

Oral History in a Digital World

Book of Abstracts

[Arranged by Session]

Opening Panel: Ethics & Legalities [Room T116]

Ethical dilemmas and digital technologies: how are oral historians managing?

Myriam Fellous-Sigrist

King's College London

This paper describes the first results of my fieldwork conducted in 2018 and 2019 for my PhD project. My research analyses the tensions created by digital technologies in oral history. Such technologies enhance the visibility and use of historical archives; yet they also trigger new dilemmas. Practitioners have to reconcile competing expectations: transparency of publicly-funded research, open access to information, use of the latest technologies for dissemination, requirement for data protection and need for participants' informed consent. My project investigates and seeks to alleviate some of the difficulties thus created; one of its first stages is to understand how oral historians have managed such tensions over the last three decades.

The primary sources collected during my fieldwork consist of 100 responses to an online survey and 20 interviews with oral history interviewers and curators. These sources help better understand the various ethical dilemmas facing practitioners, the practical solutions developed to anticipate risks and the processes used to deal with these questions throughout the interview "life cycle" (from the interview preparation to its long-term preservation). Finally, their analysis helps unpack what is at stake depending on the type of oral history projects and on their technological, regulatory and institutional contexts.

As Mary Larson, Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki (among others) point out, discussion about ethics are still needed in our discipline. Hopefully this research can show that the discussion should not overlook the specificities of the digital context and can help identify the different ethical strands of digital oral history.

Oral history in a GDPR world: sensitivity reviews at the British Library

Charlie Morgan

The British Library

The General Data Protection Regulation of May 2018 has created new legal and ethical issues in providing online access to oral history interviews. Specifically the act names 'special category data' under which individuals, including third parties mentioned in interviews, now have greater leeway to object to the release of sensitive data that is likely to cause 'substantial damage and distress'. Special category data is divided into ten categories and together they broadly encompass information that is common throughout all oral history interviews.

This throws up a number of intellectual questions: how can we judge 'damage and distress'? Can children and grandchildren experience it based on information divulged about parents and grandparents? Is it acceptable to project back current definitions onto historical interviews? In addition, there are serious practical issues such as what documentation and terminology should be used and how much time can reasonably be allocated to such a process.

This paper will explore these questions through the work-in-progress sensitivity review process developed at the British Library and will welcome feedback on this process. The paper will make use of real life examples, including both historical interviews as well as interviews conducted post-GDPR. These will be situated in the broader questions surrounding online access, namely how does an archive balance the drive towards online access with the protection of interviewees and third parties, and how do technological changes (including technologies not yet invented) impact upon this balance.

Unlocking the Potential of National Museums NI's Sound Archive

Victoria Millar

National Museums NI

National Museums NI is currently participating in *Unlocking Our Sound Heritage*, an ambitious three-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and led by the British Library, the aim of which is to digitally preserve almost half a million endangered sound recordings from across the UK and make 100,000 of these available online, transforming the visibility of sound archive collections in the process. This paper will provide an overview of the various stages of the project which include digitisation, cataloguing, rights clearance and learning and public engagement, and will examine some of the successes, challenges and pitfalls that the Northern Ireland project team have experienced along the way. A significant proportion of National Museums NI's own sound archive is being digitised as part of the project. Amassed over a period of years, beginning in the 1970s, the archive is both extensive and diverse, a remarkable oral history resource pertaining to transport, industry, crafts, folklore, language, as well as traditional music and song. This paper will discuss the project's role in unlocking the potential of this archive – by opening it up and making it more visible; by providing the opportunity to reconnect with it and understand it better; and by transforming it into a valuable digital resource for research, education and interpretation initiatives going forward, in line with National Museums NI's aspirations and plans for the future.

Panel 2A: Recovering hidden stories [Room T116]

Digital conversations and women religious: Breaking the Silence

Dianne Kirby

Trinity College Dublin

The paper will address an ongoing project and the challenges of persuading women religious, Protestant and Catholic, to engage with an oral history project exploring their experiences during the Troubles.

The paper will contrast the responses of male and female religious to engaging with the project. The reluctance of women to participate will be examined, along with the key factors that proved crucial to securing the trust and subsequent engagement of what was still a tiny minority. Recorded extracts will be used to highlight the gender distinctions.

