Words and Feelings: Reflecting on Oral History and Emotions

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From the Editors

As incoming editors, we would like to express our appreciation for the enormous efforts of retiring editor Sue Anderson who, for the past eight years, has worked tirelessly to produce a high quality journal. We would like to thank Sue for so generously sharing her knowledge and experience with us. Sue and the editorial board have ensured that, as we reach the 2020s, the OHAJ is an engaging and relevant read for a broad range of people. We are excited to be given the opportunity to consolidate and build on this wonderful legacy.

We plan to continue to have a strongly themed issue each year and to continue to finetune the incorporation of technology (such as the recently trialled insertion of audio recordings into the text). We aim to proactively attract potential authors working in diverse fields and hope, in future, to induce select authors to record themselves verbally delivering their article – and to make such recordings available through the journal as an audio file. We intend future editions to include pieces authored by well-known historians in which they reflect on their own practice and changes in the field over the course of their career. We are also considering including in each edition an article by an early career oral historian which contextualises and reflects on the influence of a pivotal work.

This bumper special edition was well underway when we took over the reins of editorship. It includes seven peer reviewed articles, all of which adhere to the theme 'Oral History and the Emotions'. Alistair Thomson kicks off this issue by illustrating how to identify, document and index emotions expressed during interviews conducted for the Australian Generations Project. Focussing on 'joy' and 'shame', Thomson thoughtfully demonstrates how the meaning of emotions is not fixed but changes over time, across cultures and in different social settings.

In a powerful and self-reflexive piece, Jordana Silverstein draws attention to what happens during uncomfortable interviews, and the variety of emotions generated within both interviewer and interviewee during such encounters. In reflecting on her interview with a prominent former public servant and public commentator on refugee issues, she reflects with raw honesty on the intimacies and discomfort that may be created within the space of the interview and how, in this space, the interviewer's personal views may be compromised.

Focussing on the recollections of Polish citizens who, following deportation to the Soviet Union, spent time in India and Africa before settlement in Australia, Paul Sendziuk and Sophie Howe draw attention to numerous factors that influence the way memories are made, shared, narrated and distorted. They seek to understand the process by which particular (and, at times, inaccurate) stories become dominant within both individual narratives and collective memory.

The testimony of four holocaust survivors are considered by Annabelle Baldwin who illustrates how emotions recalled from traumatic events (in this case the additional trauma of sexual assault) are present in the interview space. Through sensitive analysis, she peels back several layers of emotion: the emotions of the original event, of the retelling and, in this case, with the additional trauma of sexual assault interview, of listening to such painful narratives, and of writing and reading about them. Baldwin highlights the moral imperative for interviewers to be alert to how their interaction with the interviewee affects the interviewees' expression and experience of emotion.

Using interviews conducted with participants of the 1960s student movement as case studies, Portia Delina demonstrates how different techniques can be employed to uncover emotions – in this case the emotional motivations for student protest. Her paper contributes to broadening the methodological tools available to oral historians seeking to hear emotions in the past. By 'listening against the grain', Delina is able to access emotions that have, historically, been disavowed by the student movement.

Geraldine Fela draws on interviews conducted with three nurses who cared for people dying of HIV/AIDs in Sydney and Brisbane during the 1980s. Fela shows how both the complex political dynamics of the period and the nurses' personal and geographic settings shaped the different ways each nurse negotiated difficult emotions. Francesco Ricatti's original and

beautifully written piece provides a fascinating account of the relationships between oral history, trauma, embodiment and archetype. Ricatti draws on a rich literature and a compelling oral history to argue that the body cannot be ignored in oral accounts of trauma and that archetypes can deepen our understanding of what is being revealed and concealed in oral accounts of corporeality.

To commemorate the fortieth anniversary of Australia's Oral History Association, we have reprinted Beth Robertson's comprehensive history of the association which was published by this journal ten years ago. Alistair Thomson has written a supplement covering the last decade to bring this history up to the present.

It is heartening to read the numerous reports of oral history projects being undertaken across the nation. Some, such as the Hostels Project, have now finished while others, such as the Holden Histories Project, are just commencing. Curator Fiona Kinsey explains how oral histories have enhanced collection acquisition, documentation and management at Museums Victoria through the example of oral histories conducted with former Kodak workers, while Deborah Tout-Smith reveals that ways in which oral histories with descendants of World War One veterans helped to express and elicit emotions in the exhibition *Love & Sorrow*.

Oral history workshops, seminars and symposia take place regularly across Australia, and Judy Hughes' workshop report details the digital technologies presentation Doug Boyd made to Victorian oral historians. We also note the passing of respected oral historian Ben Morris, commemorated in Janis Wilton's obituary. Anna Shnukal's very personal account of complexities and difficulties involved in researching the Torres Strait Islander genealogies concludes the non-reviewed articles and reports. Shnukal's piece will doubtless be a valuable record for future generations of Islander and non-Islander researchers.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the editorial board, reviews editor and anonymous reviewers for their efficiency and assistance. We hope you enjoy this edition of the OHAJ and we invite you to send your ideas, suggestions and submissions to us to help shape the next issue.

Carla Pascoe Leahy and Skye Krichauff

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Indexing and Interpreting Emotion: Joy and Shame in Oral History

Alistair Thomson, Monash University

Abstract

The history of emotions has been one of the most prominent historical 'turns' of recent years, yet oral historians have been working with emotions for decades. In this article I explore how indexing emotions recorded in Australian Generations interviews can pinpoint the range and significance of emotion in Australian lives. By linking directly to the audio recordings archived at the National Library of Australia, I show how hearing the voice and sound of personal testimony can expand and enrich our understanding of its emotional register. Focusing on joy and especially shame, I consider how this focus on emotion in Australian life stories might illuminate the historical and cultural experience of emotion, how the meanings and feelings of emotion are shaped by historical circumstance and negotiated in social lives, and how emotional registers vary across time and culture.

Oral history and the history of emotions

'Life is long. When you're forty-eight, there's been a lot of stuff that's happened (laughs). It's got elements of comedy and there are elements of heartache and drama and thriller and it's got so many things in it.' (Rhonda King, born 1965)[1]

This statement was made by Rhonda King during her interview with Mary Hutchison for the Australian Generations Oral History Project in 2013. It highlights the prevalence and variety of emotion in oral history. Although the history of emotions has been one of the most prominent historical 'turns' of recent years, oral historians have been working with emotions for decades. In this article I explore how indexing emotions recorded in Australian Generations interviews can pinpoint the range and significance of emotion in Australian lives. By linking directly to the audio recordings archived at the National Library of Australia (NLA), I show how hearing the voice and sound of personal testimony can expand and enrich our understanding of its emotional register. Focusing on joy and especially shame, I consider how this focus on emotion in Australian life stories might illuminate the historical and cultural meanings of emotion, and

thus enrich our understanding of intimate lives and Australian histories.

Since the early 2000s, the history of emotions has become a central concern of historians around the world.[2] Books, journal articles, conferences and research centres have focused on the nature and significance of emotion in history. This literature has established the centrality of emotion in the embodied experience of human life. It has shown how human emotions are neither timeless nor universal but rather shaped by particular historical and cultural circumstances. While emotion is intimate and individual, it is also social; theorists write of emotional 'communities' or 'regimes' that prescribe and manage particular forms of emotional expression by individuals and groups.[3]

Oral historians have been doing histories of emotions for decades, though often without using that label. From the beginnings of the oral history movement after World War Two, researchers who recorded and used oral history interviews recognised that witnesses recalled not just the events of the past but also the meanings and feelings that were essential parts of those events. By the 1970s, oral historians such as Luisa Passerini and Alessandro Portelli were arguing that this 'subjectivity' was a defining feature of interviews and an invaluable contribution of oral history. For example, in her landmark study of the popular memory of Italian fascism in the 1970s, Passerini showed that gaps and silences in the remembering of interwar fascism indicated personal and collective shame, which reflected how Italian society was still struggling to deal with its recent past.[4]

Certainly, emotion has been a central feature of the interviews I have recorded and the oral histories I have written since the 1980s. In *Anzac Memories*, elderly war veterans like Fred Farrall or Bill Langham recalled fear in battle, affection for mates and both grief and guilt about their mates' deaths.[5] They recalled the dreams and disillusionment of postwar life, the crippling effects of post-traumatic stress and different measures of pride, regret or shame. In *Ten Pound Poms* and *Moving Stories*, British postwar migrants like Dorothy Wright and Phyllis Cave recalled fervent hopes for a new life and the anguish of departure and separation.[6] They remembered the thrill of new sights, sounds and smells, and the confusion of a world that was both terribly familiar and awfully strange. They,

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too, looked back on their life histories with pride and regret. Such powerful emotions were shaped by particular personal and historical circumstances, and in turn these emotions often influenced how individuals acted in their lives.

These examples highlight how oral historians have understood and worked with the emotional content of interviews. First, just as we have considered how individual remembering is affected by cultural narratives about the past (variously labelled popular memory, collective memory, social memory or public memory), we have also noted how individual emotions are impacted by social relations and cultural expectations. For example, it became easier for World War One veteran Fred Farrall to understand and articulate his feelings of wartime inadequacy and emasculation as Australian historical narratives about the soldier as victim rather than hero became prevalent from the 1970s.[7]

Second, as participants in the oral history encounter, interviewers are acutely aware of the embodiment of emotion. As an interview triggers recall of an emotional episode, and as that remembering generates a recurrence of emotion, we can see our narrator hunching over or holding her body tight, perhaps unable to speak, or we can hear the breath squeezed out of her voice, a change in pitch or pace, or a lingering sigh. Though the emotion in the room will never exactly replicate the emotion of the past, its embodiment in the present offers clues for interpretation about the nature and meanings of those past events and their emotional content. We are reminded that while human experience may be articulated in language through the brain, it is also felt and expressed through the body.[8]

Third, oral historians have long been alert to the two interconnected temporal histories of emotion in an oral history interview – namely the emotion of the time of the event and the emotion at the time of the telling. Our interview instruction manuals remind us to attend to the emotion in the room, to respond with sensitivity and care as recollection triggers powerful emotions, and to reflect upon the causes, nature and meanings of such emotions as we interpret the interview. We recognise that the intimate relationship of the interview helps to conjure strong feelings, and that the emotional baggage of the interviewer can sometimes affect how we behave in the interview, just as the interview might generate strong feelings for both parties during and after the recording. Our interpretation of emotions in the interview might include analysis of how and why past events continue to provoke potent feelings, and we draw upon those emotional expressions as one clue among others to interpret the nature and significance of feelings in the past.[9] Increasingly, we recognise that, for the oral history researcher, there is a third temporal history of emotion, namely the time of the listening. As a researcher plays a recording (which they may or may not have created), they can be moved by their interactions with the recorded narrative and the profound intersubjective experience of deep and empathetic listening.

Fourth, oral historians work with audio or video interviews, and are alert to the fact that a transcribed text of the words of the interview is a partial and inadequate rendering of the event. Interviewers are aware that much of the emotional meaning in interviews is available through the sound of the voice and the look of the face and body. Whenever possible, we listen to our audio interviews, and watch our video recordings, so that we can best interpret emotion and affect in what is being said. We also, at times, attempt to describe and explain those embodied expressions of emotion to our audience.[10]

Yet oral historians would be the first to admit that it is not always easy to find the emotions in our interviews, let alone to decipher and interpret them. Audio sources are hard to work with. Listening to an interview in real time can be rewarding but is enormously time consuming. Though we can quickly and effectively scan text with our eyes, when we speed up a recording we lose the aural clues of voice and narration. The different types of finding aids that we produce to help researchers navigate interviews are not always helpful in pointing to the emotional passages and qualities of the recording. A narrative summary produced by the interviewer soon after the interview might describe the emotional highlights of the interview, including the interviewer's own feelings, and might encourage the researcher to listen to that interview. However, if that summary is all that is available, the listener will need to listen to the whole interview to find those moments. A transcript might include clues about emotional context (laughter or tears might be noted in brackets), and sometimes the emotional resonance of an event will leap off the page. But the emotional depths of a passage are often expressed beneath or between the lines of text, and narrators don't often label their emotions with a term that will be located in a word search. Researchers often struggle to locate or identify emotion within one interview transcript, let alone across a set of transcripts. An interview log or 'timed summary' might be more useful in that regard if, for example, its author identifies significant emotion within a segment of an interview, or if a glossary of terms for emotion is used in a keyword section to identify specific emotions. However, timed summaries rarely include that level of emotional specificity, not least because creating a timed summary is an expensive, laborious business which favours content over form, and perhaps also because the author often hasn't thought to include details about emotion. In recent years commentators have urged researchers to take advantage of new digital technologies to include emotion, and to provide links to its audio expression, within our finding aids for oral history interviews.[11] In the Australian Generations project our team of oral historians took up that challenge.

Indexing emotion in *Australian Lives*

The Australian Generations Oral History Project utilised digital technologies that have helped

researchers find, identify and interpret emotion within recorded interviews. Australian Generations was a partnership between university historians, the National Library of Australia (NLA) and ABC Radio National.[12] Between 2011 and 2014 I led a team that recorded 300 life history interviews across Australia. These interviews were selected from almost 700 people who volunteered to be interviewed in response to appeals in regional media and to under-represented groups. In the selection process, my fellow selectors and I aimed to ensure the interview archive would comprise a diverse range of Australians in terms of age (about fifty born each decade from the 1930s to the 1980s, with a sprinkling born in the 1920s), social class and educational background, gender, sexuality and disability, region (roughly proportionate to the spread of people between metropolitan, regional and remote Australia and to the population of each state and territory), and indigeneity and ethnicity (just over a quarter of interviewees were born overseas, in many different countries). In total, 1221 hours of Australian Generations audio recordings have been archived at the National Library where they are available for research and public use subject to conditions stipulated by each interviewee.

Interviews averaged about four hours in length and were usually recorded over two sessions. Our life history interview approach – in which the interview follows the contours of a person's life and the priorities of the narrator, with the interviewer gently probing and stretching the account for added detail, depth and complexity – differed from many oral history projects which instead focus on a particular topic in an interviewee's life, such as war, employment or education. Interviewers were sometimes challenged by the difficult stories and powerful emotions evoked in intimate life histories.[13]

About two-thirds of the interviews are fully accessible online. Researcher access to these online interviews is enhanced by NLA technological innovations, which have been explained in detail in an article by Kevin Bradley and Anisa Puri.[14] In short, a 'timed summary' for each interview includes a summary and key words for each consecutive segment of the interview (a segment is typically between one and five minutes in duration). Each segment is directly linked to the same point in the audio recording. A researcher searching within an interview, or across the interviews using Trove, will be directed to all points in the timed summaries that contain the search term, and can read the summary or listen to that point of the recording. The URL for each segment is available to paste into publications and thus provide a hyperlink direct to the online interview segment and audio. This article uses that facility to enable online readers to listen to the cited interview extracts – by linking direct to the NLA's online archive – and then continue to listen to more of that interview if they wish. The same direct and searchable link between text and audio is also available for the fifty online interviews that we transcribed for use in an Australian Generations anthology. Each transcript segment (delineated as paragraphs) has a unique URL. By clicking on the 'flag' to the right of each segment a user reveals the URL citation details for that passage – as shown below.

Finding emotion within and across the 200 plus Australian Generations interviews that are available online is not easy. When we set up the process for interviewers to create timed summaries, we did not think to create a glossary of emotion keywords that they could use to tag relevant interview segments. Occasionally the timed summary happens to include a reference to episodes of particular emotional significance. In retrospect, tagging emotion within the timed summaries would have added another level of usefulness and searchability. For example, such tagging would have enabled a researcher to search across all the interviews for sections tagged for 'love', 'hate' or 'grief' and then to explain the diverse and changing historical experience of any such emotion.

But in the book based upon the Australian Generations interviews and compiled by Anisa Puri and myself, *Australian Lives: An Intimate History*, we were able to index emotion.[15] For this book we chose a small, but still diverse, set of fifty interviews. We selected a group of this size so readers could get to know each narrator, and so the interviews would represent a wide range of Australian lives and histories. We only used

interviews that are available online with permission from each interviewee, because we want readers to also be listeners with an option to hear each spoken extract, as we explain below.

In the book, extracts from the interviews are arranged within two types of chapters. One set of chapters traverses the life course, starting with Ancestry and then charting Childhood, Youth, Midlife and Later Life, and exploring change and continuity in each life stage from the 1930s to the 2010s. Interspersed between those chapters are thematic chapters about Faith, Migrants, Activism and, in conclusion, Telling My Story. Some chapters have sub-sections that focus on particular topics. For example, Youth canvasses high school, teen family life, youth culture, first loves, school to work, and military service. Within each section the interview extracts are usually arranged chronologically so readers can follow change across time and consider the factors that may have influenced significant personal and social transformations. For instance, First Loves starts with the glory boxes that young women in the first half of the twentieth century used to gather household items for their prospective marriage, and concludes in the 2000s with internet dating amongst straight and gay couples.

From thousands of pages of transcripts we selected extracts that illuminate change and continuity and how individuals lived with and against the economic forces, cultural expectations and legal constraints of their times. We also chose extracts that highlight how different types of Australians have managed their lives and faced distinctive challenges and opportunities. And, of course, we picked stories that evoke the humour, drama and pathos of human life.

These stories are told through voice as well as word. The texture and sound of speech convey meaning. Speakers emphasise significant words and phrases with increased volume or a well-timed pause. They speed up with excitement or emotion, or slow down as they recall a difficult moment. Silence can indicate pain or embarrassment, or the struggle to relate a memory that has no easy story. The voice can suggest warmth and pleasure, anger and disappointment, sarcasm or disapproval. Laughter can be joyous, anxious or ironic. Tears can be happy or sad. In *Australian Lives* we tried to capture some of this aurality in our textual editing and presentation of interview extracts: emphasised words are *italicized*, laughter and sighs are noted in (parentheses), lengthy pauses are indicated by three dashes (---), while a single long dash (—) indicates an aside or afterthought.

But there is a limit to how much of this aural nuance can be captured in text. The patterns of the spoken word are different to those of written prose. Speech is 'ragged at the edges; it twists and turns, gnaws away at meaning and coils itself up'.[16] Narrators zig-zag from one topic to another, as each memory triggers a connected story or feeling. There are false starts as interviewees fumble towards the story they want to tell, and most people pepper their speech with 'um' and 'ah', 'kind of', 'like'

or 'sort of'. For a linguist these might be invaluable clues, but they can be confusing and irritating for a reader.

With regard to editing each transcript extract, my co-author Anisa Puri and I sought to capture the nuance of the spoken word while also ensuring a readable and coherent text.[17] We removed words that didn't add to the meaning of an extract, deleted passages that were not directly relevant to a story's primary focus, and we merged passages from different parts of an interview which related to the same topic. We did not add words, except in [square brackets] to ensure coherence, and we did not alter words except where the repetition of a vernacular usage (such as 'yeah' or 'gotta') was distracting rather than meaningful or, in very few cases, where it was clear that the narrator had mistakenly used the wrong word. We occasionally fixed syntax to enhance readability, though we also sought to maintain the style and flow of speech. We retained interviewer questions where they made a significant impact on the narrator's story, as a reminder that these stories were created within an interview relationship. We wanted the readers of the text to be able to 'hear' and appreciate the rhythms and textures of the spoken word.

The wonders of digital technology allow users of the *Australian Lives* ebook to simultaneously be reader *and* listener – to enjoy both written and spoken versions of each interview extract. In the ebook each extract is hyperlinked so that when an ebook reader clicks on the link a new website window will open showing the interview on the National Library online listening system. Click once more to accept the Library's conditions for use and after several seconds the selected extract will start playing. While the audio extract is playing, the Library's verbatim transcript is visible. Alternatively, the reader/listener can continue to read the edited transcript in the ebook. The audio will continue playing beyond the selected extract so the user can listen to more of that person's story, or they can exit the Library's online recording and continue reading, and listening, to other extracts in the ebook.[18]

As the ebook user reads and listens to each extract they will see how the edited text in the book is not the same as the Library's verbatim transcript, and that neither replicates the spoken word. The book's edited text offers a clear, focused and readable version of the narrator's story; the audio track offers additional meanings conveyed in sound and by the way each person tells their story. For the listener, oral history becomes aural history with enriched audio access to the interviews, and to the emotions of the narrator.[19]

Australian Lives includes two indexes: a Narrator Index to enable readers to follow one narrator throughout the book, and a General Index to find extracts related to a place or subject. My co-author and I decided to include emotions in the General Index, as shown overleaf.

Indexing emotion was not a straightforward process. It was not difficult to index any extract in which the narrator used a particular word to describe emotion,

such as 'love' or 'hate' (although of course some of those index links are misleading because the term is used ironically or playfully). However, finding and identifying emotions that were not labelled in this way was much harder. We had to listen to each extract and use the evidence of context, words and voice to identify the appropriate emotion to index. This was never an exact science. It required difficult judgements about the nature and significance of emotion – both from the time of the event and the time of the telling – and it was affected by our own emotional experience and cultural understandings at the time of the listening as we responded to the stories we heard.

We had to be alert to emotions that we had not expected, and to consider how one word might convey different types of emotion. For example, 'love of activities, places and things' is not the same as 'love of people' (though we decided that love of people and love of pets were close enough to be combined). We included terms that often involve an expression of emotion (such as 'laughter' or 'crying and tears'), and we realised that 'laughter' might signify any number of different emotions so decided to include all 55 'laughter' references in one index item. I'm hoping another researcher will have fun listening to all that laughter and exploring how laughter is used and what it means.

In short, the index to emotions is a rough and ready finding aid that enables users to locate, read and listen to expressions of different types of emotion, and to consider the significance of that emotion within Australian lives and history. It is also, of course, shaped by the editors' understanding and interpretation of different emotions. This became clearer to me as I began to use the index to explore two sets of emotions, 'happiness and joy' and 'shame', and realised how emotional registers are historically specific and culturally bound.

Joy and shame

Twenty-two extracts in the *Australian Lives* book are indexed for 'happiness and joy' ('joy' represents an especially intense form of happiness, but was not easy to distinguish neatly). 'Happiness and joy' is positioned in the index between 'guilt' (5 items) and 'hate' (8). Other related index terms include 'excitement' (13), 'laughter' (55), 'love' (of different varieties) and 'pleasure and enjoyment' (7). Listening to the 22 episodes indexed for 'happiness and joy' makes it clear that there are many types of happiness and joy, and that it was experienced for different reasons across the life course.

For example, Ruth Apps, who was born 1926 in Wagga Wagga and interviewed in Sydney in 2012, is indexed for four very different episodes of happiness and joy (online readers of this article can listen to each extract by clicking on the hyperlinked text at the start of the extract).

She recalls the 'happy times' of family holidays during the 1930s on a beach near Sydney.

> We would go to the beach—and it wasn't known in those days—my mother would cover us in coconut oil which meant we promptly fried and we would come out in blisters, but we would happily swim there in the surf. And my father

was a good swimmer and he would take us out and it was very enjoyable. My parents must've had to make sacrifices to do that for us, but it was such a happy time.[20]

Later in the interview, Ruth thinks she remembers rejoicing about the advent of the contraceptive pill ('I think I rejoiced' suggests that perhaps that feeling became stronger over time and is now her predominant emotion).

So I had my second and third children with that basic family planning. Then after the third one was born, I said, 'I didn't want any more' and that happily coincided with the introduction of the Pill. I think I rejoiced.[21]

Ruth had enjoyed secretarial work before she started a family. She remembered how much she enjoyed her return to work once her children reached school age.

They rang me after Christmas and said, 'That position that you were doing casually is available, would you like it?' I said, 'Yes please' and I went back to work. I'm now glad I did. I thoroughly enjoyed it. It made a lot of financial difference to the house. I started in a stenographers' pool and then I became the secretary to the engineer and then I worked for the Mayor.[22]

Most poignantly, in her old age and with friends suffering from dementia, 86-year-old Ruth reflects on the importance of remembering, and thus continuing to experience, both joy and sorrow.

Memory is terribly important…. if you can't remember what you did as a child you've lost that joy, or sorrow, whichever it happens to be.[23]

In each of those examples we get a sense of what made Ruth happy at different points in her life: quality time spent with parents and siblings; a fulfilling career; and reminiscing about a life well-lived. We also get a sense of how happiness was impacted by social relations and historical circumstances. In the 1930s, it was the comparatively affluent Apps family could afford a car and a family holiday, and Ruth's father could afford to spend time with his children that was fondly remembered; in the 1960s, the Pill made a career an option for a talented, ambitious yet frustrated housewife and mother of three.

I'm sure it would be possible to study happiness and joy within these interviews in more depth, but it strikes me that powerful negative emotions are often more revealing about people's lives and how emotional lives are shaped by historical circumstances. 'Shame' is a case in point.

Ten extracts in the *Australian Lives* book are indexed for 'shame'. Related emotions include 'disapproval and approval' (11 items), 'embarrassment' (10), 'humiliation' (2) and 'guilt' (5). A number of historians have written about the power of shame. In *Struggletown*

– the acclaimed oral history of Melbourne's working-class inner-suburb Richmond – Janet McCalman identifies shame as a core emotion experienced by many unemployed men who felt they had failed their families during the Depression of the 1930s, or by women and children of poor families who could not afford to keep up appearances.[24] Writing of 'Shame and its histories in the 20th century', New Zealand historian Barbara Brookes also identifies the shame of the failed male breadwinner, especially in times of economic crisis. Brookes identifies overlapping emotional communities, within which emotional values and rules tie individual behaviour to social norms. She shows how social shaming is often underpinned by moral and legal force.[25]

Among the narrators of *Australian Lives*, shame was often an explicit, named category of potent emotion. Narrators recalled past episodes of shame during which they had felt like a 'bad person'; in a number of cases they still felt 'ashamed' about the episode, which often related to experience of mental health, sexuality, unemployment or addiction. Usually these experiences of shamefulness involved a process of shaming, in which a person was perceived to breach social norms and was 'shamed' by family members or the wider community. Some narrators still felt ashamed about an episode in the past which carried a continuing emotional resonance. In other cases, historical shame was recalled but had lost its emotional charge; the feeling of shame was no longer felt, or it was replaced by a different type of emotion. Sometimes the very process of articulating a past episode of shame with an empathetic listener induced a new understanding and different feelings. Social norms about what was 'shameful' had sometimes changed over time, and many narrators looked back on their past shaming with anger about unfairness or mistreatment. Thus the items indexed for 'shame' in *Australian Lives* demonstrate types of behaviour that were deemed 'shameful' in the past and the ways in which behaviour was policed through shaming, yet they also show how the categorisation of shame has changed over time.

For example, David Cooper was born in 1955 and grew up in a working-class Melbourne family. David has never forgotten the difficulty and shame of not being able to read during his 1960s primary schooling. He believes that nowadays a boy like him would be diagnosed as dyslexic and that his learning difficulty would be supported rather than shamed.

It took a long time for me to learn to read. What I remember about that is how frustrated I would be able to make people when they were trying to teach me to read. You'd have, you know, 'This is John, this is Betty.' And then you turn the page over and they'd go, 'This is?' and I wouldn't remember John's name. And they'd go, 'It's the same word on the other page.' How could it be the same word on the other page, 'cause it's on a different page. My mum would end up getting so frustrated. She'd yell at me. People were thinking I was taking the mickey

out of them, that I wouldn't remember these words. So I remember getting yelled at a lot, and I remember being frustrated and I didn't like school because of that. […] I gave up and became determined not to learn it, a little bit, I think. You know, I'll teach you that I don't need it.[26]

Shame and shaming can also be shaped by gendered social expectations about appropriate behaviour. For example, when David Cooper was interviewed in 2013, he recalled how unmarried mothers were shamed until at least the 1970s. He regrets the long term intergenerational scars:

> Then I look back when I trace my family tree and you find out that your own mother was pregnant when she got married, and that my grandmother and her and her sisters left Tasmania to come to Melbourne so that you wouldn't disgrace the family's name because you were pregnant.[27]

Women have often been the victims of shaming. Trish Barrkman was born in rural Victoria in 1933 and interviewed in 2011. Trish recalls how in the Brisbane suburbs of the early 1970s she was made to feel ashamed as a divorced working mum with 'latchkey children':

> Children were called 'latchkey children'. I used to go to school meetings and these people would get up and talk about latchkey children. […] A latchkey child was someone that came home to an empty house, from school. There was that stigma. There was that moral undertone that you were leaving your children. What else were we supposed to do? How else were we supposed…?[28]

Shame can have ethnic or racial connotations. Milica Stoikovic was born in 1985 in Perth. During her interview in Adelaide in 2011, she recalled how, at her 1990s Adelaide school, her Serbian migrant heritage became shameful because of the Yugoslav civil wars:

> I have one really vivid memory—and I'll never forget this. So this was Year 9 for me. I was walking down the corridor out of drama class and a boy started running down the corridor and he was saying, 'Arkan is dead! Arkan is dead! Thank God, I hate all Serbians. I hate all Serbian people, Thank God he's dead.' Then he turned around to me and one of my friends was like, 'You know, she's Serbian. Shut up.' And then he's like, 'Oh are you Serbian?' And I said, 'Well yeah, sort of.' And then he's like, 'Well I don't wish you were dead but I wish everyone else was.' […] I always felt very guilty. I felt very ashamed of being Serbian because of everything that was said to me about those people and about that time. But I shouldn't have been made to feel that way.[29]

Sometimes the power of shame reverberates in the voice of a narrator. Former school-teacher Lynne

Sanders-Braithwaite (born 1949) was a drug user and heavy drinker for most of the 1970s and up until 1987, when she left her husband, and for a time her children, on the north coast of New South Wales, in order to get clean in Sydney. Lynne's feelings of shame are apparent in the following extract. However, listening to her voice reveals a layer of aural clues. Her husky, hard-lived voice and its shifting emotional register contrast with bird song in the bush outside:

> I had these two beautiful children that I adored but it was caravan parks and farm houses and evictions, lots of violence within the home, lots of fear. A constant feeling of failing at everything that I'd ever believed in or wanted. […][30]

> 1987—just before I left my marriage and took off to Sydney to get clean and sober—we had to go to Coffs Hospital. They had ear surgery coming up and something went wrong with the equipment. One of the doctors said, 'Even children of women like this deserve better treatment.' I realised then that it was beginning to impact on them. I knew if they were to stay in the world that I was offering them, they would become children of the local drunk or the local junkie. I hated that. I've never forgotten that day, that burnt into my memory. […] But that was one of the days I can—I was gone within two days of that.[31]

Lynne's voice conveys the physical and emotional effects of a tough life. The shame she felt when a doctor said that 'Even children of women like this deserve better treatment' is 'burnt' into her memory. Lynne's tone suggests that she still feels some shame about her failings as a mother, while also finding explanatory relief through her articulation of external causes such as domestic violence and homelessness. A second passage highlights how Lynne has struggled to make a positive sense of her decision to leave her children, and how her composure has been hard-won and yet is still vulnerable:

> I knew nothing about life without drugs by then. Certainly knew nothing about life without alcohol because all the family had drunk. Well not mum, everyone except mum. But that was the beginning of life turning a corner completely. I still think—in later years I was still ashamed of leaving the children and an old lady in Maroubra said to me that she'd left her son and it was the single most honourable thing she'd ever done. That was a real gift. 'Cause I knew they—where I'd left them—they were going to be safe and they were going to be loved. There wouldn't be danger any more, you know, and they'd be fed and clothed and all those sort of things, which they were of course.[32]

A final example illustrates how shame is both cultural and historical. Arthur Hunter, a young Aboriginal man born in the Kimberley in 1989, was interviewed in 2012

by Elaine Rabbitt in Broome. At the time, Arthur was working as a sound recording technician with Goolarri Media Enterprises.[33] 'Shame' features prominently in Arthur's life story (13 passages within the transcript include the word 'shame') and it carries distinctive cultural meanings within his Kimberley Aboriginal world and in his experience with non-Aboriginal Australia. Arthur's early education was split between public schooling in Wyndham (where his father lived) and the Aboriginal cattle station where his mother's family lived. At the cattle station, Hunter loved being 'home-schooled' by his mum and relatives who taught him about country, culture and language.

My mum's side—like we have a cattle station in the family. That's been in the family since I was very, very young or since I was born. That's between Halls Creek and Fitzroy, about thirty, forty k's out of Halls Creek and on Fitzroy Road, Fitzroy Crossing. It's about 10 k's dirt road into the bush, which is pretty good, spectacular. Since I was young I spent times in Wyndham and at our station called Lamboo Station.

My mum and dad split when I was very young, well I think when I was a baby. They split and so I've just been going back and forward to Lamboo, Lamboo and Wyndham. Zoom back and forward and when I'm out in the bush like with my mum, on the station is like mustering, getting cattle, waking up in the morning, all that stuff. Like I miss it now you know. I wish that I could have stayed back there and worked on the land with the family and my grandparents. The bush life, for me growing up, I knew my food and I knew my bush fruits. I know what time to leave for hunting and where to go and how to track down certain food source or animals to get. And I just had fun as I was growing up there. You just walk down to the bush. We went hunting for goannas. It was the best times.[34]

My uncles taught me a lot and my mum and aunties and, especially my grandparents. They try to teach me stuff about you know—well they do, and they did—teach me stuff about skin groups and my language and where I'm from, which country that they are from. They taught me a *lot*, my juja and jabbi—that's from down Halls Creek side—we call our grandparents, juja is nanna and jabbi, that's grandpa. That's Djaru side I think. Or Kija—one of them two. But I've learnt a lot from my grandparents. They took me out bush when I was very young. They practically was my second parents. They taught me stuff, they took me places that I've never been to.[35]

For Arthur, living between two worlds, town schooling in Wyndham was shameful.

And then we went into town and went to school there. […] And I was a really, really quiet boy, really shy. I didn't really get along with people.

I'm not a people's person. But maybe when I want to be I can be. Back in the days where you couldn't get a good conversation out of me like what I'm doing now with you. So it was really—for me back then—it was really, I think I was shame. And I don't know what the meaning 'shame' is, I think is just being ignorant I reckon. I reckon when I was back then I was being ignorant.[36]

2005 I wanted to quit school and go work in the station with my family or, you know, do something, because I thought I was dumb and I couldn't learn much. My teacher telling me, 'Arthur stick into it. Next year will be a good year for you.' You know, 'You'll really love it.' But for me I was really shy. I couldn't really talk and when he telling me about this place called Goolarri that we are in now—Goolarri Media in Broome, Goolarri Media Enterprises—back in 2006, he said, 'We gonna go to Broome, do school-based training. We gonna go into radio.' I was like, 'What? Radio? That's gonna be shame.'[37]

Feeling 'dumb' and being shamed at school is not an uncommon experience among those interviewed for the Australian Generations project. Like David Cooper and Arthur Hunter, narrators from many different backgrounds and cultures recall being shamed at school. Arthur Hunter's shame at school was exacerbated by the gulf between the sociable, loving experience of family learning on country, and his isolation and perceived ignorance in the town school. A self-perception of shameful ignorance contributed to his shyness (why talk if that might show you up) and his determination to leave school. When a sympathetic teacher recognised that conventional schooling was undermining Arthur's confidence and talents and suggested an alternative of 'school-based training' (where Arthur would learn skills on the job within an Aboriginal media organisation), Arthur worried that the new opportunity was also 'gonna be shame'.

For Arthur Hunter, shame has distinctive Kimberley Aboriginal qualities. Anthropologists have shown that shame is one of the strongest emotions within Indigenous communities across Australia, and that the operation and meanings of shame can vary across different Aboriginal communities. For example, Philip Adgemis has shown how for the Yanyuwa people of north Queensland, after more than a century of colonisation and adaptation, shame is centred on knowing, and especially not knowing, the Law, and is critical for intergenerational knowledge transmission to young Yanyuwa men and women.[38] Shame is used by elders in many Aboriginal communities to teach children how to behave appropriately, and to monitor and control appropriate behaviour.[39] It is central to the forging of well-socialised and responsible community members. It can be culturally inappropriate and shameful to speak directly about difficult matters.[40] Being singled out from the mob can be a cause for shame, as it was for Arthur as a Black country kid in

the town school, or as he anticipated becoming the new boy at Goolarri Media in Broome. The potential for shame can generate a range of emotions and behaviours, such as shyness, embarrassment or modesty. Shame is central to the 'organisation of feelings' by which kinship and community relations are maintained.

In Arthur Hunter's interview, shame is used in relation to several different but related situations and behaviours. Shame refers to not speaking directly about difficult things. It refers to a fear of being singled-out or rejected, but also a fear of behaving inappropriately, of cultural shame. In the course of her interview with Arthur, Elaine Rabbitt, who has lived in Broome for many years and worked alongside local Aborigines in oral history and other community projects, asks Arthur to explain behaviour that might not be comprehensible to an outsider. Shortly after starting his school-based training with Goolarri Media in Broome, Arthur was involved in setting up the stage for the Kimberley Girl competition.

> [Broome had this this competition](#) called Kimberley Girl in 2006. Oh, me and my mate and my teacher, we built this black border for the staging, to help the Goolarri mob set up. And there was one girl that in the competition. Her name was Anjay Phillips. She was checking me out, from what she telling me. Then on the finals night she got someone to come up and ask me, you know, if you want to go out or hook up or something. I was a good boy. The girl came up to me and said like, 'Oh this girl want to know.' I'm thinking, 'Fuck.' I was thinking, 'Gee.' Then I asked this other dude here—my cousin—but I was shocked that the girl wanted to go out with me or something, like go out with me. I was speechless. I was shaking ---

> Elaine Rabbitt: *Can you explain that that's a bit of Broome style or Kimberley style—about how Anjay didn't come up to you direct.*

> Up here in the Kimberleys we don't—well some people do but most people don't—they get someone to, they get a friend or a cousin to ask a girl or a guy out. So they don't go directly to that person and ask them because they're scared to get shut down or get rejected and people don't like that—getting rejected. So she did that to me and she got someone else to do it for her. And I said, 'Yeah okay, might as well.' I was really shy, and a little good boy.[41]

As a 'good boy' Arthur knows how to behave within the cultural norms of his people, and the fear of shame shadows his emotions and shapes his behaviour.

For a White listener the shamefulness of courting a girl directly may be surprising, and had Elaine Rabbitt not asked Arthur to explain his 'Kimberley style' I would not have recognised and indexed this episode as one of shame. After listening to Arthur more closely and reflecting on the emotion in his interview, I began to realise how my understanding of various emotions was limited by my own cultural background. To take another example, the distinction I made in the index between 'love of activities, places and things' and 'love of people and pets' might not make sense for Aboriginal people who have maintained a deep connection with the land of their forbears. They perceive Country as alive, so that their love of their place or Country is comparable with their love of people and animals.[42] In short, emotions such as love or shame manifest in different ways across different cultures. They may have different feelings and meanings and they may generate different bodily responses.

Arthur is aware that even telling his life story in an interview might be regarded as 'shameful'. By speaking in public he forgoes a cultural preference for reticence and transcends his deep-rooted though fading identity as a shy and quiet young man. He knows that it might not be deemed culturally appropriate for a young Kimberley Aboriginal man to talk about himself in this context and in this way. But in the course of the interview he explains that through his education and work with an Aboriginal media company he has developed confidence in himself and in his own words. More than that, he has developed an imperative to talk about his community and his culture, to use his own story to contribute to a storied understanding of his people and their history. And, informed by his experience of living across different cultures, and through the process of reflecting on his life in the interview, Arthur has begun to think and feel differently about shame.

> [I've been waiting for this interview](#) but I didn't think it would be now or in this form. But I'm really glad I'm doing this. To get my word out there and save me saying it all the time to my mate—talking about my culture and my history. I'm talking about it, is actually a step forward for me so I can maybe do something later on. So it's been pretty good. I don't find a shame in doing it. I just feel, I feel happy 'cause I'm doing it because I'm getting my story out there for people to actually look at or listen to.[43]

Conclusion

Listening to the complex layers and meanings of shame in Arthur Hunter's account has shown me how emotion is both cultural and historical, shaped by distinctive cultural expectations and historical circumstances. Along with other interviews from our Australian Generations project, it shows how emotional registers can change across time within a person's life and within the wider community. These interviews confirm that oral history offers rich potential to record and interpret the diverse emotional qualities of historical experience.

Yet oral historians of emotion need to be alert to a number of methodological and epistemological challenges. We need to consider how emotions at the time of the event are always entangled with the narrator's emotions at the time of the telling and the interviewer's – and

future listeners' – emotions at the time of listening. As researchers, we need to disentangle those emotional threads and thus distinguish the feelings and meanings of emotional experiences at different points of time. When we record an interview we need to consider how our own emotions intersect with and impact upon the narrator's emotions and their story-telling. When we listen to interviews we need to be aware of our own historically and culturally-specific emotional registers so that we can listen hard and carefully for the feeling and meaning of emotions from other, temporally or culturally foreign contexts. We need to accept that the labels we draw from our own cultural context to index and identify emotion might not work for other contexts and times, and that they are, at best, a guide for listening and interpretation. And, of course, we need to use text as no more than a starting point for interpretation, and to listen (and watch) for the aural and visual clues of embodied emotion.

