanding of the past.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS WELCOME AND REALLY VALUED!

PLEASE FILL IN AND RETURN THE STUDENT EVALUATION FORM AT THE END OF THIS HANDBOOK.

THANKS.
APPENDIX 1: ORAL HISTORY EQUIPMENT GUIDELINES

The British Library Sound Archive provides advice about equipment. For a full copy of their guidelines, contact: Oral History, British Library Sound Archive, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB, Tel 020 7412 7404, email oralhistory@bl.uk. The following draws upon these guidelines.

1. **Recorders**: Most oral historians now use solid state digital recorders. At the SOHC we use a range of machines from the cheapest Zoom 1 and Tascam DR-05 to the better spec. Zoom H4N (recommended) and top range Marantz PDM 660 and 670 models.

2. **Memory cards**: These recorders use compact flash cards. We'd recommend 8GB cards (but at least 2GB) and for the SOHC archiving we record at broadcast quality, following BLSA Guidelines: ‘and record PCM WAV (or .wav) files at 48kHz/16bit [or 44.1 kHz/16bit]. As we want to archive high quality recordings to recognised standards, we record in PCM .wav format, not MP3 or other compressed format, so that all of the data from the recording is stored.

3. **Uploading and saving digital recordings**: Once the flash card contains data to archive we upload the .wav files to computer via the USB port in the recorder or (better) via a card reader plugged into USB2 port on the PC. We upload, rename, and back up to external computer hard-drive, then make an additional copy as an MP3 for playback and security purposes. It’s also possible at this stage to make a further copy (say for an interviewee or transcriber) onto a DVD or CDR, though neither should be regarded as an archival version. Then (and only then) it's possible to ‘reformat’ (i.e. wipe) the flash card ready for the next recording. It’s worth buying a few spare memory cards or a portable external hard-drive to back-up for long field-trips.

4. **Software for digital audio editing**: If you do not have a digital editing programme, such as Sound Forge or Wavelab, you can download two programmes free from the internet which can both batch convert .wavs to MP3: Audacity [http://audacity.sourceforge.net/] or Winlame [http://winlame.sourceforge.net/download.php] then choose: winLAME prerelease 4 (Windows Installer) at Sourceforge.

5. **Archiving and storing digital audio files**: Audio files can be stored on a variety of different digital media. Following the BL the SOHC has recently moved away from CDR and DVD-R storage to computer hard-drive and mass-storage solutions for long-term preservation.

6. **Transcription software**: Our transcribers are currently using Express Scribe Transcription Playback software which is a free download from [http://www.nch.com.au/scribe/] for ‘home use’. This is controllable via ‘hot keys’ on the keyboard and/or via a remote foot pedal.

See also - Oral History Society: Practical Advice: [http://www.ohs.org.uk/practical-advice.php]. Here you will find further advice on recorders, using external microphones and using video to record interviews.
APPENDIX 2    SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

This Select Bibliography gives only a small snapshot of the range of publications available on the broad theme of oral history.

Methodology Guides
The textbooks we recommend are:

Ethics
The standard reference work for **British Copyright and Ethical issues** is:

Key academic journals:
*Oral History* (Oral History Society of Great Britain)
*Oral History Forum d’histoire orale* (Canadian Oral History Association)
*Oral History Review* (US Oral History Association)
*Memory Studies*
*Words and Silences* (International Oral History Association)

Oral History theory

a) Overviews of Theoretical approaches

b) Feminist oral history
S.B.Gluck and D.Patai (eds), *Women’s Words: the feminist practice of oral history* (1991)


C. Daley, ‘He would know but I just have a feeling’: Gender and oral history, *Women’s History Review* 7 (1998)

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c) Memory


d) Subjectivity and intersubjectivity


e) Narrative

M-F. Chanfrault-Duchet, ‘Narrative structures, social models, and symbolic representation in the life story’, in Gluck and Patai (eds), Women’s Words, pp.77-92.
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Pollock (ed), Remembering: Oral History Performance (Basingstoke, 2005).