The paper will also address the project's methodology and how and why it managed to secure authentic and often moving testimony from a group of women whose voices have long been silenced and marginalised by male dominated churches and a male dominated society.

The presentation will include showing some of the most revealing and moving moments, discussing the way in which conversation proved an effective means of generating shared recollections and experiences not previously discussed in a public forum.

Interviewing the interviewers: an oral history of Irish journalism

Daniel Carey

Dublin City University

While journalists and editors have been pivotal in producing what former Washington Post publisher Philip L Graham called 'the first rough draft of history', their working lives remain an under-researched area of enquiry in Ireland. A new oral history project based at the School of Communications in Dublin City University aims to go some way towards addressing that.

Interviews for a PhD thesis entitled 'The working lives of former journalists and editors in Ireland: Continuity and change' began in May 2018. Over twenty interviews have been conducted since, and work is ongoing on the project, which is due to finish in 2021.

The recordings and transcripts of the interviews will eventually become part of the Media History Collection at Dublin City University, where they will be digitised, made available for public access, and may form part of future exhibitions. It is hoped that the oral testimony of former editors and journalists will deepen our understanding of the role of journalism in Ireland.

This paper will inform delegates about the project's progress to date, and will examine the unique advantages and disadvantages of interviewing people who have spent their lives asking rather than answering questions. It will also give a flavour of the kind of material the interviews have produced so far. The presentation – which will include audio clips from some of the interviews – will also look at the range of possibilities for

disseminating the interview material, and discuss plans for its 'digital afterlife' in the DCU Media History Collection.

Sport, Memory and Nostalgia: The Lives of Irish Republicans in Internment Camps and Prisons, 1971-2000

Dieter Reinisch

Webster Vienna Private University

While there exists a wide range of historical and social science literature on political prisoners during the Northern Ireland conflict between 1969 and 1998, little emphasis has been put on the life in prison of the individual internees and prisoners. Sport, in particular, played key parts in the lives of both Republican and Loyalist prisoners. In this paper, I will draw attention to the lives of individual Republicans internees and prisoners by analyzing their oral memories of sport during the internment and imprisonment. Between 2014 and 2017, I have conducted 34 interviews with activists in the Provisional Irish Republican Movement since the 1960s.

I will analyze the feelings and emotions expressed in the narrative of sport in prison. To be sure, the internees and prisoners not only performed sport, both individual sports and team sports but also, in later years, followed sports events on TV and radio, discussed sports developments and wrote about sports events such as soccer World Cup Finals for their own prison newssheets and outside papers. In the memories of these events, I recognized strong positive and negative feelings about imprisonment. The stories of brutal wing shifts, early morning strip-searches and beatings are overshadowed by happy memories of organizing sports tournaments; oftentimes, the stories are not only very emotional but even nostalgic.

To conclude, understanding these dynamics will open a new and interesting avenue of research that will help us to understand the motivations and lives of political activists before, during, and after their imprisonment.

Panel 2B: Incorporating new technologies [Room T115]

Social media and oral history: Digital Detective Work, Dissemination and Dilemmas

Kieran Murphy

Cork Folklore Project

I will discuss how the use of social media has altered how we disseminate oral history but also how its use affects the consent process, research for interviews, identifying potential interviewees and its impact on the questions and material in interviews themselves. Using examples and experience from working in the Cork Folklore Project I will chart the changes in our collecting, our methods and outputs in recent years due to increased engagement with different social media platforms.

The visual nature of the medium puts increased focus on photography and an impetus towards video. The limits, requirements and users/audiences of different social media platforms complicate the way we disseminate our material. There is an apparent

mismatch between platforms requiring short, audio-visual content when our material is audio only and long-form in nature: squaring that circle poses opportunities and challenges. Creating a social media calendar has incentivised the editing of short sound clips from existing interviews for use on social media. It has also highlighted topics for further research and interview questions.

We have also have examples of where social media has connected us to researchers, new audiences, and connections who can link us with potential interviewees or audiences for listening evening events. While personal connections are still crucial for relationship-building social media is an additional tool, especially for the important “transitional generation” demographic who remember the pre-digital world but are comfortable digital communicators and can be key connectors/gatekeepers between generations or different groups.