Acknowledgements

Endnotes

1   Rhonda King, born 1965 in Canberra, interviewed by Mary Hutchison in Canberra on 11 and 19 May 2013, Australian Generations Oral History Project (AGOHP), National Library of Australia (NLA), TRC 6300/182, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-220035263/listen/2-3612

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4   Luisa Passerini, *Fascism in Popular Memory: The Cultural Experience of the Turin Working Class*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987. See also, Alessandro Portelli, 'The Peculiarities of Oral History', *History Workshop Journal*, vol. 12, Autumn 1981, pp. 96–107. For more recent examples of oral historians reflecting on the meanings of emotions, see: Joanna Bornat, 'Remembering And Reworking Emotions: The Reanalysis of Emotion in an Interview', *Oral History*, vol. 38, no, 2, pp. 43–52; Jenny Harding, 'Talk about Care: Emotions, Culture and Oral History', *Oral History*, vol. 38, no. 2, pp. 33–42; Katie Holmes, 'Does It Matter If She Cried? Recording Emotion and the Australian Generations Oral History Project', *The Oral History Review*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2017, pp. 56–76. See also Katie Holmes, 'Learning to read emotions in oral history', OUP Blog, at https://blog.oup.com/2017/05/oral-history-emotions/, accessed 4 April 2019.

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6   A. James Hammerton and Alistair Thomson, *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005; Alistair Thomson, *Moving Stories: An Intimate History of Four Women Across Two Countries*, Manchester University Press and UNSW Press, 2011.

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9   On the emotional relationship of the interview and of historical research, see Michael Roper, 'Analysing the Analysed: Transference and Counter-Transference in the Oral History Encounter', *Oral History*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2003, pp 20–32; Michael Roper, 'The Unconscious Work of History', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2014, pp 169–93; Holmes, 'Does It Matter If She Cried?'.

10   See Francis Good, 'Voice, Ear and Text: Words, Meaning and Transcription', *Oral History Association of Australia*, vol. 22, 2000, pp. 102–9; Siobhán McHugh, 'The Affective Power of Sound: Oral History on Radio', *Oral History Review*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2012, pp. 187–206; Dan Sipe, 'The Future of Oral History and Moving Images', *Oral History Review*, vol. 19, no. 1/2, 1991, pp. 75–87.

11   For discussions about the potential and limitations of timed summaries, see Michael Frisch, 'Towards a Post-Documentary Sensibility: Theoretical and Political Implications of New Information Technologies in Oral History' in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd edition, London and New York, Routledge, 2006, pp. 102–14; Douglas A. Boyd, '"I Just Want to Click on it to Listen": Oral History Archives, Orality and Usability', in Douglas A. Boyd and Mary A. Larson (eds), *Oral History and Digital Humanities: Voice, Access and Engagement*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 77–96.

12   The Australian Generations Oral History Project was funded by an Australian Research Council Linkage grant, LP100200270. The project website is at http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/australian-generations/.

13   Nicole Curby, 'Confession and Catharsis: Crafting a Life Story and Charting a History of Emotions', *Circa: The Journal of the Professional Historians Association*, vol. 4, 2014, pp. 53–58. Although our interview guide focused on the life story that each narrator wanted to tell, interviewers were asked to stretch and probe that story-telling, and were provided guidance on a range of historical topics and encouraged to 'drill down' on such topics where they seemed to be a significant part of a person's life story.

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16   Raphael Samuel, 'Perils of the Transcript', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, London and New York, Routledge, first edition, 1998, p. 391 (first published in 1971).

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29 'Milica Stoikovic' is a pseudonym. This interviewee closed her interview just before the *Australian Lives* book was published.

30 Lynne Sanders-Braithwaite, born 1949 in Summer Hill, Sydney, interviewed by Jo Kijas in Raleigh, New South Wales on 16 and 17 September 2012, TRC 6300/100,
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'I'm Skeptical of Foreigners': Making Space for Discomfort in an Oral History Interview

Jordana Silverstein

Abstract

In this article I explore the dynamics which emerged in an oral history interview I conducted with a former senior public servant, John Menadue, in Sydney in 2017. Menadue was the Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1980 – 1983), and remains a public commentator on refugee issues. Through an adoption of Sara Ahmed's conception of emotions as relational – and produced by orientations to people, ideas, institutions and practices – in this article I inquire into the particular dynamics that arise through an uncomfortable interview. I consider this discomfort and the ethical questions it provokes, as I ponder to whom interviewees may be oriented and the ways in which ideas of race, belonging, control, and fear may be brought to bear within the emotional space of the oral history interview.

Article

In June 2017, I emailed a former senior public servant who had worked for a long time in the Australian Department of Immigration, requesting an interview as part of my research on the history of Australian government and federal bureaucracy approaches to child refugee and asylum-seeker policy. This public servant retired in 2016, alongside numerous others, when the face of the Department changed (as has been widely documented) under the leadership of Secretary Mike Pezzullo and Coalition Government Minister for Immigration and Border Protection Peter Dutton.[1] This change marked a shift towards a more militarised and securitised approach to governing immigration, including Australia's 'humanitarian intake', and away from viewing settlement and integration support programs as a fundamental part of the immigration-management project and work of the Department.[2]

This public servant 'respectfully' declined to participate in an interview, stating in an email:

> I am presently on vacation in the Greek islands… the first decent break in many years… and I have spent much time reflecting on my career of nearly 40 years in the federal public service. I have decided that I do not want to re-live any of that period when I was dealing with refugee issues. I left that period of my career with my marriage barely intact and with a severe impact on my physical and emotional well-being.

While this person appreciated 'that Australia's refugee policies and programs are fertile ground for researchers, the broader academic and legal fraternity and journalists', they pointed out 'no one has given a nanosecond of thought as to the impact on the thousands of decent, hard working public servants who have been in the frontline of developing and delivering government policies and programs in this field.' And although this respondent 'appreciate[d]' me contacting them, when they granted me permission to quote them anonymously, they clarified that they 'would not want to be represented as a public servant who did not agree with the government policy i [sic] was charged with implementing. The point I tried to make in my previous response is that government policy in this field is challenging, difficult to implement and emotionally charged… and that it takes its toll on those who have the responsibility of implementation.'[3]

In this brief email correspondence, the respondent touched on a number of emotional issues raised when conducting oral history interviews, including the toll that an interview can take on an interviewee, the toll that the subject material can take on an interviewee's life, and the question of the role of the interviewer: who are they conducting research for, and what happens when they extract knowledge, time, ideas, and emotions, from their interviewees? This respondent pointed to the ways that different emotional connections and attachments are made to our jobs, to the ideas that we produce in them, to the labour that we undertake and to the people with whom we interact. Our work takes a toll, this respondent asserted. Part of this is the oral history interview and the space it creates. The interview is a form of work that produces a certain intimacy or connection; it instantiates particular emotional valencies that can, indeed, take a toll. As scholars such as Esther Faye and Robert Reynolds show, the space of the oral history interview is one of co-constitution, involving the sharing of feeling,

sentiment and emotional knowledge. Emotional labour is undertaken in the space of the interview, both by and for the interviewer and interviewee.[4] Indeed, as Anna Green states, 'oral histories are works in progress, as individuals cognitively and emotionally grapple with the contradictions and complexities of their lives.'[5] Taking this respondent's reply as an invitation to reflect, I am left wondering: who do we (as both the interviewer and interviewee) make emotional connections with and to in our interviews, our research, and our work? Where are our emotions directed – both consciously and, more profoundly, unconsciously – when we engage with work and conversations around government policy and bureaucracy?[6] And moreover, how, to follow Joy Damousi's lead, can we expand our historical understanding of Australia's past by exploring the public expression of private feelings?[7]

The research project for which I wanted to interview this former public servant, and from which the material in the rest of this article derives, involves producing a history of Australian child refugee and asylum seeker policy from the 1970s to the present. In this project I am exploring the emotional economies which are constituted through this policy making.[8] To write this history of policy and policy-making, I am conducting both archival research (primarily in the National Archives of Australia and the National Library of Australia) and interviewing people who have been involved in policy-making over this period. I have conducted approximately 30 interviews which have been transcribed, examined by the interviewee and approved (or are somewhere within that process). Because of the obvious political sensitivities around the issue under examination, as well as the necessary ethical considerations involved in conducting any sort of oral history interview, I am diligent with approval processes and in respecting the needs and desires of my interviewees. I am also aware that – unlike the much more common oral history projects that attempt to tell histories from below – most of my interviewees carry significantly greater social, political, cultural and material capital than me. Some have already recorded their oral histories as part of other projects and may have had their recordings deposited within national institutions, such as the National Library of Australia.

At the same time, I am the granddaughter of Jewish Holocaust survivors, who came to Australia as stateless refugees on the *Sagittaire* on July 29, 1949.[9] As I live in Australia, I am unavoidably a settler coloniser, living with great discomfort amidst ongoing settler colonialism and Aboriginal dispossession. Some of my primary obligations and empathies – ethical, political, historical – lie with refugees, Indigenous peoples, displaced people and those who have endured genocide, not with those who make the policies and political decisions which govern and control others' lives. This part of my self is not separable from my work as a historian.

Many of the interviews I have been conducting have therefore been, in a word, fraught. When I listen over them to confirm the transcript, I hear myself undertaking the role of deracinated and detached oral historian, and particularly of a female oral historian, raised to encourage the men around me to continue speaking the way they want – I make routine approving utterances, agreeing with their words, adopting the role of a model migrant citizen. As is well practiced by many an oral history interviewer, my role in the space of the oral history interview is to ensure my interviewees are comfortable and to encourage them to share something new – a story, a sentiment, an idea. My role is to create a space for intimacy and reflection. I aim to be open to hearing what people say, to work to understand where they are coming from, what their personal and collective histories and memories are, and how and why they voice the stories and ideas that they do. My task is to approach interviewees in the spirit of openness and honesty. These interviews need not be cathartic or a space of personal growth; I am not intentionally providing a space for my interviewees to work through their feelings about their jobs, even if some may seem to work through certain ideas as they are talking. However, they are a space for the production of feeling.[10] In this way, the work which I am undertaking in these interviews is connected to life history interviewing work undertaken by Australian oral historians such as Joy Damousi, Robert Reynolds, Shirleene Robinson, Alexandra Dellios, Niro Kandasamy, Sarah Green, Katie Holmes and Alistair Thomson. I am interested in providing space for interviewees to share their emotional responses, to think deeply and reflectively about the work they have undertaken in relation to the topic at hand. I try to think through the emotions which are produced through the interview encounter.[11] And although I want to understand the work that these emotions do, my task is not to empathise with my interviewees.[12] In this article and elsewhere, I want to describe the emotional work being undertaken to try to understand its force, but I am not seeking to sympathise with – nor encourage my readers to sympathise with – my interviewees.

In this article I am thinking about the role of the oral historian (who in this case is not herself a refugee, but who occupies the historical position of being a descendant of refugees and survivors of genocide) in undertaking research around child refugee and asylum-seeker policy, and about the emotions generated in this kind of oral history interview. It is important to note that, while the oral history interview has its own way of producing emotion, the emotions I am examining in this article and this project which are articulated by policy-makers working in this field, emerge in numerous other sources.[13] For instance, during a speech

given by Tony Burke (a former Australian Labor Party Minister for Immigration, Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship) at the 2015 ALP National Conference, when Burke called for the Party to adopt a policy of supporting boat turnbacks, on the basis of his feelings about his experience as Minister when people, and most particularly for him young children, drowned at sea.[14] This policy of boat turnbacks – later endorsed by the ALP – was designed to accompany a system of indefinite detention of asylum seekers arriving by boat, wherein they have been held in detention centres in Australia, Nauru and Papua New Guinea.[15] Burke's speech is one example of the types of emotions which float throughout policy discussions of refugee children, who are particularly emotionally potent, or sticky: as Burke spoke, he appeared to get teary.[16] Discussions of refugee children are often emotionally loaded; policy-makers will regularly resort to the use of emotional language in order to express their policy ideas for them. This was apparent too in Prime Minister Scott Morrison's 2018 report of his tears at the thought of children being held in immigration detention – a detention which he has been directly responsible for instituting as both Minister for Immigration and Border Protection and Prime Minister.[17] These are two examples of many. In my broader project I am interested in thinking through the ways emotions bubble up in discussions of child refugee and asylum-seeker policy and in looking at both public iterations of these discourses and feelings, and how these expressions arise during the more private oral history interviews I conduct.

Orientations

This article understands these emotions primarily through the work of Sara Ahmed and her meditations on orientation. At the beginning of her book *Queer Phenomenology*, Ahmed asks 'what difference does it make "what" we are oriented toward?'[18] This question likewise frames this article. Ahmed explains that 'orientation is a matter of how we reside in space… of how we inhabit spaces as well as "who" or "what" we inhabit spaces with.'[19] Moreover, 'orientations… shape how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitance, as well as "who" or "what" we direct our energy and attention toward.'[20] Orientations are therefore questions of familiarity, of how we engage with the familiar and the unfamiliar, and how we produce familiarity through normalisation or naturalisation: who we 'know' and 'feel' we are in community with.[21] Orientations as described here can be understood to shape to whom, and how, we respond. They are the difference between, for example, a perspective that centres refugees and thus looks towards justice for asylum seekers as the purpose of policy, and a perspective aligned with the nation-state that instead looks towards border control. As such, emotions are 'relational'; we can 'understand them as part of the simultaneous production of subjects and the social and the relationship between them.'[22]

These orientations involve the circulation of emotions, which, in their movement, work to build an emotional collectivity or community – they orientate people to others and bring people together into a shared community. So, whether we describe something as a sad moment, or a moment of fear, or a moment of happiness, or another feeling, we become bound to others who think similarly about that moment. We learn to orient ourselves emotionally through our involvement in a group and a group is produced through a shared orientation or set of feelings. These can be conscious descriptions and collectivities, but they need not be. It is more likely that these emotions will be felt and expressed at the level of the unconscious. But regardless, we bring others into that circle, or emotional community, by displaying our emotions. The sight of tears, and thus their circulation, is a particularly prevalent community building tool; crying is a social act, as we can see in the tears coming from Burke and Morrison.[23] Circulation directs where certain feelings should go, and when they should stop. It determines who empathy is projected towards, and who is the focus of intolerance. It determines whose histories are narrated and heard, and whose are dismissed.[24] This process can be understood as being part of the creation of what Barbara Rosenwein has called 'emotional communities', namely the circulating emotions which bring people together into a community.[25] These are communities in which 'shared vocabularies and ways of thinking… have a controlling function, a disciplining function,' acting to aid in the production of a community that undertakes particular action.[26] Emotions secure us to others.[27] As is evident in the words of my interviewee, described below, work is done to construct an emotional community of public servants who control people's movements, and who have certain feelings about that. This is a product, and a reinscription, of an orientation, expressed materially and discursively, towards the feelings of a white Australian nation.[28]

The interview

When I interview people about their role in policy-making, the interview is not producing a set of emotions which would not otherwise exist – for the interviewee, for me, or for the discourses which we are tapping into and further producing. However, interviewer and interviewee do, together, produce an emotional space that has its own texture and that creates its own emotional community, even if only for an hour or two. This article explores this texture via one interview in particular, namely one I conducted on 11 September 2017 with John Menadue at his home in a wealthy suburb in Sydney. Following Menadue's recommendation, I arrived via ferry. On arrival, Menadue offered me a drink, set out two biscuits for us,

and we proceeded to discuss his history of involvement in government and public service bureaucracy.

I focus on this interview in order to fully explore the words and ideas which are shaped in one encounter. There is a long history, particularly within the queer history frameworks which influence my research, of focusing on case studies through oral history interviews in order to gain a nuanced understanding of the textures of feelings and histories which individuals can carry. By examining the words of one former senior public servant, it is possible to gain insight into the emotional work which is expressed and undertaken within the space of the oral history interview, and to understand the forms and directions of attachment and orientation produced through this interview. My account here is my reading of our interview; Menadue would have his own reading, as would an outside observer, or someone listening to the recording or reading the transcript.

John Menadue was born in South Australia in 1935. From 1960 to 1967 he was Private Secretary to Gough Whitlam, then the Australian Labor Party's Leader of the Opposition. For seven years, from 1967 to 1974, he was General Manager at News Limited in Sydney. He then served as Secretary of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet from 1974 to 1976, working for both Whitlam and Malcolm Fraser (who was a Liberal Party Prime Minister). He was Australian Ambassador to Japan from 1976 to 1980 and in 1980 was appointed Secretary of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs by Fraser. In December 1983 he became Secretary of the Department of Trade, before becoming CEO of Qantas (June 1986-July 1989) and later Director of Telstra (December 1994-October 1996). Menadue has chaired various Health Reviews and Health Councils, as well as the Australia Japan Foundation and New Matilda's board. Amongst other honours and awards (including the Japanese Imperial Award, The Grand Cordon of the Order of the Sacred Treasure), Menadue was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in 1985 for his public service.[29] He has written an autobiography – which he encouraged me to read before we met – and maintains a blog 'Pearls and Irritations', where he regularly contributes to public conversation and provides a space for liberal perspectives on government and policy.[30]

Having examined his writings, before arriving at the interview I understood that Menadue and his work were key to the dismantling of the formal bureaucratic aspects of the White Australia Policy. I also understood that Menadue continued to take a public role in advocating for refugee and asylum-seeker policies shaped by white liberalism.[31] In February 2017, for instance, he wrote an article in *The Guardian* with Frank Brennan, Tim Costello and Robert Manne. Together they argued that 'concerned citizens need to accept that the boats will remain stopped' and that the general population need to accept the position emanating from both major
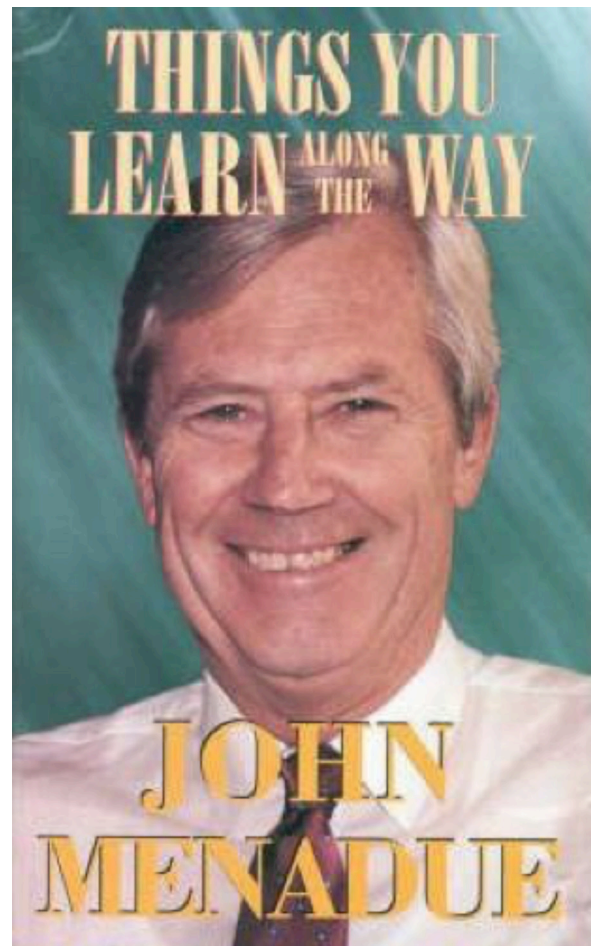
Cover of book by John Menadue, Things You Learn Along the Way (1999)

political parties: namely, that people seeking to come to Australia by boat to seek asylum should be stopped and turned around 'if that can be done safely, transparently, and legally.'[32] In this, as in much of Menadue's recent approach, there is a balancing of discourses of concern with measures that are punitive, ethically unjust, and illegal under international law. His political approach is largely aligned with the liberal perspectives carried by numerous Australian politicians and members of the media.

Menadue informed me that when Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser called him back from his ambassadorship in Japan to appoint him Secretary of the Department of Immigration, Fraser 'said to me, "What did you want to do when you come back to Australia?" and I said, "I want to come back and bury White Australia." And he said, "You're on." As quick as that.'[33] This desire to 'bury White Australia' came both from his time spent at university with 'three Malaysian students' – which 'really was a shock' having come from a country town populated, he remembered, exclusively with white people – and his time in Japan, when he found Australia being regularly criticized because of the White Australia Policy.[34] Menadue said

> we're all conditioned by a culture in the society in which we live and it's when we're confronted with something different, people that are different, that you think hell, you know, maybe

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I need to rethink. And that's a painful process very often. You don't learn in comfort zones. That's my experience. You learn when you're challenged, which is a bit worrying at times. Some people react to that by just retreating completely and others say, 'Well, you know, let's, maybe there is something there I need to think about.' So it was that gradual process, and the political move at that stage was sort of to the left.

Menadue here outlines precisely the experience of moving outside one's emotional community, and the new feelings and connections this can produce. He told me that, from the beginning of his time in the Department, he was working to dismantle the focus on migration from England and encouraging public servants under his charge to look outside the United Kingdom for migrants. Throughout the interview, Menadue emphasised the important role, as he saw it, that 'fear of the foreigner' has played in immigration programs in Australia. This 'fear', he said, bonded together, and bonds together still, workers within, and sentiments of, the Department. It is one of the emotions which orients them to each other.[35] I will return to this below.

During the interview, Menadue said that he believed that the

immigration and the refugee program… changed Australia for the better. It was a case of nation-building on a pretty heroic scale. Maybe we pushed it too fast and too hard, maybe, but I mean looking back it was successful. So I think it was that element of a sense of nation building and the ending [of] White Australia which gave the satisfaction [of the job].

He described what he considered to be 'successful multiculturalism', which, he stated,

depends on broad adherence to particular basic and agreed structures [and] attitudes in terms of the structures, the parliament, rule of law, separation of powers, beyond that into the English language, if you like the British system which I think most people will agree is – apart from the monarchy – is not a bad sort of system… And that diversity brings strength [and] challenges, but diversity for its own sake is not to be supported. Diversity is fine if it contributes to a greater good, but in diversity like, you know, child marriage, polygamy, genital mutilation, whatever, isn't in my view a diversity that improves Australia. That's a value judgment I would make. And I have a view on burqa, for example, which I think it's contrary to multiculturalism because it does divide unnecessarily and in my view public space should be secular and neutral whether you're Catholic, Jewish, Muslim or whatever.

It's not a view which the left endorses. They state a politically correct view 'oh, you know, that doesn't matter,' but I think it does matter, to then building a stable, strong multicultural society.[36]

From this lengthy answer we get a sense of where Menadue now appears to position himself, whom he sees himself aligned and in community with, and whom he expresses displeasure or disagreement with. As a former Secretary, Menadue aligns himself with the white governmental practice of controlling the biopolitical, racial and cultural makeup of the Australian populace.[37] This comment from Menadue came after he had mentioned 'the risks of multiculturalism' and I had asked him in response 'what are the risks?' His reply follows what Danielle Every has identified as being the use of 'liberal binaries' in 'political discourse to establish an exclusionary humanitarianism as obvious, natural and right.'[38] Moreover, it sits within the idea of multiculturalism sketched by Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley, wherein 'multiculturalism provides a discursive space for debating questions of race, culture, legitimacy and belonging.'[39]

This article will demonstrate how these sentiments, these 'questions', were produced throughout Menadue's words. This moment – one of many – was difficult and uncomfortable for me, sitting with him at his kitchen table, as an interviewer. Menadue was instrumental to the bureaucracy and sentiments of dismantling official White Australia, but in this moment, I was compelled to wonder what this interview would have looked like if it was being undertaken by a woman wearing a burqa. Or if, indeed, my Jewishness had been more visible in that moment – what if it was more profoundly marked on my body through my clothing? What if my difference was more visibly marked? How would this have changed his orientation towards me? And yet, on the transcript, all I say in response is 'Yep.' This, it would seem, was the requirement of the oral history interview, in which my interviewee and I were co-creating a discursive and material space of conversation. What (white, Australian) emotional community, then, did we create in that moment of the interview? This was for me a moment of deep ambivalence and uncertainty as an interviewer.

Menadue argued that there is a deep fear in Australia about asylum seekers coming on boats, and no possibility of Australians being comfortable with people making their own way to Australia via boat. That is why, he suggested (as did numerous others I have interviewed), boats need to be controlled. At the same time, he told me, 'our refugee flow' should be increased, through a vital 'spirit of generosity' and for humanitarian reasons.

'We've behaved disgracefully on that in recent years, but also refugees are just such superb settlers. I think we have a self-interest in the sort

of get up and go of refugees. They choose, they self-select themselves. Better than a migration officer ever could select them. They're the people who are prepared to abandon everything. Everything, physically apart from family, for a new life. And they don't sit around and make a judgment whether we'll go or not. Well, we're going. And that's why they're so good as small business entrepreneurs, hard work. I'd choose a refugee any day over a migrant for that reason.'[40]

But, he continued,

The selective high schools are just dominated by migrants and particularly refugee children. Just – I think too much – it frightens some Australians but it's just that commitment of parents. I think they do cram schools and so on which I worry a bit about, but it's a bit overdone, I think, but it's just recognition of how those refugee families are determined to make a new life. Remarkable people.

Indeed, he later told me, recognising the importance of 'caring for the stranger' is an important driver in refugee policy as 'who knows, we might be a stranger ourself one day.' He noted that the important additional principle in the making of 'good policy' is the understanding that 'these strangers are usually such superb settlers. The odd Jewish family's done well.' Disconcertingly, Menadue and I shared a chuckle at that comment – my chuckle almost certainly from awkwardness and discomfort, his harder to read.[41] Here then was a moment when he attempted – perhaps successfully – to incorporate me into the 'we' of the governing white Australian nation. But, he reiterated, he 'think[s] those two things: that caring for a stranger and [the] contribution they make' are the two important considerations. Here fear, ambivalence, resentment, and admiration bubble to the surface in this instance of the capitalist logic sitting alongside – or perhaps slightly displacing – the most elementary of humanitarian impulses.[42] People are deemed to have utility for the state if they may provide a basis for growth and development; they are not approached on the basis of equal claims for justice and mutual aid but rather as fitting into the binary of productive and unproductive, 'deserving' and 'undeserving'.[43] Indeed, RISE has pointed to such discourses as 'popular misconceptions' that play a role in 'escalat[ing] existing xenophobia' in the 'general community.'[44] In this way, such sentiments aid in the exclusion of refugees from the emotional community; they orient bureaucrats towards the capitalist state, rather than refugee or migrant justice. Within the context of this interview, this was perhaps a moment when Menadue saw me as being aligned with, or oriented towards, him, rather than

contemporary asylum seekers. The weight of my familial and communal history was made oblique.

Children

In the interview I asked Menadue what he remembered about his work with regard to children in particular. Like others who worked in government or the public service in this policy area in the 1970s and 1980s, he had only a 'vague' memory of this work.[45] But his first explanation of the specific place of children in policy discussions was articulated through the lens of the racist language of people as 'anchors'.[46] Menadue told me that

a feature of any refugee flow, almost any one, is that they send teenage boys out, sort of their anchors. Get them through 'cause they're usually pretty resilient. You don't have to commit the whole family and so if you can get them through the process into a new country then they're the anchor to bring the rest, which is understandable. People don't like it. And then that creates particular problems of how do you handle, you know, young children. And these are children. In many cases they're 13, 14, 15. But there's a political reason for them doing it. And so they're not helpless little kids. There's a plan there by their parents and others, so I think sometimes people like Frank Brennan and others [they're talking] about, you know, these kids in special protection, you know, and they say, 'Oh, you know, you can't treat them as refugees. You've just got to give them entry.' Well, if you do that, you'll have more anchors coming. So, I'm a bit hard-headed on that one. But they've still got to be treated decently and the best way to treat them is to put them with their parents if you possibly can. But they don't want that, of course.

In Menadue's distinction of 'people [who] don't like it' as responding to the 'anchors' who do 'it', he is making plain the emotional – and political – communities which he identifies into existence. Menadue is evidently addressing a non-refugee audience with this framing- he is imagining refugees as people to be governed, rather than people to be addressed directly.[47] Indeed, in his wording, 'people' here are counterposed to the refugees and asylum seekers who are either on the move or whose family members are on the move. This is a common rhetorical move, and one to which it is important to draw attention, to make clear the community building work such rhetorics undertake.[48]

Menadue's primary memory of interactions with children was not connected with any 'specific policy'. Instead, his actions 'would've been in response, he was 'sure, to the UNHCR saying, "We've got these large

numbers of young kids. Will you do something?"' And, as he told me, they 'often did' do something. He similarly did not remember taking any action as a result of the Minister being the guardian for unaccompanied children, telling me that it was not an issue when he was Secretary.[49] 'We were pretty naïve in those days,' he told me. What or who is remembered, and who is forgotten, plays a crucial role in creating emotional communities.

Conclusion

One of the last questions I asked Menadue was about the role of emotions in this policy-making. He replied

> Emotion is fear of the foreigner. Fear of the stranger. It's in everyone. A person that's different and what do you know about them. I think it's a natural sort of human reaction in it. The worry about the person that's different. But I often think also, in addition to that sort of fear of a foreigner there is also a decency in everyone that they will respond to a person in need. As Abraham Lincoln described, the better angels of our nature.

Menadue continued his explanation, saying 'I think it's a mistake to think that it's all just black and white. I'm skeptical of foreigners. I hope I've got a generosity as well, but, you know, that struggle goes on in everyone and it goes on in every country. But it's got to be managed.'

As a historian, I know that these 'fears' are social rather than natural – they are learned, developed, coerced and controlled by governments and societies. They are not natural, but the project of naturalisation is a deeply political one. In other words, 'Fear of the stranger' or 'the foreigner' is not simply in everyone: it is learned by some people, developed by ideologies and projects of racism, xenophobia and nationalism, and then routinely spoken of, and enacted, as hegemonic. There is a process of naturalisation, and this is key, I argue, to the project of the construction and maintenance of these communities of feeling. Discourses such as this, accessible through the space of the oral history interview, adjoin some people to certain others and ensure that some people remain merely other. The precise discourses and words spoken here are, perhaps, a product of the time when this interview was recorded as much as (or even more-so) the time in which Menadue held power as Secretary of the Department. His mention of the burqa and its place within Australian multiculturalism was certainly reflective of the discussion of the day – throughout the previous weeks it had been a topic of discussion amongst the political classes, with various right-wing politicians and newspapers openly calling for women to be banned from wearing it.[50] As they bend time, bringing together past and present within the space of the story-telling, oral history interviews give access to a

person's developing political thinking.[51] They also give access to an understanding of the ways emotions are expressed unconsciously, and how they are produced by and through individuals, communities, prevailing discourses and systems of governance. There is no one neat line, no one neat package, which explains how emotions come into existence or how they are expressed. Rather, there is a great deal of slippage amongst the different influencing factors and systems of making meaning. Moreover, how we identify someone's emotional discourses from the outside may not resonate with how they understand themselves internally. Of that I am keenly aware. The oral history interview is a space of iterative performance, with both interviewer and interviewee performing their roles.

But, as demonstrated above, the types of words and emotions that I have identified Menadue using reveal a set of prevailing attachments and orientations. We can see how he is oriented towards governing and controlling. We can identify when and how refugees are made visible and not visible and the way they are understood as useful because of their imagined entrepreneurial spirit. The position of Secretary of the Department of Immigration is one which orients towards building an emotional community that controls – and this becomes apparent in the space of this oral history interview. The interview is a space that produces its own emotional dynamic – of Menadue as producer of knowledge and controller of population, and me as interviewer as uncomfortable (to put it mildly) with the work his discourse does, but feeling compelled into playing my role in the interview. My discomfort at his white liberal racism, his normalisation of discourses around the danger and threat of difference, pervaded my feelings during and after the interview. But I additionally recognise that my discomfort is insufficient to overcome, or work against, the racialised control that his words instantiate. Indeed, in many ways my discomfort is beside the point of the larger story being written here.

Returning to the reply I received from the public servant discussed at the beginning of this article, we can understand that there must be space within the histories of policy-making to dwell on and with the emotions that are generated when the work is done. There must be space for historians and others to study these emotions that are generated. And this research in turn produces certain emotions. The task then, it would seem, is not to refuse emotional engagement as an historian utilising the tools of oral history methodologies. Rather, the task is to seek to bring them to the forefront, turn them against themselves, find ways to dismantle the borders that are being created between people through the use and naturalisation of emotional discourses – of fear, alienation, discomfort, and sentimentality towards particular acts – in the oral history work. The space of the oral history interview

allows us to think about who and what, to return to Sara Ahmed's question, we are orienting ourselves towards. When interviewees speak of, or gesture towards, populations of (child) refugees as mere groups to be governed or 'felt' against, 'speechless emissaries', to use Liisa Malkki's phrasing, we need to unpack and work against these formulations.[52] We need instead to centre the emotional communities built around claims for migrant and refugee justice. But what this precisely means – how these stories can be used to orient myself as an interviewer, and the histories with which I am engaging, away from naturalising racism and fear of difference and towards more open borders – remains the vital, humbling, challenge.

This article has been peer reviewed.

Acknowledgements

Endnotes

1   See, for example: James Button, 'Dutton's Dark Victory', *The Monthly*, February 2018. Available at https://www.themonthly.com.au/issue/2018/february/1517403600/james-button-dutton-s-dark-victory.

2   Martin McKenzie-Murray, 'Inside Border Force's Power,' *The Saturday Paper*, 5 September 2015. Available at https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/immigration/2015/09/05/inside-border-forces-power/14413752002322, Accessed 7 April 2019; Kellie Tranter, 'Dutton, Payne and Pezzullo: The Truth about Australia's Militarised Border,' *Independent Australia*, 14 June 2016. Available at https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/dutton-payne-and-pezullo-the-truth-about-australias-militarised-border,9107, Accessed 7 April 7 2019.

3   Personal communication with former public servant, 30 June and 17 July 2017.

4   There is a copious body of literature on the emotional work involved in the space of the oral history interview. See, for instance, Esther Faye, 'Psychoanalysis and the Barred Subject of Feminist History,' *Australian Feminist Studies*, vol. 10, no. 22, Summer 1995, pp. 77–97; Robert Reynolds, 'Trauma and the Relational Dynamics of Life-History Interviewing,' *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2012, pp. 78–88; Valerie Yow, '"Do I like Them Too Much?": Effects of the Oral

History Interview on the Interviewer and Vice-Versa,' *The Oral History Review*, vol. 24, no. 1, Summer 1997, pp. 55–79; Katie Holmes, 'Does It Matter If She Cried? Recording Emotion and the Australian Generations Oral History Project,' *The Oral History Review*, vol. 44, no. 1, Winter/Spring 2007, pp. 56–76.

5   Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates,' *Oral History*, vol. 32, no. 2, Autumn 2004, pp. 35–44.

6   For a discussion of how histories of emotion have been taken up within Australian historiography see Sarah Pinto, 'The History of Emotions in Australia,' *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 48, no.1, 2017, pp. 103–114.

7   Joy Damousi, 'History Matters: The Politics of Grief and Injury in Australian History,' *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 118, 2002, pp. 100–112.

8   For a discussion of emotional economies see Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 2014.

9   Their arrival documents are available at NAA: B78, 1957/ STAWSKI S; NAA: B78, 1957/STAWSKI W; NAA: B78, 1957/STAWSKI E.

10   Reynolds, 'Trauma and the Relational Dynamics of Life-history Interviewing,' pp. 78–79.

11   See the full Katie Holmes and Alistair Thomson (eds), 'Special Issue: Oral History and Australian Generations,' *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 47, no. 1, 2016; Alexandra Dellios, 'Remembering Mum and Dad: Family History Making by Children of Eastern European Refugees,' *Immigrants & Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2018, pp. 105–124; Niro Kandasamy, 'Unravelling Memories of Family Separation Among Sri Lankan Tamils Resettled in Australia, 1983-2000,' *Immigrants & Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2018, pp. 143–160; Sarah Green, '"All Those Stories, All Those Stories": How Do Bosnian Former Child Refugees Maintain Connections to Bosnia and Community Groups in Australia?' *Immigrants & Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora*, vol. 36, no. 2, 2018, pp. 161–177; Robert Reynolds and Shirleene Robinson*, Gay & Lesbian, Then & Now: Australian Stories from a Social Revolution*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2016; Joy Damousi, *Memory and Migration in the Shadow of War: Australia's Greek Immigrants after World War II and the Greek Civil War*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2015.

12   For a discussion of 'empathy in oral history' see Jenny Harding, 'Talk About Care: Emotions, Culture and Oral History,' *Oral History*, vol. 38, no. 2, Autumn 2010, pp. 36–37. For an exploration of racism shared within the space of the oral history interview – albeit in a somewhat different context – see Karen Agutter and Rachel A. Ankenny, 'Unsettling Narratives: Overcoming Prejudices in the Hostel Stories Project,' *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2016, pp. 464–477.

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14   'Tony Burke: Asylum Seekers & Boat Turnbacks', *Labor Herald*, Youtube, 25 July 2015, Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rvwc4Q7myUk. Accessed 7 April 2019. See also Tony Burke, 'Tony Burke on Deaths at Sea: "I've Never Seen a Photo of Him, but I Have of his Coffin"', *Labor Herald*, 25 July 2015, . Accessed 7 April 2019.

15   On this history, see for example Behrouz Boochani, *No Friend But The Mountains: Writing from Manus Prison*, Translated by Omid Tofighian. Picador, Sydney, 2018; Michael Green and André Dao (eds), *They Cannot Take The Sky: Stories From Detention*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2017.

16   Barbie Zelizer explains that 'bearing witness requires a space for visualizing trauma in a fashion that can move individuals – and by extension collectives – toward and through recovery.' But what happens if, as in Burke's case, the traumatic feelings are dwelt on? See Barbie Zelizer, 'Finding Aids to the Past: Bearing Personal Witness to Traumatic Public Events,' *Media, Culture & Society*, vol. 24, no. 5, 2002, p. 711.

17   James Elton-Pym, 'Scott Morrison Prayed and Cried "On His Knees" for asylum seekers,' SBS News, November 9, 2018. Available at https://www.sbs.com.au/news/scott-morrison-prayed-and-cried-on-his-knees-for-asylum-seekers. Accessed 7 April 2019.

18   Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2006, p. 1.

19   Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, p. 1.

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23   On white tears see Ruby Hamad, 'How White Women use Strategic Tears to Silence Women of Colour, *The Guardian* 8 May 2018. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/08/how-white-women-use-strategic-tears-to-avoid-accountability. Accessed 7 April 2019.

24   Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 8.

25   Barbara Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2006, pp. 24–27. For a discussion of Rosenwein's conception of emotional communities and how they can be expressed in oral history interviews see Carrie Hamilton, 'Moving Feelings: Nationalism, Feminism and the Emotions of Politics,' *Oral History*, vol. 38, no. 2, Autumn 2010, pp. 86–93.

26   Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, p. 25.

27   Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, p. 11.

28   See, for instance, Francesco Ricatti, 'A Country Once Great? Asylum Seekers, Historical Imagination, and the Moral Privilege of Whiteness,' *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2016, pp. 478–493.

29   This biographical information is taken from https://johnmenadue.com/precis/. Accessed 7 April 2019.

30   John Menadue, *Things You Learn Along the Way*, David Lovell Publishing, Melbourne, 1999; John Menadue, Pearls and Irritations, Available at https://johnmenadue.com/, Accessed 7 April 2019.

31   As well as his autobiography and writings on his website, see also John Menadue and Michael Keating (eds), *Fairness, Opportunity and Security: Filling the Policy Vacuum,* ATF Press, Hindmarsh SA, 2015.

32   Frank Brennan, Tim Costello, Robert Manne and John Menadue, 'We Can Stop the Boats and Also Act Decently, Fairly and Transparently,' *The Guardian*, 14 February 2017. Available at https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/14/we-can-stop-the-boats-and-also-act-decently-fairly-and-transparently Accessed 7 April 2019.

33   John Menadue, interviewed by author, Sydney, 11 September 2017, tape and transcript held by author. All further quotes from Menadue interview are from this same interview.

34   The White Australia Policy was a foundational policy which – in part – regulated migration on the basis of race. It existed from Australia's federation in 1901 to its abolition by the Whitlam government.

35   On the productive affective biopolitical role of fear in the era of the War on Terror see Ben Anderson, 'Morale and the Affective Geographies of the "War on Terror",' *Cultural Geographies*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2010, pp. 219–236; Brian Massumi, 'The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat,' in Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (eds), *The Affect Theory Reader*, Duke University Press, Durham, 2010, pp. 52–70.

36   On difference and diversity see, for example, Tanja Dreher and Anshuman A. Mondal, 'From Voice to Response: Ethical Responsiveness and the Politics of Difference,' in Tanja Dreher and Anshuman A. Mondal (eds), *Ethical Responsiveness and the Politics of Difference*, Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, Switzerland, 2018, pp. 1–19.

37   On the governmental management of difference in the Australian settler-colony see Aileen Moreton-Robinson, *The White Possessive: Property, Power and Indigenous Sovereignty*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2015; Ghassan Hage, *White Nation: Fantasies of White Supremacy in a Multicultural Society*, Pluto Press, Sydney, 1998; Boochani, *No Friend But the Mountains*.

38   Danielle Every, 'A Reasonable, Practical and Moderate Humanitarianism: The Co-option of Humanitarianism in the Australian Asylum Seeker Debates,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 21, no. 2, 2008, pp. 211–2.

39   Alana Lentin and Gavan Titley, *The Crises of Multiculturalism: Racism in a Neoliberal Age*, Zed Books, London, 2011, p. 3.

40   On the bureaucratic categorisation of refugees see, for example, Roger Zetter, 'Labelling Refugees: Forming and Transforming a Bureaucratic Identity,' *Journal of Refugee Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, 1991, pp. 39–62.

41   On the important role of the textures of the audio in oral history interview recordings see Anne Karpf, 'The Human Voice and the Texture of Experience', *Oral History*, vol. 42, no. 2, Autumn 2014, pp. 50–55.