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C. Daley, ‘He would know but I just have a feeling’: Gender and oral history’, Women’s History Review 7 (1998)
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M. Chamberlain and P. Thompson (eds), Narrative and genre (1998)
S. Caunce, Oral History and the Local Historian (1994)
S. Berger & B. Niven (eds), Writing the History of Memory (2014)
Texts using Oral History Methodology. This is just a selection – there are many more.
The best are:

* D. James, *Doña María’s Story: Life History, Memory and Political Identity* (Durham and London, 2000).

**Overview of oral history in Scotland**
Angela Bartie and Arthur McIvor, 'Oral History in Scotland', *Scottish Historical Review*, XCII, April 2013, pp 108-136. See footnotes for references to the key works.

**Some other general texts:**
A. Sheftel and S. Zembrzycki (eds), *Oral History Off the Record: Toward an Ethnography of Practice* (2013)

**Research monographs/collections/articles advancing methodology:**
_____ They Say in Harlan County (2011)
_____ “Dis/composing the Subject: Intersubjectivities in Oral History”, in T. Cosslett,
R. Samuel & P. Thompson (eds), *The Myths We Live By* (1990)

**Childhood**

**Popular Culture, Leisure, Religion, Education**
Angela Bartie, *The Edinburgh Festivals* (2014)
S.C. Williams, *Religious Belief and Popular Culture in Southwark c.1880--1939*

**Workplace**
A. Portelli, *They Say in Harlan County* (2011)
A. Chand, *Masculinities on Clydeside* (2016)
D. Walker, “Danger was something you were brought up wi”: Workers’ Narratives on Occupational Health and Safety in the Workplace, *Scottish Labour History*, vol 46 (2011), pp 54-70.
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**Family and Sexual Relations**
S. Szreter and K. Fisher, Sex Before the Sexual Revolution (2011)
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I. MacDougall, Voices from the Hunger Marches (1990)
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G. Dawson, Making Peace with the Past Memory, Trauma & the Irish Troubles (2007)

**War, Trauma and Conflict**
E. Jessee, Negotiating Genocide in Rwanda (2017)
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Emma Newlands, Civilians into Soldiers (2014)
Juliette Pattinson, Behind Enemy Lines (2011)

**Health and the Body**
Emma Newlands, *Civilians into Soldiers* (2014)

**Heritage, Museums, Archives and Exhibitions**

**Oral history in Ireland**
See [https://www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie/advice/reading/](https://www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie/advice/reading/)

Lundy, P. and McGovern, M., “‘You understand again’. Testimony and post-conflict transition in the North of Ireland” in The Oral History Reader, pp. 531-537.

A small island oral history (Barra)
J. Ross, Voices Galore (2016) – based on radio interviews

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‘Spring into Methods’ Oral History Training
(SGSAH/SS, May 2019)

FEEDBACK

Thank you for attending – we hope you found it interesting and, more importantly, helpful in relation to your research. Please take a little time to let us know what you thought of the training - your comments and feedback will be used to monitor our effectiveness and ensure we are meeting your needs. We only ask that you are honest and constructive.

Please pass this form to the trainers at the end of the session or scan & return it by email to a.mcivor@strath.ac.uk, or post: A. McIvor, Humanities (History), University of Strathclyde, 4.21, Lord Hope Building, 141 St James Road, Glasgow G4 0LT.

Please indicate the date of the training seminar here……………………………………

Below are a set of statements. Please indicate your ranking using the following criteria:

1 = strongly disagree   2 = disagree   3 = neutral   4 = agree   5 = strongly agree

Please include additional comments or feedback on these issues and/or individual sessions in the space below each statement and at the end.

Communication was clear and effective

1 2 3 4 5

Sessions were well prepared and organised

1 2 3 4 5

The pace of teaching was acceptable

1 2 3 4 5
Feedback on questions/points was prompt and helpful  1  2  3  4  5

The sessions were presented in an effective manner  1  2  3  4  5

The session on equipment was sufficient  1  2  3  4  5

The seminar covered what I expected it would  1  2  3  4  5

1 = strongly disagree  2 = disagree  3 = neutral  4 = agree  5 = strongly agree

Additional comments / feedback:
Please provide at least one sentence giving your reflections on the quality of the training programme and what you got out of it.