Learning through sharing stories: working towards new connectivities between the Irish and Indigenous nations in the digital age

Aedan Alderson

York University

In recent years, the call for producing research projects that links Irish experiences of British-rule with those of other nations that have experienced British-colonialism has been renewed by scholars such as Lloyd (1999), Said (2003), and Wilson (2008). For Irish researchers looking to respond to this call through collaborative research with Indigenous North American communities, the fact that oratory and oral history transmission remain the foundational forms of knowledge transmission in many Indigenous nations is a strong precedent for producing Transatlantic oral history research. This paper argues that oral history researchers looking to work with Indigenous communities in North America should engage seriously with the rise of digital technology, and its potential benefits for increasing our ability to produce ethical, and relationally-accountable research collaborations with communities in multiple countries.

Drawing on my ongoing dissertation research, this paper will discuss how internet-based digital technologies continue to strengthen my ability to gather and connect oral history testimonies from the border-towns of Donegal County with oral histories gathered in Mi'kmaq Indigenous communities in Cape Breton, Canada. In particular, it will discuss the themes of using digital technologies to increase community access to oral history testimony in ways that responds directly to Indigenous research protocols; the use of internet-based technologies to create ongoing communication with contributors in multiple countries during the research process; and the prospect of using digital technologies to create new global communities that can use shared oral histories to create substantive allieships that can provide the basis for future collaborations.

Panel 3: Moments

Sharing Memories

Arlene White

Killaloe-Ballina Local History

In August 2017, the Killaloe-Ballina Local History Society was established. One of the projects we had a keen interest in working on from the start was a local Oral History project.

In March 2018, quite by accident, we came across the Killaloe Heritage Collection, housed in the Local Studies Centre in Ennis, Co. Clare. This collection was the result of a project carried out between 1991 and 1992 which involved interviewing and recording over 80 of Killaloe & Ballinas' oldest residents about their lives, their families, their memories.....

The Killaloe-Ballina Local History Society has now digitised this entire collection and we aim to make it available to the public both at home and abroad in digital format over the coming year.

A collection of material taken from six of these interviews was selected and these vignettes with a slideshow of photographs and documents from the era being described were presented at a public event during Heritage Week 2018. This provided the listener with a fantastic insight into the lives of our predecessors in our historic twin-towns.

What struck me most when preparing for this event was the huge advancement in technology in just over 25 years! While preparing parts of these interviews to be played, I quite quickly became familiar, and so grateful for, programmes like Audacity, where the art of completely editing an interview is just a click of the mouse!

If, in the early 1990's, with a tape recorder, a typewriter and a limited budget, a fantastic collection of information on the people, traditions and the industries which helped to shape our twin-towns could be collated, Oral History should be top of all our agendas!

'Mapping stories of the city'; oral narratives of Dublin

Charles Duggan, Arlene Crampsie and Kelly Fitzgerald

Dublin City Council & UCD

Charles Duggan, Arlene Crampsie and Kelly Fitzgerald have begun the process of an oral history project audit within Dublin City. Charles and Kelly would like to present a short, ten minute piece in order to discuss initial findings in 'Oral History Moments', if possible. Charles will also outline his aims & objectives towards 'mapping' oral histories across the city and how this information will contribute towards fulfilling the city's strategic plan in this area.

The ongoing ethics conversation: responses to Cork's Main Streets, an online oral history project.

Penny Johnston

Cork Folklore Project

Discussions about the pitfalls of digital dissemination in oral history have primarily centred around ethics and duty of care, and a concern that this conversation has been subsumed by a techno-utopian discourse that privileges openness over privacy and confidentiality. Larson (2014, p. 162) points out that the ethical dimensions of online oral history are not solved (or resolved) but are part of an ongoing conversation. In the spirit of this conversation I have sought feedback on Cork's Main Streets, an online project that uses excerpts from the Cork Folklore Project's oral history archive. In this paper I will draw on these responses and talk about how they have changed my ideas about using oral history online.

Tea at the Metropole Hotel: In Conversation with Michael Twomey

Fiona Brennan

Theatre Historian and Independent Researcher.