42   For an important critique of humanitarian logics within refugee discourses see Miriam Ticktin, 'Thinking Beyond Humanitarian Borders,' *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, vol. 83, no. 2, 2016, pp. 255–271.

43   Michelle Peterie, 'Docility and Desert: Government Discourses of Compassion in Australia's Asylum Seeker Debate,' *Journal of Sociology*, vol. 53, no. 2, 2017, pp. 351–2.

44   RISE (Refugees, Survivors and Ex-Detainees), 'RISE Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Migration's Inquiry into Multiculturalism in Australia', 5 May, 2011, 3–4. Available at http://riserefugee.org/publications/. Accessed 2 April, 2019.

45   I have conducted interviews with former Minister for Immigration Ian Macphee, who was Minister to Menadue's Secretary, and he similarly had little memory of producing policy specifically for children. This was borne out in my interviews with other public servants working at the time, and is also reflected in the government and party archives: children are rarely mentioned as a specific group.

46 See, for instance, Joon K. Kim, Ernesto Sagás and Karina Cespedes, 'Genderacing Immigrant Subjects: "Anchor Babies" and the Politics of Birthright Citizenship,' *Social Identities: Journal for the Study of Race, Nation and Culture*, vol. 24, no. 3, 2018, pp. 312–326; Mónica Novoa, 'Drop the I-Word: Debunking the Racist "Anchor Baby" Myth,' *Colorlines*, 15 February, 2011. Available at https://www.colorlines.com/articles/drop-i-word-debunking-racist-anchor-baby-myth. Accessed 7 April 2019.

47 On the discursive addressing of white people see, for instance, Amir Jaima, 'On the Discursive Orientation toward Whiteness,' *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2019, pp. 210–224.

48 See Francesco Ricatti, 'A Country Once Great? Asylum Seekers, Historical Imagination, and the Moral Privilege of Whiteness,' *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2016, p. 482.

49 On the history of the Minister as guardian, which arises from the Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act 1949, see for instance Jordana Silverstein, '"The Beneficent and Legal Godfather": A History of the Guardianship of Unaccompanied Immigrant and Refugee Children in Australia, 1946-1975,' *The History of the Family*, vol. 22, no. 4, 2017, pp. 446–465; Jordana Silverstein, '"I Am Responsible": Histories of the Intersection of the Guardianship of Unaccompanied Child Refugees and the Australian Border,' *Cultural Studies Review*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2016, pp. 65–89.

50 For coverage see, for instance, Michelle Grattan, 'Tony Abbott: Consider Burqa Ban in Places "Dedicated to Australian Values",' *The Conversation*, 6 September 2017. Available at https://theconversation.com/tony-abbott-consider-burqa-ban-in-places-dedicated-to-australian-values-83590. Accessed 7 April 2019; Natasha Bita, 'Should Australia Ban the Burqa?' *The Daily Telegraph*, 9 September 2017. Available at https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/should-australia-ban-the-burqa/news-story/237c1c058951a0e1e42d8941b9565a48. Accessed 7 April 2019; Amy Remeikis, 'One Nation Leader Pauline Hanson Wears Burqa in Senate Question Time Stunt,' *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 August 2017. Available at https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/one-nation-leader-pauline-hanson-wears-full-burqa-in-senate-question-time-stunt-20170817-gxyd5d.html. Accessed 7 April 2019.

51 On a discussion of 'the time of the telling' which is raised in oral history interviews see, for instance, Alistair Thomson, 'Moving Stories: Women's Lives, British Women and the Postwar Australian Dream,' National Museum of Australia, 19 June 2008. Available at https://www.nma.gov.au/audio/audio/historical-interpretation-series/transcripts/moving-stories-womens-lives. Accessed 7 April 2019.

52 Liisa H. Malkki, 'Speechless Emissaries: Refugees, Humanitarianism, and Dehistoricization,' *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 11, no. 3, August 1996, pp. 377–404.

Interrogating Memories of Salvation: 'Stalin's Poles' in India and Africa, 1942—50

Paul Sendziuk and Sophie Howe

Abstract:

Following their deportation and exile in the USSR during World War Two, thousands of Poles spent up to eight years in refugee settlements in India and Africa before some secured migration to Australia. Sixteen members of this group were interviewed by the authors and recounted their time in these settlements in very positive terms. This article suggests why so many remembered finding 'salvation' in Africa and India, when other forms of evidence point to their experiences being more difficult. It highlights the significance of broaching topics in a particular order during an interview, the age and 'class' of the interviewee at the time of the events being recalled and at the time of interview, the distorting effects of 'collective' memory and the use of photographs to prompt memories and tell stories.

Introduction

Australia's acceptance of 170,000 displaced persons (DPs) after World War II significantly bolstered Australia's population and was vital for the reconstruction of the nation's economy. The history of this migration scheme, and the challenges posed to and by the new arrivals, has been well documented by historians such as Egon Kunz, Andrew Markus and Nonja Peters, and, more recently, Ruth Balint, Jayne Persian, and Alexandra Dellios.[1] These histories largely focus on those who suffered or fled from Nazi aggression and who were housed in European DP camps at the end of the war before being selected to come to Australia. Much less is known about those who suffered occupation and deportation by Soviet forces, and who then found salvation in DP camps located outside of Europe.[2] Addressing this relative neglect, we have elsewhere written about the fate of tens of thousands of Polish citizens who were deported to the Soviet Union during the war and spent up to eight years in DP settlements in the Middle East, India and Africa before arriving in Australia in 1950.[3] In doing so, we drew upon sixteen oral interviews that one of us conducted with survivors of this group in 2009 and 2010, as well oral histories collected by Maryon Allbrook and Helen Cattalini over two decades ago.[4]

The stories told by our interviewees are remarkably consistent and present the British-administered Indian and African camps in a very favourable light. These camps seem to have provided calming and therapeutic environments, which provided the foundation for the Poles to more easily adapt to life in Australia and prosper. Most of our interviewees recalled food in the camps being plentiful and nutritious, and clothing and accommodation adequate, enabling the Poles to arrive in Australia in robust health. Their many years spent in the camps encouraged the formation of strong communal bonds and social and class hierarchies, so it is not surprising that, once in Australia, many of 'Stalin's Poles' married one another and founded Polish organisations to maintain these friendships and replicate these hierarchies. Catholic church services and after-school Scouts and Girl Guides groups were cultivated in the Indian and African camps to impart the benefits of moral and civic virtue, hard work and faith in Christ to a disproportionately large number of fatherless children. Children also experienced for the first time democratic governance and the consistent application of the rule of law. It was the disciplinary function of these institutions and form of governance that, our informants suggest, enabled the youngest of the Polish exiles to achieve success at school and work once in Australia.[5] In short, the Poles' stories suggest it was their pre-arrival experiences that substantially determined their ability to cope and adapt to their new home in Australia.

Putting aside the question of whether life in Australia was really as prosperous for the majority of Poles as suggested by the sample that we interviewed, in this article we turn our attention to their recollections of salvation in India and Africa. For if their memories of their time in India and Africa are faulty or distorted, the perceived causal link between their immediate pre-arrival experiences and their successful settlement in Australia becomes more tenuous. We have good reason to believe what they told us. The Poles' recollections are remarkably consistent and accord with the few available written sources pertaining to the period and places in question.[6] But, as we shall discuss, there are numerous factors that influence the way in which memories are made, shared and narrated that can result

in a consistent but inaccurate story to emerge. And the written sources used to test the veracity of the oral testimony are not necessarily objective records, having mostly been composed many years after the Poles were in India and Africa and thus themselves the product of memory and the imperfect art of story-telling. There is also just enough evidence – the odd statement made during an interview pointing to hardship, and some of the physical remnants of the former Indian and African camps – to call into question the otherwise overwhelmingly positive portrayal of life in the camps. In this article, then, we interrogate the Poles' memories of salvation and how those memories were formed, and consider the process by which those memories came to constitute the history of the Polish settlements in India and Africa between 1942 and 1950.

Exile

To make sense of the Poles' recollections, we must first understand how they came to be in India and Africa. This part of the story begins on 17 September 1939, when eastern Poland was invaded by units of the Red Army that seized control of territory occupied by 13.5 million Polish citizens.[7] Private and state property were confiscated, and arrests, expulsions and executions became common. Some 200,000 army personnel and reservists were interned and nearly 22,000 Polish citizens, many of them army and reservist officers, were executed by the NKVD and buried in the Katyn forest and elsewhere.[8] The Soviets compiled a list of those most capable of resisting, and in the middle of a freezing night on 10 February 1940 their deportation began. A total of four waves of deportations saw *at least* 320,000 Polish citizens (but possibly hundreds of thousands more) exiled to Siberia and other parts of the Soviet Union to work in labour camps and collective farms.[9] Crammed into railroad cattle wagons with few provisions, to undertake journeys that lasted up to four weeks, thousands died before they reached their destination.[10]

When Russia was attacked by Germany, the prospects of those who had survived deportation and exile in the Soviet Union seemingly improved. In an uneasy alliance with the Polish government-in-exile, Stalin agreed to free the surviving Polish citizens and allowed the formation of a Polish Army on Soviet soil. The released Poles undertook an arduous journey through the Soviet Union to join the Polish troops amassing thousands of miles away in southern Uzbekistan, but without adequate transportation, food, or communal support, many perished during the attempt. More died upon arrival as disease swept through the army settlements. It is estimated that 10 per cent of the 200,000 Polish citizens who gathered in the central Soviet republics between December 1941 and June 1942 died of typhus alone.[11] During this time, many children were separated from their mothers as they were forced to get on and off trains to beg for food or

steal, or because severely ill children needed to be left behind in orphanages and hospitals so that the rest of their families could follow Polish army units south.[12]

Finally, in the European spring and summer of 1942, approximately 74,935 formerly exiled army personnel and 38,120 Polish civilians were permitted to leave the Soviet Union and cross the Caspian Sea to reach Pahlavi in Persia (now known as Iran).[13] At least a further 2650 Poles travelled overland to Mashhad, and then to other locations in Persia and India.[14] These civilians constituted just a fraction of those deported from Poland, with the remainder either dead or left stranded in Soviet territory, as further departures were prohibited by Soviet authorities.[15]

Most of the Poles spent only a few months in Persia. The soldiers and cadets departed for training in Iraq and Palestine, taking with them 6,100 female civilians who joined the Women's Auxiliary Service.[16] Several thousand boys and girls were sent to schools in Lebanon and Palestine.[17] Seven hundred and thirty-three orphaned children and 102 of their carers sailed to New Zealand,[18] and two transports containing 1,435 Poles left for Mexico via Karachi.[19] Greater numbers, some 5,000 of the exiled Polish civilians, were transferred to British-administered camps in India, the biggest of which was Valivade, established near the city of Kolhapur in the first half of 1943. They remained there until 1947, when India secured Independence from Britain and the camps were closed. The majority of the 'Indian' Poles, about 3,500, then secured resettlement in England and Canada (and twenty were selected to come to Australia[20]). The remainder were sent to Africa to join the 18,000 other Polish refugees who had been transferred there from Persia in late 1942 and 1943.[21]

Initially, the camps in India and Africa had their expenses paid by the colonial governments, who invoiced the exiled Polish Government in London for reimbursement.[22] This arrangement continued until July 1945 when a pro-Soviet Communist Government was installed in Poland, which declined to accept financial responsibility for its citizens abroad who refused to return to Communist Poland. Thus British colonial authorities became solely responsible for the Polish camps in India and Africa, resulting in lower expenditure and the replacement of Valivade's Polish commandant with a British officer. Later, from August 1946 until the Poles' departure from India and Africa, the Polish settlements were supported by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and its successor, the International Refugee Organisation (IRO).[23]

Memories of India

Our interviewees vividly recalled the organisation of the camps and their physical layouts. Residents of the Valivade camp lived in stone barracks that were

divided into family apartments, usually consisting of two rooms and a small kitchen. Boguslaw Trella recalled that the accommodation offered privacy and autonomy:

> each family had its own apartment, [we] didn't have to share anything … it was quite a pleasant feeling because you could arrange our little place the way we wanted to. We would put those coloured matting on the floor and you could hang up things all on the wall. It was home, really.[24]

The Poles received an allowance that they used to purchase supplies to prepare their own meals. Trella, Halina Juszczyk and Tadeusz Dobrostanski each recall there was 'plenty' to eat.[25] Some adults were able to find paid employment to supplement their allowance. Urszula Paszkowska remembers what a 'good life' this was, at least in a material sense:

> As mother was working as a teacher her salary doubled our income so it was quite adequate for our needs. There was a good supply of shops in the centre of the settlement, there were markets just outside where vegetables could be bought and we were able to travel to Kolhapur to get anything else that wasn't available. I was involved in the Girl Guide movement and we had some lovely camps and excursions.[26]

As the 'small allowance' was just enough 'for food and clothes', but not for leisure activities such as the cinema or the Scouts' camp, life was harder for those without additional income.[27]

Valivade functioned democratically, with a representative from each 'block' of barracks sitting on one of five councils. These councils liaised with the commandant (a Pole), who dealt with the British authorities and was ultimately responsible for the camp's administration. Within the camp community, a church, a hospital, an orphanage, numerous community centres, a theatre, a regular newspaper and a canteen and restaurant were established. As Bogdan Harbuz recalled:

> We could listen to the BBC radio programs which were broadcast in Polish in one of the five regional library-cultural centres where young people could also play chess, cards, or other games. There were also choirs and the central administration would organise large concerts and plays for the whole camp. We also had a cinema run by an Indian. It was like a little town of its own. Five thousand Polish people. A little Poland in India.[28]

Children in Valivade were educated by three kindergartens, four elementary schools, a secondary school, and a trade school.[29] Two thousand five hundred children attended these Polish Schools which followed teaching programs from pre-war Poland.[30] Students were taught in Polish. However after 1945, English became a part of the syllabus when it became apparent that a return to Poland was unlikely. This was beneficial for the children who later emigrated to Australia. Trella recalls that corporal punishment, while permitted, was never used by the teachers to maintain discipline. Dobrostanski considered the education to be 'a very high standard'.[31]

As in the other Polish camps in India and Africa, Scouting and Girl Guides, Catholic Mass and team sports became a feature of the children's daily lives. These activities, along with male scout leaders and priests, instilled discipline and respect within the disproportionately large number of fatherless children. As Dobrostanski and his fellow deportees recall, reforming these children was an immense challenge. They had survived the Soviet Union by begging, lying, stealing food, and pick-pocketing corpses left on railroad platforms. In India and Africa, they learnt patience, industry and team work, and how to tell right from wrong.[32]

Memories of Africa

The Poles who went to Africa from Persia were settled in 23 different camps in the British territories of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika (Tanzania), Northern and Southern Rhodesia, and South Africa. Women outnumbered men by a ratio of 2:1; and children and adolescent girls outnumbered women by a similar ratio.[33] The largest camps were Tengeru in Tanganyika and Koja in Uganda. Peak population in these camps reached about 5,000 and 4,000 people respectively. Most of the Poles spent time in multiple camps, moving to one of the largest camps when their smaller settlement was liquidated. Of the Poles who ultimately came to Australia, nearly all ended up in either Koja or Tengeru, where an Australian immigration selection team visited in November and December 1949. By this time, some Poles had spent seven years in Tengeru and were fully enmeshed in the community that was established there.

The camps were administered by British commandants, but the daily affairs of the camps were largely determined by a committee of Polish elders. As in India, Polish schools, scout groups, churches, orchestras, libraries, hospitals, civic centres, workshops and service cooperatives were established and Polish culture prospered. African radio stations ran Polish-language programs, and there was a Polish press.[34]

The Poles who had come from Valivade remember being disappointed by the conditions they found at the very remote Koja settlement in Uganda. 'After the luxury of India', remembers Bogdan Harbuz, the camp 'looked rather primitive to us'. The Poles were now given provisions instead of money: 'some rice, flour, a bit of meat, salt, sugar, tea and coffee once a

week'. Many planted their own vegetable gardens to supplement their diet. 'We felt very dependent on UNRRA for everything, including our clothing', recalled Harbuz.[35] Some of our interviewees were disappointed by the taste and quantity of the food – Zenon Zebrowski and his two sisters, Teresa and Zofia, each made disparaging comments about this – while others recalled it was acceptable.[36]

The Poles in Africa were not obliged to work for their rations or, depending where they were, the meals that were provided for them in large dining halls. Owing to their greater isolation there were fewer opportunities for them to undertake paid work in the local economy than was the case in India. In this respect, they had fewer opportunities to acquire skills that might have been useful in Australia. Women spent a fair bit of time trying to keep their thatched roof and mat floor bungalows clean, tending to family members suffering from malaria, and chasing snakes and plagues of ants and insects from their dwellings. They were also involved in camp administration and 'intellectual work', such as teaching. The 'manual labour' was performed by local Africans, who, the Poles remember, were treated poorly by the British.[37]

Many of the African camps were in exotic and beautiful locations. Koja in Uganda bordered Lake Victoria. Harbuz recalls 'the big lake, the beautiful jungle, the animals, the fruit of the jungle, the Africans. To me it was an adventure.'[38] Budding photographer Wojciech Marten's testimony and pictures record sailing on the lake and rambunctious adventures in Koja and its surrounds (see Figures 1 and 2).[39] Elizabeth Patro remembers that girls were kept on a tighter rein, though she and her friends still found themselves stranded up a tree on the shores of Lake Victoria as a pod of hippopotami, one of the most dangerous creatures in Africa, wallowed below.[40] At the time, children were oblivious to their mothers' fretting when they absconded to the jungle or savannah, where they

Sailing Lake Victoria that bordered Koja Camp, Uganda. Photograph courtesy of Wojciech Marten.

encountered boa constrictors, giraffes and elephants. Three of our interviewees recalled, fleetingly, one of the Polish children being eaten by a crocodile, and almost all suffered from malaria, but they did not dwell on these experiences.[41]

These, then, are stories of salvation and restoration, of developing confidence and capabilities, and of little Polish 'villages' run according to Catholic and democratic values and the rule of law. As Elizabeth Patro explained, it was as if the Poles had ascended from Hell into Heaven.[42] But physical evidence that remains at the sites of some of the former camps suggests a different story that was barely acknowledged by our interviewees. In 2007 one of us visited the site of the former Tengeru camp in Tanzania. Little remained of the camp; some of the buildings became part of an agricultural college that was still in use. Hidden from view down a winding path lay a gated cemetery of Polish graves, still tended by a Polish Catholic priest who lived in the area. It contained 148 crosses and headstones, many marking the deaths of children. A similar cemetery exists near the former Koja camp in Uganda, where there are more than 100 graves. The cemeteries are stark reminders that Africa was not then a particularly safe place for Europeans, especially those who had histories of malnourishment and compromised immunity. Malaria and other tropical diseases were rife in most parts of Africa where the camps were located. There were outbreaks of influenza and typhus, and waterborne parasites were an ever-present threat, not to mention the jungle and savannah creatures.

Moreover, one man, Bogdan Harbuz, a former resident of the Valivade and Koja camps who was interviewed

Wojciech 'Tex' Marten enjoys the jungle surrounding Koja Camp, Uganda. Photograph courtesy of Wojciech Marten.

for an oral history project in the mid-1990s, had a different recollection to those that were offered to me. He told oral historians Maryon Allbrook and Helen Cattalini:

> I remember hunger again, and discipline was very strict. We kids thought that no-one cared about us any more. We were asked to serve at the table and we saw the difference in food between the groups of older people who were looking after us and what we were getting. We used to go to the rubbish bins behind the kitchen to get some things out of it to eat. The Commandant was always dressed in an army officer's uniform, with a baton that quite often used to land on somebody's backside. He was very strict with us. That is the way I remember it.[43]

The nature and tone of this remark is at odds with the joy and enthusiasm expressed by our interviewees. What might have led them to focus on different things, and recount their experiences in India and Africa in a much more positive manner? Here we get the heart of methodological and theoretical matters concerning the recruitment and interview of those willing to share their memories, and the tricks of memory itself.

The stories told by our interviewees need to be placed in the context of the history of their lives until this point. In comparison to what happened to the Poles during the war and in the Soviet Union before they arrived in the camps, India and Africa *were* like Heaven. Not a single one of them failed to shed tears as they remembered the terror of the night their family was deported – dogs barking and soldiers pointing guns at hysterical family members in bedclothes – or when recounting riding with corpses aboard the freezing, stinking cattle wagons to exile in the Soviet Union. One recalled her father shooting her brother and then himself to avoid capture by Russian troops.[44] Life in Soviet work camps and 'special settlements' was hard, and the Poles' release and journey southward to escape the Soviet Union even more perilous. Fathers were dead or missing, mothers became separated from their children, and all were forced to beg or steal or trade precious items – even buttons from blouses – to escape starvation. The physical condition of the Poles upon arrival in Pahlavi in Persia is telling (see Figure 3). When the Soviet Union was so dark, it is almost inevitable that Africa and India would shine bright. The tone and content of their testimony might have been different had we questioned our interviewees only about the DP settlements in India and Africa, rather than first asking them to recall the horror of deportation and the struggle for survival in the Soviet Union. What is told at a particular point in an oral history interview is dependent, to an extent, on what has just been said.

We can be certain that if we had interviewed the mothers of the children in the DP camps, rather than

Polish children, Pahlavi, Persia (Iran), 1942. Photograph courtesy of Tadeusz Dobrostanski.

the grown-up version of the children, we would have heard different stories, or the emphasis placed on different things. All of our interviewees were between 12 and 20 years of age by the time they left Africa in 1950, and aged between 72 and 79 years when they spoke to us. Their parents were no longer alive to be interviewed. While their children sat in school learning from donated books, played soccer, swam in the lake, and rambled in the savannah or jungle, the mothers mourned the deaths of their husbands and their children who had not survived the exodus from the Soviet Union, or fretted for their husbands who were in the army or in hiding. It was they who watched helplessly as their children wrestled with malaria (having just seen family members and other children succumb to disease in Russia and Uzbekistan), who frantically fought plagues of ants and insects, and who worried that the lake, snakes or other animals would consume their children. Elizabeth Patro laughed as she recalled being stranded with her classmates in a tree for a day and half the night after being chased by a hippo, which came to rest with her young underneath the branches. But she could admit that her mother was terrified by this incident. India and Africa would not have felt like a safe place for Polish mothers, and while some recovered their equilibrium and began the ascent, the currents of Hell surged and tugged at their feet.

The age of our interviewees during their stay in India and Africa and then at the time of interview raises a further issue. As Jay Mechling reminds us, an adult reflecting in the present about their childhood "will be perceiving and interpreting that childhood through her adult, learned categories – from adult notions of propriety to the special vocabularies of popularized psychology".[45] Historians Katie Wright and Julie McLeod have also shown how such memories can be influenced by the powerful cultural narratives of childhood given widespread expression in popular culture, such as the notion of childhood being the 'best days of your life'.[46] Carla Pascoe's interviews with men and women who grew up in 1950s Australia appear to support this, with her respondents recollecting their post-war childhoods as safe and free in contrast to the

dangers and pressures surrounding the contemporary experience of growing up.[47] Our interviewees were not necessarily describing the best days of their lives, nor were all strictly 'children' during their time in India and Africa, but they are all, at least to a degree, likely to be influenced by a pervading and nostalgic cultural narrative concerning the freedom and joy of youth.

Our sample of interviewees was limited in another way, which likely influenced the testimony we collected. Nearly all had enjoyed relatively successful and prosperous lives in Australia, either taking advantage of secondary and tertiary education opportunities (being too young upon arrival to be bound by a two-year manual work contract[48]) or working their way through a variety of occupations before becoming small business owners or entering the professions. Most had assumed or been elected to prominent positions in Polish community organisations – a measure of both the esteem in which they were held by their community and their apparent respectability. It was either through these organisations, or by being recommended by other members of the Polish-Australian community, that they came to our attention or our project caught theirs. We thus largely interviewed successful and upstanding members of the Polish-Australian community, and it is not surprising that, in being asked to reflect on how they came to be in their current position, they should look favourably upon a time and place that they believed instilled the virtues and values that enabled them to prosper once in Australia. This view – that humans habitually compose their memories to suit or validate their present-day identities – is maintained by scholars such as Alistair Thomson, John R. Gillis, Christin Quirk, Brian F. Havel, Valerie Bourke, and Susan Engel,[49] as well as psychological studies.[50] Had we been able to recruit and interview more people who had endured difficult lives in Australia, who were perhaps more attuned to poverty and social inequality, we might have heard more stories aligned with Bogdan Harbuz's recollection of hunger, inequity, and corporal punishment in the DP camps, and/or which blamed the organisation of the camps for failing to adequately prepare them for life in Australia.[51]

While all of the interview participants would describe themselves now as proud Australians, and all expressed gratitude for the 'generosity' of the Australian government and people for accepting them in 1950s, they also exhibited deep affection for the country from which their families were so brutally removed. They had not wanted to be repatriated to Poland after the war because of the communist take-over and, in many cases, because the country's borders had been redrawn so that their homes were now situated in Ukraine. But they were proud of the country that existed prior to the war, and especially the Polish government, betrayed and forced into exile in London when the country was invaded and partitioned. Most of our interviewees

specifically remarked that it was the exiled government, using gold smuggled out of Poland, that provided for their welfare in India and Africa (although, in truth, private charity and loans from the British government – which could never be repaid – sustained the system). To therefore criticise the organisation of the camps in India and Africa, and the activities and provisions within, would be to criticise the Polish government-in-exile and what it stood for: beloved pre-war Poland.

Beyond these issues is the matter of memory. Scholarship concerning the constitution of memory, and one's ability to accurately recall and narrate memories of past events, has proliferated in the past three decades, inspiring the publication of many books and the creation of academic journals devoted to these subjects. This field of research is multidisciplinary, drawing on the insights of historians, literary theorists, psychologists and neuroscientists, among others.[52] We now understand that, in the words of Alessandro Portelli, 'memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings';[53] it is reconstructive and influenced by one's cultural and gender identity,[54] rather than a flawless recording of what was witnessed or experienced in the past. As oral historian Mary Chamberlain explains:

> We cannot look, imagine, remember, describe, or recount without first having the imaginative structures that enable this… What is remembered, when, and why is molded by the culture in which [people] live, the language at their disposal, and the conventions and genre appropriate to the occasion.[55]

We also know that one's experience of trauma impacts on memory,[56] as does the passage of time, in ways that are unpredictable and unique to each individual, and that memories are prone to adapt and modify upon each telling. Indeed, as Steven Rose asserts, 'each act of recall is itself a new experience. Reactivated memories are subtly changed each time we recall them'.[57]

However, it is the scholarship pertaining to the interplay between 'collective memory' and individual memory that is most relevant to our particular study. Sociologist Maurice Halbwach pioneered this line of thinking. He argued that in order for social groups to maintain an 'affective community', individuals tended to remember and retell stories in ways that were in harmony with the memories of others.[58] The most durable memories then tended to be those held by the greatest number. Refining this argument, Alistair Thompson and Graham Dawson have shown how individuals, desiring or seeking acceptance within a social group (be this a family, a migrant cohort or the nation as a whole), will consciously or subconsciously recollect past events in a way that conforms to particular narratives or scripts sanctioned by the group.[59] This tendency is arguably strongest when the group is

clearly defined by its members sharing very similar and emotional experiences, and meeting regularly to retell or commemorate events, as in the case of the former Poles that we interviewed. At the time of interview, each defined themselves as a 'Siberian survivor' and enjoyed participating in regular gatherings of Kresy-Siberia groups/associations in Perth and Melbourne. The formation and maintenance of their identity relies upon them telling their stories over-and-over again, to each other and to others, and reciting them in a similar way that confirms their legitimate place within the group. Memories of India and Africa are shared, with the ever-present risk of one's own recollection being buried beneath the weight of testimony of the majority of others, or appropriating the stories of others as one's own. Through this process, differences in the interpretation of events are diminished or resolved entirely.

The use of photographs, such as the ones featured in this article, as aids to recall the past at Polish community gatherings and commemorations exacerbates this process. The photographs – often belonging to someone else – viewed by and shared among the group become triggers for one's own memory and storytelling. 'In doing so', Thomson maintains, 'they might filter memory selectively through the images that were created and that have survived'.[60] More often than not, photographs are taken to capture happy and harmonious occasions, their subjects smiling, which in this case has contributed to the romanticised portrayal of the Indian and African camps and their surrounds.

Writing about instances when individual soldier memories fail to conform to the constructed mythology concerning 'ANZAC heroes', Thomson reminds us that memories that do not fit the dominant narrative are 'risky and painful'.[61] And so it has proven for at least one of the former Polish displaced persons who was critical of the Poles' treatment in India and Africa when he was interviewed by Allbrook and Cattalini in the 1990s. We were told by one of our interviewees 15 years later that this fellow had been 'ex-communicated' from the group for the views he had expressed.[62] A friendship forged during traumatic experiences of deportation, forced labour and exile – that was strong enough to withstand hunger, disease and death – was fractured due to a disagreement about how one aspect of the past was remembered. In probing the former Poles' memories of India and Africa, we do not seek to cause a similar rupture in the group, nor wish to cause offence. We believe that our interviewees recalled their experiences to the best of their ability, and faithfully told us what they remembered. We certainly do not discount their memories. Despite our reservations expressed above, the consistency of the former Poles' testimony and its alignment with written sources cannot be ignored. Rather, our aim has been to illuminate how and why memories might be distorted and narratives bent, and to consider the process by which particular stories become dominant, so that we might be less quick to dismiss divergent views of the past.

This article has been peer reviewed.

Endnotes

1   Egon Kunz, *Displaced Persons: Calwell's New Australians*, ANU Press, Canberra, 1988; Andrew Markus, 'Labour and Immigration 1946-9: The Displaced Persons Programme', *Labour History*, vol. 47, 1984, pp. 73–90; Nonja Peters, *Milk and Honey – but No Gold: Postwar Migration to Western Australia, 1945-1965*, UWA Press, Perth, 2001; Ruth Balint, 'Industry and Sunshine: Australia as Home in the Displaced Persons' Camps of Postwar Europe', *History Australia*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2014, pp. 102–27; Jayne Persian, *Beautiful Balts: From Displaced Persons to New Australians*, NewSouth Publishing, Sydney, 2017; Alexandra Dellios, *Histories of Controversy: Bonegilla Migrant Centre*, Melbourne University Publishing, Melbourne, 2017. See also, for example, Catherine Panich, *Sanctuary? Remembering Postwar Immigration*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1988; Klaus Neumann, *Across the Seas: Australia's Response to Refugees - A History*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2015; and various entries in James Jupp (ed.), *The Australian People: An Encyclopedia of the Nation, Its People and Their Origins*, 2nd ed., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001.

2   Works that examine the temporary settlement outside of Europe of Polish DPs (who did not necessarily come to Australia) include Anuradha Bhattacharjee, *The Second Homeland: Polish Refugees in India*, Sage, New Delhi, 2013; Lynne Taylor, *Polish Orphans of Tengeru: The Dramatic Story of Their Long Journey to Canada 1941-49*, Dundurn Press, Toronto, 2009; and Atina Grossmann, 'Jewish Refugees in Soviet Central Asia, Iran, and India: Lost Memories of Displacement, Trauma, and Rescue', in Mark Edele, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Atina Grossmann (eds), *Shelter from the Holocaust: Rethinking Jewish Survival in the Soviet Union*, Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 2017, pp. 185–218. More recent work has focused on the experiences of European Jews who either fled to the Soviet Union to evade capture by the Nazis, or were deported to the Soviet Union from Poland, and eventually found refuge in China before coming to Australia. See Antonia Finnane, *Far from Where? Jewish Journeys to Shanghai*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1999; Klaus Neumann, 'The Admission of European Refugees from East and South Asia in 1947: Antecedents of Australia's International Refugee Organization Mass Resettlement Scheme', *History Australia*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2015: pp. 62–79; Ruth Balint, 'Before Australia: Historicising Russian Migration via China after World War II', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2019, pp. 3–20; Jayne Persian, '"The Dirty Vat": European Migration to Australia from Shanghai, 1946–47', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 50, no. 1, 2019, pp. 21–40.

3   Paul Sendziuk, 'Forgotten People and Places: "Stalin's Poles" in Persia, India and Africa, 1942–50', *History Australia*, vol. 12, no. 2, 2015, pp. 41–61.

4   Full-length audio recordings as well as 'timed' summaries of the interviews are available from the National Library of Australia's website: 'Stalin's Poles' Oral History Project, interviews conducted by Paul Sendziuk, http://nla.gov.au/nla.cat-vn4767196. Also see Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story: Polish Refugees Recount their Experiences of*

Exile, Dispersal and Resettlement, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1995.

5   This view was most clearly expressed by Janusz Smenda (National Library of Australia [henceforth NLA], TRC 6175/6), George Mazak (NLA, TRC 6175/2) and Tadeusz Dobrostanski (NLA, TRC 6175/13). Similar claims have been made by and about 'Stalin's Poles' who settled in other countries. See various testimonies in Adam Manterys (ed.), *New Zealand's First Refugees: Pahiatua's Polish Children*, Polish Children's Reunion Committee, Wellington, 2008; and Anne Applebaum, 'The Children of Pahiatua', *Slate*, 17 May 2013, accessed 28 September 2014, http://www.slate.com/articles/life/the_hive/2013/05/pahiatua_s_polish_world_war_ii_refugees_a_group_of_young_poles_made_a_new.html

6   This literature mainly consists of autobiographical accounts, some of them unpublished. See, for example, Alicia A. Zarzycki and Stefania Buczak-Zarzycka, *Kwaheri Africa: A Polish Experience 1929-1950, from Deportation to Freedom*, self-published, Perth, 1986; Ryszard Wiland, *Mother Don't Cry*, Australian Booksellers Association, Melbourne, 2007; Tadeusz Piotrowski (ed.), *The Polish Deportees of World War II: Recollections of Removal to the Soviet Union and Dispersal Throughout the World*, McFarland & Company, London, 2004; Teresa Glazer, *et al*. (eds), *Poles in India 1942–1948*, Association of the Poles in India, London, 2009. For more scholarly accounts, see Bhattacharjee, *The Second Homeland*, and Taylor, *Polish Orphans of Tengeru*.

7   Daniel Boćkowski, *Czas nadziei. Obywatele Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej w ZSRR i opieka nad nimi placówek polskich w latach 1940-1943*, Wydawnictwo NERITON, Instytut Historii PAN, Warszawa, 1999, p. 17. This estimate is based on pre-1939 census data and does not include the large number of people who fled into Poland's eastern territory following Germany's invasion of the west.

8   Czesław Brzoza and Andrzej Leon Sowa, *Historia Polski, 1918–1945*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków, 2009, pp. 574–5.

9   This figure is derived from NKVD documents that became accessible to researchers in the early 1990s. Many survivors of the deportations believe that these records are incomplete because their names do not appear on the lists of deportees and because the number of deportees contrasts with much higher estimates produced by eyewitnesses during the war. Some historians continue to believe that over one million Poles were deported, but consensus suggests the actual number lies between 320,000 and 400,000. For a brief discussion of the disagreement between historians on this point, see Katherine R. Jolluck, '"You Can't Even Call Them Women": Poles and "Others" in Soviet Exile during the Second World War', *Contemporary European History*, vol. 10, no.3, 2001, p. 465, fn. 4.

10 Many of our interviewees recalled the deprivations suffered during the journey to Soviet exile in gruesome detail. See, for example, Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC 6175/3; Janusz Smenda, NLA, TRC 6175/6; Tadeusz Dobrostanski, NLA, TRC 6175/13; Halina Juszczyk, NLA, TRC 6175/14; Boguslaw Trella, NLA, TRC 6175/15.

11 Stanislaw Ciesielski, Wojciech Materski and Andrzej Paczkowski, *Represje sowieckie wobec Polaków I obywateli polskich*, Osrodek Karta, Warszawa, 2002, pp. 20–1.

12 Most of our interviewees recalled such instances. See, for example, Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC 6175/3; Tadeusz Dobrostanski, NLA, TRC 6175/13; and Kazimierz Sosnowski, who was one of the children separated from their mothers, NLA, TRC 6175/10.

13 These figures are quoted in reports written by Lt. Col. Alexander Ross, the Officer in Charge of the British Base Evacuation Staff who oversaw the evacuations and the establishment of the refugee settlements in Iran. See 'Report on Evacuation of Poles from Pahlavi, 25th March – 25th April 1942', 3 June 1942, National Archives (UK), FO 371/31077, and 'Evacuation of Polish Citizens from Krasnovodsk – Report on the Refugee Camps', National Archives (UK), WO 204/8711.

14 Leszek Bełdowski, 'How and Why Several Thousand Poles Came to India', in Teresa Glazer, *et al*. (eds), *Poles in India 1942–1948*, Association of the Poles in India, London, 2009, p. 15.

15 The civilian evacuees were selected by Polish and Russian authorities, who, for different reasons, discriminated against Polish Jews and those who were considered to be Belarusian or Ukrainian. Hence ethnic Poles constituted the overwhelming majority of evacuees and, following the departure of most of the evacuated Polish Jews to Palestine, constituted approximately 97 per cent of those who were eventually selected by migration officials to settle in Australia. See Anita J. Prazmowska, *Britain and Poland, 1939–1943: The Betrayed Ally*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, pp. 132–3; and, for the Australian selection, Allbrook and Cattalini, pp. 126–7.

16 Bełdowski, 'How and Why', p. 15.

17 Bełdowski, 'How and Why', p. 15; Tadeusz Piotrowski, 'Introduction', in Piotrowski (ed.), *The Polish Deportees of World War II: Recollections of Removal to the Soviet Union and Dispersal Throughout the World*, McFarland & Company, London, 2004, pp. 10–11. For the transfer of the Polish Jews, who were mainly children, see Henryk Grynberg, *Children of Zion*, trans. Jacqueline Mitchell, Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Ill, 1998; and 'Tehran Children', *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*, accessed 3 May 2018, https encyclopedia ushmm org content article tehran children

18 See Manterys (ed.), *New Zealand's First Refugees*; and Krstyna Skwarko, *The Invited: The Story of 733 Polish Children Who Grew Up in New Zealand*, Millwood Press, Wellington, 1974.

19 See Richard C. Lukas, 'Polish Refugees in Mexico: An Historical Footnote', *The Polish Review*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1977, pp. 73–5; Piotr Piwowarczyk, 'Hacienda Santa Rosa: A Polish Refuge in Mexico', *Cosmopolitan Review*, vol. 3, no. 4, 2011, available at http://cosmopolitanreview.com/hacienda-santa-rosa; Robin Waldman, 'Little Poland en la Hacienda', National Archives [blog], 22 April 2011, https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2011/04/22/little-poland-en-la-hacienda

20 Neumann 'The Admission of European Refugees from East and South Asia', pp. 65–71.

21 Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 83.

22 There were exceptions. For example, the Balachadi camp for children in India was supported by private donations.

23 Jan K. Siedlecki, 'Outline of Financial Considerations', in Teresa Glazer, *et al*. (eds) *Poles in India 1942–1948*, Association of the Poles in India, London, 2009, pp. 37–8.

24 Boguslaw Trella, NLA, TRC 6175/15.

25 Boguslaw Trella, NLA, TRC 6175/15; Halina Juszczyk, NLA, TRC 6175/14; and Tadeusz Dobrostanski, NLA, TRC 6175/13.

26 Paszkowska quoted in Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 78.

27 See the testimony of Wiesława Paszkiewicz quoted in ibid., pp. 78–9.

28 Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 80.

29 Piotrowski, 'Introduction', p. 11.

30 Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 80.

31 Trella, NLA, TRC 6175/15; Dobrostanski, NLA, TRC 6173/13.

32 Dobrostanski, NLA, TRC 6175/13. Speaking about his time in the Scouts, which operated every day after school and on the weekend, Stanislaw Harasymow recalled that the aim was 'to improve yourself, you have to improve your character, improve your knowledge', NLA, TRC 6175/7.

33 Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 83.

34 See Piotrowski, 'Introduction', p. 11; Halina Juszczyk, NLA, TRC 6175/14; Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC 6175/3; George Mazak, NLA, TRC 6175/2; Wojciech Marten, NLA, TRC 6175/16.

35 Bogdan Harbuz quoted in Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, pp. 83–5.

36 Zenon Zebrowski, NLA, TRC 6175/12; Teresa Sosnowski, NLA, TRC 6175/9; Zofia Nadachowski, NLA, TRC 6175/11.

37 Teresa Sosnowski, NLA, TRC 6175/9; Zofia Nadachowski, NLA, TRC 6175/11; George Mazak, NLA, TRC 6175/2.

38 Bogdan Harbuz quoted in Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 85.

39 Wojciech Marten, NLA, TRC 6175/16.

40 Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC 6175/3.

41 Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC; 6175/3; Janusz Smenda, NLA, TRC 6175/6; Nina Smenda, NLA, TRC 6175/5.

42 Elizabeth Patro, NLA, TRC 6175/3.

43 Bogdan Harbuz quoted in Allbrook and Cattalini, *The General Langfitt Story*, p. 77.

44 Teresa Sosnowski, NLA, TRC 6175/9.

45 Jay Mechling, 'Oral Evidence and the History of American Children's Lives', *Journal of American History*, vol. 74, 1987, p. 581.

46 Katie Wright and Julie McLeod, 'Public Memories and Private Meanings: Representing the "Happy Childhood" Narrative in Oral Histories of Adolescence and Schooling in Australia, 1930s-1950s', *Oral History Forum d'histoire orale*, vol. 32, 2012.

47 Carla Pascoe, 'Be Home by Dark: Childhood Freedoms and Adult Fears in 1950s Victoria', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2009, pp. 215–31.

48 Working-age displaced persons who were accepted as migrants to Australia first had to agree to fulfil a two-year labour contract, which could see them sent to work anywhere in Australia, even if this meant they were separated from their spouse and/ or children. Regardless of their qualifications, most men were classified as 'labourers', while women were assigned work as 'domestics'. For further information, see Alexandra Dellios, 'Displaced Persons, Family Separation and the Work Contract in Postwar Australia', *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2016, pp. 418–32; Persian, *Beautiful Balts*, pp. 60–9.

49 Quirk argues that 'memories are continually re-worked to reinforce meaning that is relevant to the present situation and to protect the individual's sense of self'. Havel adds, 'we remember ourselves in the past as we are now'. See Christin Quirk, '"The other thing was…": The Reciprocal Interview Relationship and the Impact of "Unconnected" Traumatic Memories', *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, vol. 34, 2012, p. 49; Brian F. Havel, 'In Search of a Theory of Public Memory: The State, the Individual, and Marcel Proust', *Indiana Law Journal*, vol. 80, no. 3, 2005, p. 698. See Alistair Thomson, 'A Past You Can Live With: Digger Memories and the ANZAC Legend', *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, vol. 13, 1991, p. 13; John R. Gillis, 'Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship', in John R. Gillis (ed.), *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1994, p. 3; Valerie Bourke, 'Re-remembering the Bombing of Darwin', *Oral History Australia Journal*, vol. 36, 2014, p. 58; Susan Engel, *Context is Everything: The Nature of Memory*, W.H. Freeman & Company, New York, 1995, p. 81.

50 See, for example, Anne Wilson and Michael Ross, 'The Identity Function of Autobiographical Memory: Time Is On Our Side', *Memory*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2003, pp. 137–49; Susan Bluck, 'Autobiographical Memory: Exploring its Functions in Everyday Life', *Memory*, vol. 11, no. 2, 2003, pp. 113–23.

51 With this noted, we still managed to recruit a relatively representative sample of people from working-class and middle-class backgrounds, and were successful in meeting our other objectives: an even mix of male and female interviewees, who came from a wide range of camps in India and Africa and who settled in different places once in Australia.

52 For informative overviews of some of the key findings of this scholarship, written with oral historians in mind, see Alistair Thomson, 'Memory and Remembering in Oral History', in Donald A. Ritchie (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2010, pp. 77–91; and Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 'Interpreting Memories', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London, 2016, pp. 297–310.

53 Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London, 2016, p. 54.

54 See, for example, Harald Welzer, 'Re-narrations: How Pasts Change in Conversational Remembering', *Memory Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2010, pp. 5–17, esp. pp. 10–11; Christina Daley, '"He Would Know, But I Just Have a Feeling": Gender and Oral History', *Women's History Review*, vol. 7, no. 3, 1998, pp. 343–59; Penny Summerfield, 'Culture and Composure: Creating Narratives of the Gendered Self in Oral History Interviews', *Cultural and Social History*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2004, pp. 65-93; Robyn Fivush, 'Remembering and Reminiscing: How Individual Lives are Constructed in Family Narratives', *Memory Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2008, pp. 49–58.

55 Mary Chamberlain, 'Narrative Theory', in Thomas L. Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and Rebecca Sharpless (eds), *Handbook of Oral History*, AltaMira Press, Lanham, 2006, pp. 389, 396, 399, cited in Thomson, 'Memory and Remembering', p. 88. As Thomson

then reminds us: 'form as well as meaning is cultural, and that when we create and re-create stories about experience we adopt and adapt culturally available storytelling forms or genre'.

56 See, for example, the various essays in Selma Leydesdorff, Graham Dawson, and Kim Lacy Rogers (eds), *Trauma and Life Stories: International Perspectives*, Routledge, London, 1999; and Cathy Caruth (ed.), *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1995.

57 Steven Rose, 'Memories Are Made of This', in Harriet Harvey Wood and A.S. Byatt (eds), *Memory: An Anthology*, Chatto and Windus, London, 2008, pp. 65–6. For scientific explanations of memory distortion, see Daniel Schacter, Scott Guerin and Peggy St. Jacques, 'Memory Distortion: An Adaptive Perspective', *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, vol. 15, no. 10, 2011, pp. 467–74; Liona Scully, Lucy Napper and Almut Hupbach, 'Does Reactivation Trigger Episodic Memory Change? A Meta-analysis', *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory*, vol. 142, Part A, 2017, pp. 99–107; Jason Chan, Krista Manley and Kathryn Lang, 'Retrieval-Enhanced Suggestibility: A Retrospective and a New Investigation', *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2017, pp. 213–29; Elizabeth Loftus, 'Planting Misinformation in the Human Mind: A 30-Year Investigation of the Malleability of Memory', *Learning & Memory*, vol. 12, 2005, pp. 361–6.

58 Anna Green provides a concise summary of Halbwach's thinking. See Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and "Collective Memory": Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2004, pp. 37–8.

59 Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1994; Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities*, Routledge, London, 1994.

60 Alistair Thomson, 'Family Photographs and Migrant Memories: Representing Women's Lives', in Alistair Thomson and Alexander Freund (eds), *Oral History and Photography*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2012, p. 170. For further discussion concerning the way in which photographs evoke and influence memory and oral testimony, see other essays in this volume. Also see Jesse Adams Stein, '"That was a posed photo": Reflections on the Process of Combining Oral Histories with Institutional Photographs', *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, vol. 35, 2013, pp. 49–57; and David Sweet, 'Vida – A Pastor's Wife', *Oral History Australia Journal*, vol. 37, 2015, pp. 26–31.

61 Thomson, 'A Past You Can Live With', p. 13.

62 Out of respect for both this man and our informant, we have chosen not to divulge their names.

'And What Happened Next?': Emotions and Sexual Violence in Holocaust Interviews

Annabelle Baldwin

Abstract:

This paper considers the testimonies of four female survivors of sexual violence who gave interviews to the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive. For the survivor, talking about this experience (sometimes for the first time since the war) is often one of great emotion and trauma. These women relive their experiences of sexual assault while giving their memories voice, motivated by the desire to put their stories 'on the record'. In this paper, I focus on four interviews with women survivors and explore 'what happens next' when traumatic memories are shared. I consider how emotions from the event are present in the interview, the inevitable intertwining of memories of sexual violence and those of other traumatic Holocaust events, as well as the way the interview space, and interviewer/interviewee interactions within the interview, affect how emotion is expressed and what emotions are experienced. I also consider ethical implications for how oral historians can use these kinds of difficult interviews, particularly when accessing an existing archive of interviews.

Introduction

Talking about sexual violence and the Holocaust brings up complicated emotions for many women in the Shoah Foundation's Visual History Archive. The process of giving Holocaust testimony is arguably an emotive process in itself. But talking about sexual violence in the context of the genocide often leads to complex, layered memories of grief, guilt, shame, trauma, anger, pain and anguish.[1] For many survivors, their experiences of sexual violence are intricately intertwined with their Holocaust experiences, and remembering separation from family members, deportations, the people who saved them and even liberation can also mean recalling their memories of abuse and assault.

For Holocaust historians interested in sexual violence, oral history is usually the preferred, and often only, source of information. Some scholars have made use of Nazi documentation, but these records are always perpetrator-centred. These documents have proved fruitful in explaining how Nazi institutions dealt with sexual violence against Jewish women, particularly the *Wehrmacht* (the German army).[2] However, they tell us very little about the experience of the survivor or about the prevalence of sexual violence, given that most assaults were not reported to Nazi authorities and many that were reported were not prosecuted. Survivor writings, such as memoirs, poetry and other forms of literature, have been fruitful for discussions of sexual violence.[3] In these varied works, survivors discuss fears of sexual violence, moments of vulnerability at camp intake and witnessing sexual abuse against friends and family. While valuable, research utilising written literature and memoirs taps into a small subset of the survivor community with the inclination and ability to communicate their experiences in writing. In light of these evidentiary limitations, the majority of scholars interested in exploring the experiences of Jewish women and sexual violence turn to survivor testimony. Oral testimony allows scholars to gain the insights of multiple survivors, particularly those whose stories may not have been recorded in other forms, offering a breadth of experiences to draw on.

This article is drawn from a larger study investigating survivor testimonies discussing sexual violence collected by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute between 1994 and 1999. Holocaust testimony projects are often large scale, but the Shoah Foundation's venture is the largest collection of audio-visual interviews in the world to date. The Foundation's Visual History Archive (VHA), its digitised database and testimony repository, houses nearly 52,000 interviews with Holocaust survivors. The testimonies were collected in the mid-1990s across 56 countries and in 32 different languages, creating an archive of rich and varied survivor stories. The project was famously begun by Steven Spielberg following the critical and commercial success of his Holocaust film *Schindler's List* (1993), leading to his establishment of the Foundation (initially known as the Survivors of the Shoah Foundation) in order to record the stories of as many Holocaust survivors as possible. The Foundation's ambitious goal of 50,000 interviews by the year 2000 was reached and surpassed, with the resulting testimonies preserved in digital format and made available via institutional subscription around the world.[4]

The Shoah Foundation is not without its critics, and its approach to testimony collection and interview procedure has certainly influenced the way difficult stories are told within the VHA.[5] The interview process was heavily regulated by the Foundation: interviewer guidelines gave pages of instructions to the volunteer interviewers to ensure consistency between testimonies.[6] The interviews were to follow a particular narrative arc: pre-war life in Europe, wartime persecution and postwar regeneration.[7] This prescribed format led to a structured interview, and necessitated an 'interventionist interviewer' who directed the flow of the discussion.[8] While some interviewers are less intrusive than others, the general prescriptiveness of the interview process has largely resulted in fairly guided and interviewer-heavy testimonies. The discussion of sensitive, emotional topics, such as sexual violence, are directly impacted by this, as this article shows.

In this article, I consider the testimonies of four women survivors who conducted interviews with the Shoah Foundation between 1995 and 1997 in the United States.[9] The testimonies are drawn from a much larger study on sexual violence against Jewish women during the Holocaust. For this project, I watched all 989 English-language interviews conducted by and stored in the digital archive of the Shoah Foundation that were indexed with sexual violence keywords.[10] My work is an archival study of the narratives of sexual violence in the VHA, and considers not only what we can learn about sexual violence through these testimonies, but also how these stories are shaped by the institutional context of the interviews, the way survivors have interpreted and reinterpreted their experiences of sexual violence and their decisions to talk about these memories to the Shoah Foundation.

Talking about sexual violence during the Holocaust is never easy. For some of the women in my sample, the interview with the Shoah Foundation is the first time they have spoken about these experiences after four decades of silence. Others use the interview as a chance to tell their families (who will receive a copy of the videotaped session) the truth of what happened to them during the war years. These discussions are typically painful, distressing, grief-provoking and difficult for the women. These are not uncommon emotions in Holocaust testimonies, and previous scholars have noted the intricate and complicated layers of trauma survivors carry in their interviews.[11] However, the untold nature of many of these stories, and the absence of those like them in Holocaust historiography, which had only just begun to probe gendered experiences in the 1990s, made stories of sexual violence particularly difficult for women to disclose. The interviews are thus loaded with different layers of emotion: that of the initial assault, the cumulative distress of living with the experience for decades before the interview, and the emotion of retelling the story in the interview setting,

Jewish men, women and children from Hungary are separated for selection on the ramp at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, 1944. Credit: Auschwitz Album, Yad Vashem. The full album can be viewed at: https://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/album_auschwitz/index.asp

all wrapped in the larger, traumatic narrative of their Holocaust experience.

In this article, I discuss how women's testimonies about sexual violence are infused with emotion. The testimonies demonstrate the embodiment of past emotion in the survivors' present, as they recall traumatic memories of sexual violence. They show how emotions can be created within the interview space, either through the act of recollection or due to the interaction with the interviewer. I argue that memories and narratives of sexual violence during the Holocaust can express tangled emotions that make remembering and talking about these events particularly difficult in the present.

'You are beyond your own help': Past emotions are also present emotions

Recalling trauma means talking about emotions experienced in the past, but it can also mean reexperiencing that pain. In his pivotal work on Holocaust testimony, Lawrence Langer argues that survivors are not 'reviving' their memories of traumatic experiences in their interviews: 'There is no need to revive what has never died'.[12] Holocaust survivors live with their complicated memories constantly, and the interview space becomes a place where not only memory is shared but also emotion.

A key example of this is Esther G.'s testimony.[13] In 1944, Esther was sent to the Skarżysko-Kamienna labour camp in Poland when she was seventeen years old. This camp has become infamous for the rampant sexual violence perpetrated against Jewish female prisoners by not only the guards, but also the German

camp commanders.[14] The camp was an armaments manufacturing site and Esther worked building light armaments. After another prisoner's smuggling plan was detected, the prisoner framed Esther as the one who gave him the contraband bullets found in his possession, to protect his lover and as revenge for Esther's rejection of his romantic overtures toward her. The German commander of the facility, Fritz Bartenschlager, soon uncovered the lie and shot the two offending prisoners.[15] But he did not allow Esther to return to work either. He told Esther that she was very beautiful and, as a young woman, probably wanted to live. But he 'can't resist me,' Esther says, tugging at the collar of her blouse. He molested her in the office of the interrogation, then blindfolded her and took her down to the mines, known to the prisoners as the 'death department'.[16] He then forced her to stand at a weighing station and measure out gunpowder for bullets for three days and nights without sleep. She managed to do this without making any mistakes, so after three days, he let her go back to her work detail.[17]

Esther's terrifying experience is recounted in quiet detail in her testimony. She describes her molestation carefully, and both her physical pain and her emotional anguish are evident:

> And he took his right hand and twist my breast. [Whispers] The left one. [Pause] It hurt more than any pain can hurt because it's not only the physical pain from it. It is the moral. It is the crucial – everything is taken from you away. And you are beyond your own help.[18]

Her emotional distress at the time of the assault is clear, but so too is her anguish as she recalls the event in her interview. This is particularly evident through her frequent use of the present tense. She begins in the past tense, but slips into the present tense when referencing the psychological distress she felt while being abused. The present tense demonstrates her mental state in this moment of the interview: the pain is not past for her but continues in the present. She whispers when telling the interviewer how he grabbed her body and her voice is strained. Her description is filled with pauses as she swallows before continuing.

Esther's testimony demonstrates present emotion not only in her words, but also in her physical presence. Body language can be particularly instructive in oral history interviews. Audio-visual interviews allow the viewer not only to hear the words spoken and the changing qualities of the narrator's voice, but to place this in the context of their physicality. In Esther's interview, her movements indicate a physical connection with the memory of her assault. When beginning her story about the officer, she pulls on the collar of her blouse, obscuring the microphone for a few seconds. A minute later, as she says, 'twist my

breast', her voice raises in pitch, indicating her anxiety at the memory. The next few words – 'The left one', are whispered faintly, and her right hand clutches at her left breast. Her movements in placing her own hand on her breast indicate not only what the German officer did to her but also an attempt to protect herself. Her mirroring actions indicate the embodied nature of the memory.[19] Memory of traumatic events is not only embedded in our minds as words and images, but also as physical feelings. As Esther describes her assault, she remembers his touch; her movements mimic his, whilst also seeming to protect her from the remembered feeling. Within the interview space, as Esther demonstrates the physicality of her memory, both the interviewer and the viewer – removed from the scene in time and space – witness this connection between the past traumatic event and the present emotional retelling.

Within the interview space, when listening to and watching Esther speak, it is clear that while what she is recounting is in the past, what she felt then continues to be felt in the interview. Her physical discomfort and movements hint at physical pain echoing from her experience fifty years before. While her sense of self may have been restored in the ensuing years since her assault, the feeling of having everything stripped away still haunts her and recalling it means not only giving voice to her memories but also physically remembering what happened to her.

Survivors of sexual violence often experience feelings of guilt or shame after the assault. They sometimes blame themselves for being attacked, or for not being able to prevent or stop it.[20] These feelings are present for Holocaust survivors who experienced sexual violence, but their responses are also entwined with their guilt and identity as a Holocaust survivor. That these women were assaulted during the Holocaust adds an additional layer of complex emotions. Not only do they need to come to terms with being violated sexually, but also with all the horrors of the genocide and the loss of family members and their former lives.

For Eva G., the memory of the attempted rape she suffered on the train on the way to Auschwitz is tied to her guilt about the death of her sister. Eva, 15 years old, and her 13-year-old sister, Vera, were deported from Sered concentration camp in Czechoslovakia to Auschwitz in 1944. As they boarded the train, the sisters were reunited with a man who had been a friend of their parents. He joined the pair in the wagon and helped them on the long journey. He invited the sisters to lean on him in the cramped cattle car and encouraged them to think about their parents rather than paying attention to the desperate fighting occurring in the crush around them. But as their journey neared its last day, the man tried to rape Eva. Vera was sleeping and did not know about the assault, but Eva physically

withdrew to the other side of the wagon. Feeling that she could not burden her younger sister, Eva emotionally withdrew from her also and would not tell her what had happened. This physical and emotional distance led to an argument and, when they arrived at Auschwitz, Vera tried to escape from her sister. Remembering her mother's instructions when they last parted that Eva was to be 'the big one and look after her, whatever happened', she clung to her sister on the crowded platform. During the selection, where fit, able-bodied Jews were sent to work and children, the elderly and the weak were sent to their deaths, Eva was sent to the right, to work, and Vera, left and to the gas. Eva asked to remain with her sister, but, still angry about the train journey, Vera eagerly joined the group destined for death.[21]

In the case of both the attempted rape on the train and her separation from her sister, Eva's testimony emphasises her feelings of helplessness and isolation. The abuse had made her 'grow up overnight': she was no longer the person she had been before. She was unable to explain the abuse to her sister: 'So the man was gone, and I made my way back to my sister, who was not speaking to me. I couldn't explain, she was *so* much of a baby, I couldn't explain anything to her. And we left the wagon, very, very angry with each other.'[22] Her inability to explain herself to her sister is the focus of Eva's testimony here – a self-imposed silence intended to not only spare Eva from putting her abuse into words, but to protect her sister.

Similarly, Eva's description of the moments following the separation from Vera focuses on helplessness:

> And in a moment, she was free of me and ran and she ran away happily. [Twelve second pause] [voice shaking] Um, I guess what happened next, it was intensive and so incredibly alien that it kept me too busy to try and find out [what happened to Vera]. And I recall being stripped of that pitiful suitcase. On my mind was one thing, that I had her things. How would she get her things? Well that didn't take long to be clarified.[23]

Vera's elation at being free from her sister becomes an image of her running happily to her death in the gas chambers, while Eva was forced to proceed alone to the work camp. Eva's inability to save Vera mirrors her vulnerability to the abuser in the train. She could not protect her sister, as her mother had insisted she should, just as she could not stop the older friend from assaulting her in the wagon.

Eva's memory of emotional pain caused by her sexual assault is complicated as it is also the despair of losing her sister. Eva struggles to reconcile her own survival with her sister's death. Her own natural mental anguish

about being almost raped by a family friend in a cattle car needs to be tempered, in her mind, with the fact that her sister was murdered the same day and as the 'result' of the molestation. In fact, Eva qualifies her story about the assault by saying 'I'm telling you this because it's very important to what happened later.' She tells the story to explain the separation from her sister. The moment of recollection in the interview is where Eva reveals the twisted, double-trauma of her initiation into Auschwitz. She cannot remember or talk about her sister without also recalling the attempted rape she suffered. While Eva is emotionally controlled for most of the time while talking about this experience, the end of this story leads her to take a 12 second pause, before shakily continuing to describe the routine of showering and shaving inmates. In those minutes of silence, Eva pulls her emotions back before they spill over in the interview, holding her gaze on the interviewer and then dropping it to her lap, sadly shaking her head.[24]

Further complicating Eva's memory is that her experience of sexual abuse is not only tied to the death of her sister but to an iconic Holocaust event: the arrival at Auschwitz. This event is a frequent touchstone in not only testimony but also Holocaust representations such as film, as well as in scholarship. As such, for many survivors, their arrival story is a frequently told one. In order to tell hers, Eva must either tell the story of her sexual assault or edit that story out. In either version, she is remembering not only Auschwitz, but also her sister's death and the attempted rape. Holocaust and gender scholar Joan Ringelheim terms this 'split memory'. Survivors (and scholars) of the Holocaust struggle to reconcile experiences of sexual violence within the context of their other Holocaust memories. Sexual violence seems unimportant to the overall story of Holocaust because it is often absent from both scholarship and from survivor narratives, writes Ringelheim.[25] But when common aspects of Holocaust narratives involve sexual violence, separating them can be a problem. Eva's example demonstrates how memories of sexual violence during the Holocaust are frequently tied to other painful memories, such as the death of family members, which make them all the more difficult to live with.

'You're speaking of what happens now, just right now?': Emotions created in the interview space

While Esther's and Eva's stories are of emotive memories, we know as oral historians that emotions can be created in the interview space as a result of the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. In the previous two examples, the interviewer was more passive; allowing the survivor the space to talk about and express their pain as they recalled their memories. But the next two interviews demonstrate that the act of recalling memories of sexual violence during the Holocaust during an interview can itself generate new emotions.

Survivors of sexual violence conducting interviews with the Shoah Foundation faced a complex decision before and during the interview as to whether they would reveal these particular memories. Thus even the spectre of the interview would likely have engendered stress in many interviewees. For Irene B., contemplating giving testimony brought on considerable stress. Irene B. and her mother, Helena, were members of a Yugoslavian partisan group in Serbia. There was a fight between their group and *Četnici*, a Chetnik nationalist guerrilla force, and Irene and her mother were arrested by the nationalists and taken to a prison in Vlasotince, Serbia. Irene and Helena had false identity papers, so they were not detected as Jews and were imprisoned as partisans. In the Yugoslav prison, she was raped multiple times by the head of the Chetniks, every day for the year that she was imprisoned. Eventually, the Chetnik organised for her to be transferred to a German facility, so that he would not have to kill her, and in the second prison she was raped again by a German soldier named Franz. After managing to be released from German custody with the help of a friend with further false papers who vouched for the women, Irene was raped by a third man, a soldier she had never seen before, who accosted her on a street and pushed her into an abandoned house and raped her. Irene struggles while recalling her memories of her time in the Chetnik prison, where she witnessed the daily torture of other inmates while in solitary confinement, waiting for her rapist to return to abuse her again.[26]

Towards the end of this long and difficult interview, her interviewer, a man named Burton Leiser, asks her to reflect on 'how it feels to reminisce about these events that you, in a way, have put out of your mind for so many years and… what it's been like for you to do this.' Irene clarifies, 'You're speaking of what happens now [in the interview], just right now?' 'Yes,' says Leiser. She immediately responds, 'Devastating.

Absolutely devastating.' Irene then talks about her initial contact with the Shoah Foundation and agreeing to give an interview, knowing that would mean talking about these painful experiences:

> And after I hanged up from her [the representative from the Shoah Foundation], I received a migraine headache, which I never have headaches, almost never. The headache is still with me going on. And my stomach was terribly upset and I started reminiscing… And I started saying, 'I can't go through that [talking about the Holocaust], that's too devastating for me! What am I doing! How can I play with my mind, going back something I have put away for fifty-five years? I don't want to think about it… I had a couple of sleepless nights and when you called me [the interviewer] [pause] I chickened out. I decided I can*not* go through with that. I just can't… you'll be such an effect on me, having sleepless nights, starting all over, thinking [about] what I went through, when I shelved that away for 55 years. … And it's buried very much. In my head, somewhere. And there is a big something pressing against it.[27]

In this passage, Irene honestly reveals the mental blocks she has consciously and unconsciously put in place to protect herself from her memories. When thinking abstractly about giving an interview, the idea seemed bearable – 'I'm a very happy person', she tells her interviewer minutes before this exchange. 'I have a very relaxed life.' But as soon as she made concrete plans to talk about her memories, she experienced considerable physical and psychological torment. These symptoms echo her description of her physical condition when imprisoned by *Četnici*, where she was raped daily by the head of the facility. At that time, she also had stomach pains, sleepless nights and terrible headaches. Her body's stress response to being forced to remember as she made plans to give an interview mimicked the physical torment she suffered for a year while in this prison.

The physical pain was so much that, after many sleepless nights, Irene called to cancel her interview. She compared talking about her experiences, particularly the multiple rapes, to 'playing with my mind.' But she changed her mind again while speaking with the Foundation. She says to Leiser, 'And in a way it's okay. In a way it's good to get it out… Maybe I will get now a release… Maybe it will be good for me. I don't know.'[28] Searching for catharsis, she gave a candid interview that she planned to show her children, to whom she had never confided previously about the rapes. She does not say in her interview whether she feels she made the right decision but hopes she will be able to put her memories to rest.

Jewish women and children from Hungary disembark the train at Auschwitz II-Birkenau, 1944. Auschwitz Album, Yad Vashem.

Many interviewees report using the interview as a way to talk about and, perhaps, to make sense of, their difficult memories. While the interview space cannot 'heal' a traumatized survivor of violence, it can be a way for survivors to give voice to memories that haunt them and an audience to hear of their suffering.[29] Although the Foundation did reach out to the survivors following the interview, and provided them with copies of their interviews, the viewer watching the interview has no way to know whether talking about her experience did help Irene.

Irene's example demonstrates the power of the interview process to contribute to an interviewee's strong emotional reaction when remembering traumatic memories. She had thought her memories, while painful, would be innocuous but discovered that the process of even contemplating giving an interview was sufficient to elicit psychological and physical responses. Her testimony demonstrates the potency of the interview as a space for creating its own emotions, not only as a place to discuss events and suffering that have passed. In addition, her own reflections on her thoughts about giving testimony demonstrate the need for oral historians to think about the interview in terms of process: the before, during and after effects of questioning.

Oral historians are acutely aware of their impact upon the interview and are particularly conscious of the effect that they have on the interviewee with the questions they ask. As interviews are a co-created source, the dynamics in the interview space impact upon the direction of the interview. An interviewee who is not at ease with the process or their questioner may refrain from disclosing difficult memories, especially if they do not feel the interviewer will be supportive.[30] When a survivor talks about sexual violence in a Holocaust interview, the reaction of the interviewer is crucial to how comfortable the interviewee feels about this revelation and how much of their experience they will share. In my larger project, I observed a number of survivors who disclosed their abuse in the interview and who received far from supportive reactions: silence, gasps, awkward throat clearing and the eventual stilted question, 'So what happened next?' Confronted with unsupportive and uncomfortable interviewers, survivors may ultimately feel that the Shoah Foundation, and perhaps historians in general, are not interested in their experiences of sexual violence during the Holocaust. They generally move on with their stories, but the lack of interviewer reception to painful topics lingers in the following discussion. For others whose interviewers did ask follow-up questions, the way the interviewer approached this delicate topic determined how comfortable the survivor felt and sometimes how much detail they gave about their experiences. Survivors with a strong rapport with their interviewer engaged in reflective discussions about their experiences and their memories of them.

In the interviewer-interviewee relationship, oral historians are well aware of the power they hold.[31] The interviewer is the one who arranges the interview, decides on the questions, operates the equipment and, ultimately, controls the end product – the recorded interview. Oral historians writing about the issue of power and inequality in the interview relationship have recognised the need for caution in how the interviewer proceeds when the dynamic is unbalanced. This is especially true in situations where the subject of the interview can be traumatic. Being insensitive to the limits an interviewee places around difficult topics can cause further emotional pain to survivors who are already suffering.

The last example is of an interview that failed the interviewee in an emotional sense. Erica C. prefaces her story by saying, 'I really don't want to talk about it. But I will.' She tells her interviewer that while still living in Vienna after the *Anschluss,* she was gang raped repeatedly by members of the Gestapo. She says the authorities required her to report to them three times a week from 1938 until she escaped to Switzerland in 1940. Every time she reported to the Gestapo headquarters, she was taken to a special room and gang raped by multiple German men. On several occasions in the interview, Erica says she cannot talk about the details. The interviewer, Juliet Halpern, asks clarifying questions in the first instance, which Erica responds to. There is then a break to change tapes. After the tape change, the interviewer attempts to extend the discussion of sexual violence, including asking questions about how Erica dealt with the experience psychologically, how it affected her marriage and how she told her family about what happened to her. Erica repeatedly states her reluctance to talk about the experience:

> INTERVIEWER: Can you describe how this event happened?
>
> ERICA C.: How – What?
>
> INTERVIEWER: How this event happened to you? The second time you went?
>
> ERICA C.: [Ten second pause] I can't do that. [Looking to right, then turns head looking up and slightly left] There is no way that I can go into details about this [slight shake of head]. I can't.
>
> INTERVIEWER: Okay. Just, you were told to go to another room?
>
> ERICA C.: Mm-hmm.
>
> INTERVIEWER: What did you think? You didn't know?

ERICA C.: Didn't see anything. They asked me to get undressed, and I didn't. So they pulled my clothes down. Not all of it, just some of it. [15 second pause, Erica stares at the interviewer.] I can't help more – I can't tell more. Can't. Sorry. [Pause] It's just too personal. [Frowns] Too hateful.

INTERVIEWER: What, ah– Do you remember being frightened? Screaming? Crying?

ERICA C: [Slow nod] I sure do. [Ten second pause, looking to the left, unfocused. After pause, Erica sighs, refocuses and turns her head back to the interviewer.]

INTERVIEWER: What happened when you had to go the next time?...[32]

After this exchange, the interviewer asks for information about what happened when she reported to the Gestapo. Erica's body language – long pauses, looking away from the interviewer for extended periods and frowning – makes clear her discomfort with the line of questioning and several times she says that it is 'too personal' and that she cannot talk about it. Later in the session, the interviewer again interrupts Erica to return to this story and to ask for more detail. Erica reveals her son told those who attended her synagogue what happened, as a way to tell her children and grandchildren about her trauma. Halpern asks Erica to expand on this:

ERICA C.: I wanted them [my children], and grandchildren, to hear, for the first time, what happened to me. And I did tell that, in front of all the people. Didn't go into details like you're asking me to. But I did tell them. [Pause, sniffs.]

INTERVIEWER: And you were able to?

ERICA C.: Not into details. As a matter of fact, I did not talk about it. My son went up on the stage, Steven. I could not talk about it anymore. And I don't want this to happen now. So he went up on the stage and he told about that part.[33]

During the interview, Erica could not be clearer here that she is uncomfortable with discussing the details of her multiple gang rapes. Her body language is hostile, her voice incredulous when the interviewer returns to the subject repeatedly, and she specifically states that she does not want to talk in detail and is unhappy with the direction of the interview. Yet the interviewer continues to bring up this experience. While the detail of the questioning means that the viewer has a far better understanding of what happened to Erica, and

how this has affected her life, this knowledge comes at some cost to the survivor, who felt compelled to answer questions against her wishes. Potentially, Halpern may have believed she was working within the guidelines of the Shoah Foundation's project here: their interviewer guidelines make clear the need for specificity and concrete details, encourage the interviewer to ask '*probing questions* [to] elicit information in greater depth, and… [to] ask the interviewee to reflect upon events'.[34] Literary scholar Dawn Skorczewski discusses a similar Shoah Foundation interview, where the interviewer presses for details about sexual violence that the survivor was not prepared to give. She argues that such a moment destroys the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, to the point where the camera becomes voyeuristic, witnessing the very emotion that the survivor did not want to display.[35] Certainly, in Erica's interview, the repeated returning to the issue of sexual violence causes a breakdown in the rapport between the interviewer and interviewee.

Erica's testimony is extremely uncomfortable to watch. A survivor who brought up her traumatic experiences in order to have them on the 'historical record' is ignored in her requests to stop the questioning and probing for details. Skorczewski likens interviewers in such scenarios to detectives, 'enact[ing] a discursive situation in which detectives pursue the facts of a crime. They are positioned as knowing experts whose inquiries shape the narratives of the events.'[36] In the examples Skorczewski uses, the interviewees push back against their interviewers' attempts at more details and refuse to answer. Erica attempts to do this at first, but, under the continuing barrage of questioning from Halpern, she does eventually provide more detail. We can see in Erica's testimony a clear example of an uneven power relationship being exploited.[37] Although she does not want to answer because recalling the details is emotionally too hard, Erica does because she feels obliged in the context of the interview. Sitting in front of an interviewer, a videographer and a camera, in that moment she felt that she could not push back and refuse to talk. This is a particularly problematic element of the interview. In these exchanges, Erica's emotional state has become irrelevant to the quest for details.

By pushing for details that Erica does not want to give, Halpern denied Erica the agency to determine which aspects of her story were told and recorded in the interview. Oral historians have long been concerned about protecting our narrators from the ill effects of retelling difficult stories and have argued that a key way to do this is to ensure the interviewee has a measure of control over how they tell their own story.[38] Reflecting on his extensive work with Holocaust survivors, Henry Greenspan has observed that scholars should view silence and speech as acts of agency. '"Choose" is the key word,' he writes.[39] In

Erica's interview, her agency is clearly displayed in her careful decision to tell her family and community, and likewise in her choice to give the broad strokes of her story to the Shoah Foundation. But this agency is then removed, and Erica's wishes silenced, by the interviewer's insistence that they continue to talk about the topic against the interviewee's expressed wishes.[40] In Erica's interview, the emotional display is not only the pain of recollecting traumatic memories, but also that of not being listened to, in a space specifically created to listen to her story.

Oral historians, particularly those accessing interviews in secondary archives as I am, need to be cognisant of the ethical ramifications of using other people's interviews. While I cannot control what happened in Erica's interview, I can control how I use it as a scholar and I can respect her agency while doing so. I have chosen to include her story in this paper to demonstrate the importance of listening to narrators and of being cautious about how the interview space and the interviewer-interviewee dynamic can have considerable impact on narrators. In Irene's case, she made a decision to push past her physical and emotional pain to sit with the Shoah Foundation and talk about her Holocaust experiences, including sexual violence. Erica agreed to share her story of sexual violence, but she placed limitations on what she was willing to share. Her agency was not respected in the interview process and her interview demonstrates the vulnerability of oral history interviewees when talking about sensitive subjects.

'And what happened next?': Using emotional interviews in Holocaust research

Oral history as a discipline is necessarily self-reflective. Usually, this involves the interviewer considering their own interview, the ethics involved and their relationship with the interviewee. In the case of my research, I am not the interviewer, but rather a viewer watching on my computer screen twenty years after the interviews were conducted.. In using the VHA, I am a further step removed from the interview than other oral historians conducting interviews about difficult subjects. For these other oral historians who are aware of the ethical concerns about asking narrators to detail traumatic experiences, they are personally embedded in the intimate dynamic between interviewer and interviewee. But the secondary viewer, removed in time and space from the interview, has no control over how the interview is conducted, nor the delicate interactions within this space after sexual violence revelations are made. So how can we ethically make use of these interviews?

Holocaust research, by its very nature, is emotional work. All Holocaust testimonies involve asking the narrators to talk about experiences that were traumatic and destructive to their communities, their families

and to themselves. Further, our ability to conduct research on taboo topics such as sexual violence is contingent on survivors voluntarily doing emotional work in interviews and choosing to talk about these experiences. As I discussed earlier in this article, survivor testimonies are the main, and sometimes only, sources historians have that shed light on Jewish women's experiences of sexual violence. As such, it is imperative that we are careful with the interview sources that exist already and when conducting new research with Holocaust survivors about sexual violence.

In the additional interviews I looked at as part of my larger project almost every single interviewee initiated the conversation about sexual violence themselves. These were experiences they deliberated on and decided to bring up in their interview. Many emphasised the importance of having their story 'on the historical record'. They made very deliberate decisions to talk about their difficult memories because they saw that these stories were not present in most scholarship and representations of the Holocaust. Irma M., for instance, forcefully insisted on telling her story of sexual assault when an embarrassed interviewer tried to move the discussion along. Leaning forward and pointing an index finger straight at the interviewer she says, 'I want to discuss something else in Switzerland. Okay?... I must put this in because I think it's important.'[41] We should not be afraid to use interviews that include taboo stories because that also removes agency from these women who made the difficult decision to share experiences, despite their discomfort and the emotional toll it took on them. As Irma and hundreds of other women like her make clear, what happened to them was important and should be included in historical understandings of the Holocaust. Several women mentioned feeling angry and unrecognised by the lack of discussion in historical scholarship about sexual violence against Jewish women. Luba M. speaks with frustration about never being able to find reference to the mass rapes by Soviet soldiers of women in liberated concentration camps: 'somebody [should] write about it and say something about it!'[42] She believes talking about her attempted rape will provide a more accurate representation of the war and liberation. These women are aware that discourse about the past is often controlled by historians.[43] Survivors sometimes explain that giving testimony is a way not only to object to existing scholarly work that has marginalised their experiences, but also to actively influence future scholarship because their Shoah Foundation Institute stories may be used in historical work. Talking about sexual violence in their Holocaust interview was a way to assert their own agency and to actively participate in the creation of histories about Jewish women during the Holocaust.

The Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive is a repository filled with emotion. Testimonies

about sexual violence during the Holocaust demonstrate that 'what happened next' – after the assault, and after the disclosure of sexual violence in an interview – is complicated by both the tumult of the memories and the interview circumstances themselves. The four interviews discussed in this paper are examples of anguish, disgust, discomfort, guilt and sorrow. Esther, Eva, Irene and Erica all shared their stories with the Shoah Foundation in order to have their experiences of sexual violence on the record and to ensure their story is told in its entirety.

Emotions and feelings about sexual violence are woven into the broader narratives of their Holocaust experiences. For Esther, these emotions are visceral and connect to her sense of identity. The memory of her assault is clearly imprinted upon her body and retelling this story also brings the reminder of her perpetrator's violent touch. Eva's experience demonstrates how memories of sexual violence can be closely intertwined with other key memories of the Holocaust. Remembering her sister and her cruel separation from her necessitates remembering the assault she suffered at the hands of a trusted family friend, all while in the desperate circumstances of a cattle car bound for Auschwitz. The direct link between her assault and her sister's death means that this memory is infused with feelings of guilt for Eva. In both of these testimonies, the emotions of the past are still very clearly present for the two women remembering their assaults in the 1990s, and although they may have processed their experiences in the intervening years, the emotions felt about these events are still raw and powerful in their interviews.

Emotions can also be created within the interview space. Irene's story demonstrates how even the contemplation of remembering sexual violence, and her Holocaust experiences more generally, can bring back floods of memories buried decades earlier. Finally, Erica's interview is a stark example of the role the interviewer plays as an active participant in the construction of the interview and the responsibility interviewers have to not only listen to their interviewee, but also to be cognisant of the emotional damage that can be wrought in a quest for a detailed interview when dealing with sensitive topics.

These stories demonstrate the importance of attempting to understand emotion not only in terms of the events they are describing, but also how emotion affects the narration of these events many years later and how the act of giving testimony can create new emotions within the interview space. We must be both aware and cautious of the power of emotion within difficult testimonies in order to conduct and use our interviews effectively, and to ensure our narrators are not emotionally harmed by our practice.

This article has been peer reviewed.

Acknowledgements

Endnotes

1   Kirsty Chatwood argues for a consideration of the context of genocide when discussing sexual violence during the Holocaust. See Kirsty Chatwood, '(Re)-Interpreting Stories of Sexual Violence: The Multiple Testimonies of Lucile Eichengreen,' in Esther Hertzog, ed, *Life, Death and Sacrifice: Women and Family in the Holocaust*, Gefen Books, Jerusalem, 2008, p. 162.

2   Birgit Beck, 'Rape: The Military Trials of Sexual Crimes Committed by Soldiers in the *Wehrmacht*, 1939-1945,' in *Home/Front: The Military, War and Gender in Twentieth Century Germany*, ed. Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum, Berg, Oxford, 2002, pp. 255–73; Birgit Beck, 'Sexual Violence and its Prosecution by Courts Martial of the *Wehrmacht*,' in *A World of Total War: Global Conflict and the Politics of Destruction,* 1937-1945, ed. Roger Chickering, Cambridge University Press, Washington, D.C., 2005, pp. 317–31; Birgit Beck, *Wehrmacht und sexuelle Gewalt: Sexualverbrechen vor deutschen Militårgerichten,* 1939-1945, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn, 2004; Monika Flaschka, 'Race, Rape and Gender In Nazi-Occupied Territories', PhD Diss., Kent State University, 2009. In Nazi-Occupied Territories'; David Raub Snyder*, Sex Crimes Under the Wehrmacht*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 2002.