I have long been committed to researching the neglected history of Ireland's amateur dramatic movement and the many unsung heroes of Irish theatrical life. I have encountered many people who, perhaps, had never really spoken in any detail previously regarding their amateur dramatic pursuits during the 1940s and 1950s. There have been many memorable moments, but one that is particularly important to me is my interview with the late Michael Twomey, actor, adjudicator, director and theatre practitioner extraordinaire. I first met Michael when he was adjudicating at the Kerry Drama Festival in March 2015. On the opening night, I introduced myself by handing him a copy of the 1947 Kerry Drama Festival programme. It listed the Cork Presentation Guild's entry, Hamlet, which was the first festival production in which Michael had ever starred. During the week, snatching moments here and there, we talked a little more and Michael reminisced. We organised to meet that summer at the Metropole Hotel, Cork, where, one Friday morning, we sat down over tea, and I duly pressed "record" on my mobile phone. Michael was very much aware of amateur drama's vital role in Ireland's social and cultural development and lamented its neglect as one of Ireland's forgotten histories. I would be delighted to share this "memorable moment" during conference proceedings and expand briefly on the relevance of oral history to my continuing research.

The Art of conversation - 'Stories Between Us' - creating an intergenerational platform to explore past times.

Janine Davidson

Artist & Independent Researcher

'Stories Between Us' is an intergenerational public art project that has grown from the valued relationships developed between groups of older people and adults that the artist Janine Davidson has worked with in the Dublin 7 area over the last 16 years. This particular project was made possible with additional financial support of Grangegorman development agency.

A series of workshops facilitated by Collins Barracks Museum created a platform bringing together children from fifth and sixth class from St Gabriels School, Henrietta St Adult Education (HACE), and the Phibsboro Retirement Group.

Through a process of sharing and playing games of old and new; conkers, hopscotch, skipping etc, a memory box of handling objects that represent and inspire the telling of stories about Grangegorman and the local Dublin 7 area will be available as an ongoing resource for other groups to engage with each other in a similar way.

“It’s all about growth, the younger generation and the older generation we’ve all benefited from it...blossom and growth, we have all blossomed.”, Mary Hayes, Phibsboro Art group.

This moment will describe the journey of this intergenerational project. The planning and experiences of creating a platform that involves different age groups learning from each other and about each other. The conversations between the older generations sharing local history, storytelling, traditional crafts and the younger people learning to connect with the past.

With special thanks to Edith Andrees, Helen Beaumont, Mary Muldowney and Anna O’Loughlin

Panel 4A: Interviewing across the generations [Room T116]

Rhodes and the Holocaust: Oral History through generations

Milena Callegari Cosentino

University of Limerick

The aim of this research is to examine the transmission of life experiences from Holocaust survivors of Rhodes Island to following generations within the family system. The principle source of information for the Holocaust survivors’ experiences are the interviews conducted during the 1990s, available at the Visual History Archive of the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation. In this follow-on study, the second and third generation relatives of those survivors are being invited to participate in interviews, to explore how memory, identity, trauma, and nostalgia are communicated across generations. The interviews are based on the oral history method, focusing on what the participant considers important in their personal and family narrative in relation to the Holocaust. The aim is to enable analysis to go beyond the individual and access the social context to which the narrator belongs. In this method, memory is considered a form of historical evidence, and the objective of my analysis is to understand the meaning-making process for the individual, rather than the event itself. Results from current interviews will be compared to those generated from the online oral history collections from the 1990s, to highlight how interviewees perceived oral history and the Holocaust at that time. On completion of the study, the audio and/or transcription of the interviews recorded can be provided to the institutions that have collaborated with this research, intending to increase accessibility, archiving and disseminating their stories.

History for everyone: Teaching inclusive and democratic history by constructing digital oral history documentaries

Marloes Hülsken & Anne van Duuren

HAN University of Applied Sciences

History education in Dutch schools does not reflect the history of everyone. The Dutch society is diverse and multicultural. The history curriculum at secondary schools, colleges and universities does not reflect this diverse society. History education is often mainly about white men, macro events and far too little about diversity and personal stories. For example the voices of minority groups, such as migrants and women are barely heard. We believe that by implementing oral history into the history curriculum, we can change the content of history education and make it more inclusive and democratic (see also: Llewellyn, Ng-A-Fook, 2017).

In 2018 we have started a project funded by the Ministry of Education at the HAN University of Applied Sciences. This project aims to make history education more diverse and democratic by using and constructing digital oral history sources.