3   Examples of survivor memoirs that explore sexual violence and gendered themes include Livia E. Bitton Jackson, *Elli: Coming of Age in the Holocaust*, Harper Collins, London, 1994; Jagna Boraks, *Garden of Steel*, Ekstasis Editions, Victoria, 1993; Lillian Boraks-Nemetz, *The Old Brown Suitcase*, Ben-Simon Publications, 1994; Charlotte Delbo, *Auschwitz and After*, trans. Rosette C. Lamont New Haven: Yale University Press, Brentwood Bay, 1985; Lucille Eichengreen, *Rumkowski and the Orphans of Łódź*, with Rebecca Camhi Fromer, Mercury House, San Francisco, 2000; Lucille Eichengreen, *From Ashes to Life: My Memories of the Holocaust*, with Harriet Hyman Chamberlain, Mercury House, San Francisco, 1994; Ruth Elias, *Triumph of Hope: From Theresienstadt and Auschwitz to Israel*, trans. Margot Bettauer Dembo, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1998; Fania Fénelon, *Playing for Time,* with Marcelle Routier, trans. Judith Landry, New York: Atheneum, 1977; Judith Magyar Isaacson, *Seed of Sarah: Memoirs of a Survivor*, University of Illinois Press, Chicago, 1990; Cecilie Klein, *Sentenced to Life: A Survivor's Memoir*, Holocaust Library, New York, 1988; Isabella Leitner, *Fragments of Isabella: A Memoir of Auschwitz*, ed. Irving A. Leitner, Thomas Y. Crowell Publishers, New York, 1978; Olga Lengyel, *Five Chimneys*, Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1947; Nina Markovna, *Nina's Journey: A Memoir of Stalin's Russia and the Second World War*, Regnery Gateway, Washington, D.C., 1989; Gisela Perl, *I Was A Doctor in Auschwitz*, International University Press, New York, 1948; Leonard Tushnet, *The Pavement of Hell*, St Martin's Press, New York, 1972.

4   USC Shoah Foundation Institute, 'Preserving the Visual History Archive,' available from http://sfi.usc.edu/explore/preservation, accessed 3 September 2014.

5   For a detailed and critical analysis of the VHA, see Noah Shenker, *Reframing Holocaust Testimony,* Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 2015.

6   USC Shoah Foundation Institute, 'Interviewer Guidelines,' available from http://sfi.usc.edu/vha/indexing, accessed 22 November 2015, p. 3. The volunteers were all paid a stipend of US$50 per interview. Bernard Weinraub, 'Spielberg Recording Holocaust Testimony,' *The New York Times,* 10 November 1994.

7   Shenker, *Reframing Holocaust Testimony,* 119.

8   Christopher R. Browning, *Remembering Survival: Inside a Nazi Slave-Labor Camp*, W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 2010, p. 5.

9   This paper will only examine testimonies of female survivors. My larger project examined sexual violence against Jewish women and girls, and I did not include analysis of male testimonies. This was for two reasons. The first is the large volume of testimonies I already had for women survivors (989 in English) compared to a much smaller number from male survivors. Secondly, it became clear early in the project that Jewish men's memories of sexual violence were very different not only in the way they experienced sexual violence, but also in language choices, psychological reactions, the ways men interpreted and applied meaning to their own experiences, and in the gendered cultural discourses surrounding sexual violence against men as opposed to that against women. It became evident that the stories of male survivors of sexual violence during the Holocaust could not be given satisfactory attention in this project, so I limited the focus to Jewish women and female children. My next project will be an exploration male experiences of sexual violence and a gendered analysis of men's memories of the Holocaust.

10 This included two categories of keywords: 'rape and sexual molestation' and 'coerced sexual activity' (including permutations of these two categories, such as 'rape and sexual molestation in ghettos').

11 For example, see the following notable works: Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*, Routledge, New York, 1991; Henry Greenspan, *On Listening to Holocaust Survivors: Beyond Testimony,* 2nd ed, Paragon House, St Paul, 2010; Lawrence L. Langer, *Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1991.

12 Langer, *Ruins of Memory,* xv.

13 See a previous publication of mine that also discusses Esther's testimony. Annabelle Baldwin, 'Sexual Violence and the Holocaust: Reflections on Memory and Witness Testimony,' *Holocaust Studies: A Journal of Culture and History* 16, no. 3 (2010): 112–34.

14 See Felicja Karay, '*Death Comes in Yellow': Skarżysko-Kamienna Slave-Labor Camp,* trans. Sara Kitai, Harwood Academic, Amsterdam, 1995; Felicja Karay, 'Women in the Forced-Labor Camps,' in Dalia Ofer and Lenore J. Weitzman, eds, *Women in the Holocaust*, Yale University Press, New York, 1998, pp. 285–309.

15 For more about Fritz Bartenschlager's widespread sexual abuse of Jewish female prisoners in Skarżysko-Kamienna, see Felicja Karay, 'Women in the Forced-Labor Camps', pp. 290–91; Felicja Karay, *Death Comes in Yellow*, pp. 80–81

16 Felicja Karay, 'Women in the Forced-Labor Camps'' pp. 287-88. I use the term 'molested' to mean non-consensual sexual contact without penetration.

17 Esther G. (23436), 17 November 1996, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 6, 2.00-15.00.

18 Esther G. (23436), tape 6, 10.00-11.00.

19 Dan Sipe, 'The Future of Oral History and Moving Images', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson eds,' *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd ed, Routledge, London, 2006, p. 409.

20 Catalina M. Arata, 'Coping with Rape: The Roles of Prior Sexual Abuse and Attributions of Blame', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* vol. 14, no. 1, 1999, pp. 62-78.

21 Eva G. (2723), 25 May 1995, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 2, 18.00-25.00.

22 Eva G. (2723), tape 2, 21.00-21.30.

23 Eva G. (2723), tape 2, 24.00-25.00

24 Eva G. (2723), tape 2, 22.00-25.00.

25 Joan Ringelheim, 'The Split Between Gender and the Holocaust,' in Ofer and Weitzman, *Women in the Holocaust,* pp. 340–50.

26 Irene B. (28053), 8 April 1997, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 3, 13.00-27.00; tape 4 0.30-2.30; tape 5, 4.00-5.00, 12.00-17.00.

27 Irene B. (28053), tape 5, 12.00-17.00.

28 Irene B. (28053), tape 5, 16.30-17.00.

29 Sean Field, 'Beyond "healing": Trauma, oral history and regeneration', *Oral History*, vol. 34, no. 1, (Spring 2006), pp. 31–42.

30 Valerie Raleigh Yow, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3rd edition, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, 2015, pp.108–22.

31 For instance, see Henry Greenspan, 'From testimony to recounting: Reflections from forty years of listening to Holocaust survivors', in Steven High, ed, *Beyond Testimony and Trauma: Oral History in the Aftermath of Mass Violence*, UBC Press, Vancouver, 2015, p. 147; Daniel James, 'Listening in the cold: The practice of oral history in an Argentinian meatpacking community', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds, *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd edition, Routledge, London, 2016, pp. 73–91; Popular Memory Group, "Popular memory: Theory, politics, method," in Perks and Thomson, *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd edition, p. 52; Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, State University of New York, Albany, 1991, p. 56.

32 Erica C. (33315), 18 September 1997, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 2, 0.20-3.00.

33 Erica C. (33315), tape 2, 16.20-17.30. This tension is well illustrated in Claude Lanzmann's documentary film *Shoah*, where he pushed *Sonderkommando* survivor Abraham Bomba to recount how he cut the hair of the Jews arriving at Treblinka before they were gassed. Claude Lanzmann (dir.), *Shoah*, 1985. For criticism of this scene and the ethics involved, see Raul Hilberg, *Sources of Holocaust Research: An Analysis,* Ivan R. Dee, Chicago, 2001, pp. 169–70.

34 USC Shoah Foundation Institute, 'Interviewer Guidelines,' available from http://sfi.usc.edu/vha/indexing, accessed 22 November 2015, 10. Emphasis in the original.

35 Dawn Skorczewski, '"You want me to sing?': Holocaust testimonies in the intersubjective field', *Dapim: Studies on the Holocaust*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2018, pp. 119–21.

36 Skorczewski, 'You want me to sing?', p. 120.

37   For more on this, see Michael Frisch's work on shared authority: Michael Frisch, *A shared authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*, State University of New York, Albany, 1990.

38   Anna Sheftel and Stacy Zembrzycki, 'Who's afraid of oral history? Fifty years of debates and anxiety about ethics', *The Oral History Review*, vol. 43, no. 2, 2016, pp. 338–66.

39   Henry Greenspan, 'The unsaid, the incommunicable, the unbearable, and the irretrievable', *The Oral History Review*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2014, pp. 230–31.

40   For an illuminating discussion on the ability of interviewers to further silence survivors of sexual violence, see Linda Alcoff and Laura Gray, 'Survivor discourse: Transgression or recuperation?', *Signs*, vol. 18, no. 2, Winter 1993, pp. 260–90.

41   Irma M. (45616), 4 September 1998, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 3, 18.30-19.00.

42   Luba M. (7784), 20 October 1995, Shoah Foundation Institute Oral Testimony, tape 3, 3.50-5.30.

43   Portelli, *Death of Luigi Trastulli, p.* 56.

'Listening Against the Grain': Methodologies in Uncovering Emotions in Oral History Interviews

Portia Dilena

Abstract

Protest is an inherently emotional act, yet for student protestors in 1960s Australia this was a damaging accusation. In an attempt to legitimise their actions, students depicted their protests as a rational pursuit. This denial of emotion proves problematic for oral history researchers attempting to reveal the role of emotions in student protest. This paper demonstrates the different techniques that can be employed to uncover emotions in oral history interviews when the interviewee was reluctant to have them exposed. By listening against the grain, emotions can be written back into a history where they were intentionally written out.

Introduction

Embarking on research for my PhD in September 2017, I tentatively reached out to one of the participants of the 1960s Australian student movement, in the hope of obtaining an interview. I had been put in contact with this individual through a colleague of mine, who had known them from their time at university, and I was hopeful that this connection would facilitate an easy relationship. In the opening email, I introduced myself, gave a brief description of my project – that I wanted to uncover the motivators and transnational aspects of the Australian student movement between 1960 and 1970 – and explained that crucial to my research were the voices and stories of those who were there. Two hours after sending my very welcoming and flattering email, I received a curt reply. The response stated that while the former protestor was open to an interview, they were also very cautious. They had heard about my interest in the role of emotions from our mutual acquaintance, and they were wary and guarded. They stated that 'conservative theorists and publicists' had attempted to explain the activism of the 1960s in the same 'psychological' manner, and that I would 'not find much sympathy for this approach from any of us who were involved at the time.'[1] While this frank response stung a little, and dampened my enthusiasm for conducting my first oral history project, it did not take me by surprise, not even a little.

Protest badges from Museums Victoria's collections. Photographer: Patricia Nistor. Source: Museums Victoria https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/articles/15181]

I knew the history of 1960s Australian student activism and its tense relationship with emotion and psychologically-based theory. To suggest to these ex-protestors that they were motivated by emotions, or that emotions played any role in their past actions, was seen as akin to calling them narcissistic and overindulgent. Yet with the advancement of the emotional turn in academia, the negative tropes surrounding emotion have been largely broken down. Emotion has once again entered the discussion and analysis of social movements, and with much success.[2] If I was to explore the motivators and workings of student protest, then I needed to address the role of emotions. How then, was I to work emotions back into a history in which the participants still completely rejected them? How do you uncover emotions that do not want to be uncovered?

Using the concept of listening against the grain,[3] this paper will demonstrate my approach to uncovering the role of emotions in 1960s Australian student protest, an area in which emotions were essentially written out and yet, I argue, deserve to be written back in.

Emotions in 1960s Australia

In the 1960s there was an upsurge in dramatic, student-led protest across the world; civil rights in the United States, free speech at the University of California, student and worker revolts in Paris in 1968, and the all-dominating Vietnam War. The world was changing rapidly and youth, in particular university students, had something to say. In Australia change was occurring fast. Between 1945 and 1975 the Australian university student population had increased tenfold, while the Australian population had not even doubled.[4] In 1950, government-funded teaching studentships were re-introduced, and in Victoria two new universities, Monash and La Trobe, opened in 1961 and 1967 respectively.[5] This opened tertiary education to the working and middle class who had originally been excluded through caps on admissions and financial restraints. With more students accessing tertiary education, alongside advancements in communications and media technologies, radical New Left ideas poured in from Europe, the UK, Asia and the US. Mirroring this influx of ideas, student political groups and student publications flourished, with many student groups producing two or more papers per week.[6] For Monash activist Michael Hyde, this was an exciting time to be studying. Aware of international student movements, Hyde actively sought out student political action, and found it in the Maoist Monash Labor Club:

> Then I went and saw the Labor Club. And they just… [smacks lips] They were ALIVE man, they were ALIVVVEEE!! They had Marx and Engels, Che Guevara, and Chairman Mao all over the fucking place. And they were active, they were *talking* to people! They had lots of different things, they had *great* badges… and they were out there doing it![7]

Protest and revolution had taken the world by storm with academics, authorities and social commentators desperately trying to find out why. Quite ironically, emotion as a causation featured prominently in analyses by contemporaneous social movement theorists. Yet this emotion-centred approach was used to undermine the movement's credibility, leveraging the commonly held belief that emotions existed in opposition to rationality.[8] This reason versus irrationality binary was often employed by governing bodies to deride and discredit the student movement and their actions.[9] Many tried to explain away the student movement through a Freudian psychological approach, believing that students were acting on their irrational, primitive emotions, rather than their rational, reason-driven sensibilities. In her article 'Oedipal Politics', published in the *Current Affairs Bulletin* in 1969, Dr Coral Bell listed seven reasons as to why the students were protesting.[10] According to her, they were middle-class, large-city-located, first generation children of immigrants, who were transferring their internal 'father-son' Oedipal tensions onto the university authorities. She claimed that protestors were fulfilling the pre-assigned societal role of the 'student radical', taking part in 'ritual drama'.[11] The paternalistic approach of conservative theorists dismissed and discredited the students and their campaigns. Students reacted strongly to this condescending attitude, with the Monash Labor Club stating, 'we are not a collection of ratbags but a serious organisation.'[12]

Yet this emotion centred approach was not to last, as in the 1970s a new wave of academics in the social sciences emerged who had been part of or were sympathetic to the student movement, resulting in a shift in social movement theory.[13] No longer did they seek to condemn or dismiss student activists, rather they chose to address protest in a more factual and empirical fashion. In a bid to remove the irrationality and seemingly unmeasurable elements from protest, emotion was written out of their analysis. This shift in social movement theory saw the development of Resource Mobilisation Theory, which sought to explain *how* protest occurs over the *why*.[14]

Occurring concurrently, radical student groups also removed emotion from their actions in an effort to legitimise their campaigns. Their adherence to ideology strengthened, behaviour expectations of participants became stricter, and their publications became more factual and impersonal. In a July 1967 edition of *Print*, the newspaper for the Monash Labor Club, the author scathingly lists the true enemies of the Vietnam War. The author states that their enemies are those who 'take part in the rape and slaughter of the Vietnamese nation', those who 'sacrifice the lives of the young', and those who 'censor our reading and cripple our minds.'[15] By contrast, a 1971 article from the same paper simply lists the facts and costs of the Vietnam War, removing all emotive language.[16]

While the publications printed by students at the time have provided me with a wealth of sources, they are often lacking in the personal detail necessary for my research focus. Oral history allows me to access the personal side of history that is often left out of written sources. Through the medium of oral history, participants are able to narrate their own lives, including their own analyses and nuanced understandings of it. In fact, psychologists Bernard Rime, Susanna Corsini and Gwenola Herbette found that individuals are more likely to share their emotional experience through an autobiographical account than any other medium.[17] Yet, as demonstrated above, many of my participants were still scarred by their treatment in the 1960s and were wary of any mention of emotion as motivator. I needed to construct a methodology in which emotions were not a focal point, yet were still being addressed.

While this paper is situated in the field of history, it has drawn on a number of different disciplines to compliment and strengthen it. The study of emotions across the humanities and social sciences experienced a resurgence in the last half of the twentieth century.[18] Due to its infancy there has been a dialogue between disciplines seeking to 'obtain a more holistic theory of emotion' through the sharing of methodology and theory.[19] Originally presented at an Oral History Victoria symposium, this paper is my own methodological approach to researching emotions in oral history interviews.

Methodology

In order to uncover emotions in my interviews I attempted to apply the subaltern studies concept of reading against the grain, except with a slight twist. Listening against the grain follows a similar concept to its post-colonial studies parent, in that by listening to the silences and absences, we can access that which might be buried or ignored.[20] By utilising four different techniques – question structure, emotion talk, metaphors, and non-verbal and prosodic features – I was able to uncover emotions without alienating or putting undue stress upon my interviewees.

Firstly, there is question structure. In his seminal work on emotions, William Reddy claims that strong emotions are connected to an individual's deepest and most base desires.[21] Thus, it follows that important life moments and decisions are paired with strong emotion and memories. In order to access these memories, and consequently the associated emotions, the interview needed to be structured in a way that allowed the interviewee to identify these important life moments and convey them without the feeling of being coerced. In a 2014 study on the development of a computer software that tracks emotions in recorded oral history interviews by Khiet Truong, Gerben Westerhof, Sanne Lamers and Franciska de Jong, the importance of question structure in eliciting emotional responses was demonstrated.[22] Truong et al found that emotional displays increased towards the end of the interview, but also after open-ended and meaning questions as opposed to factual and close-ended questions. The authors believed that open-ended and meaning questions left room for a more personal and thus emotional response.[23] Mirroring this sentiment, Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack encourage oral history researchers who interview women to use open-ended questions as it enables room for reflection on the part of the interviewee.[24]

Applying this to my own work, I structured my interview questions by life stages and key events, avoiding factual and close-ended questions. This meant that the interviewee was able to reflect on what that life stage or event meant to them, demonstrating what they believed to be important. For example, I would ask them in what ways were their family politically active? Why had they identified with international freedom movements? And to conclude the interview, what was their most memorable moment? This final question, building upon the memories resurfaced from the previous questions, asked the interviewee to identify what they found to be not only the most significant moment, but also that to which they had the strongest connection. When posed this question, Ken Mansell, an ex-Monash Labor Club member, fondly recalled getting up and singing 'The Ballad of Ho Chi Minh', 'guerrilla' style, at the May 1970 Melbourne Moratorium:

> My most memorable moment was up at Treasury Gardens, when everyone had assembled, and there was at least 80,000 people there. Sam Goldbloom is with Jim Cairns up on the podium, and they're speaking to the assembled throng, and it's as far as your eye can see – people everywhere [laughs]. And, Albert Langer came up to me, I'm standing behind the podium – I don't know why… Albert Langer came up to me and he said, 'Ask them if you can get up and sing the Ballad of Ho Chi Minh' [big laugh]. I looked at Albert and I said, 'Oh, no chance! No way!' And somehow I plucked up the guts and the courage to say to Goldbloom, who was the MC, 'Can I get up and sing a peace song?' [giggles]. *Well!* I got up and sang about four verses of the Ballad of Ho Chi Minh, and it caused great traumas! [25]

Just moments before, Mansell had spoken solemnly and even held back tears, remembering the power of the anti-war movement when the marchers sat down on Bourke Street, bringing the city to a stand-still. Yet it was this cheeky, youthful act of singing a song that 'wasn't the [accepted] line' by the wider anti-Vietnam War Movement, which in hindsight Mansell identified as most significant.[26] Mansell's response, contrasted with the solemn account of the sit-in at the Moratorium, demonstrates the importance Mansell places on those happy, irreverent moments experienced between friends.

A second key finding of Truong's et al study was that emotional displays increase during the course of the interview.[27] While they were not able to give a definite reason as to why this occurs, there are several possibilities including: the incremental accumulation of emotions; the act of going deep into one's memories and unearthing long-forgotten emotions; or, as Katie Holmes argues, the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. Drawing on the work of oral historian Michael Roper and psychoanalytic insights, Holmes calls attention to the importance of the relationship between the interviewer and the

interviewee and its possible impact on the course of the conversation. Holmes argues that the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee, and both individuals' own history, react with each other to elicit or trigger an emotional reaction unique to that point in time.[28] While Holmes calls for the historian to be aware of this relationship in their analysis of the material, linguist Kathleen Ferrara believes that dialogue should be co-constructed to enable a more productive conversation.[29] Building upon these recommendations, I practice a methodology where I try to form some sort of relationship between the interviewee and myself before each interview. Not only does this make the interview less stressful, but it also allows it to progress more smoothly and naturally.

Secondly, it is important to listen to occurrences of 'emotion talk'. Emotion talk, defined by Jenny Harding, are the emotive words used in conversation to describe the speaker's current or past affective state; such as angry, sad, happy, etc.[30] While the words themselves may seem quite shallow, Harding believes that their deeper historical and social meaning provides a more in-depth analysis of the interviewee's understanding of their own subjectivities. French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan argued that there is both affect and emotion: the former being the bodily, personal experience, and the latter, the culturally-created label that is then assigned to the affect.[31] Emotive words derive their meaning from their use in society and throughout history, generating a multiplicity of definitions outside of the base bodily sensations they are meant to articulate. If a person states they are depressed, not only does this mean that they are feeling sad, but the term also carries their society's understandings and preconceptions around mental illness and depression. Similarly, an individual can apply several emotive words, such as 'depressed', 'down' and 'sad', to the affect they are experiencing, each label providing a slight variation on meaning.[32] Emotive words are used by the interviewee to reflect on, but also give critical analysis to, their life narrative and thus should be tracked throughout the interview.

In this short extract from my interview with Michael Hyde, Hyde constantly refers to the way fury fuels his desire for action today, as it did when he was 15:

> Hyde: But I have been getting so pissed off about war, so pissed off about the First World War in particular, if I hear one more poor, deluded child, or person, say 'well they fought for our freedoms and we wouldn't have what we have now…' [sighs]. Jesus Fuckkkk. If I have to hear that piece of shit again, I think I'll blow up!
> Dilena: Is this one of the reasons why you would like to write this book?
> Hyde: Precisely. As a matter of fact, I realised

the other day that I am beginning to feel like I did when I was 15. *Furious* at property. *Furious* at racism. *Furious* at war. *Furious* at injustice.[33]

In this extract, Hyde uses several emotive words that refer to anger; 'pissed off,' 'Jesus Fuck' and the repeated 'furious.' Yet, furious is more than mere anger, it is the deep betrayal and frustration experienced when one understands the injustice and unfairness of a repeated or deliberate action. Hyde was, and is not just, furious that war and racism exist, rather he is furious that war and racism continue to exist and are supported through the actions of governments, despite their known harmful effects. In this example, tracking the emotive words in an interview provided me with a deeper analysis of the interviewee's own understanding of their subjective experience.

Thirdly, and in the same vein as emotion talk, is the need to pay attention to metaphors used in interviews. The wide variety of available metaphors allow an interviewee to convey slight variations of their affective state and memory that emotive words may not be able to provide. Raymond W Gibbs Jr., John S Leggitt and Elizabeth A Turner in their study of metaphors around anger, found that interviewees used 'figurative language strategically to express the subtle nuances of emotional states.'[34] Jane Moodie explores in greater detail the importance of metaphors and figurative language in recovering emotions in her article, 'Surprised by Joy: A Case History exploring the Expression of Spiritual Joy in Oral History'. Moodie believes that the metaphors and figurative language used reflect the intensity of emotion assigned to that memory.[35] By utilising certain creative language, the interviewee hopes to evoke the analogous emotion in the re-telling.[36] Metaphors and figurative language demonstrate what is important to the interviewee, and how they understand, remember and assign meaning to that memory. By using terms like 'cut it open' and 'demolition' when describing the Vietnam War, Jim Prentice, a Brisbane radical, demonstrated how much of an impact the Vietnam War had on Australian youths' perception of the world, and subsequently it's influence in mobilising the student movement.

> It was a simple binary. The trouble is, it was a terribly, terribly simple binary that was put on. You know, we were good, they were bad. And so, that was like a really fragile ideology, and the Vietnam War just cut it open… like it was a kind of demolition of that whole world view.

For Jim Prentice, the Vietnam War and the atrocities committed during it violently destroyed Australian youths' understanding of communism as defined by the Australian government and media. This realisation was so dramatic and personally upsetting that Jim compares it to a violent act.

The final technique is one that has been traditionally accepted as the main carrier of emotion in oral history interviews.[37] Non-verbal and prosodic features relate to instances in an interview where emotion is expressed without words. This can refer to changes in the tone of voice, a sigh, the pace, voice inflection, or even a pause. In Leslie Anne Hadfield's article on the South African Black Conscience movement, she argues that slight changes in the pace of the story or the tone of voice demonstrate the intensity of the political danger at the time, and the emotional effect it had on the interviewees.[38] Yet academics have argued that while non-verbal cues and prosodic features are useful for identifying the type of emotion prevalent at the time of interview, they are shallow and not truly effective in revealing past emotions.[39] Fussell states that non-verbal mechanisms do not provide the detail necessary to understand the 'the full range of human emotional experiences'. Firstly, non-verbal mechanisms do not provide the fine detail, such as the exact type of emotion or its origins, that verbal communication facilitates. Secondly, and especially pertinent to oral history interviews, is that often people are talking about emotional experiences of the past. That means that while reflecting upon the past, the individual may not be experiencing the event or emotions in the same way as the initial event, having had time to process the event and associated emotions, possibly altering their perceptions and experiences of it in the present.[40]

Non-verbal cues featured prominently throughout my interviews, ranging from the countless pauses as interviewees slowly searched for the correct words, to laughter at remembering amusing student antics. Laughter can signify a range of emotions or thoughts, whether that is the recollection of a fond memory, or astonishment at the perceived corruption and opposition the students had faced. Furthermore, it also demonstrates the impact of nostalgia and time in altering memories and emotions.[41] In my interview with Fran Newell, her recollection of the lengths to which she went to meet up with her draft resister husband, Michael Hamel-Green, demonstrate the impact of time on memory.[42]

> Newell: It was sort of the way we lived, it was just an *enormous* amount of pressure now I think about it.
> Dilena: Yeah, I can't even imagine being constantly followed, and watched, and listened to as well.
> Newell: Yeah, yeah! So, we had wigs and disguises. And, a friend, somebody who was involved at the time who I am still friends with, says he will never forget the day that he came to a house to see me, because I was going to take him to see Michael. And I answered the door, in my wig, in my outfit, and he had *no idea* it was me, none at all! And I didn't say anything, I just

> pointed down the hall, and it wasn't until we got to the end and closed the door and I spoke did he realise who I was [big laugh]. It was bizarre.
> Dilena: It must have been a very good costume then?
> Newell: Yes, the wig is now in the State Library.
> Dilena: Oh really? [laughs] What colour was the wig?
> Newell: It was called '*La Rocka!*' Red… bizarre.[43]

In this short extract, Newell explains the pressure on their lives when her husband Hamel-Green was on the run from the Federal Police, but also the joy in remembering her 'La Rocka' wig. While Newell remembers the stress that Hamel-Green and herself were under in those years, she is also expressing joy, looking back now at the lengths to which they went to maintain their marriage.

Conclusion

The year 2020 will mark the 50-year anniversary of the first Melbourne Moratorium, signalling an opportunity for reflection. Why did so many students break from such a traditional and conservative older generation and take to the streets in the hundreds of thousands? What was it about the Vietnam War that connected so many disparate groups in society? And in a world experiencing such rapid change today – climate change, refugees and mass migration – will this sort of mass, united action ever occur again? By applying new methodological and theoretical approaches, I believe some of these questions can be addressed.

The application of emotions theory to the Australian student movement of the 1960s and 1970s has produced a fresh analysis. Firstly, a new methodological approach had to be constructed. Made up of different interviewing techniques drawn from a range of disciplines, the methodology outlined above was developed for this study. Secondly, applying this original methodological approach has resulted in new insights. While the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s have been extensively covered through a range of methodologies and theoretical approaches, no significant study to date has done so through the lens of emotions theory. Through this novel approach, the questions above may be addressed.

Did students break from the conservative past due to a sense of injustice or fury (as put by Michael Hyde), compelling students to speak up? Were the horrors of the Vietnam War, broadcast into people's lounge rooms, so distressing that individuals felt the need to unite and take to the streets to make their voices heard? By making the political personal, as second wave feminists argued, are people more likely to take an active, more personal role in pushing for change?

I may not have definitive answers to all the questions listed above, but in this study I have demonstrated that it is possible to access emotions in oral history interviews without directly asking for or about them. While this assisted me in my research in accessing emotions in the oral histories of student protestors, this technique is also useful for accessing emotions in pre-recorded interviews. This allows researchers to apply new techniques and approaches, such as emotions theory, to histories when the individuals may no longer be accessible.

Through the application of listening against the grain, I am able to uncover emotions from my interviews, without putting undue stress upon my interviewees. This has broadened our collective understanding of the 1960s and 1970s Australian student movement, particularly the historically rejected role of emotions.

This article has been peer reviewed.

Endnotes

1   Portia Dilena, 'Participant Request Email,' 6 September, 2017.

2   Key works include; Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper, and Francesca Polletta (eds), *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements,* University of Chicago Press, 2001; James M Jasper, 'Emotions, Sociology, and Protest,' in Christian Scheve and Mikko Salmela (eds), *Collective Emotions*, Oxford Scholarship Online, 2014; Helena Flam and Debra King (eds), *Emotions and Social Movements,* Routledge, Great Britain, 2005; Sara Ahmed, 'The Politics of Bad Feeling', *Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association Journal*, no. 1, 2005, pp. 72–85.

3   I use this term lightly, in the sense that I am listening for that which is not obvious or clear, and that I use different methods to obtain information. This draws on the original idea of Ranajit Guha, who employed an alternate reading of colonial sources so as to access the voices of the subaltern subjects traditionally excluded from those sources. Nancy Partner and Sarah R I Foot, *The SAGE Handbook of Historical Theory: SAGE Publications,* SAGE Publications, London, United Kingdom, 2012, p. 32.

4   Marilyn Bowler, '"How Lucky My Generation Was": Teaching Studentships in Victoria 1950-78', Master of Arts thesis, La Trobe University, 2012, pp. 50–51.

5   Bowler, How Lucky My Generation Was, p. 51.

6   Monash Labor Club's newspaper *Print* became daily in 1969, and even planned to sell their paper in other universities across Australia: 'Print Goes Daily', 4 March, 1969, first edition. See also, Sally Percival Wood, *Dissent: The Student Press in 1960s Australia,* Scribe Publications, Brunswick, Victoria, 2017.

7   Michael Hyde, interviewed by author, 11 April, 2018, tape and transcript held by author.

8   Much has been written on the rejection of emotions by the humanities and social sciences. For excellent overviews, see: Jeannette M. Haviland and Michael Lewis (eds), *Handbook of Emotions,* Guilford Press, New York, 1993; Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta, *Passionate Politics*.

9   Altman discusses the many different responses to the student movement at the time: Dennis Altman, 'Students in the Electric Age', in *The Australian New Left: Critical Essays and Strategy*, William Heinemann, Melbourne, 1970, pp. 126–47.

10   Coral Bell, 'Oedipal Politics? An Interpretation of Student Insurgency and Its Repercussions', *Current Affairs Bulletin,* vol. 43, no. 12, 1969, pp. 178–191.

11   Bell, Oedipal Politics?, p. 179.

12   'Get With the Strength', *Print*, 4 March 1969.

13   Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta, *Passionate Politics*, p. 4.

14   Verity Burgmann, *Power, Profit and Protest: Australian Social Movements and Globilisation,* Allen & Unwin, Singapore, 2003, pp. 10–11.

15   'Who Is My Enemy?', *Print*, 27 July 1967, p. 2.

16   'Re-Print', *Print*, 13 July 1971, p. 1.

17   Susan R. Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion: Introduction and Overview', Psychology Press, 2002, p. 11.

18   For international relations: Ty Solomon, '"I Wasn't Angry, Because I Couldn't Believe It Was Happening"': Affect and Discourse in Responses to 9/11', *Review of International Studies; London,* vol. 38, no. 4, October 2012, pp. 907–28. For history: Peter N. Stearns, 'History of Emotions: The Issue of Change', in Jeannette M Haviland & Michael Lewis (eds), Handbook of Emotions, Guilford Press, New York, 1993; Jeannette M. Haviland and Michael Lewis, *Handbook of Emotions,* Guilford Press, New York, 1993. For psychology: Susan Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion: Introduction and Overview', in SusanFussell (ed.), The Verbal Communication of Emotions: Interdisciplinary Perspectives, Psychology Press, New York, 2002; Daniel Reisberg & Paula Hertel (eds), Memory and Emotion, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008.

19   Robert C Solomon, 'The Philosophy of Emotions,' in Jeannette M. Haviland and Michael Lewis (eds), *Handbook of Emotions*, Guilford Press, New York, 1993, p. 9.

20   For further information on the 'reading against the grain' concept see, Ranajit Guha, *A Subaltern Studies Reader, 1986-1995,* University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1997; Partner and Foot, *The SAGE Handbook of Historical Theory*; Tracey Banivanua-Mar, *Violence and Colonial Dialogue: The Australian-Pacific Indentured Labor Trade,* University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, United States, 2006.

21   William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2001, p. 114.

22   Khiet P. Truong et al., 'Towards Modeling Expressed Emotions in Oral History Interviews: Using Verbal and Nonverbal Signals to Track Personal Narratives',

Literary and Linguistic Computing, vol. 29, no. 4, December 1, 2014, pp. 621–36.

23 Truong et al., Towards Modeling Expressed Emotions, p. 627.

24 Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, 'Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses', in *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd ed., Routledge, London , 2016, pp. 179–92.

25 Ken Mansell, interviewed by the author, May 2018, tape and transcript held by author. The Monash Labour Club made headlines when they began raising undisclosed funds for the National Liberation Front (NLF). Their actions have been credited with pushing the Defence Force Protection Act 1967 through Parliament, which prosecuted individuals who assisted, through money or goods, the NLF: Jon Piccini, *Transnational Protest, Australia and the 1960s,* Palgrave Macmillan, London, 2016, p. 37.

26 Mansell, interviewed by the author, May 2018, tape and transcript held by author.

27 Truong et al., 'Towards Modeling Expressed Emotions p. 621.

28 Katie Holmes, 'Does It Matter If She Cried? Recording Emotion and the Australian Generations Oral History Project', *The Oral History Review,* vol. 44, no. 1, April 1, 2017, pp. 56–76, 71–72.

29 Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion', p. 13.

30 Jenny Harding, 'Talk About Care: Emotions, Culture and Oral History', *Oral History,* vol. 38, no. 2, 2010, p. 35.

31 Solomon, '"I Wasn't Angry, Because I Couldn't Believe It Was Happening"', p. 907.

32 Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion:', p. 8.

33 Hyde, interviewed by the author, tape and transcript held by author.

34 Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion:', p. 9.

35 Jane Moodie, '"Surprised by Joy": A Case History Exploring the Expression of Spiritual Joy in Oral History', *Oral History,* vol. 38, no. 2, 2010, pp. 75–84, 79.

36 Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion:', p. 8.

37 Truong et al., 'Towards Modeling Expressed Emotions in Oral History Interviews', p. 624; Jeffery Pittman and Klaus R Scherer, 'Vocal Expression and Communication of Emotion', in *Handbook of Emotions,* Guilford Press, New York, 1993, p. 185; Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion: Introduction and Overview', p. 2.

38 Leslie Anne Hadfield, 'Can We Believe the Stories about Biko? Oral Sources, Meaning, and Emotion in South African Struggle History', *History in Africa,* vol. 42, June 2015, p. 258.

39 Truong et al., 'Towards Modeling Expressed Emotions in Oral History Interviews', p. 624; Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion: Introduction and Overview', p. 2.

40 Fussell, 'The Verbal Communication of Emotion:', pp. 2–3.

41 Due to the relative infancy of the field, there are differing views surrounding memory and emotion. Mark Cave states that 'passion fades' with time: Mark Cave, 'What Remains: Reflections on Crisis Oral History', in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds), *The Oral History Reader*, 3rd ed., New York and London, Routledge, 2016, p. 96. Paul Thompson argues that strong emotion solidifies memory and carries it through time: Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 3rd ed., Oxford University Press, United States, 2000. For a psychological perspective see Reisberg and Hertel, *Memory and Emotion*.

42 As is clear from this paper, my research has been dominated by the male voice. This is reflective of literature of the movement as a whole, with the majority of the voices and memories recorded that of the men who dominated the movement. This has silenced the many women who often worked in the background of the movement, undertaking the supporting roles (such as typing, administration, etc) necessary for the movement to succeed. I am actively trying to even out the gender imbalance in my work. For research that does address the role of women see; Ann Curthoys, '"Shut Up, You Bourgeois Bitch": Sexual Identity and Political Action in the Anti-Vietnam War Movement', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1995; Jean Taylor, *Brazen Hussies: A Herstory of Radical Activism in the Women's Liberation Movement in Victoria 1970 - 1979*, 1st ed., Dyke Books, Melbourne, Victoria, 2009; Ann Curthoys, *Freedom Ride: A Freedom Rider Remembers,* Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2002.

43 Fran Newell, interviewed by the author, 4 May, 2018, tape and transcript held by author. Fran Newell and Michael Hamel-Green met through the Peace Movement and married before Michael went underground to evade conscription. Michael went underground from 1971 - 1972, while Fran continued to evade police to meet up with him.

'A shudder of terror': HIV/AIDS nursing, oral history and the politics of emotion

Geraldine Fela

In July 1983, Australia announced its first (official) AIDS related death: a forty-three-year-old Melbourne man who died at Prince Henry hospital.[1] It was not until 1996 with the introduction of Highly Active Anti-retroviral therapy that there was effective treatment for the virus. Between 1983-1996, nurses were at the frontline of care. Whilst the medical profession floundered, desperately trying to catch up with the mysterious virus, nurses provided the intimate physical and emotional care desperately needed by people facing untimely and often painful deaths. This paper is based on oral testimony collected in 2017 from nurses who worked in Australian HIV wards and clinics during the crisis. It considers the testimony of three nurses, Tom, Jackie and Katharine*.[2] Paying close attention to the narratives of these three nurses enables a detailed investigation into how they negotiated complex and difficult emotions. In *An Archive of Feelings*, cultural theorist Ann Cvetkovich argues for a 'reconsideration of the conventional distinctions between political and emotional life', a blurring of the line between politics and emotion.[3] Barbara Rosenwein likewise draws attention to the dynamic connection between emotional and political life in *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages*.[4] This paper will explore the 'affective life of politics' by considering how Tom's, Jackie's and Katharine's memories of fear, discomfort and grief were inflected by the broader politics of the AIDS crisis, as well as their particular personal and geographic contexts.[5]

Jackie and Tom both worked in the HIV outpatient clinic at Sydney's St Vincent's hospital in Darlinghurst. Jackie is a straight woman and Tom is a gay man. St Vincent's is in the heartland of gay Sydney, arguably the epicentre of Australia's AIDS crisis.[6] Between 1983 and 1996, approximately six to seven thousand people died of AIDS related illnesses in Australia. Many of these people would have come through Jackie's and Tom's clinic.[7] Katharine worked in a very different context to Jackie and Tom. She nursed in an infectious diseases ward from 1987 at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane during Queensland's notoriously conservative Bjelke-Petersen government. During interviews with each of these nurses, I found they had

different ways of negotiating the difficult emotions associated with the AIDS crisis. Despite the risk that was associated with her work in the early days, Jackie was reluctant to discuss fear and anxiety. Conversely, Katharine was comfortable discussing the anxiety and fear that she sometimes experienced when nursing HIV and AIDS patients. Tom was comfortable talking about anxiety but not grief and sadness. He emphasised the joy and excitement of the period and relied on dry, dark humour to skate over the painful aspects of the period.

Examined side by side, these three distinct case studies provide insight into how our memories of emotion are mediated by the social and political environment of our everyday world and our personal political values. The different ways each interviewee negotiated difficult emotions was shaped, at least in part, by the complex political dynamics of the period and their particular personal and geographic contexts. Barbara Rosenwein defines emotional communities as 'groups in which people adhere to the same norms of emotional expression and value – or devalue – the same or related emotions.' Importantly, 'More than one emotional community may exist – indeed normally does exist – contemporaneously.'[8] Jackie, Katharine and Tom each inhabited different emotional communities. Though both Jackie and Tom worked together in the same clinic at Sydney's St Vincent's hospital, Tom's identity as a gay man living in the heart of Sydney's gay community shaped what Cvetkovich might call his 'affective experience' of the crisis.[9] Similarly, though both Jackie and Katharine were heterosexual nurses working with HIV and AIDS patients, their distinct geographic contexts –Jackie in Sydney and Katharine in Queensland – saw them negotiate difficult emotions (such as fear) in different ways.

Negotiating the politics of fear

The fear that surrounded the HIV virus was highly politicised.[10] The AIDS panic that erupted sporadically in Australian society throughout the 1980s and 1990s – from the moral outrage following the death of three Brisbane babies from a HIV positive blood transfusion

to the terrifying Grim Reaper advertisement – was inflected by homophobia and prejudice. Conservative media and politicians singled gay men out as agents of infection.[11] This set the stage for a significant increase in anti-gay hate crimes. In Sydney during the 1980s and 1990s, many gay men fell victim to vigilante gangs. The death toll from this period is only now becoming known, but at least 88 homicides have been identified as part of this swathe of gay hate crimes.[12] In this context, for nurses working with HIV and AIDS patients fear was a complex emotion to negotiate. While conservative Australia was fomenting panic over a gay swimming carnival at the Andrew Boy Charlton pool in Sydney, down the road at St Vincent's Hospital nurses were cleaning up HIV positive bodily fluids and dealing with used needles.[13] Particularly in the early days, nurses working at the coalface of the crisis in AIDS wards and clinics faced some danger of infection. Both Katharine and Jackie experienced moments of exposure to HIV positive blood: Jackie via a needle stick, Katharine when she covered her patient's open wound with her hands. They remembered these moments in very different ways. Importantly, it was not the objective level of risk associated with each incident that determined how it was remembered. Jackie did not recall feeling afraid but Katharine did, despite the much higher risk associated with a needle stick injury. Rather, I suggest that how they remembered these moments of exposure was mediated by the political and geographic contexts in which they were working.

When Jackie told me about her needlestick injury, she began by recalling how one of her colleague's became infected with HIV:

> And the other point is needlestick injuries and we did have a staff member, a female staff member – straight – I worked with her and she sustained a needlestick injury and within two weeks she'd had a very significant seroconversion illness, because at the time it happened she didn't think it was significant, but she seroconverted.

Q: So she was infected?

> Yep, she was infected from a needlestick injury so that was pretty hard for everyone. It was awful in fact, you know she was a great nurse. Yes – you know you had staff who got sick and died. Fortunately we only had one episode of a, um, needlestick injury that resulted in a seroconversion and HIV positivity [pause] but certainly as time went on it, you know, it changed everyone in our…. eye clinic that's right, because you know before we had so many antiretrovirals CMV [Cytomegalovirus] retinitis was rampant and the ophthalmologist who looked after all those guys he was just wonderful. He was another person – he was a married man, he had kids, and he had no qualms

and he looked after all those patients with HIV retinitis and the patients loved him because he was so nice to them.[14]

Though Jackie admitted that the infection and death of her colleague was 'awful' she avoided using words like 'fear', 'afraid', 'scared'. She spoke in very general terms: it was 'pretty hard for everyone'.[15] She was also quick to deflect the conversation, moving abruptly from the story of her colleague's HIV infection to a description of the hospital's eye clinic. Here she highlights the respect that her heterosexual colleague, the ophthalmologist, showed towards HIV positive patients. Perhaps this is because, when Jackie raised the topic of her colleague's infection, she touched on some of the complex emotions that were part of the experience of AIDS nursing. That is, an understandable fear of exposure which, in a context where fear around HIV and AIDS was inflected with prejudice and ignorance, was something nurses like Jackie were (and perhaps still are) reluctant to acknowledge. She quickly deflected the needlestick infection to another, unrelated, story of an 'unprejudiced' medical practitioner. It was as if she was negating any suggestion of prejudice or fear in her memory of her colleague's injury and infection.

Following her segue to the eye clinic, Jackie returned almost immediately to the issue of needlestick injuries and revealed that she herself had experienced such an injury. She recalled:

> This particular time I remember taking a butterfly needle out of a patient and I knew he was very unwell, very end stage. I don't know how it happened but I got a needlestick injury, and I remember it was into my thumb. And I remember [my colleague] saying to me 'quick squeeze it and just keep running your hand under the tap' which I did, so I really milked it straight away as soon as it happened.[16]

When I asked her if the event frightened her, Jackie said: 'you know, I didn't think about it much at the time but certainly now, yes.' She commented that she looks back and thinks 'my god how lucky was I.'[17]

That Jackie did not recall feeling afraid at the time does seem surprising in this situation, certainly the reaction of her colleague suggests that there was an awareness of the risk involved in a needlestick. Jackie immediately ran her hand underwater and squeezed the wound and this indicates that she felt infection was a real possibility following the injury, especially given that the patient was 'end stage' – meaning a high viral load. Of course it's possible that Jackie simply cannot remember her fear. As Mark Cave points out, over time 'passions fade' and it can be difficult to recall emotions years after an incident.[18] Another possibility is that Jackie genuinely did not feel fear. After all, nurses at

St Vincent's Darlinghurst, the epicentre of the AIDS crisis, spent their days dealing with the HIV virus and its deadly effects. Perhaps for Jackie this moment of exposure was not outside the norm of her daily work life. Or perhaps Jackie's inability to recall fear reflects the changed status of an HIV diagnosis today. When stories are 'related in the present', how we remember and narrate them is shaped by this present.[19] Thanks to improved treatment, HIV is no longer a deadly virus in Australia, it is a chronic but manageable condition and perhaps Jackie's narration reflects this present medical reality. At the same time, it is worth noting that if this was the case, it was not something that inflected Katharine's memory of her own exposure.

Katharine (who worked in Brisbane under the politically conservative and homophobic Bjelke-Peterson government) remembered feeling fear and anxiety whilst working with people with HIV and AIDS:

> The only thing I can recall is a shudder of terror when someone said 'this is where you'll be working'. You know because I'd gone for a job and they said 'you'll be going to infectious diseases' and I said 'oh that sounds great' and then they said 'oh well you'll be looking after people with AIDS in there too' and I mean, I don't know anything, so I was fairly anxious I must admit…. And you know like I wasn't at that stage, I'd been back nursing since 1985 so I hadn't been back nursing a long time but I was happy and I was in the swing of things and this was quite challenging but it turned out being one of the best experiences of my life.[20]

Katharine's 'shudder of terror' was quickly overcome, she went on to nurse many people with HIV and AIDS and had a long career in sexual health. But this was not the last time she felt anxious about her work. She recalled one moment in particular that left her uneasy. Like many of the nurses I spoke with, Katharine developed close relationships with her patients. She explained that this made it easy to overlook the possibility of contagion:

> Because you became so familiar with the individual patients…you had to remind yourself that, hey remember, you know, if there's bleeding…I remember once…it was a spontaneous thing and it was only because it was such a familiar person…I put my hand on something that was bleeding, he had a [pause] cannula and there was [pause] a problem and I didn't want anything to go wrong so without even grabbing a glove I put my hand over there.[21]

Katharine was happy to share this incident with me but I gained the impression that it had been a frightening moment. She recalled that 'it was only momentary', she quickly pulled her hand away. It made her 'stop and think.'[22] In Katharine's reflections, it became clear that she felt in that brief moment her actions had gone beyond ordinary care and concern. She recalled feeling afterwards that she had crossed a line: 'I had put to the back of my mind why he was really there and you know, boundaries are so important.'[23] Alessandro Portelli comments in *The Peculiarities of Oral History* that whether or not we maintain the orality of an oral source has bearing on its meaning.[24] Certainly, I found this to be true of Katharine's interview. It was only by listening to the recording that I noticed how her pauses became longer, her fluency and the volume of her voice changed, she became quieter when she discussed this encounter with the infected blood of her friend and patient.

It was clear to me that, for Katharine, this was a moment that was frightening at the time and that still provoked anxiety when remembered today. In truth, Katharine's encounter was not particularly dangerous. HIV cannot be transmitted through touch, even touching infected blood. By contrast a needlestick injury, like the one Jackie experienced, is relatively dangerous as it risks injecting the HIV virus directly into the blood stream. The transmission route of HIV was well established by 1985 and this information had been distributed to healthcare workers via pamphlets and fact sheets.[25] Even in Queensland, where information was restricted by the conservative state government, the Queensland Department of Health did distribute basic fact sheets about the virus.[26] It seems likely that both Katharine and Jackie would have known the relative risk of each encounter.

It was not, however, the 'riskiness' of these moments that shaped how these two nurses remembered these moments. Rather, it was the broader political and geographic contexts in which they worked. Michael Lambek argues that memory is a 'moral practice' and points out that 'if remembering is a moral and identity-building act, so to be sure, is forgetting'.[27] The narrative Jackie told of nursing during the AIDS crisis was of pragmatic, resourceful and non-judgemental nursing. It is a story inflected by the professional pride nurses were increasingly asserting following the industrial upsurge of the mid-1980s.[28] It was also a story of nursing in Sydney, the city where the gay community was largest and arguably the most organised.[29] The 1970s had seen the birth of gay liberation in Sydney, the emergence of a gay press, the development of gay political organisation and regular national homosexual conferences.[30] Inspired by New York's Stonewall Riots of 1969, the gay community came out of the closets and onto the streets to fight for the right to live and love without persecution. Most famously in Australia, Sydney's first gay and lesbian Mardi Gras in 1978 saw a protest and celebration during which gays and lesbians fought alongside each other against a homophobic police force and the prejudice of the media and justice system.

'Gays bashed over AIDS', Daily Mirror (Sydney), 19 November 1984, p. 1. Courtesy the Australian Gay and Lesbian Archives.

The legacy of this activism saw the community highly organised and political when HIV arrived. Jennifer Power claims that '[t]he organised response of the gay community has been one of the most striking features of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Australia.'[31] In other words, when gay men faced a health crisis that threatened their very existence, the gay community was able to draw on an existing tradition of activism and was ready to confront prejudice and discrimination.[32] HIV positive people took centre stage and demanded they be talked *to* rather than about; HIV positive people refused to be victims and asserted themselves as agentful patients who were fighting for their rights.[33] Rather than advocating abstinence, organisations like the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) encouraged people to have sex safely and promoted positive images of gay identity and sexual practices.[34] This was the 'emotional community' in which Jackie found herself immersed, a place and a community that was rejecting the moral panic around AIDS, homosexuality and infection. In this context it is understandable that Jackie, a heterosexual woman who was working closely with the gay community, was reluctant to acknowledge that she experienced emotions like fear and anxiety.

For Katharine in Queensland, the political context was very different and this shaped how she experienced and recalled her own encounter with a patient's blood. The Bjelke-Peterson government was committed to maintaining the criminalisation of male homosexuality, they refused to pass on federal funding to the Queensland AIDS Council and to distribute the federal National Advisory Committee on AIDS (NACAIDS) safe sex information.[35] The street marches and demonstrations that were the backbone of the gay and lesbian movement in Sydney were banned in Bjelke-Peterson's Queensland. Moral panic reached fever pitch following the death of the four 'Brisbane babies' in 1984, and the unique political climate of 1980s Queensland made it difficult for the gay community to respond.[36] This is not to say that there was no response, rather that it was of a different quality to the confident, open challenge to fearmongering evident in Sydney. This may be why Katharine was happy to talk about her own fear and anxiety and why she felt that 'shudder of fear' when told she would be working with people with AIDS. Her 'affective response' or 'experience' was shaped by the broader politics of anxiety and prejudice that prevailed in Queensland at the time.[37] For Jackie in Sydney, fear and anxiety was 'devalued'. For Katharine, fear was a 'norm of emotional expression' within the 'emotional community' of Bjelke-Peterson's Queensland.[38]

Rejecting the Reaper: Gay nurses and HIV/AIDS

The gay nurses I spoke to, even those who worked in Sydney, were more open than straight nurses to discussing their fears and anxiety around the virus. Tom, who worked at St Vincent's around the same time as Jackie, recalled his reluctance to share an ice-cream with his HIV positive friend:

> I had a close friend who I nursed while he seroconverted [seroconversion is the initial illness that is experienced following HIV infection]. I remember the first time we were walking on a beach together and we bought ice-creams and he offered me a lick of his ice-cream to see what the flavour was, as you routinely do, and I really thought about it before I took a lick of his ice-cream. And I knew, through all of my training and all of my knowledge, that there's no way I could get HIV from licking his ice-cream. But it was an emotional thing to overcome that, and in those early days when people felt like pariahs, when we didn't know what we were dealing with, that sort of stuff was really important.[39]

Tom, a member of the gay community, did not feel (as Jackie did) that he needed to distance himself from the prejudices of ordinary Australians. However, while Tom was noticeably more comfortable reflecting on his own anxieties and fears around the virus than Jackie, I did find him reluctant or reticent when discussing grief and sadness. It was not that Tom did not acknowledge that the crisis was difficult; he spoke about it at one point as 'our generation's world war'.[40] Rather, that he heavily emphasised life, happiness and humour, even when describing the sickness of a lover.

> I had an affair with a fellow who died, he was covered in KS [kaposi's sarcoma, an AIDS related cancer] at the end and quite demented,

and he used to wear outrageous makeup and lipstick and beads and became quite eccentric at the end. But I can remember taking him to lunches and things with friends, with straight friends who would be quite confronted that there was this man who was a little demented with a lot of makeup on.[41]

In this story the sickness and approaching death of his lover is inflected with humour and a kind of camp sensibility. Tom employed this camp, funny and frank approach quite a lot when he talked about death. He remembered the early days of the crisis as a time when there were 'a lot of corpses on Oxford Street.'[42] Perhaps Tom struggled to remember or articulate the grief of the time or maybe it was simply too much to describe. It could be that Tom used dark humour as what Alistair Thomson might call 'a strategy of containment', a way of masking 'loss or pain'.[43] I interviewed him only once and perhaps we had not built sufficient trust for him to disclose those difficult emotions to me.

It is also possible that, for Tom, excitement and happiness *were* strong emotions he felt during these years. For Tom, as for many gay nurses, the AIDS crisis coincided with his youth. He was young, surrounded by other young gay people, doctors, nurse and activists; together they were fighting side by side for their community. It is easy to imagine the camaraderie, the sense of purpose and belonging that they must have felt. As community historian Paul Van Reyk notes in his examination of ward-based nursing at St Vincent's, 'the ward was not unremittingly grim. You could count on drag queens turning up in a flurry of feathers and sparkles to do an impromptu show.'[44] It seems likely that Tom's youth and community attachment shaped his experience of the AIDS crisis.

The way Tom negotiated his emotional memory of the period may also have been influenced by his political context. The association between gay sexual practices, identity and death was characteristic of the emergence of HIV and AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s. In *Policing Desire: Pornography, AIDS, and the Media*, Simon Watney notes that in popular consciousness AIDS makes 'the rectum a grave' and as a result 'the image of homosexuality is re-inscribed with connotations of contagion and disease.'[45] Though Watney's case study is AIDS in America, Australia was not immune from this association between gay life, sex and death. The infamous 'Grim Reaper' campaign is perhaps the most notorious example of this. Commissioned and broadcast by NACAIDS, the 1987 campaign saw the figure of the Grim Reaper, long associated with death in Western cultures, become synonymous with HIV/ AIDS in Australia.[46] Bearing a scythe and bowling ball and adorned in a tattered black robe, the menacing figure was depicted bowling over 'ordinary Australians'. A terrifying voice-over delivered the government's

warning to sexually active Australians: 'always wear a condom, always.' Alongside the authoritative safe-sex directive, the campaign carried a secondary message: AIDS was no longer a disease restricted to deviants— Dennis Altman's 'poofs, junkies, whores'[47]—it was coming for mainstream Australia.

'Grim Reaper' as appeared on national media in 1987, commissioned by NACAIDS.

In the opening frames of the advertisement, we see men, women and children—presumably representing the general community—being lowered, like skittles, on to a bowling alley. The menacing figure of the Grim Reaper is introduced and a voice explains: 'At first only gays and drug users were being killed by AIDS.' The Reaper's ball then bowls over men, women and children. In an image that evokes the industrial slaughter of the Holocaust, 'ordinary Australia' becomes a heap of bodies that is scraped off the floor of the bowling alley.[48] The implication of the NACAIDS campaign was that HIV/AIDS was horrifying, not so much because it killed gay men, haemophiliacs and drug users, but because of the threat it posed to others.

Many in the gay community objected on the grounds that the campaign positioned the lives of gays and IV drug users as less important than the men, women and children of mainstream Australia.[49] Not only did the advertisement present a hierarchy of guilty and innocent victims, as Deborah Lupton has pointed out, it also meant that the Grim Reaper – 'grotesque and medieval' with its associations of 'death, famine, plague and divine retribution' – became the definitive figure of AIDS in Australia and thus associated closely

with gay men.[50] In September 1990, the newsletter of the Western Australian AIDS Council *AIDSaction* reflected on the personal cost of the moral panic surrounding AIDS in an article titled 'Guilt: The Price of Pleasure':

> Those infected with HIV are subject to an adverse judgment on the part of society. When someone is diagnosed as HIV positive, they are suddenly confronted with the possibility of having to die prematurely. To further add to their anxiety, they find they are carriers of the disease which may alienate their friends, relatives and associates. They have become societies [*sic*] "new lepers"![51]

The gay community, however, refused to be defined by the grotesque figure of the Grim Reaper. Activist groups like AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) brought defiance and anger from the streets of New York to Australian shores. Despite the efforts of conservative commentators and medical professionals, and in defiance of conservative politician and Christian minister Fred Nile's prayers for rain, Sydney's gay and lesbian Mardi Gras was not shut down by the AIDS crisis – the party continued, now with condoms.[52]

In the stories Tom told about the period, there was one moment when the impact of the Grim Reaper flashed through his testimony. Recalling bumping into patients at dinner parties and gay bars, Tom commented that he felt like 'nurse death sitting at the table'.[53] It was clear from Tom's tone in the interview that this description was inflected with his camp, tongue-in-cheek humour. Nevertheless, in this moment he positioned himself as a harbinger of death and disease. In some ways this moment only threw into relief his general reluctance to dwell on the darker emotions in his memories of the AIDS crisis. Tom predominantly emphasised joy and happiness in his recollections: it was, in his words, 'an extraordinary time'. As well as the clubs, the drugs and the sex, Tom described an incredible sense of purpose and fulfilment in his work. In the same way that the gay community refused to be defined by the vision of the reaper, Tom's emotional memory appears shaped in part by a political or moral inclination to tell a positive story of his community's resilience and a rejection of the association between gay life and death.

Mark Cave argues that 'Not only is emotion the key to understanding the actions and attitudes of interviewees, it is often the glue that holds the memory of events together.'[54] Certainly this was true for Katharine, her memory of the moment when she touched her patient's blood with her ungloved hand was clearly one that continues to affect her today. Through this story she conveyed the nature of the work she was doing and the close and intimate care that she gave her patients. In contrast, for Jackie and Tom, some memories of events held together well while some of the more difficult emotions we might associate with these events were notably absent. It seems that the sharply contested politics around fear and infection that was openly playing out in Sydney during the AIDS crisis helped shape the emotions that Jackie and Tom were willing or able to recall. Conversely, Katharine's experiences of fear are a testament to the very different political environment of 1980s Queensland, where fearmongering could not be challenged with parades and marches. These case studies demonstrate how the conventional distinction or delineation between politics and emotions is hard to draw.[55] For these three nurses, the emotions they experienced or felt able to express were shaped, at least in part, by the politics of the 'emotional community' they inhabited in the 1980s and 1990s.[56]

This article has been peer reviewed.

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Embodied memories of trauma: oral history and archetypes

Francesco Ricatti

At a very fundamental level, oral historians' work with trauma and oral narrative has more to do with a medieval story of dragons and monsters than one might initially think.

(Lori Ann Garner)[1]

we write from the body.

it remembers everything.

(Nayyirah Waheed)[2]

Abstract

Through the analysis of interviews recorded with Norma Holmes, a woman born in New Zealand in the late 1920s from a French mother and a Chinese father, this article considers how traumatic experiences are recalled and shared by individuals though archetypical and uncanny narratives. In particular, it explores the surprising interrelation between Norma Holmes' story and the archetypical narratives analysed by Carlo Ginzburg in his work on the witches' sabbath. This unlikely connection illustrates the need to acknowledge the historical depth that oral storytelling of traumatic events often carries. Phantasmatic and archetypical, yet deeply embodied, memories and narratives should be at the core of our understanding of the past, and how it lives in the present.

Premise

The debate over oral history since the 1970s has been dominated by the tension between the symbolic and the forensic. Matters of subjectivity, objectivity, authenticity, reliability, memory and narrative in oral history have intersected with broader debates on the nature of history itself and its role in society: from objective and accurate social science to little more than fiction in disguise. It is well known that the works that have most effectively advanced the standing and credibility of oral history have come from historians who have not just admitted the fallibility of memory and the potential inaccuracy of oral testimonies, but have argued for the historiographical power of understanding the reasons and meanings behind contradictory and ambiguous recollections of the past.

In this article I intend to explore, through a specific case study, the potential connection between oral histories of trauma on the one hand, and oral traditions and narrative archetypes on the other hand. My main argument is that while oral history is an extremely valuable historical methodology, its power also relies on the way in which its close relationship with oral stories provides an opportunity to explore, within historically specific contexts, broader ontological and existential concerns. In other words, oral history – through its intersection of historical specificity, individual and collective memories, and oral stories that rely on deeper archetypes and broader narrative structures – create a complex and productive space in which the human condition can be explored more vividly and profoundly.

Through the individual narrator's personal involvement in major historical events, the dialogical interactions with the interviewer, and the development of powerful forms of witnessing and co-authored story-telling, the best oral histories can provide not just an illustration and interpretation of past events, but also a powerful exploration of the human condition. Oral history, in its most powerful iterations, creates strong connections between the discipline of history and other disciplines, such as ethnography, cultural anthropology, folkloric studies and literary studies. This becomes particularly apparent when analysing oral histories of trauma, as narrators attempt to give voice to unspeakable life experiences. Historical specificity is essential, as universalizing such experiences would correspond to a tragic further denial of their reality, their existence within specific contexts, and their impact on specific individuals and communities. Yet any interpretation of tragic historical events also needs to be sustained by broader and deeper relations to other human events and narratives; it must connect to the emotions, feelings, experiences and stories shared by other people, often from distant places and times. It is in this ability to connect the individual to the historical, and the historical to the universal, that lies oral history's greatest epistemological and political value.

Far from being a general reflection on such complex theoretical and methodological issues, my introductory

paragraphs are a necessary premise to the rest of this article. In it, I explore the surprising interrelation between an oral history I have recently recorded with an elderly woman of French and Chinese descent, and archetypical narratives I studied more than two decades ago in the work of the great Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg on witches' sabbath.[3] As unlikely as such a connection might appear, it illustrates the need to acknowledge the historical depth that oral storytelling of traumatic events often carries.

Norma Holmes's story

Norma Holmes was born in New Zealand in January 1927. Her father was born in Canton, China, in 1904, and her mother was born in 1906 in Guernsey Island, from French-speaking parents. During the first thirty years of Norma's life, she experienced a series of personal traumas that intersected with major historical events, including the Japanese occupation of China and Hong Kong, the Second World War and, later, the major transformations of Australian society in the postwar period. I met with her more than ten times to interview her and record her stories.[4] In this article, I intend to focus on one particular aspect that structured Norma's life memories: namely, the way in which wounds, scars, and various imbalances in her body came to represent in her narrative not just the consequences of those traumatic events, but also a way of narrating the incommensurable and incomprehensible nature of those traumas. In her stories, there is little desire to explicitly name emotions or feelings. Resilience, for Norma, is a matter of stubborn physical resistance, and how the body itself is transformed in the process of survival. Yet such bodily transformations, which continue long after the traumatic events have concluded, inevitably present an uncanny, spectral element. They are a constant reminder that any journey to the kingdom of death, or its proximity, is as physical as it is metaphysical; the trauma of getting too close to death and to the dead, and then coming back amongst the living, is often an embodied trauma. The mysteries of death, suffering, human cruelty and resilience take over the body, so that a reopening wound, a scar, a terrible migraine, or an inexplicable blindness become essential narrative and emotional tools in expressing and re-embodying trauma.

In the many iterations of her story over the two years I interviewed her, Norma often started by noting how happy her early childhood was: 'I was the only [child], I was a little princess'. Yet a crucial traumatic event almost immediately comes to dominate her narrative of those early years:

> When I was young, … I'm only about five and I climbed up on the sink, … the water's boiling, bubbled up, and I slipped into the copper. I just looked at my foot and the flesh was just floating

away, it was dreadful. And I screamed and screamed and my mother came, and I ended up in hospital.

…

Because of my foot, I was never without shoes and socks, even at home, because I was always conscious of that foot. The colour has faded now, but at the time it looked terrible.

Because of this accident, Norma limped for a year or so, until she had one of the first graft operations in New Zealand.

Norma relates much of the happiness of her early years to her deep love for her mother and her maternal grandparents, of whom she has fond memories. But at the age of seven or eight, when her parents separated, she was taken away by her father, who made her promise she would never try to contact her mother again; a promise she kept for the rest of her life, and which is still a source of great sadness and regret to her to this day. Her father changed their surname and took her first to Queensland, in Australia, where his family had a market garden and two stores, and then to Hong Kong, where he left her at a boarding school. He then went back to Queensland, remarried and had many children. Due to the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong and the Second World War, he stopped sending money and Norma was forced to leave the boarding school. She spent many years with relatives, first in Hong Kong, then in mainland China, experiencing fear, loneliness, exploitation and starvation and witnessing terrible acts of violence. After the war she moved to Queensland, where she witnessed the suicide of a young uncle, got married, had a daughter, was abandoned by her husband, was exploited for years by her father, and then, when life was finally taking a positive turn, experienced the devastating re-emergence of repressed and traumatic memories. Despite all that, after getting a job at the department store David Jones, and working two more jobs at night and on weekends, she managed to leave her father's house, take proper care of her daughter, and develop long-lasting friendships with other women, which she continues to nurture and

Norma and her father at the maternal grandparents' farm in New Zealand (late 1920s). Photograph courtesy Norma Holmes.

Norma with calves at the maternal grandparents' farm in New Zealand (early 1930s). Photograph courtesy Norma Holmes.

which continue to give her great comfort.

The limping trip to the realm of the dead

In his book *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, and in particular in the chapter entitled 'Bones and Skin', Carlo Ginzburg notes the recurrence of stories and myth characterised by exactly the same events we find in Norma's story: after the segregation or disappearance of the mother, a disfigured child has to face an inevitable fate.[5] When the protagonist of the story grows up, a peculiar way of walking or limping, or a peculiar foot, signal his or her uncanny connection with the world of the dead; it is only after extraordinary trials that he or she may go back to the homeland. These components are not all present in each story considered by Ginzburg, but many tend to occur at once and often recur, and connect stories as different as, for instance, *Oedipus* and *Cinderella*.

Ginzburg is particularly interested in showing how, in a great number of these stories, the journey into the realm of the dead is linked to a radical imbalance in the body, often expressed by monosandalism (wearing only one shoe), limping, or some sort of deformation of the foot. It is Oedipus' swollen foot, it is Achilles' heel, and Cinderella's lost shoe.[6] As we have seen, this is also the foundational trauma of Norma's story. The emergence of this archetype fascinated me when I first read Ginzburg's book in the early 1990s. Was this really an archetype, and how can we explain it? Ginzburg himself notes how his research is an invitation to radically reformulate the notion of the archetype, in particular by conceptualising archetypes as deeply linked to the body and its self-representation. This concept was too abstract for me at the time, until one evening I told my father about the recurrence of limping in characters that must travel or have travelled into the realm of the dead. 'That makes sense' he said to my surprise, as if I had just made an obvious

connection. As a magistrate and prosecutor, he had patrolled the scenes of many fatal crimes and accidents shortly after they occurred. He told me, 'Almost all the people I've seen who had been killed in a traumatic event had lost one shoe.' In a personal experience of this bizarre phenomenon, a few weeks after talking to my father I saw in a street in Rome a person who had just committed suicide by throwing herself from a balcony. The paramedics had tried to cover her with a sheet, but it was too short and her feet were visible; she only had one shoe. Since then, I have noticed hundreds of movies and TV episodes in which the victim of a sudden death is shown without one shoe. A possible explanation is, then, that archetypes and literary tropes about uncanny and spectral stories may relate directly to bodily experiences and the witnessing of traumatic events.

Norma's story recalls very closely the kind of stories and myths analysed by Ginzburg. The segregation or disappearance of the mother, the disfigurement of the child and the limping are already obvious. There are also several contacts with the world of the dead in her story: Norma almost starved to death and at times survived by killing and eating rats; she witnessed many killings and other atrocities, including against women and children; she was told stories of anthropophagy happening around her; and she saw her grandfather being kidnapped and heard him describe how his kidnappers chained him to the ground like a dog. Her story also includes the return home after extraordinary trials (although she could never really go home to New Zealand and her mother). Norma's story has even more details in common with the Cinderella story, for instance the happy early childhood, the presence of a stepmother and stepsiblings, and the fact that she went through years of exhausting and unpaid work, inside and outside the house.

Norma's mother (n.d.) Photograph courtesy Norma Holmes

The way Norma's story almost perfectly fits the archetypical structure suggested by Ginzburg could be a pure coincidence. This, however, wouldn't explain the centrality of the foot and other bodily imbalances in almost all sections of Norma's story and not just in the first instance when Norma was a child. Norma's story confirms that the body is not only transformed during the traumatic event, but in fact never ceases to be transformed by the trauma and its consequences, even long after the traumatic event itself is concluded. Furthermore, I suggest that these bodily transformations come to represent a reminder of how it is impossible to fully remember, narrate and comprehend the trauma itself. There is an uncanny, spectral aspect to be considered in the way the traumatised body never completely heals.

Embodying the trauma

In Norma's story, different and traumatic events are constantly connected to her foot, or to other instances of imbalance in her body. This is how she describes meeting her relatives in China for the first time:

> And then we went back to the ancestral house in mainland China to meet everybody […] I had one ear different to the other and they used to show me off as if I was a freak in the circus.

And this is how she expresses her suffering at the boarding school in which her father had abandoned her:

> I've had migraines all my life and they started when I was at boarding school. At the school there was like a quarry, but it was painted white and we used to be out there in the playground and I kept running into this quarry all the time and that was the start of the blinding headaches.

She also explains:

> I'm a sleep walker. […] At boarding school, they used to wait till I go [sic] to sleep and then they'd put down a dish of water here and a dish of water there. And they'd watch me get out of there, push the windows open, go and sit on the window sill, two floors up mind you, and I'd be dangling my feet, but then when I'd sit there and dangled enough, I'd go back and get into bed. And they would just watch me, because they were told never to wake me up. It's a dreadful feeling when they wake you up when you're sleep walking. A feeling of fear, it's dreadful.

Importantly, in introducing the story of her somnambulism at the boarding school, Norma often recalls how, after the operation to the foot, on doctor's advice, she would go to the beach and immerse the foot in the sea to help the recovery. This is one of the few happy memories she relates. Was she experiencing, in the sleepwalking and the dangling of the feet outside the window, the same relief from trauma? Why would she otherwise often associate these two events in her memories? Was she travelling back to that beach, to the water that had soothed her foot?

And this is how she describes life during the war:

> Looking at my foot you would notice that that piece of flesh didn't belong on that foot. But being a girl, I suppose, you're very conscious of this, and I was never without shoes and socks. And I had had the best of everything, because you know, my father had spoiled me rotten. And then all of a sudden things changed. I never had shoes during the war. No shoes, no socks.

She also talks about the hard work in the rice paddies:

> I was pretty close to death, several times. I got sick, but you still had to do your work. I had this big ulcer on my leg. That was a big hole, when I was over in China in the paddy fields, and different people would tell me different herbs I had to get, and you could have fitted a golf ball in it, it was so bad. It got infected. You couldn't help but be infected, because you were in the paddy fields, which is all mud. You're in the mud all the time, and nothing on your feet. It was cold. You were in the paddy fields too. You shivered, it was dreadful, you know, so, but I got through it, because I was young. But there, there was hopelessness. I couldn't see anyway of it getting any better.

She later describes her physical state when arriving back to Australia a couple of years after the war:

> Because of the diet and numerous things, I never had a period till I was on the boat [back to Australia]. Twenty years old. People in the village used to call me the stone girl. […] I didn't develop properly inside and out. And when I got off the boat in Sydney, my father could hardly recognise me. I was so thin. My hair's grown back, but my eyebrows never did, everything fell out. For four years, I'd never seen any toothpaste, or soap, or anything on my feet, I was bare-footed for so long. […] My dad took me to see a specialist when I got out here, and he said, because of the size of my hands and my feet, I should have been three inches taller. Because of carrying the loads, because I was stunted in growth, carrying these loads heavier than I was, I've got big hands, and I've got big feet. But the body didn't match. I was stunted in growth.

And then, in her early thirties, Norma had a nervous breakdown:

I had a nervous breakdown when I was thirty-three. There was no counselling when I came back. I was put straight to work, and because that's all been built up inside of me, when I was thirty-three I just broke down entirely, and I still went to work, but I couldn't talk. My vocal cords had parted.

It was only through hypnosis that Norma's repressed memories returned, and she gradually recovered her voice.

These selected excerpts show how often Norma's memories of those traumatic years are explicitly linked to either an imbalance in the body or a problem with her lower limbs. Emotions, feelings and experiences linked to traumatic events are expressed by Norma through the uncanny manifestation of the trauma within the body, before, during and long after the traumatic events. Norma's story and its relation to archetypical narratives poses a set of questions and issues.

The first is around the relationship between oral history and folkloric archetype. Far from assigning the latter to an ahistorical dimension (the archetype being repeated throughout centuries and across continents), Norma's story suggests that the archetypical narrative may provide deep, complex, imaginative and corporeal dimensions that sustain and reinforce the dynamism and specificity of oral and social history. In her article on the close relationship between oral history and medieval oral tradition, Lori Ann Garner argues that there are, for instance, close parallels between the narrative patterns of early medieval texts and those of contemporary oral history narratives.[7] She further argues for the function of oral narrative as a means to respond to traumatic events, noting how 'the construction of such personal narratives often follows patterns that have been observed in the composition and performance of oral poetry.'[8]

Similarly, Sean Field has argued that is it important for oral historians to consider how indescribable trauma comes to be described by interviewees through 'myths, fantasies and forms of magical realism.'[9] In dealing with the challenge of the memory-making and story-telling of traumatic events, traditional stories, patterns and archetypes may provide an opportunity to deal with a truth that relates to, but also transcends, the factual recollection of the events. As historical specificity influences oral tradition, so oral tradition influences historical memories and stories. Archetypical stories are revitalised by and reinvented through their use in oral recollections of historical events by individual narrators. At the same time, those archetypes provide oral histories with deep, nuanced, complex and ambiguous narratives that go well beyond the platitudes of established oral history narratives. If the urgency of recalling historical events as living memories injects

life in archetypical stories, archetypical stories inject life into oral histories through their powerful references to the deep and inscrutable connections between the physical and the metaphysical. It is at this powerful and productive intersection that Norma's individual memories provide a deeper and more intricate rendering of the past.

Franco Castelli has suggested that when mythology intersects with oral history, it provides exemplar and paradigmatic structure to individual events, in exchange for some loss in historical accuracy. This appears to be a reasonable exchange, given the need to remember the past not just as a form of preservation, but as a function of our investment into a better future.[10] Yet what is even more important is that the archetype speaks to the core of our existence, to our deeply shared human history. It gives voice and presence to complex interconnections between past and present, and between physical and metaphysical, that a simple recollection of traumatic events would fail to express. It is around these archetypes that fragmented, contradictory, inexplicable, and at times unspeakable memories of trauma can be reimagined and rearranged to produce a more meaningful tale about life.

The second, and closely related issue that Norma's story raises pertains to the role that the traumatised body comes to play in the recollection, elaboration, and narration of the traumatic events. A number of historians in recent years have argued the need to reconnect the semantic with the somatic, and to consider the body, and how it remembers, as central to storytelling and oral history.[11] Jeff Friedman has argued that, because 'historical events are embodied in individual subjects', we need to rehabilitate 'embodied experience in the construction and interpretation of history.'[12] He further argues that 'oral history projects should be designed to explicitly interrogate the embodied experiences of narrators.'[13] In analysing oral histories of the Italian Resistance to the Nazi occupation, Sarah De Nardi conceptualises the human body as 'a channel of interaction with the world in experience and in memory.'[14]

Bodily manifestations of the trauma come to represent not just the persisting physical and psychological consequences of the trauma itself, but also the metaphysical, uncanny, incomprehensible, and perhaps unspeakable elements of traumatic experiences and memories. This becomes particularly apparent in stories in which the individual trauma of the narrator intersects with and relates to the witnessing of other people's traumas, for instance during wars. In Norma's story, while her personal traumas are not always a consequence of the war, the war itself, with its ineluctable and incomprehensible tragedies, comes to represent the crucial existential counterpoint to her

personal history of resilience and resistance against abuses within her family. This connection between the personal tragedy of her life and the tragedy of the war she witnessed is often experienced and remembered through corporeal references: to her traumatised yet resilient body that survives the war, to the bared, unnamed bodies of victims who had been tortured and killed by the Japanese, and to the re-emergence of the trauma in her own body, decades after the traumatic events. It is as if memories are not only remembered and retold, but experienced anew, again and again, through the body.

Oral history has played an essential role in emphasising the centrality of the wounded, mutilated, and desecrated body in personal recollections of the tragedy of the Second World War. In the most powerful instances, such corporeal references become not just a dry acknowledgement of the cruelty of war, but a deep, unresolved expression of the necessity – and yet impossibility – to comprehend and communicate such absurd tragedies.[15] References to injuries to the lower limbs are very common in war recollections. One could assume that such injuries have a lower mortality rate than similarly traumatic injuries to the upper body, and this is potentially another physical explanation for why limping in archetypical stories marks the body of someone returning from the kingdom of death. Yet this specific, physical reason is often intertwined with limping as a metaphorical expression of the imbalance resulting from the trauma.

In concluding this article, I want to clarify that such correlation is neither inevitable, nor always follows a similar pattern. I will do so by referring briefly to three of the many examples of oral histories in which the deambulatory imbalance, while physically linked to war traumas, takes on different meanings and functions. Yet these examples also will reinforce my argument that Norma's history and her use of archetypical references to deambulatory issues are deeply rooted in shared experiences of war, violence and trauma throughout human history.

In her article on traumatised war veterans and oral history, Alison Parr cites one of her interviewee's memories of being unable to walk on grass when he came back from the war due to the his fear of mines.[16] Here, once again, the factual element of the story (grass makes mines harder to spot), intersects with an irrational fear (there are no mines to be afraid of at home), and come to express a mental imbalance brought about by the trauma (which, in this particular story, is expressed through agoraphobia). What this story and Norma's have in common is not just the expression of the trauma of war through a deambulatory issue, but also the fact that both of them felt very isolated and were not able to relate their traumatic event to a broader narrative which was shared by fellow victims.

The need to fit a personal story within an established narrative shared with other victims may, at times, refocus the story away from the physical and mental trauma. For instance, Kevin Blackburn notes that one of his interviewees (a member of the British Indian Army in Singapore during the Pacific War who joined the Malaysian Indian struggle for independence) did not focus much on his leg being mangled during a Japanese bombing raid, because that did not fit with the anticolonial sentiments shared by his community of veterans.[17] This reinforces Blackburn's argument that histories of trauma are more easily shared and remembered as a matter of fact when a sense of shared community allows collective memory to supersede personal memories. Conversely, when individual memories do not fit a community's memory, or when the traumatised person experiences further isolation and alienation, the embodiment of the trauma becomes the focus of the narrative, and often comes to express broader existential concerns.

The deambulatory imbalance also plays a role in Fred Farral's Anzac story, as recorded and analysed by Alistair Thomson.[18] First Farral suffered from trench foot. On his return from war, his feet were too damaged for farm work. The extent to which his trench foot and the injury to his knee were a key component of his persisting health problems is unclear, but Farral continued to suffer from mental and physical issues which, he argued, were the consequence of war. Thomson notes how, in a letter written to his brother in 1917, Farral recalls 'waiting in shell holes […] with wounded and dead men "everywhere"; […] copping a "Blighty" wound in the leg that was a ticket back to hospital in England; hobbling five miles to safety "under shell fire all the time" past wounded and dead.'[19] In the light of Ginzburg's considerations and my own analysis of Norma's story, this recollection also seems to establish a clear correlation between the physical injury, the journey through the realm of death, and the return home.

These three different examples, when considered in relation to Norma's story, show how the specificity of the story being remembered – and the context in which it is remembered – have a significant impact on the way the trauma continues to be experienced and recalled through references to the body and, more specifically, through limping and imbalances in the body. Yet they also suggest a continuity between the traumatic physical experience, the mental trauma, the establishment of archetypical narratives and the use of such narratives in oral recollections of traumatic events. Could one argue that feelings and emotions come to be articulated *beyond* linguistic, expressive and performative manifestations? That through bodily

imbalances and deformations emotions have at once a physical and a metaphysical component, positioned at the divide between life and death, the known and the unknown? Norma's story suggests that in studying the relationship between oral history and emotions, we also need to consider what is revealed or concealed by the body, beyond the utterance and performance of codified emotions. Perhaps one of the starting points could be to focus on the body as the very surface in which many binaries become deeply and inextricably intertwined: past and present; event and memory; trauma and resilience; life and afterlife; physical and metaphysical; rational and irrational.

This article has been peer reviewed.

Endnotes

1 Lori Ann Garner. '"Stories which I Know to Be True": Oral Tradition, Oral History and Voices from the Past', *Oral History Review*, vol. 43, no. 2 (2016), pp. 263, 275.

2 Nayyrah Waheed, *Salt*, Middletown DE (USA), the author, 2013, p. 238.

3 Carlo Ginzburg (trans. Raymon Rosenthal), *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, Penguin, New York, 1991. Originally published in Italy as *Storia Notturna. Una Decifrazione del Sabba*, Einaudi, Turin, 1989.

4 Ten interviews were conducted between 25 July 2014 and 15 May 2015 at Norma's home in Brisbane (Queensland, Australia). One final interview was recorded in the same location on 17 November 2016. The interviews are archived at the University of the Sunshine Coast Library (access is restricted). At the time of the interviews, Norma was in her late eighties and had expressed a desire to tell her life story and have it recorded. She claimed this was the first time she was speaking in detail about many of the key events in her difficult life. Norma's life story had a profound impact on me, and this article is my first attempt to make sense of my emotional and intellectual response to it.

5 Ginzburg, *Ecstasies*.

6 Ginzburg refers to old versions of the Cinderella tale which are widespread across the globe and in which, for various reasons highlighted by Ginzburg in his essay, the visit to the prince's palace can be interpreted as a visit to the realm on the dead.

7 Garner, *Stories*.

8 Garner, *Stories*, pp. 268–269

9 Sean Field, '"Healing": Trauma, Oral History and Regeneration', *Oral History*, vol. 34, no. 1, Spring 2006, p. 31.

10 Franco Castelli, 'Fonti Orali e Parola Folklorica: Storicità e Formalizzazione', in Cesare Bermani (ed.), *Introduzione alla Soria Orale: Storia, Conservazione Delle Fonti e Problemi di Metodo. Volume I*, Odradek, Rome, 1999, pp. 167–90.