About fifty students at the Teacher Trainer Institute made short oral history documentaries about diverse and inclusive history. They were trained in interview and film techniques and learned about diverse history of the second half of the twentieth century. Students interviewed and filmed eyewitnesses and compared these stories with the content of school books and scientific studies. Subsequently they made short digital documentaries about their research topics.

In this paper we would like to elaborate on the process of making inclusive documentaries and we will present and discuss the learning outcomes of the project. We will give some examples of successfully adding new perspectives into history education by using digital oral history.

Llewellyn, Kristina R., Ng-A-Fook, Nicholas (Eds.) (2017) Oral History and Education. Theories, Dilemmas, and Practices. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Wudha Yarbi-dya: Our Elder's Stories in the World of the Digital

Dr Sadie Heckenberg

University of Southern Queensland, Australia

Indigenous oral history brings life to our community narratives and portrays so well the customs, beliefs and values of our old people, our Elders. This sharing links us to our ancestors and creates intergenerational connectedness. But how do we maintain these one to one personal connections in the world of the digital? Indeed, Indigenous knowledges and oral histories can be mistreated or misused within a world where the recording is not properly protected. This paper investigates the ways in which Indigenous intellectual property and knowledge can be protected within this exchange. This makes sure that knowledge remains within community hands no matter the medium. The paper explores concepts of Cultural Safety as being ingrained within ethical interviewing practices, and the significant place of the performative aspects of this exchange. This paper asserts that within a duty of care Indigenous knowledge can be protected within the contemporary digital environment. This then continues to give

an Indigenous voice to the need for this greater sharing to be of value to our communities.

Panel 4B: Engagement and Dissemination [Room T115]

Your Tenement Memories: Engagement, Outreach, and Oral History

Kate Chandler

Dublin City Council Culture Company

Run by Dublin City Council Culture Company for 14 Henrietta Street, this oral history project aimed to address gaps in our knowledge of tenement life in Dublin, whilst enhancing public engagement and connection with their heritage. 'Your Tenement Memories' was a response to the vast pool of living knowledge of the tenements. Previous oral history projects had revealed there were many people willing to share these stories, but these had taken place in inner city locations, and were not always accessible to the large number of tenement dwellers who were relocated to Dublin's suburban areas in the 20th century.

In order to gather more information about tenement life whilst fostering a sense of connection with heritage, community outreach sessions doubled as pre-interview meetings. Ten of Dublin's new suburbs built in the 20th century were identified as neighbourhoods in which to hold pre-interview community outreach sessions. The sessions were billed as drop-in chats to talk about your memories and to "help us understand more about life in Dublin's tenements". Monthly sessions were also held at premises on 14 Henrietta Street.

Pre-interview questionnaires were carefully developed, and a team of facilitators were present on each day to conduct the pre-interviews. Each community member had the option to consent to further contact. After these sessions a filtering exercise took place and select participants were contacted for a recorded interview. This presentation will cover the results of combining pre-interview filtering with community engagement, and the overall results of the project, including audio recordings.

Applying digitalization to oral history for exhibition: processes, problems and advantages

Robert Flatley

Knock Museum, Co. Mayo

This presentation will explore methods Knock Museum staff use to convert pre-digital audio formats and enhance digitalized audio for an oral history exhibition. Beginning with a brief introduction to our 'Memories of Knock' project, using short snippets from our collection, this paper will outline some of the hardware and software we use to digitalize and augment audio up to exhibition standards. Examples of problems and solutions encountered will be discussed.

Operating under the financial constraints of a local museum, hardware and software needs to be cost-effective. This presentation aims to introduce minimal cost options (often free) for working with digital audio files. The processes described should be

transferable to similar research projects unless operating under extreme budgetary restrictions. Emphasis will be placed on the fact that none of the museum staff have IT or sound engineering backgrounds. The methods described should be operable by any non-technical personnel with just a little patience and practice.

The presentation will feature two short video intervals of key processes used to prepare oral material for exhibition. The first (less than one-minute clip) will demonstrate the transfer of standard audio cassettes to mp3 format using a Tevion Cassette Converter. The second (approximately two-minutes) will introduce Audacity, a free downloadable audio editing tool. This will show key features in practice, such as, combining individual audio files, amplifying/equalizing volume and streamlining unused file space.