11 Jeff Friedman, '"Muscle Memory": Performing Oral History', *Oral History*, vol. 33, no. 2, Memory Work, 2005, p. 36; Horacio N. Roque Ramírez and Nan Alamilla Boyd, 'Introduction Close Encounters: The Body and Knowledge in Queer Oral History', in Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramírez (eds), *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2012, pp. 1–20.

12 Friedman, 'Muscle Memory', p. 47.

13 Jeff Friedman, 'Oral History, Hermeneutics, and Embodiment', *Oral History Review*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2014, p. 299.

14 Sarah De Nardi, '"No-one had asked me about that before": A Focus on the Body and "Other" Resistance Experiences in Italian Second World War Storytelling', *Oral History*, vol. 42, no. 1, Spring 2014, p. 74.

15 It is beyond the scope of this paper to acknowledge the vast literature on the topic. Nonetheless, Gabriella Gribaudi's work on the Second World War in Southern Italy has been particularly relevant for my approach due to Gribaudi's ability to bring the perspective of the civil population (not just as victims and witnesses, but as people able to resist, oppose, disobey and solidarise) to the forefront of the historical narrative. See in particular Gabriella Gribaudi, *Guerra Totale. Tra Bombe Alleate e Violenze Naziste. Napoli e il Fronte Meridionale 1940–44*, Bollati Boringhieri, Turin, 2005.

16 Alison Parr, 'Breaking the Silence: Traumatised War Veterans and Oral History', *Oral History*, vol. 35, no. 1, p. 61.

17 Kevin Blackburn, 'Recalling War Trauma of the Pacific War and the Japanese Occupation in the Oral History of Malaysia and Singapore', *Oral History Review*, vol. 36, no. 2, p. 231.

18 Alistair Thomson, *Anzac Memories: Living with the Legend*, Melbourne, Oxford University Press, second edition, Monash University Press, Melbourne, 2013. Here I refer in particular to Alistair Thomson, 'Anzac Memories Revisited: Trauma, Memory and Oral History', *The Oral History Review*, vol. 42, no. 1, 2105.

19 Thomson, *Anzac Memories Revisited*, p. 4.

Long Desperate Hours at the Typewriter: Establishing the Oral History Association of Australia

Beth M Robertson

This paper was requested by the-then editor to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Oral History Association of Australia and originally published in this journal in 2008. It documents the founding of a national association by Jean Teasdale in Perth in 1978, prior to the existence of local oral history groups anywhere in Australia. It also establishes the influence of the first two oral history conferences in Australia, convened by Joan Campbell at La Trobe University in Melbourne in 1974 and 1975. The paper goes on to describe the consolidation of the OHAA in its early years, as well as assessing how much of the founder's original vision had been realised thirty years later.

The Oral History Association of Australia (OHAA) came into being at a meeting held at the University of Western Australia (UWA) on 26 July 1978 through the extraordinary energy and drive of one woman. While the same 'convergence of sociology and history'[1] that stimulated the emergence of oral history as a research technique in Britain in the 1960s was exciting a new generation of historians across Australia in the 1970s, it was social worker Jean Teasdale who spent 'the long desperate hours' at the typewriter[2] to bring about a national association.[3]

In 1975 Jean Teasdale had interrupted her career as a social worker to become one of the first two full-time interviewers appointed to the J S Battye Library of West Australian History's Oral History Program at the State Reference Library of Western Australia. She brought impressive skills and experience to the role. She had studied psychology at UWA prior to completing a Diploma in Social Science at the University of Adelaide, awarded in 1952.[4] She had then worked in a range of agencies in Adelaide and Perth, as well as teaching at Western Australia's inaugural School of Social Work at UWA from 1965-1968.

Jean had also pursued an interest in History studying for a Master of Arts (Preliminary) at UWA (1969–1971), while continuing to raise four children. Prior to joining the Library in 1975 Jean was working as a family counsellor in her husband's general medical practice and contributing as a volunteer to support

Jean Teasdale (pictured) founded the OHAA in 1978. Photo courtesy John Ferrell.

refugees from Darwin in the wake of Cyclone Tracy (24 December 1974).[5]

The potential of oral history to contribute to the historic record had been recognised by the Battye Library's first librarian, Mollie Lukis, during a nine-month trip to Europe and North America funded by the Carnegie Foundation in 1957–1958.[6] In 1961 she and her staff began recording interviews for the Library's collection as time permitted.[7] This was the first oral history program in a major Australian library. While the National Library began supporting fieldwork by oral history practitioners in 1960, beginning with Hazel de Berg's recordings of writers and artists, it did not begin 'a full-scale oral history project' until 1970 when retired journalist Mel Pratt was contracted to conduct interviews with people selected by the library.[8]

The resources to establish a dedicated program at the Battye Library eventuated from the State election campaign in 1974 when Liberal Party leader Sir

Charles Court proposed 'the gathering of live history while the memories of those who are making it are still strong.'[9] When Sir Charles became Premier the State Librarian's submission to establish an oral history program within the Battye Library was successful.

During 1975 and 1976 Jean researched and recorded over 60 interviews for the Library. Interviewees ranged from farmers (her own family background) and miners to government ministers and Western Australian-born entertainer Rolf Harris.[10] Her role also involved training others in interviewing and recording techniques, proofreading transcripts and promoting the collection.

However, she felt isolated. She had been a member of the Australian Association of Social Workers since 1952,[11] benefiting from its program of publications and conferences and contributing herself to the development of the profession. There was no such support for oral history in Australia. So Jean joined three overseas associations: the United States' Oral History Association (established 1966), Britain's Oral History Society (established 1973) and the Canadian Oral History Association (established 1975), and she began corresponding with other practitioners identified through their journals.[12]

In 1977, with the idea of a national association of oral history already in her mind,[13] she travelled to Britain where she attended an Oral History Society conference in London[14] and met the editor of its bi-annual journal, Paul Thompson.[15] On her return to Perth Jean was now determined to establish a similar organisation in Australia.

The idea of a national oral history association was not entirely without precedent. It had been raised at a one-day conference at La Trobe University, Melbourne in 1975. It was the third of three conferences between November 1973 and February 1975 that had begun to build a sense of community between oral history practitioners in the eastern states, and to suggest to Australian libraries and archives 'the growing respectability in this country of oral history programmes'.[16]

The first Australian Folklorists' Conference[17] at the University of Sydney on 17–18 November 1973 was convened by the New South Wales Folk Federation (established 1970) but 'brought into the open a number of questions which must be asked of any oral history programme whether it be concerned with the specialised fields of folk lore, tradition and popular song or interviews on tape with politicians and public servants or artists and writers.'[18] Three months later two of the delegates, folklorists Wendy Lowenstein and Shirley Andrews, addressed a much larger gathering in Melbourne; the first national conference about oral history held in Australia.[19]

Joan Campbell convened two influential oral history conferences in 1974 and 1975. Photo ca. 1980, courtesy of Joan Campbell.

The one-day conference on 1 March 1974 was convened by Joan Campbell, a senior tutor and PhD candidate at La Trobe University. Joan's primary interest was European history but she chose local topics for her postgraduate degrees so that she would not need to leave her young family to do research. In 1972 she began recording oral histories, and also made contact with the US Oral History Association, while she explored the idea of a PhD on the history of the Mornington Peninsula. Although she decided instead to research the colonial history of the Port Phillip district[20] she continued to record interviews with people on subjects of interest to her[21] and to correspond with American practitioners. When she joined the History Department of La Trobe University in 1974 she offered to present an oral history course for third year students. She also taught oral history in a voluntary capacity through the Council of Adult Education.[22]

The decision to convene a conference was made because of 'the need for dialogue' in 'this relatively new development within the discipline of history.'[23] The conference program presented 16 speakers in five panels covering current developments in oral history, ethnohistory and interviewing. The speakers were primarily Victorian academics but the response was overwhelming; about seventy people attended,[24] the catering for tea breaks fell well short of demand and Tom Stannage, who attended from UWA, enthused that, 'All that is vital in history in Australia seems to be occurring at specialist conferences like this one.'[25]

As Joan reported in the proceedings, convening the conference 'provided a vital means of communication between many researchers… From Townsville to Perth, and places in between, numerous letters have come in wanting to know more about the Conference and its aims.'[26] For 'the Second Oral History Conference' on 6 February 1975 she assembled eight speakers, including academics from Canberra, Queensland and South Australia, for a program focussed on immigrant

communities and folk traditions. She concluded that 'the need for a listing of oral history contacts within Australia' was clear.[27]

Joan signalled her intention to convene a third conference in 1976 in the 1975 conference proceedings,[28] and referred to the lack of a formal association in a report she wrote for the US Oral History Association's journal.[29] However the momentum was halted when she left La Trobe for the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology to coordinate the establishment of the Victorian Technical and Further Education Off-Campus Network to support distance education. Like oral history, distance education appealed to Joan's interest in innovative approaches to research and teaching. She subscribed to the OHAA in its first year and was involved in discussions about the establishment of a Victorian Branch[30] but her involvement in oral history ended in the early 1980s.[31]

The timely publication of the proceedings of both La Trobe conferences fixed their influence on the growing interest in oral history in the late 1970s. The second proceedings also provided Jean Teasdale with an invaluable list of almost 150 oral history contacts and collections, which she used to begin canvassing support for a national association by a letter she circulated throughout Australia in March 1978.[32]

> It would seem that the time has come for Australia to think about a national association in conjunction with yearly conferences. … Perhaps steps have been taken towards this in the East but certainly not here in the West. If you reply to this note I wonder if you would also say whether you would be interested or not in such an association being formed. … I was not involved in the 75 conference so do not know what the feelings about a national association were at that time.[33]

The following month Jean produced the Oral History Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 1 on the Gestetner in her husband's general practice.[34] The lead item was 'Comments on the formation of an Australian Oral History Association' in which she referred again to the second La Trobe conference:

> A number of people in Australia now feel it is time for those working on some form of oral history, whether in their own work or in organized programmes to get together in some form of an association so that ideas, methodologies, ethics, etc. can be discussed, as well as offering a means of disseminating the growing volume of knowledge in this field through either a newsletter or a journal.

> Following the Oral History Conference at La Trobe University in 1975 some had hoped that this would occur, but interest waned and no one was sufficiently motivated to collect

people together for this purpose. It is now felt that there is sufficient interest for a body to be formed at least in Western Australia, and it is for this reason that a meeting will be arranged some time in July.[35]

The short time in which Jean intended to marshal support for the meeting is all the more remarkable given that she was also preparing to travel to Penang in early May to attend a 'Colloquium on Oral History' organized by the National Archives of Malaysia and the Universiti Sains Malaysia, in cooperation with UNESCO.[36] Nevertheless, the second edition of the Oral History Newsletter distributed in July included not only the formal notice of 'an Oral History Inaugural Meeting' on 26 July but also a draft constitution and standing orders based on those of the British Oral History Society.

By the day of the meeting Jean had recruited 23 people to serve in positions of the proposed executive or on the committee.[37] As high school history teacher John Ferrell, the inaugural Treasurer, recalled twenty years later, 'Nothing was left to chance. There may have been nominations from the floor on which Jean didn't rely[38] [but] she had nominees in advance for each position to ensure a committee could be established.'[39]

There has been a persistent misconception that the organisation formed on 26 July 1978 was a Western Australian Oral History Association that predated the national body.[40] There was certainly some initial opposition to setting up a national association prior to establishing a local oral history organisation in the West.[41] This is probably reflected in Jean's words, also quoted above: 'It is now felt that there is sufficient interest for a body to be formed at least in Western Australia'.[42] In 1980 Wendy Lowenstein in Melbourne also questioned whether the OHAA had been formed prematurely, much to Jean's chagrin.[43] However she had never had any intention of settling for less than a national association.

> I had to seek a number of people for Executive positions before the meeting was held and people from other states had to be found since a National body was the objective. … The committee was a very large one and possibly could have had fewer WA members.[44]

Of the 32-person 1978-1979 committee, 11 were interstate representatives, including two of the three Vice Presidents: Professor Weston Bate of Deakin University in Melbourne and Graeme Powell, the Principal Librarian of the National Library of Australia in Canberra. The third was Professor Geoffrey Bolton of Murdoch University. Jean was elected Organising Secretary, and announced in the next issue of the newsletter, 'The Oral History Association of Australia is now a reality.'[45]

Jean had an ambitious program mapped out to

establish the role and influence of the OHAA and she gave herself a deadline in which to achieve it, deciding 'to devote two years to setting up the Association and although I hate typing, addressing envelopes, filing etc., I had to knuckle down to the job.'[46] She had intended from the outset to convene an oral history conference in Perth in 1979 to coincide with Western Australia's sesquicentennial.[47] Now, with the help of an OHAA subcommittee and support from the History Department of UWA and several sponsors, two were organised; a 'local conference' on the theme of 'Oral History and the Community' attended by about 70 people on 31 March[48] and a National Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 18-19 August that drew 125 delegates.

In forming the program of the first National Conference Jean continued to be international in outlook. It was scheduled to coincide with the International Conference on Indian Ocean Studies to encourage participants from that region[49] (resulting in delegates from Indonesia, Kenya and Mauritius), and Professor John Saville, Chairman of the British Oral History Society, was invited as a keynote speaker. Papua New Guinea, Malaysia and Thailand were also represented.[50] The spirit of the conference established another precedent, as John Ferrell recalled:

> [The] first Executive and their families made great efforts to ensure the success and good spirit of the first National Conference. All delegates were met on arrival at bus, train or airport terminals. Transport for delegates was arranged from university college accommodation. Some visitors were billeted. In this, again, Jean led the way, offering hospitality to three people.[51]

Membership grew steadily in response to Jean's tireless publicity; with 107 reported six months after the OHAA's founding[52] growing to 285 by March 1980.[53] At the same time Jean was urging the formation of branches throughout Australia. She travelled to South Australia to be present at the meeting on 5 February 1979 that established the OHAA's first branch.[54] The NSW Branch was formed on 5 July 1979.[55] Jean was also on the Editorial Committee for the publication of the first Oral History Association of Australia Journal in 1979, containing the papers of the National Conference.

Responsibilities also began to devolve to others. Wendy Lowenstein in Melbourne was elected Newsletter and Journal editor at the first AGM, the NSW Branch organised the second National Conference in Sydney in May 1981 and Jean was pressing both the SA and NSW branches to take on responsibility for the National Executive after the Biennial General Meeting (BGM)[56] to be held at the Sydney conference. In the issue of the Newsletter that announced that the NSW Branch

would take on the role, it was also reported that Jean had resigned as Honorary Secretary of the OHAA and taken a six-month leave of absence as Liaison Officer.[57] She was just a little behind schedule; she had taken 27 months rather than two years to set the OHAA on its feet.

In every other way, Jean's timing had been perfect. She had established the national oral history association on the eve of the publication of Australia's 'first crop of "oral history books"'[58] that delivered the idea of oral history outside universities and well beyond the audiences of folk societies. Alan Roberts' list of these publications includes:

> Scholarly works like [Ray] Broomhill's *Unemployed Workers* on the Depression in Adelaide and Clive Moore's *The Forgotten People* on Pacific Islanders in Australia; more popular works like Kevin Gilbert's *Living Black*, which won the 1978 National Book Council Award for Australian Literature; Wendy Lowenstein and Morag Loh's *The Immigrants*; and Lowenstein's massive *Weevils in the Flour* which won the Royal Blind Society's 'Talking Book of the Year Award'… Finally, from England came Paul Thompson's *The Voice of the Past: Oral History…* a handbook of the oral history method, an essay on the theory of oral history, and a masterly survey of the changing role of oral history in the development of western historiography.[59]

The establishment period had not been easy for Jean. Apart from the administrative work, negotiation and travel, as soon as branches formed the OHAA began to take on a life of its own in ways that did not always meet with her approval. The most vexing issues were, not surprisingly, finances and membership affiliation.

In the May 1980 issue of the Newsletter both Wendy Lowenstein's editorial 'It's a big country!' and an article by Alan Roberts, President of the NSW Branch, entitled 'W(h)ither the branches?' suggested that provisions in the constitution and the view of some of the National Executive that branches should be self-supporting would inhibit the ability of existing branches to accept responsibility for the National Executive and discourage the formation of more branches. Jean's response 'as founder' was vehement:

> At no time did I envisage that branches… would claim back a large proportion (currently one-third) of each subscription. This situation was changed once branches were formed and began looking for easy money… Is it really necessary for the national body to hand back such a large slice of the cake to branches without effort on their behalf. Should we not reconsider this

whole question of finance realistically before the national body, not the branches, 'wither'… [We should be] pulling together to make our already well known Association into a well organised whole rather than permitting branches to encircle and crush it.[60]

At the BGM in May 1981 compromises were made on both sides, and the retiring President Professor Geoffrey Bolton commented wryly, 'It must be stressed that our negotiations on this subject have been more open and amicable than is customary in Federal-State conferences over funding.'[61] The subscription rebate to branches was reduced to 25 percent, but membership affiliation was clarified; from now on a member living in the geographical location of a branch would be assumed to be a member of the branch.

Jean had regained her equanimity in her report as retiring Secretary/Liaison Officer,[62] and was elected Honorary Life Member.

> In moving the motion, Alan Roberts said that OHAA would not exist but for Jean's tremendous efforts. He felt some trepidation in taking over from her as Secretary/Liaison Officer, as Jean's was a hard act to follow. It would be interesting to see what new directions she found now for her energy and organising talent… The motion was carried unanimously and by acclamation.[63]

She was not the OHAA's first Life Member. That honour had been bestowed on John Thomson, 'the WA Forestry Officer who carried his tape recorder through the hot dusty North West in the mid-1960s before most people had even heard of the term "oral history,"' at the inaugural AGM in August 1979.[64]

Jean remained actively involved in the National Executive, as Vice President, and WA Branch until 1983, and in the practice of oral history. She was, for example, one of the WA Coordinators of the nationwide 'Australia 1938' interviewing program that provided source material for the Australians 1938 volume of the Bicentennial series Australians: A Historical Library published in 1987. Despite formally retiring from social working in 1993, she continued to work occasionally as a locum in the emergency department of the Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital. In 1997 her long-awaited book *Facing the Bow: European Women in Colonial Malaya 1919-1945* was published, based on interviews she had recorded in Australia, Malaya and Europe in the 1970s.[65] Jean died in November 2002.

Thirty years later, how much of Jean's original vision of the OHAA has been realised? Successive National Committees[66] have been as unsuccessful as Jean in finding reliable sources of external funding to support

the development of the OHAA. The same has been the experience of most other historical organisations formed in the late twentieth century. Instead, branch membership has been the basis of the OHAA's finances.

Branches were established in all states and each has endured. The WA Branch was the third formed after SA and NSW on 9 March 1980.[67] A meeting originally called for the purpose on 23 July 1979[68] failed to attract enough people due to a severe electrical storm. Branches in Queensland (for many years known as the Southeast Queensland Branch) and Victoria were formed in 1982.[69] The Tasmanian Branch was the last to form. There had been an attempt to start a branch in Hobart in the early 1980s but it was not until the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston began using oral history in its exhibitions in 1988 that the idea found fertile ground. The inaugural meeting was held on 20 July 1991 to coincide with the launch of the Museum's book Launceston Talks: Oral Histories of the Launceston Community.[70]

The territories have proven more elusive. A Northern Territory Branch is mentioned in issues of the Oral History Newsletter in 1980, but it was probably not formalised for want of the requisite ten members. Distance and the transience of the Territory's population continue to thwart the establishment of a local branch. Instead, Territorians are attached to the SA Branch.

The failure of an ACT Branch to persist is more problematical. One was formed at a meeting held at the National Library in Canberra on 1 March 1980. Twenty-six people attended and the first committee included representatives from the Australian National University, National Library and Australian War Memorial.[71] However, the branch was disbanded in 1983[72] and local members have since been attached to the NSW Branch. Canberra has the greatest concentration of Australians with secure employment in the field of oral history. Several national institutions have supported OHAA aims and activities over the years and the National Library hosted the 2001 conference, but a robust ACT Branch taking its share of responsibility for the National Committee, annual journal and biennial conference would be a tremendous support to other branches.

Most branches have long-standing and mutually beneficial relationships with their state libraries and, like Jean, oral history staff in state libraries have continued to play major roles in the development of the OHAA. Nevertheless, the OHAA has also lobbied vigorously for particular libraries not to cut back their responsibility for collecting oral history in response to increasing budgetary pressures.

It took about 10 years for the OHAA to become financially resilient. The national newsletter was

abandoned in 1985 as too expensive and increasingly redundant as branches established their own publications. The National Committee struggled to continue producing the annual *Journal* until 1986 when the first of three years' sponsorship from the National Museum of Australia not only ensured its continued existence[73] but also allowed branches to retain half of each subscription.

This was particularly timely for the SA Branch, which was struggling to develop its own publication. The first edition of the *Oral History Handbook* had been published in May 1983 as a little A5-size booklet of 32 pages compiled by the SA Branch committee. At $1.00 to members and $1.50 to others it was intended to provide a simple, affordable alternative to commercial publications such as *The Voice of the Past*. One thousand copies were sold in 18 months.[74] A revised and expanded second edition was produced in 1985 and a discount price for orders of 10 or more copies enabled other branches to buy in bulk and sell at workshops at a small profit. Now in its fifth edition,[75] about 16,000 copies of the *Handbook* have been sold since 1983.

The biennial conferences have never been a financial burden to the OHAA. Most have resulted in a modest profit that is shared between the host branch and the National Committee, and the more significant benefit of an increase in membership in the host state. The conferences represent the 'truly cooperative affair'[76] that Jean hoped the OHAA would become, with branch committees, as well as the National Committee, extending loans to the organising branch if required, sharing budgetary and logistical information from past experience, and sending delegates to participate in the associated BGMs.

The 1983 BGM gave branches the power to receive subscriptions directly from their members, as well as the responsibility for forwarding a portion of each amount to the National Committee. This is now known as the capitation fee, and it is used primarily to fund national OHAA publications including the *Journal,* membership brochures, *Guidelines of Ethical Practice* (adopted 1993) and *Guide to Commissioning Oral History Projects* (first published 1998); to subsidise branch activities, such as new editions of the *Oral History Handbook* and the Queensland Branch's *Talking Together: A Guide To Community Oral History Projects;*[77] and to support the planning stages of the biennial conference.

Even Jean's extravagant vision of 'an oral history association which encompasses both Pacific and SE Asian areas to form a Pacific Australasian Society'[78] has been realised in a way. The International Oral History Association (IOHA), formed in 1996, has six continents or areas represented on its Council,

including Oceania of which Australia is a part. A member of the OHAA National Committee has the role of international representative and provides contact between OHAA and IOHA. Two Australians, OHAA's Janis Wilton and expatriate (until 2007) Alistair Thomson, have served as President of IOHA. The 14th International Oral History Conference was hosted by the OHAA in Sydney in 2006 and brought participants from 29 different countries, and there have been about 15 Australian papers offered for the 15th International Oral History Conference to be held in Guadalajara, Mexico in September 2008.[79]

Reflecting on the two years she devoted to establishing the OHAA, Jean admitted, 'I must say I resented very much the long desperate hours I spent at the typewriter. I could have produced two books in the time I spent as a non typist pushing those keys.'[80] Would a national Australian oral history association exist today if not for Jean Teasdale? Almost certainly, but it is likely to have emerged some time later from established state associations following the pattern, for example, of the Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations (established 1996). Instead, the evolution of oral history in Australia has been discussed in a series of 15 national conferences and distilled in 30 consecutive journals. Thanks to Jean's indefatigable endeavour and unwavering vision, the OHAA has been functioning as a 'well organised whole'[81] for 30 years.

Endnotes

1   Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*, 2nd ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 65.

2   Jean Teasdale, letter to Alan Roberts, 5 November 1981, reproduced in *OHAA Circular 3*, 10 February 1982, held in the records of the OHAA (SA Branch), State Library of South Australia (SLSA), SRG 257/4. The records of the National Committee of the OHAA, 1978-1987, are held in the National Library of Australia at MS 7982.

3   For an overview of oral history in Australia see Alan Roberts, 'The Development of Australian Oral History, 1798-1984' in *Oral History Association Journal* [hereafter *OHAA Journal*], no. 7, 1985, pp. 3–22. The material was also published in a shortened form in Louise Douglas, Alan Roberts & Ruth Thompson, *Oral History: A Handbook*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1988.

4   *Calendar* of the University of Adelaide, 1953, p. 135.

5   Information about Jean Teasdale is drawn from three sources: the biography on the cover of her book *Facing the Bow: European Women in Colonial Malaya 1919-1945*, Centre for Migration & Development Studies, Nedlands, WA, 1997; John Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale, Founder of OHAA', in *OHAA Journal* no. 22, 2000, pp. 133–5; and (unattributed) 'In Memoriam – Jean Teasdale, December 1928-November 2002' in *The West Australian Social Worker*, Australian Association of Social Workers (WA Branch), May 2003, pp. 6–7.

6   Margaret Medcalf, 'The Oral History Programme of the Battye Library of West Australian History' in *OHAA Journal*

no. 2, 1979-1980, p. 53. This article and others that use it as a reference incorrectly place Miss Lukis' Carnegie trip in 1956. Contemporary sources show that it began in 1957. See *Archives and Manuscripts: The Journal of the Archives Section of The Library Association of Australia*, vol. 1, no. 3, December 1956, p. 24 and vol. 1, no. 4, August 1957, p.36.

7   Medcalf, 'The Oral History Programme', p. 53.

8   Graeme Powell, 'The Oral History Collections of the National Library of Australia' in *Archives and Manuscripts,* vol. 5, no. 6, February 1974, p. 139.

9   Medcalf, 'The Oral History Programme', p. 54. Court proposed the establishment of a Heritage Commission with functions including 'the gathering of live history'.

10   See the State Library of Western Australia's catalogue at http://www.slwa.wa.gov.au/.

11   'In memoriam', p. 6.

12   Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale', p. 133.

13   Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale', p. 133.

14   Jean Teasdale, circular letter, 13 March 1978, SLSA, SRG 257/4.

15   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 1, November 1979.

16   John Thompson, 'Oral History in Australia: Some Problems Discussed at the Australian Folklorists' Conference, Sydney, November 17-18, 1973' in *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol. 5, no. 6, February 1974, p. 143.

17   The Australian Folklorists' Conference in 1973 pre-dated the biennial National Folklife Conference, 1984-1994, convened by the Australian Folk Trust.

18   Thompson, 'Oral History in Australia', p. 143.

19   The proceedings were published as Joan Campbell (ed.) *Oral History 74: Papers Presented at the First Oral History Conference, 1 March 1974*, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic., 1974.

20   Joan Campbell, 'Pastoral Settlement in the Port Phillip district 1834-1847', PhD thesis submitted to the History Department, La Trobe University, 1981.

21   Joan Campbell's tape recordings are dispersed in a number of collections, including La Trobe University, State Library of Victoria and National Library of Australia.

22   Information from Joan Campbell. I am very grateful for the help provided by Joan on being contacted some 30 years after her association with oral history had ended.

23   Campbell, *Oral History 74*, p. iii.

24   Unattributed report 'Oral History Conference – La Trobe University' in *Archives and Manuscripts*, vol 5, no. 7, May 1974, p. 190.

25   Review of *Oral History 74* in *Historical Studies*, vol. 16, no. 65, October 1975, p. 626.

26   Campbell, *Oral History 74*, p. iii.

27   Joan Campbell (ed.), *Oral History 75: Papers Presented at the Second Oral History Conference, 6 February 1975*, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic., 1975, p. iii.

28   Campbell, *Oral History 75.*

29   Joan Campbell, 'Developments in Oral History in Australia' in the journal of the US Oral History Association *The Oral History Review*, vol. 4, 1976, p. 49. The editorial introduction to Joan's report incorrectly states that a she convened a third oral history conference in 1976.

30   Jean Teasdale, letter to Alan Roberts, 28 September 1981, reproduced in *OHAA Circular 3*, 10 February 1982, SLSA, SRG 257/4.

31   Joan Campbell remained at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology until her retirement in 1987.

32   Surveying oral history abroad in David K Dunaway and Willa K Baum (eds) *Oral History: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, American Association for State and Local History, Nashville, Tennessee, 1984, Louis M Starr mistakenly credits Joan Campbell's second conference with '[giving] birth to an association in 1975', p. 19. Nevertheless, the list of contacts published in the proceedings was instrumental to Jean Teasdale achieving her goal three years later.

33   Teasdale, letter to Alan Roberts in *OHAA Circular.*

34   Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale', p. 134.

35   Jean Teasdale, (ed), *Oral History Newsletter*, vol.1, no. 1, April 1978, p.1.

36   Teasdale, *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no.1, 1978, p.3. Jean Teasdale reported on the Colloquium in *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no 2, July 1978, pp. 1–2.

37   Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Oral History Association of Australia held in Lecture Room 5, Arts Building, University of Western Australia at 8pm on 26 July 1978, pp. 6–7, SLSA, SRG 257/3.

38   Five nominations from the floor are recorded in the minutes. Another three people were listed in the committee as published in *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 3, Spring 1978, pp. 1–2.

39   Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale', p. 134.

40   See 'In Memoriam', and Margaret Hamilton, 'Jean Teasdale, 1928-2002' in *OHAA Journal* no. 25, 2003, p. 112.

41   Western Australian opposition to a national rather than a local association is evident in the Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting in 1978.

42   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol.1, no. 1, April 1978, p. 1.

43   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 3, May 1980, p. 1, and Jean Teasdale's response in *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1980, pp. 1–3.

44   Jean Teasdale, 'The Oral History Association of Australia – Our Beginnings', *Oral History Newsletter* vol. 2, no. 1, November 1979, p. 3.

45   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 3, Spring 1978, p. 3.

46   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 1, November 1979, p. 3.

47   Teasdale, letter to Alan Roberts.

48   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 5, Autumn 1979, p. 2.

49   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 3, Spring 1978, p. 11.

50   *OHAA Journal* no. 1, 1978-1979, p. 8.

51   Ferrell, 'Tribute to Jean Teasdale', p. 134.

52   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 4, Summer 1979, p. 7.

53   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 2, March 1980, p. 1.

54   SLSA, SRG 257/2.

55   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol 1, no. 6, Winter 1979, p. 1.

56   The draft constitution circulated by Jean Teasdale in July 1978 required an AGM. The constitution adopted at the first AGM in August 1979 made provision for BGMs instead.

57   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1980, p. 1. The position of Organising Secretary in the 1978 draft constitution had been split to become Secretary and Liaison Officer in 1979. Jean Teasdale had held them concurrently.

58   Roberts, 'The Development of Australian Oral History', p. 17.

59   Roberts, 'The Development of Australian Oral History', pp. 17–18.

60   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1980, pp. 2–3.

61   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 4, August 1981, p. 4.

62   In February 1981 Jean Teasdale resumed the role of Secretary from which she had resigned in May 1980. She had ended her leave of absence from the role of Liaison Officer in December 1980. *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 4, August 1981, p. 5.

63   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 4, August 1981, p. 4.

64   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 1, November 1979, p. 1.

65   The location of this series of Jean Teasdale's interviews had not been ascertained at time of publication.

66   At the 1983 BGM the National Executive and Council was replaced with a National Committee.

67   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 2, no. 2, March 1980, p. 4.

68   *Oral History Newsletter,* vol. 1, no. 6, Winter 1979, p.1.

69   The Queensland Branch was formed sometime between December 1981 and April 1982 (*Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 4, no. 2, November 1981, p. 10; *Oral History Newsletter* vol. 5, no. 1, March 1983, p. 9. The latter has an account of the branch's first workshop on 24-25 April 1982). The Victorian Branch was formed on 1 December 1982 (*Oral History Newsletter* vol. 5, no. 1, March 1983, p. 8).

70   Tasmanian Branch report in *OHAA Journal* no.13, 1991, p. 130; information from Jill Cassidy, founding Branch President and co-editor with Elspeth Wishart of *Launceston Talks;* and letter from Lyall Hunt to Beth Robertson, 6 October 1983 identifying Doug Munro, Port Arthur Conservation Project, National Parks and Wildlife Service as the secretary of the Tasmanian Branch, SLSA, SRG 257, Correspondence In, 1983.

71   *Oral History Newsletter,* vol. 2, no. 3, May 1980, p. 4.

72   Janette Condon, letter to Beth Robertson, 21 April 1983, SLSA, SRG 257, Correspondence In, 1983.

73   Janis Wilton, 'General Editor's Note' in *OHAA Journal* no. 8, 1986, p. 1.

74   Beth M Robertson, 'A History of the Oral History Handbook' in *Word of Mouth, Newsletter of the South Australian Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia*, Autumn 2006, pp. 7–8.

75   Beth M Robertson, *Oral History Handbook*, 5th ed., Unley, SA, Oral History Association of Australia (South Australian Branch) Inc., 2006.

76   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 1, no. 3, Spring 1978, p. 3.

77   Lesley Jenkins, *Talking Together: A Guide to Community Oral History Projects*, Oral History Association of Australia – Qld Inc., Kelvin Grove, Qld, 1999.

78   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1980, p. 3. Jean Teasdale also put a motion on notice for discussion on the agenda of the1983 BGM calling for an investigation of the possibility of forming an Australasian Regional Association, SLSA, SRG 257, Minutes, 13 April 1983.

79   Information from Janis Wilton.

80   Teasdale to Roberts, 5 November 1981, *op. cit*.

81   *Oral History Newsletter*, vol. 3, no. 1, October 1980, p. 3.

Oral History Australia – Since 2008

Alistair Thomson

Since Beth Robertson published her invaluable thirtieth anniversary account of the establishment of the Oral History Association of Australia in 1978, the Association has been renamed Oral History Australia and reached its fortieth anniversary. I attended OHAA events in the early 1980s but then decamped to England for 24 years where I relished my involvement with the British Oral History Society (that had provided the constitutional model for Australia's Association) until returning to Melbourne in 2007. I've been active with the Victorian 'branch' and, from 2017, President of our national Association. In this addendum to Beth's article I reflect on developments in Australian oral history over the past decade.

The name change was part of a constitutional change in 2013 that recognised that the state branches were the drivers of oral history activity in this country, and that because of Australia's vast size it is easier for oral historians to be active and sociable at the state level. Under revised national and state constitutions, individuals now join one or other independent state associations. These state associations are the members of Oral History Australia (OHA), with each state association nominating one representative to serve on the OHA committee and continuing to pay a capitation fee to the national organisation. ACT oral historians continue as members of Oral History NSW, while Northern Territory oral historians are members of Oral History Australia SA/NT. Each of the state and territory associations provides introductory and advanced oral history training. A notable recent development is an emphasis on regional training beyond the capital cities, whether in Broome in the Kimberley, Townsville in north Queensland, outback NSW or Gippsland in southeastern Victoria. The state associations run conferences, publish their own newsletters and promote oral history activities

through vibrant websites. What hasn't changed is that all of these activities are run by volunteers, and that state associations are often indebted to a small number of dedicated enthusiasts.

Oral History Australia continues to organise the biennial national conference in partnership with a state association host (with each state taking a turn every 12 years). Although Beth reports that past national conferences often made a profit, this has become more difficult in recent years with venues such as state libraries now often forced by cuts to public funding to charge for use of their facilities. At the conference, and thanks to the generosity of her family, we continue to present the Hazel de Berg award to an outstanding Australian oral historian. In 2019 we are introducing national awards for an oral book and an oral history media production.

OHA also publishes the national journal, which celebrates its own fortieth anniversary in 2019. The journal has been online since 2017, and readers can now listen to hyperlink extracts from interviews that are cited in articles. Like the British journal *Oral History*, the *Oral History Australia Journal* aims to connect with the interests of a diverse range of oral historians, including university academics, professional historians, librarians and archivists, media professionals and community historians. This is not easy, with university journal-ranking exercises putting pressure on journals to be 'more academic', academic historians in turn pressured to publish in more prestigious outlets, and community historians wanting accessible writings that speak to their concerns. New editors Carla Pascoe Leahy and Skye Krichauff are canvassing plans to meet this challenge, including thematic journal issues such as this 'Oral History and Emotions' issue in 2019.

Oral History Australia, along with the state associations, is also an advocate for oral history.

In the past decade we've protested about cuts to oral history services in state and territory libraries, and we've argued that oral history journals should receive the respect they deserve in national journal ranking exercises. We've developed a guide for students and academics seeking approval for oral history projects from university ethics committees. These committees often don't understand the long-standing ethical principles and procedures of oral history. Though I've not added them up, Australian graduates have completed many wonderful oral history PhDs in recent years – despite the hassles of ethical approval – and there has been a string of Australian Research Council Linkage and Discovery projects that have featured oral history and contributed new interviews to state and national archives.

Our international collaborations and contributions remain strong. Australian oral historians feature prominently in international oral history publications, with Australian authors publishing eleven articles in the North American *Oral History Review* and nine articles in the British *Oral History* in the decade to 2019. Australians are a vibrant presence at the biennial International Oral History Association conferences (OHA also contributes to an IOHA conference bursary scheme that funds oral historians from less well-endowed continents), and in 2018 Sue Anderson was elected the third Australian President of IOHA. Oral historians from Australia and New Zealand combined in an oral history strand at the Australian Historical Association conference in 2017, and oral historians on both sides of the Tasman have recently created an Indigenous Oral History Network that supports Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and Maori oral history, and connects to indigenous oral history in North America and other parts of the world.

Australian oral historians, like our colleagues around the world, have been living the digital revolution. We've grown accustomed to recording with digital devices and archiving digital sound files. We've developed new digital and online approaches to interview documentation, such as the world-leading National Library of Australia timed summary system (that enables online users to search interview timed summaries or transcripts for extracts on particular topics, and then listen to those extracts) or the crowd-sourcing online transcription developed at the State Library of New South Wales. In 2019 Doug Boyd, the leading North American digital oral historian, used a Fulbright award with colleagues at our National Library to test voice recognition software for oral history transcription. Oral history awards offered by our state associations increasingly recognise the extraordinary innovation and imagination of oral history productions in diverse media, including radio and podcasts, website and museum exhibitions, dramatic performance and film, place-based oral history tours and good old-fashioned books (that might also be ebooks with oral history audio). Together we've been pondering the ethical challenges posed by oral history productions and online interviews that may now be available for use by anyone, anywhere, forever, and we've been rethinking how we manage and ensure informed consent in our digital age.

Perhaps the greatest challenge for our next decade will be to future-proof oral history collections. Our state and national cultural institutions have been digitising their analogue recordings, but in academics' studies and out in the community, old cassettes and reel to reel recordings are slowly dying. Digital recordings (and digitised copies of analogue interviews) are also at risk unless they are preserved by institutions that have the expertise, resources and stability to future-proof those recordings when digital media and platforms evolve. The great irony of the digital revolution is that the most robust element of an oral history interview is often the paper-based transcript that can survive for millennia. Australian oral history's great achievements of the past forty-plus years – recording life stories from individuals and groups who might not otherwise be in the historical record, and capturing Australian voices – are endangered. Our urgent task is to mobilise state and national archives and libraries to work with academic, community and professional historians, and together devise preservation strategies that will ensure invaluable oral history collections do, indeed, last forever.

Voices in *Love & Sorrow*

Deborah Tout-Smith

With the approaching centenary of World War I, Museums Victoria committed to developing an exhibition which represented the war and its impacts with new honesty, which would deeply engage contemporary visitors and which would support new thinking about war. *World War I: Love & Sorrow* opened in August 2014 at Melbourne Museum, and closed on 11 November 2018. I was the lead curator for the exhibition, and curator of the museum's military history collection.

The exhibition context

Love & Sorrow was an exhibition built on story, voice and emotion. It was organised chronologically around eight unfolding personal stories, each selected for their ability to show the impacts of war on families and generations, each with photographs, first-person writings and objects through which to tell the story, and each with a descendant[1] who could speak to the meaning and long-term impacts of that story in their family. The selected characters were a butcher with a young family; a mother who farewelled her beloved son to war; a coach-builder; a nurse; a teenage telegraph messenger; two Aboriginal brothers from Victoria, one with a wife and children; and two brothers who fought for Germany. Each story was rich, poignant and unique.

The eight story characters were introduced at the entrance to the exhibition, each represented by a portrait, a photograph with their family or community, and a short summary of their life up to 1914. A symbol for each character was used to identify the four (or so) further cases or panels as their story unfolded in the exhibition. Visitors were encouraged to select a character to follow. This was facilitated in part by the *Storyteller* app, which allowed the visitor to select a character digitally. As they moved through the exhibition, further content was triggered by beacons positioned at key locations. It was not possible for visitors to move forward and discover the ending of the story – they had to experience the unfolding of fate gradually. The *Storyteller* provided further photographs and stories about the character, and short, poignant extracts from letters and diaries were narrated.

In developing the exhibition, we faced the challenge of telling stories which were deeply personal, sometimes disturbing and often confronting. These included stories of Aboriginal displacement and disadvantage; a German family who lost loved ones in the Holocaust; and previously hidden stories of suicide, venereal disease, mental illness and alcoholism. We worked closely with the descendants to ensure that the stories were told sensitively and appropriately, and were careful to make no value judgements about any type of experience or course of action. We deliberately showed people making different decisions, such as those for and against the war effort, and people coping in different ways – or not coping at all.