Human Connections and Oral History in the Digital Age

Angela Whitecross & James McSharry

University of Manchester

Digital technologies have revolutionised the ease with which oral histories can be shared through online global platforms. But how do these changes impact on the deeply intimate nature of oral history practice in which the interview is the product of the human connection between the interviewee and the interviewer? We reflect on digital-human connections in the context of the NHS at 70: The Story of Our Lives UK-wide oral history project. Supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, NHS at 70 is training volunteers in 10 localities to collect stories from patients, staff and the public. The aim is to collect around 2,000 recordings and these will form the first Digital Archive of NHS history. The NHS has been embedded in everyday life since 1948 and almost everyone living in the UK has engaged with the institution. The scale of the project is ambitious in terms of numbers of recordings, the diversity of interviewees and interviewers and the level of public engagement in associated events. Evaluation of the interviewee's and the interviewer's experiences of conducting an interview reveals the critical importance and power of the human connection which often directly impacts on wellbeing and self-value. We will use selected audio clips to illustrate some of the ethical and practical challenges of preserving intimate human connections whilst at the same time extending accessibility to the history of the NHS through the voices of people who have created that history.

Panel 5A: Changing Contexts [Room T116]

Putting talk online: what's the story with the human voice?

Clíona O'Carroll

Cork Folklore Project/Béaloides-Folklore and Ethnology, UCC.

Online dissemination of audio interviews is often expected of oral history projects. Drawing on the experience of the community-based Cork Folklore Project in the development of our online catalogue, I have argued in the past for a 'look before you leap' approach to our engagement with these expectations on the basis of caution

regarding duty of care. In this presentation, I would like to begin an exploration of other - largely unexamined - considerations regarding putting talk online.

A shift to digital practice brings a range of opportunities and expectations to bear on our dissemination practices. Pressing questions arise for audio archives of everyday experience, regarding form, intent and 'impact'. What might it mean to make long-form 'talk' available to mass audiences, in terms of how people may (or may not) interact with this material, fundamentally different as it is to other forms of online self-representation? What do we need to understand about the cognitive impact of listening to the mediated human voice, and of the use of particular digital media and interfaces, about digital abundance and the structuring presentation conventions regarding text, image and sound? And what kind of innovative action might we take, in order to encourage a more distributed, participatory, duty of care with regard to this material? This presentation questions potential assumptions that access is sufficient for engagement, and that listening fosters empathy, and joins the conversation about what we should consider, and what approaches we might advocate, to do justice to the richness of these collections of 'talk'.

Oral History Transcription From a Linguistic Perspective

Chris Fitzgerald

University of Limerick

Oral histories provide not only historians with valuable data, but are large samples of language that may be of significance to linguistic researchers, however, cross-disciplinary collaboration is hampered by non-conformity in the conventions used in transcription. Often, oral testimonies are transcribed and presented in a format that is 'reader-friendly' and accessible as a coherent document. Though there is merit to this approach as it leads to documents that present the content of the spoken testimonies in a legible way, the nuances of the language used are often lost and the reader fails to grasp the eccentricities and linguistic features that determine the voice of the speaker (Schiffrin, 2003). Transcription conventions vary across disciplines according to the proposed purpose of the transcript. Some academic fields are concerned only with the content of the transcript, while others are more interested in the way in which the content is delivered (Abell et al., 2008). Linguistics is one such area and as a result adheres to transcription conventions that rely on various symbols to represent an array of linguistic features that are of interest to researchers in this area. This paper looks at three archives of oral histories that are publicly available both in audio and written form and analyses what linguistic features are excluded and included in order to highlight the discrepancies between linguistic and oral history transcription. Proposals are made as to how conventions could conform in order to progress the potential of future interdisciplinary collaboration.

Abell, J., Gruber, H., Mautner, G. and Myers, G., 2008. *Qualitative discourse analysis in the social sciences*. Macmillan International Higher Education.

Schiffrin, D., 2003. Linguistics and history: Oral history as discourse. *Linguistics, language, and the real world: Discourse and beyond*, pp.84-113.

Genre Differentiations: Oral Narratives and Memoir in the Digital Age

Kevin Molloy

State Library Victoria in Melbourne

The contrast between oral history and memoir can be determined, interpreted and assessed from a number of different angles. The written versus oral; the shaped narrative versus what Portelli calls the ‘untold story...made up of twice-told tales’; a studied creation versus a ‘personal composition in performance’; a solo self-reflective event, versus a mediated attempt to position one’s very personal experience in a wider historical discourse.

Just where narrative authority lies in the life story can shift depending upon the appearance or “genre” that is given to that life story. As Portelli goes on to note; in folklore authority is derived mainly from tradition; in literary or historical autobiography from a person’s sense his or her self; while in oral history, narrative authority is more complex as it is created, and occupies, a shared and shifting space where ‘someone has a story to tell, and someone a history to record’.

Oral narratives and memoir exist on the life story spectrum but do not necessarily sit side by side, a position more readily apparent in the digital age as technology allows us to privilege one type of discourse, one type of narrative, one type of aural “reader experience” or receptivity, over another. Examining these notions of shifting authorities I want to discuss three oral histories undertaken with post-War, post-Emergency Irish migrants who had emigrated to Australia between 1948 and 1965, and each of whom has completed a memoir of their lives before later interviews. In doing so this paper will assess the implications for narrative authority of the shifting balance in receptivity enabled and increasingly facilitated by the digital space.

Panel 5B: Poster / Display Session [Room T304]

****Please note this session also runs at lunchtime on Day One****

Two digital oral history projects: Cork Memory Map and Cork’s Main Streets

Penny Johnston

Cork Folklore Project

This display will present two digital oral history projects that use interviews from the archive of the Cork Folklore Project. The first of these is a revamped Cork Memory Map (<http://corkfolklore.org/cmm/neatline/fullscreen/cork-memory-map>), which has undergone several digital iterations since it was first launched in 2011. Embedded audio and images in the Cork Memory Map reveal stories associated with different places on the map of Cork city, exploring local place-making through memory and narrative.

The second site is a more specific digital project that looks at a discrete sub-collection of oral history interviews, Cork’s Main Streets (<http://corksmainstreets.corkfolklore.org/cms/>). The focus is the medieval centre of Cork city, an area with a long trading history that has more recently suffered urban decline and (in some parts) is now experiencing urban renewal. Images, text, audio

excerpts and video combine in a site that presents this part of the city from the perspective of one period in its history; a brief spell in 2014 and 2015 when the oral history interviews were collected.

These sites can be displayed on two laptops with headsets that allow conference attendees to look and listen to the digital oral history material as it is presented online.*

Voices of Bere Island: Oral History through community radio

Marc O'Hare, Caroline McCarthy, Helen Riddell, John Walshe, Paul Moore, Sarah Robinson, Laura Maye, Nadia Pantidi and John McCarthy.

Bere Island Community Radio and University College Cork

Diarmuid Ferriter's (2018) recent book "On the Edge" documents the history of Ireland's many islands and illustrates the challenges that islands faced in the last century, often idealized in the Irish national imagination, but neglected in terms of service provision, and distribution of resources. Amongst these islands, Bere Island, in Bantry Bay, Co. Cork is a unique island. Until 1938, part of Bere Island remained under British control, as Berehaven, the surrounding harbour, was one of three deep water ports that the British maintained under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1922. Up until 1938, then, island life was divided between the East controlled by the British, and the West, under Irish rule. Eighty-one years have now passed, and 180 inhabitants remain on the island, which in 1938 had approximately 1000 inhabitants. Islanders are interested in preserving the way of life through oral histories from both islanders and the diaspora. While looking back, the islanders are also looking ahead and collecting oral histories in tandem with a new community radio initiative that aims to strengthen the community and build bridges with diaspora and other island communities. This poster will present preliminary ways in which Bere Island Community Radio will support oral histories, including the potential use of text to speech to bring voice to the Irish Folklore project's 1930s findings. This project is part of a larger Grassroots radio project started in January 2018, funded by the European Commissions' Horizon 2020 Framework, under the Collective Awareness Program (CAPS).

'Stories Between Us' - an intergenerational platform to explore past times.

Janine Davidson

Artist & Independent Researcher

Short film of the process of 'Stories Between Us' an intergenerational public art project that has grown from the valued relationships developed between groups of older people and adults that the artist Janine Davidson has worked with in the Dublin 7 area over the last 16 years. This particular project was made possible with additional financial support of Grangegorman development agency.

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