The exhibition was organized around five themes relating to the chronology: spirit of the times; experiencing war; medical experience; war-time at home; and life after war. Each theme text was written for emotional impact and in narrative form. Adjectives and descriptions of personal feelings were used to disrupt the conventional, impersonal museum voice. First person voice was critical: I used as many original quotes as possible, including extracts from letters and diaries, to generate a sense of the personal, the authentic and the immediate. Different perspectives were included, such as women who spoke against the war and men interned because their family had emigrated from an 'enemy' nation.[2]

Texts were supported by objects selected for their particular emotional power – such as a postcard written by young Ethel Kemp, who would never see her father again: *Dear Daddy I am waiting and watching day by day for you*[3] and poignant paintings of fellow patients by shell-shocked John Hargreaves, lent by his daughter. Large photographs, some subtly colourized, were also selected for impact, such as a photograph of the last farewell of Private Desmond Morris, fated to die;[4] rows of dead awaiting burial on a battlefield in northern France;[5] and veteran Geoffrey Carter, who lost both legs in France, unforgiving in his gaze.[6]

Entrance to *World War I: Love & Sorrow* exhibition, 2014. Photographer: Benjamin Healley. Source: Museums Victoria

The centrepiece of the exhibition was a walk-in space projecting images of a battlefield, Glencorse Wood, east of Ypres in Belgium, showing the destruction of the landscape between 1915 and 1917, and the forest which covers the area today. Visitors' own shadows projected onto the landscape, piercing a hole into the next layer of time, and placing them directly into the scene. An intermittent, subtle soundscape of birds and battle built the atmosphere. The only words in the space were names, a list of the 1,771 soldiers of the Australian, German and British armies who were killed there in little over a week in September 1917, in alphabetical order, no matter for whom they fought – and the words of a grieving family etched on a gravestone: *Tread Softly by, Our hearts are here, With our beloved Jack.*[7]

Beyond Glencorse Wood, a separate section of the exhibition explored the experience and treatment of facial wounds at the ground-breaking hospital in Sidcup, England. Again, personal stories were featured, including surgeon Harold Gilles and soldier Bill Kearsey, humanizing the graphic and often distressing impacts of war. The visitor then moved into the home environment, at the centre of which was a hearth, set up as a vignette with personal photographs, a mourning plaque and other mementoes, and children's war-time games scattered on the ground below.

The final section of the exhibition showed the post-war impacts of service on soldiers and their families, including 'shell-shock', depression, tuberculosis, suicide and the struggles to have war wounds acknowledged by repatriation authorities. Some stories showed remarkable endurance, achievement and

triumph over adversary, but for others this was never possible, such as the German Jewish family for whom the influenza pandemic, Kristallnacht and the terrors of World War II loomed.

The end of the exhibition drew the visitor into the present, the denouement of its narrative. The *Storyteller* app triggered the final part of the character story (or visitors could manually select the story) – a 'farewell' video in which a descendant appeared on-screen to explain why that story was still meaningful and powerful for today, 100 years later, and how World War I had impacted across generations of their family. At this point the visitor would have realized that the narrator of the *Storyteller* was actually the descendant, who had accompanied them throughout their journey.

The interviews

During the exhibition development we asked the descendants to complete three tasks: record a complete account of their family member's life before, during and after the war, to become part of the museum's collection; provide short-form interviews for use in the farewell videos; and narrate their family member's original words for the *Storyteller*. We contracted Daybreak Films to film the oral histories and record the narrations for the *Storyteller*. Art Processors was contracted to compile content to create the *Storyteller.*

We set aside half a day to record each descendant. In all cases but one we used the film and sound studios at Melbourne Museum; the final descendant, who was elderly, was filmed on request in her own home. As we particularly wanted the recordings to capture

Home vignette, *World War I: Love & Sorrow* exhibition, 2015. Photographer: Benjamin Healley. Source: Museums Victoria

the emotional dimension of each story, the filming environment was critical. The filmmakers carefully created an environment of 'comfort and intimacy' in the studio to support deeper story-telling, and aimed for 'beautiful portraiture' through photographic lighting. The darkening of the studio's ambient lighting reduced interference and supported the descendant's inward focus.

I began by inviting each descendant to provide a complete account of their family member's story and its meaning for them today. Knowing each story well, I was prepared with prompts and questions to draw out the story if needed, but my intention was to encourage descendants to tell the story as they knew it, to make their own meanings and emphases.

This needed to be more than a basic recounting of the story. I paid particular attention to the emotional valence of their telling, hoping they would express deeper feelings which could in turn help the exhibition visitor connect with the story. As they talked I tried to understand and draw out the nature of those feelings. Were the descendants imagining what people at the time would have felt; expressing natural human empathy; or articulating a lingering grief and anger which cast shadows through families and through generations? Critical to this was the closeness of most descendants to the stories, and the authenticity of their detail. Three were first-generation sons or daughters of the people whose stories they told; the other five were second generation, of whom only two did not directly know the people, but knew those who had.

Inevitably there were false starts and breaks which needed to be edited to create a single, relatively continuous recording for the museum's collection. These edits were purely pragmatic; no content relevant to the interview, including all-important reflective pauses, re-tellings of the same content or emotional responses, was removed. The final recordings were each between 10 and 32 minutes long, with an average of just under 20 minutes.

The guided content for the farewell videos were intended to ensure we had suitable material for the short format (just over one minute each). In particular I hoped that each descendant would succinctly articulate how *they* felt about their family member's involvement in the war, how they were personally impacted, and what they considered were the war's impacts on their family. Importantly, each descendant was given something to hold as they spoke: a letter written by their family member, a postcard, or in the case of Jilba Georgalis, the bootie sent by her grandmother Ruby to her grandfather Frank Roberts in the trenches of France. As each spoke they unconsciously interacted with the object, turning it over, caressing it, connecting with the materiality of a long-ago past. The object seemed to support emotional engagement with the story. The filmmaker edited these interactions sensitively, moving gently between face and object, linking back to the exhibition space, where those same objects were seen.

We left the audio recordings to last, as they would need much less emotional engagement after hours of filming. For the audio, each descendant was provided with the complete *Storyteller* script for their family member, from which they read in a series of short takes. In some cases the experience was still emotional for the descendant, taking on the voice of their family member and thus connecting more deeply with the words and the sentiments they expressed. The greatest challenge was the script written in German – a German coach provided valuable support for the descendant as he read the unfamiliar language.

Each descendant approved the content of their films before they were made available in the exhibition. All provided positive feedback on the interview experience, and the opportunity to tell their family story in their own words.

Visitor response

Visitor response to the overall exhibition was strongly positive: for instance, 89 per cent of visitors reported that they had learned new things and 97 per cent said it made them think of the impact of World War I on Australian society. Extensive evaluation was undertaken by Museums Victoria to understand why the exhibition was so effective.[8] The exhibition's ability to generate emotional responses was identified

as a key reason for its impact. As many as 97 per cent of a quantitative group noticed that the text was 'written as a story and described how people were feeling'; the primacy of personal stories, the provision of information previously unknown (such as the facial wounds section) and the power of particular objects were also significant. These impacts have been discussed by authors including myself, Andrea Witcomb and Candice Boyd .[9] Unfortunately, due in part to technical issues including the inaccessibility of the farewell videos during some of the evaluation and low uptake of the *Storyteller* (which triggered the videos), it is not possible to reflect specifically on the videos' particular impacts.

Reflections

Working with descendants to understand and elicit emotions raises significant questions, particularly in the context of long time-frames and intergenerational memory. As I looked for emotional responses in the descendants, I wondered about the nature of those emotions. In what sense and in what ways can grief and anger be passed between generations within families? The fictive kinship effect observed by Jay Winter[10] and others contends that informants may be unduly imaginative and emotionally engaged by events they have not personally experienced. But with first-and second-hand stories and observations within families, might these be considered almost, if not actually, personal experiences? What does it mean to grow up in the presence of absence due to war, or with a narrative to explain why a family member struggled in their later life with loud noises, depression or physical scars? The lack of agency in many stories told by the descendants was particularly striking: the war and its impacts were beyond individual control; no-one could make wounds of body or mind disappear; and individuals could be powerless in the face of authorities who disputed claims for post-war support. What *could* be controlled was the way the story was told and remembered in families.

A particular challenge for memory and war, too, is the entanglement of public commemoration with private meaning-making. The fact that war is a public, shared event adds a special burden to memories within families and communities. It is easy to identify with the language and imagery of the public war event, particularly around Anzac Day; but how does that play out in families with direct connections to war? Interestingly, the descendants I interviewed had all thought deeply about the war and its impacts throughout their lives, and our preliminary conversations about the nature of the exhibition also helped them to share their thoughts largely without using formulaic language, imagery or stories.

Display case featuring a baby's bootie sent by Ruby Roberts to her husband Frank, a soldier during World War I, on loan from Jilba Georgalis, 2016. Photographer: Rodney Start. Source: Museums Victoria.

The centenary of the terrible events of World War I has provided a particular opportunity to reflect on the ways that memories are held or released within families over the course of a century; how trauma and violence might have intergenerational impacts; and how public and private narratives interplay. The example of *Love & Sorrow* highlights the value of emotional engagement – for historical subjects, for informants and for visitors.

Endnotes

1   I use the term 'descendant' (aka informant) throughout this article to emphasize the nature of the familial connection, although some informants are not direct descendants – for instance, a great niece and great nephew.

2   As discussed in Deborah Tout-Smith, '*Love & Sorrow*: The Role of Emotion in Exhibition Development and Visitor Experience', in Tracey Loughran and Dawn Mannay (eds), *Emotion and the Researcher: Sites, Subjectivities and Relationships*, Studies in Qualitative Methodology series, West Yorkshire, Emerald Group Publishing, 2018.

3   Museums Victoria collection MM 91075, Postcard - Ethel Kemp to Private Albert Edward Kemp, 'Fond Thoughts of You', 1917.

4   Australian War Memorial collection, AWM H16139.

5   Photographers – Frank Hurley and George Hubert Wilkins, Imperial War Museum collection, IWM E(AUS) 4944.

6   Australian War Memorial collection, Sapper G J F Carter, M51.

7   Grave inscription for Jack Edwards by his parents, quoted in Bart Ziino, *A Distant Grief: Australians, War Graves and the Great War*, University of Western Australia Press, Crawley, WA, 2007, p.143.

8   Using visitor observations, online summative evaluation, in-depth qualitative interviews, and drawing and walking interviews.

9   Tout-Smith, '*Love & Sorrow*'; Andrea Witcomb, 'Mapping the Use of Emotions in Representing WWI at Australian Museums and Memorial Sites: Politics and Poetics', War & Emotions symposium, Melbourne Museum, 17 Sept 2015; and Candice Boyd, 'Audience Experiences of the WW1 Love & Sorrow Exhibition: A Drawing/Walking Method of Evaluation', unpublished report, University of Melbourne, 2017.

10 Jay Winter, 'Forms of Kinship and Remembrance in the Aftermath of the Great War', in Jay Winter (ed), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.40.

Social Histories of Holden in Australia

Paul Sendziuk

In 2013, Holden announced that it would cease manufacturing vehicles in Australia at the end of 2017, thus ending more than a century of automotive manufacture in this country. As South Australia's largest private employer for much of its life-span, and the linchpin of the state's manufacturing sector, Holden's announcement evoked grave concern for its workers and the hundreds of smaller component manufacturers and local businesses that figuratively and literally fed its factory and workforce. This story was repeated in Victoria, though to a lesser extent due to that state's greater economic diversity. The despair that marked the 'end of the line' at Holden risks overshadowing the remarkable history of this company and its workers who for many decades were so successful in building and selling vehicles. The role that workers, and the working-class communities in which they lived, played in Holden's business warrants thorough investigation, as does the efficacy of the company's attempts to help its workforce transition to new jobs.

Historians at the University of Adelaide (Jennifer Clark, Paul Sendziuk and Carolyn Collins) and Monash

Migrant workers arriving at GMH Fishermen's Bend, 1955. Image courtesy National Archives of Australia, NAA A12111 1/1955/16/11.

University (Alistair Thomson and Graeme Davison) have accepted this challenge, and are investigating the making and breaking of Holden's manufacturing arm in Australia in the post-WW2 period. The team is focussing on the reciprocal relationship between the company, its employees, and the places where its factories were located and its workers lived. Whereas most histories of Holden (and histories of automotive manufacturing in general) focus on the mercurial careers of senior executives and the cars, this project puts manufacturing workers and places at the centre of the story. In particular, it seeks to understand:

- how the experience of working at Holden was mediated by gender, ethnicity, class, and generation

- how working at Holden impacted on family life and featured in strategies for security and social mobility

- how, within a tightly disciplined and regulated workplace, workers managed to 'make their mark' and developed unique sub-cultures within the workplace

- how technological innovation changed the nature of work

- how workers sought to protect their employment rights and conditions, and related to their bosses and the US-based parent company

Woman working on car seat springs, GMH Fishermen's Bend, 1953. Image courtesy National Archives of Australia, NAA A1200 L15480.

Cars on the GMH assembly line, South Australia, 1964. Image courtesy National Archives of Australia, NAA A1200 L53446.

- how the location of Holden's manufacturing plants influenced the nature of its business, and how the company's decisions about where to locate its factories irrevocably changed the urban landscape and socio-demographic profile of Adelaide and Melbourne

- how Holden behaved as a 'corporate citizen' in the places where its workers lived and its factories were located, and, conversely, what these communities contributed to Holden's success

- how workers responded to previous periods of economic contraction, and

- how they interpreted the challenges facing automotive manufacturers in Australia in the 21st century

- how morale and production standards were maintained once it was announced that Holden's manufacturing plants would close

- how Holden sought to assist workers to transition to new employment, and whether its efforts have been successful

- how working for Holden is remembered and how those memories continue to impact on ex-Holden employees, their families and communities, and the wider society

Beginning in late 2019, the research team will conduct 100 in-depth interviews with former Holden employees. These will take approximately 12 months to complete. Most of the interviewees will be 'factory floor' workers, but design, engineering, and marketing employees will also be interviewed. The oral histories will be held and, depending on the access conditions specified by the interviewee, made publicly accessible by the National Library of Australia. This research will be complemented and supported by a critical examination of archival sources, particularly GM Holden's archive held by the State Library of South Australia, and trade union records held mainly by the Noel Butlin Archives Centre in Canberra. The oral histories and the interpretative work will form the basis for a series of publications aimed at scholarly and general audiences, and exhibitions at the National Motor Museum and online. The project is supported by GM Holden, the National Library of Australia and the National Motor Museum. It has received generous funding from the Australia Research Council.

If you, or anyone you know, worked in some capacity in Holden's manufacturing operations between 1945 and 2017, please consider submitting an expression of interest to be interviewed for the project. Former Holden workers who are unable or unwilling to be interviewed can also submit written reflections of their time at Holden, or submit copies of photographs and other material related to their time in the workforce. Further details and an interview request form is available from the project website: https://arts.adelaide.edu.au/holden-history/. The research team can also be contacted via email: holdenproject@adelaide.edu.au

Cars on the GMH assembly line, South Australia, 1964. Image courtesy National Archives of Australia, NAA A1200 L53447

Oral History, Digital Technologies and Innovation: From Interview to Archive

Judy Hughes

Prominent United States oral historian, archivist and technology wiz Dr Doug Boyd knows how to record stories and also how to tell them. The Director of the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries is at the forefront of technological change in recording, archiving and accessing oral history and he has a story that needs to be heard.

In a workshop run by Oral History Victoria in May 2019, Boyd outlined some of the dramatic technological shifts in the oral history field and the potential consequences that range from 'revolutionary' to 'scary'. Those who were privileged to attend were treated not only to the legendary Doug Boyd charm, but also to his news of the latest innovations in transcription, finding aids for oral history and online viewing platforms.

Boyd talked extensively of the system he developed for oral history management, the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS), now used by 400 institutions in 40 countries. The OHMS system, which is based on freely-available, open-source software, provides an online working space for oral historians and archivists to index and search interview collections using controlled vocabularies and synchronised audio and video. The OHMS viewer, which is also free, provides a means of making those interviews accessible online or in a museum exhibition with the same searchability functionality. It is even possible to add GPS coordinates, hyperlinks and some multilingual features to add further value. 'So our oral histories are being used in these really fantastic ways and potentially I think have the ability to change public history ways of dealing with oral history,' he said.

With a PhD in folklore, and a background as a musician, Boyd attributed his first job as an archivist to the fact that he 'knew how to digitise and nobody else did and they knew that they needed that desperately'. After eight years as an archivist with the Kentucky Historical Society, he spent two years heading up a digital library with the University of Alabama and then returned to oral history with the Nunn Center in 2008. Since his appointment, the Nunn Center's collection has grown from 6,000 interviews to 13,000, of which 4,000 are online.

From being focussed on accessibility and discoverability of oral history, however, Boyd revealed that he now had some concerns about the consequences of such rapid technological change. Those concerns about the vastly increased access to oral history interviews ranged from the potential to alter the interview process to putting at risk the interviewee's privacy and physical safety. 'I think this accelerated innovation and access, this widespread access that's happening with oral history no matter what system you're using… is going to change interviewing,' he said. 'I think people are going to be more guarded in what they say and I think people are going to self-censor more.'

Dr Doug Boyd (centre) took time out from his study visit to the National Library of Australia to travel to Melbourne for a workshop hosted by Oral History Victoria at Monash University. Images courtesy of Judy Hughes.

Boyd said one area in need of improvement was informed consent. There needed to be more thought about 'what could go wrong' when developing processes for handling oral history interviews. Further, he described oral history as a 'goldmine for personal information', which could be misused and also warned of the increasing sophistication of audio-editing software with the potential to have an online interview excerpt edited and re-posted online with a completely different context and meaning.

Scary stuff? Not totally. Boyd gave every oral historian hope when he declared that automated transcription services had reached a 'tipping point' with some so good they now represented a viable option for archives. His personal favourite was Temi, which he said was low cost, had good accuracy and a user-friendly online interface. This does not mean, however, that transcription using artificial intelligence is superior to the human version. Professional transcribers are still more accurate, but the online services are vastly cheaper and could be utilised as a means of searching the interview and preparing a highly accurate first draft of a transcript.

There was also some good news on the issue of misusing interviews. While there are obvious risks associated with online access, Boyd concluded that the fact that an oral history interview is accessible online means people can easily reference the original version. 'The safest place for your interview is to actually be accessible online because there's always gonna be a reference point from the archive as to what was actually said versus what somebody made you say.'

Boyd was in Australia for a four-month visit to work with Kevin Bradley, Assistant Director General: Australian Collections and Reader Services at the National Library of Australia, the architect of a very similar oral history management system to OHMS.

They are working together on ways to improve both systems.

For further information, visit:

Doug Boyd website - https://dougboyd.org

Louie B. Nunn Center, University of Kentucky - http://libraries.uky.edu/nunncenter

Oral History in the Digital Age - http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu

OHMS (Oral History Metadata Synchronizer) - http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu

Giving Voice to the Photographic Manufacturing Industry: Oral History in the Kodak Heritage Collection at Museums Victoria

Fiona Kinsey

Like many museums, Museums Victoria has an active oral history program. In the Society and Technology Department there are a range of oral history collections, some still growing as active projects. They cut across the thematic curatorial areas of the department, touching on topics such as the history of the museum, women farmers (the Invisible Farmer project), the Black Saturday bushfires, war, migration, the Spotswood Pumping Station, domestic life and work in the home. One of the current active projects relates to the photographic manufacturing industry, in particular to Kodak Australasia. This project builds on the acquisition of an extensive and significant material culture collection known as the Kodak Heritage Collection, which was donated by Kodak to Museums Victoria in 2005.

In the last 15 years the Kodak Heritage Collection team at Museums Victoria has recorded 50 oral history interviews with former Kodak Australasia staff. The oral histories are all in wav and mp3 formats and are all fully transcribed. The result of this work is a rich assemblage of recollections from a variety of Kodak staff across the twentieth century, which co-exist in the Museums Victoria's state collection alongside material culture from the interviewees and the broader Kodak Australasia corporate collection.

This oral history work aimed to preserve the precious memories and knowledge of the Kodak worker community, because their specialist expertise was critical to understanding the complex technological and social history embedded in the Kodak Australasia collection held at Museums Victoria. There was an urgency around this work due to the ageing population of the Kodak community, and a relatively narrow window of opportunity existed to document their knowledge before their stories were lost.

The majority of the interviews were conducted by project oral historian Lesley Alves and Museums Victoria staff member and long-time Kodak Heritage Collection curator Fiona Kinsey. Selected interviews were recorded by Hannah Perkins and Georgia Knight from the Kodak curatorial team.

We used a whole of life methodology, along with highly focused questions on working life at Kodak.

Lucy Mikedis and her husband Michael Mikedis on the day of their interview with Lesley Alves, 14 November 2013, for the Kodak Oral History Project. Copyright Museums Victoria.

In terms of Kodak history, we asked our interviewees about a range of key company operations and events, to gain knowledge about the daily routine and the specific job of the person, but also to understand the larger role of the company and its shifts over time, and how this impacted staff. Within this approach, we particularly sought to evoke the sounds, smells and spatial character of the Kodak factory and offices. While we have literally tens of thousands of images of Kodak in the museum's collection, we wanted to build a more sensory understanding of life at the company.

The interviewees are mostly former Kodak staff – representing a wide variety of roles in the company, from managing directors to workers on the production line, in the research laboratories, in the offices and on the serving counters of the factory canteen. Their working lives stretch from the 1930s to the early twenty-first century, and each interviewee typically had decades of experience with the company to draw on – in the twentieth century Kodak was for many people their life-long employer.

We also interviewed a number of non-staff with key links to Kodak's history in Australia, such as descendants of one of the men whose photographic business merged with Kodak to establish Kodak Australasia in 1908, members of the family that sold land to Kodak for its

Jim Healy on the day of his interview with Lesley Alves, 12 March 2014 for the Kodak Oral History Project. Copyright Museums Victoria.

Coburg factory, a man who lived as a boy onsite at the Abbotsford factory with his Kodak employee parents, and experts in health imaging from the medical and academic professions.

Having built a network of over 100 former Kodak staff interested in contributing to our project through print media, radio and word of mouth, our team additionally conducted informal interviews with dozens of other former Kodak staff. We also worked with former staff to undertake detailed documentation of collection objects in our database, at times bringing past Kodak work groups back together such as members of the Engineering Department, and drawing on their expertise to add descriptions, dates and technical information, and double check the accuracy of our documentation.

As well as providing their oral histories, many interviewees generously donated objects, images and documents to the Kodak collection. Their material culture enriched the collection, because it typically filled key information gaps in the corporate collection or gave character, context and human scale to existing narratives in the corporate archive, spotlighting the margins and minutiae of daily working life at Kodak. Their oral accounts in turn gave added context and significance to the tangible material. In contributing to the project, the interviewees affirmed their long lives at work and staked a claim in the historical record, in the process actively shaping the documented narrative of Kodak's history.

One of the aims of this project has been to include participants who represent diverse voices and alternative perspectives. While we have a variety of voices already in the collection, we would like to stretch representation further, with more women's voices, more stories from migrant perspectives, and stories that record indigenous participation in the workforce. Our project is still underway, and we aim

to identify further interviewees as we continue to work with the community.

As with most oral history endeavours, this project evoked a range of emotions from the interviewees – mostly joy and pride in their careers and relationships at work, which was not surprising considering that the interviewees self-enrolled to the project and wanted to celebrate their long and loyal working lives. But there was also sadness and grief – in memory of colleagues who had died, but also overwhelmingly in response to the closure of the Kodak factory in Coburg in 2004 which left a huge impact on many former staff, even those long retired at the time of its closure.

The interviews in this project have given voice to the photographic manufacturing industry in Australia through its most significant manufacturer, Kodak, but they also expand our understandings of many other topics of historical interest including, for example, the histories of Melbourne, migration, gender roles, labour relations, war, environmentalism and advertising.

The Kodak interviews are significant and fascinating – and we recorded them just in time, because a number of our older interviewees have now sadly passed away or no longer have the capacity to contribute. For an industry whose operations and technologies are now largely obsolete, this last generation of workers have held unique knowledge and my team and I feel privileged to have documented their stories.

Being housed at a public museum, this collection is preserved into the future, is accessible for research (currently by request but excerpts from the interviews will be available on our Collections Online website in the near future), and provides original source material for exhibition and education programs. However, another key legacy of our oral history practice in this project – and one that I am particularly proud of – is that, having facilitated a strong level of engagement with the broad Kodak 'family' over an extended period of time, we have built a warm and heartfelt connection with our oral history contributors, which is still ongoing.

For further information see:

Fiona Kinsey and Liza Dale-Hallett, 'Material Culture and Memories: Industrial Heritage Volunteer Projects', in Hamish Robertson (ed), *The Caring Museum: New Models of Engagement with Ageing*, Museums Etc, Cambridge, 2015.

See also:

https://museumsvictoria.com.au/article/audio-visual-material-in-the-kodak-heritage-collection-at-museums-victoria/

Hostel Stories: Toward a Richer Narrative of the Lived Experiences of Migrants

Rachel A. Ankeny and Karen Agutter

The 'Hostel Stories' project was funded by a Linkage Grant from the Australian Research Council (LP120100553) to the University of Adelaide in partnership with community partners including the Migration Museum (SA), the cities of Charles Sturt and Port Adelaide Enfield, State Archives of South Australia, and the Vietnamese Community in Australia (South Australia Chapter) (see https://arts.adelaide.edu.au/history/hostel-stories/). The research project grew out of ongoing interests – both among former hostel residents and our community partners – in documenting day-to-day lives in the migrant hostels, reception centres, and camps (henceforth all called 'hostels') in South Australia. The project findings made considerable contributions to a Hostel Stories-focused exhibition at the Migration Museum, a new memorial at the site of the former Finsbury/Pennington hostel (built by the City of Charles Sturt), major exhibits at the National Archives and the Victoria Museum, and extensive engagement with stakeholders. These stakeholders included former hostel workers and residents and their families. Numerous events were held at community locations, many of which occurred during the South Australian History Festival.

From the 1940s until the 1990s, thousands of migrants passed through South Australia's migrant hostels. They came from locales ranging from various countries in Europe and South America to southeast Asia and the Middle East. The hostels were temporary homes to a wide range of migrants, from Displaced Persons and refugees to economic migrants and so-called 'ten pound poms.' When the project began, there was very little easily accessible information on the hostels, with limited existing research on available official records and no comprehensive or comparative work exploring all of the South Australian hostels. The project's researchers and partners recognised that the opportunity to gather first-hand accounts of day-to-day life in the hostels was diminishing as the years passed. Hence the project sought to remedy the gaps in our historical record about the hostels by bringing together the memories of former residents and workers with extensive archival research to compile the most comprehensive information to date on temporary migrant accommodation in South Australia.

There were at least fourteen government-operated hostels in South Australia between 1949 and the mid-

Young migrant Gareth Gray is pictured on his tricycle at the Pennington Hostel in 1973. In front of the photo, displayed during the Hostel Stories Exhibition (Migration Museum, Adelaide, 2013-14) is Gareth's own son. Photo courtesy of Gareth Gray (2014).

1990s, and a large number of additional migrant work camps or other forms of employer-associated migrant accommodation. Over time, the researchers on the team identified a range of archival sources, many of which had never been previously viewed or accessed, which allowed us to look in great detail at life in the hostels from institutional and policy points of view, and to track broader patterns and trends. These source materials have now been cleared and many were made publicly accessible in digital form (with digitisation sponsored by the project) to anyone who might want to pursue additional research. The project also made significant contributions via the creation of oral history interviews with numerous former hostel residents and workers. These interviews will be made publicly available through the State Library of South Australia. A guide for those researching their families and seeking information about migrant hostels has been produced for the State Archives (SA).

Oral testimonies were an essential part of our project, as through them we were able to access the memories of migrants about their actual experiences – both during their times within the hostels and in the community after their residence was completed. Based on research completed elsewhere in the country and anecdotal information, we expected to hear about the poor levels of accommodation (particularly in the earliest years) and complaints about the food. However, the oral histories also gave us invaluable access to a range of emotional experiences common amongst many migrants and refugees. Even with regard to food, oral histories allowed us to develop richer accounts, for instance about how certain ingredients provoked strong emotional responses, with many describing the smell and taste of pumpkin as well as mutton in very strong and negative terms.[1]

Many residents described the separation of families, especially when men were sent away to work and women and children remained at the hostels. The associated concerns and fears connected closely to more general feelings of alienation from not only others in the Australian community, but also from the landscape and the country itself. One resident, who was at Woodside Hostel during the 1955 Black Sunday bushfires, commented on her memories of her physical experiences as the fire burned in the area for several days. She recalled that she did not understand what was happening, and noted that her mother thought that returning to post-war Germany would be better than this sort of life. Other migrants recounted their experiences of what life was like after leaving the hostel. They frequently mentioned discrimination and fears of being attacked or beaten up because they were not Australian-born, using vivid and evocative language. Others expressed strong emotions and views about other migrants and refugees, often making stereotyped, prejudicial and even racist comments, particularly about recent arrivals.[2]

This project has made significant contributions by developing critical narrative accounts of the lived experiences of migrants and refugees who came through the hostel system, and by developing material that is relevant to historical and policy debates about migrant and refugee experiences and how they shaped contemporary Australia. The project also supported its local partners by documenting the heritage of their diverse and vibrant communities, recording the stories and experiences of important subpopulations of residents and former residents, and supporting preservation and promotion of critical local heritage sites. This, in turn, will contribute to shaping resilient and vibrant multicultural communities into the future.

Endnotes

1   Karen Agutter and Rachel Ankeny, 'Food and the Disempowerment of Post-War Refugee Women in Australia,' *Journal of the History of the Family*, vol. 22 (2017), pp. 531–53; Karen Agutter and Rachel A. Ankeny, 'Food Memories in the Liminal Space of Australian Migrant Hostels,' in Emily Falconer (ed.), *Space, Taste and Affect*, London, Routledge, 2019 (forthcoming).

2   Karen Agutter and Rachel Ankeny, 'Unsettling Narratives: Overcoming Prejudices in the Hostel Stories Project,' *Journal of Australian Studies*, vol. 40 (2016), pp. 464–77.

Vale Ben Morris

Janis Wilton

Ben Morris passed away on 14 July 2019. He was a thoughtful and committed oral historian who spent the last fifteen years recording fellow Vietnam veterans. His concern and enthusiasm were contagious, and he bravely spoke out at national and international conferences, in the media and through publications. His most recent publication is a joint article with Noah Riseman for *History Australia.*

His work is an embodiment of oral history's long held status as a means to challenge official histories and to give voice to those whose experiences have been left off the historical record. He tackled the complexities involved in insider interviews including the additional insights, the dangers of assuming a collective narrative, and the intricacies of a past hierarchy impacting on the structure and content of an interview. Ben also directly confronted the challenge of disagreeing with established official narratives about the Vietnam War, and questioned the ways in which published Vietnam War oral histories have not been sufficiently interrogated. He met with resistance and criticism alongside support and recognition.

Significantly, Ben came to oral history after a long career in the Australian Army. Retired as a totally and permanently incapacitated (TPI) ex-serviceperson, he sought to rewrite what he saw as incorrect accounts of events during the Vietnam War. He turned to oral history. He recognised the power of oral history, the skills involved, the methodological and conceptual issues that need to be addressed, and the challenges of presenting the results of his research in a variety of forums.

Ben will be missed in the oral history world and among his fellow veterans for his research, his bravery, his commitment to learning and sharing, and his generosity and compassion. He will also be missed, as Rosie Block and Sandra Blamey recall, for his great capacity for friendship and his willingness always to stop and have a chat. I will certainly miss my conversations with him, and our tracking of each other's work and lives.

The following provide a sample of Ben's research output and media appearances:

- with Noah Riseman, 'Volunteers with a legal impediment: Australian national service and the question of overseas service in Vietnam', *History Australia,* 16/2, 2019, pp. 266-286.

- 'Mental scars of Vietnam War healed through multicultural friendship between veteran and restauranteur', ABC Illawarra, 25 April 2019, https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-04-25/multicultural-friendship-in-the-wake-of-the-vietnam-war/11037938

- 'I was confronted with a scene that would haunt me forever', *Insight,* SBS, 16 February 2019, https://www.sbs.com.au/news/insight/i-was-confronted-with-a-scene-that-will-haunt-me-forever

- 'Bombshell claims army covered up truth about Aussie massacre at Nui Dat in Vietnam in 1967', *Daily Telegraph,* 12 October 2014, https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/news/nsw/bombshell-claims-army-covered-up-truth-about-aussie-massacre-at-nui-dat-in-vietnam-in-1967/news-story/3eacf164bb0fa42790fb66b138922834

- 'The diggers wish: set the record straight', *OHAA Journal,* 36, 2014, pp. 72–85 [peer-reviewed].

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Ben Morris. Image courtesy of Paul Jones, University of Wollongong

Necessary but not Sufficient: Interweaving Oral and Written Sources in Compiling Torres Strait Islander Genealogies

Anna Shnukal

Introduction[1]

Despite their deficiencies, Torres Strait Islander genealogies are relevant to oral, family and local historians, linguists, anthropologists, archaeologists and native title practitioners.Kinship and the creation of individual and family connections ('roads') which are orally transmitted over the generations are fundamental to Islander culture and society. It is only through detailed genealogical research that the relationships between individuals, families, clans and place in Torres Strait can be discerned. These relationships continue to influence the history of the region and, more generally, Australia.

Although Islanders began to record genealogical information in notebooks and family bibles from the 1870s, the academic study of Islander genealogies began with W.H.R. Rivers of the 1898 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to Torres Strait. Rivers compiled family trees on Mer (Murray Island) and Mabuyag (Jervis Island). His original purpose was to trace psychological traits within families and so he compiled genealogies for every Islander 'as far back as could be remembered' (in effect, to the late eighteenth century).[2] His few inaccuracies are the result of transcription errors between his original manuscript and the final version, linguistic misunderstandings, immigrant influence, the widespread practice of unregistered adoption and reluctance of his interviewees to name adoptees' birth parents.

In this article, I argue that neither written nor oral sources are by themselves sufficient to compile accurate and comprehensive Torres Strait Islander genealogies. Instead, these sources are complementary: each is necessary, each informs the other and each requires contextual and cultural knowledge to assess reliability. The defects of written sources are well known. Some problems arise at the time of recording or during the transcription process – for example, the conscious or unconscious bias of the recorder, inaccurate or illegible transcriptions, the vagaries of English spelling conventions and linguistic misunderstandings. Other problems include a lack of understanding by subsequent researchers regarding: the circumstances under which the information was recorded; by whom and for what purpose information was recorded; the informant's relationship with the named individual. The defects of oral sources include unreliable or even contradictory memories, generational conflation, the use of alternative names for an individual and gaps in the early genealogical record (for reasons outlined below).

In 1980 I was awarded a post-doctoral sociolinguistic research fellowship by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (today AIATSIS). I was to devise a spelling system, grammar and dictionary for the regional *lingua franca* – now called Torres Strait Creole or Yumpla Tok – and document its history. I subsequently compiled over 1200 searchable family databases from the 1830s to the early 1940s (and, in some cases, beyond). Describing this unwritten language meant learning its two main dialects through conversations with as many people in as many communities as possible. Their interests centred on family, descent and land ownership. Anthropologists commonly acknowledge that, in Indigenous societies, 'knowledge is not a free good'. Instead, information remains a major bartering currency among Islanders, with each family guarding its own stories. Having (then) a good memory, I found the knowledge I had gained to be invaluable when arriving at new places and attempting to establish relationships of trust. Not only could I speak the language but I could often identify, solely from people's first names, their island of origin and the names of their grandparents. In addition, I could often recount a few anecdotes.

My fieldwork convinced me that conversation is essential for learning language, forging emotional connections, tracing movements and family links, and discovering the conscious and unconscious norms of Torres Strait society. I am now attempting to incorporate information about lives which have previously been little documented into the historical record. In Greg Dening's words, I am aiming to 'rescue the individual and identify personal signatures on life'.[3] Only by assembling fragments of individual lives can one fully assess the social, cultural and linguistic contribution made by nineteenth-century immigrants.

All Saints Anglican Church, Erub (Darnley Island, 1981). Courtesy Anna Shnukal photographic collection, AIATSIS.

These immigrants brought a variety of Pacific Pidgin English to the region and from it their children created a new language shaped by their new lifeways.

Unfortunately, commercial family tree computer programs have proved too rigid to capture the intricate generational interconnections of Islander descent, marriage and adoption. For example, traditional adoption practices meant that often adopted children were never told their biological parentage.[4] When extended families replaced the clan as primary affiliation, childless couples or single men and women adopted a male child who would take their adopted parent's name, thus preserving the new nexus between family and land. Mamai from Erub (Darnley Island) adopted Kangroo Solomon, who became Kangroo Mamai and, after Mamai's death, claimed his land. Willie Santo from Vanuatu adopted the son of Sam Lackon (another ni-Vanuatu), John Sam, who changed his surname to Santo. The early Rotuman and Samoan immigrants often sent a first-born child back to their original families. This unrecorded information was often retained only within families. As researchers, we must assess our informants' reliability, the extent of their knowledge, and their relationship to the individual in question. In Torres Strait everything is political, so we must seek out and compare multiple sources and continually check assumptions – and we rarely feel confident about the results.

Current sensitivities around native title restrict access to much relevant material, including the (sometimes inaccurate) genealogies held by the various native title agencies. Fortunately, I began my research when many *giz le* (elderly people with knowledge of the past, born only a generation after the beginning of sustained European contact) were eager to tell their stories. They told me that, although their young people were not interested at the time, one day they would be. At that time, relatively few Europeans were living or working in the Strait and most of us knew one

another. Thursday Island government and church officials kindly allowed me to consult registers which were later closed to outsiders for 100 years. I am deeply indebted to many people for allowing me to compare Islanders' stories with written accounts, in particular two Bishops of Carpentaria, the clerk of the Thursday Island Court of Petty Sessions, Thursday Island Catholic personnel and the Community and Personal Histories (CPH) section of the Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP).

This article focuses on difficulties inherent in attempts to identify individuals from multiple, sometimes conflicting, oral and written sources. I discuss how personal names reflect significant historical events. I also discuss name exchange and name taboo, nicknames (*pleinem*), name variations and the relevance of names to Islander kinship networks. I conclude by reflecting on the researcher's responsibilities and reasons for engaging in such research, and why research conducted by outsiders may be of use to Islanders.

A brief historical outline

Making sense of the available material requires some contextualised knowledge of the geography, legends and history of Torres Strait. The Islanders are not Aboriginal people, despite centuries of intermarriage between the southwestern Islanders and Cape York Aboriginal people. They were originally Melanesians from coastal New Guinea who belonged to an extensive trade and culture area.

The Islanders' sea domain was first breached by European sailing ships in the 1830s, naval surveyors in the 1840s, and trepangers and traders in the 1860s. In 1870 pearlshellers arrived, followed by Christian missionaries in 1871. The Islanders' territory was annexed by colonial Queensland in 1879, whereupon the Islanders became British subjects and their islands became crown lands. Pearlshelling attracted thousands of men from all parts of the world, some of whom married local women, fathered local children, and/or settled permanently in the Strait. Their descendants now identify as Torres Strait Islanders. This genetic and cultural inheritance, together with the widespread practice of adoption, means that every Islander has at least one biological ancestor from Papua New Guinea, Cape York, the Pacific, Europe, Asia, America, Africa or the Caribbean. Sustained contact with others and pressure to join the new economic, religious and sociopolitical order has largely erased traditional linguistic and cultural divisions between the east and the rest and given rise to contemporary pan-Islander identity.[5]

Attempts to bring the Islanders under bureaucratic control were resisted by the first two government

residents who considered such 'protection' unnecessary. Mission schools commenced from 1873. Some islands were self-governing from 1878 with their own councils and police. The first government school opened in 1892. In 1912, under Queensland's *Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act* 1897 and amendments, Islanders were legally designated as 'Aboriginals' and their outer islands as 'Aboriginal reserves'. As state 'wards', their movements and wages were under state control and the category of 'assisted Islander' was not abolished until 1971.[6] By contrast, their kinfolk, the 'Malays/Thursday Islanders/Thursday Island half-castes' from Thursday and neighbouring islands, were 'non-Aboriginals' and not subject to state control.

From 1930, the Department of Native Affairs administered the profitable, community-owned 'company boats' that employed the majority of the male population. A series of mutinies and strikes led to the *Torres Strait Islanders Act* of 1939. This act legally recognised the Islanders as a separate people and gave their councils more authority. For all their failings, the Queensland government and the Anglican Church remain among the most important sources of community and personal documentation. Ironically, 'Malay' descendants now complain of the lack of departmental documentation about their ancestors, except in correspondence about the wives who were (or deemed to be) 'under the Act'.

World War I made little impact on Islanders but in 1942 residents of Thursday and neighbouring islands were evacuated and over 700 men joined the Australian defence forces. For the first time they interacted on relatively equal terms with soldiers sympathetic to their demands for improved services and conditions. After the war, former restrictions were relaxed and Islanders began to emigrate to the Australian mainland. Today, about one fifth of Islanders (some 6,000 people) live in Torres Strait, mostly on Thursday Island, but with others residing in 18 permanent settlements on 17 islands. 'Mainland Islanders' are particularly eager to uncover their family history, wider family connections and clan affiliations. This is the genealogist's task.

Some reflections on written genealogical sources

There exists a great deal of genealogical information contained *passim* in various publications and researchers are encouraged to consult bibliographies for possible sources.[7] However, almost all written sources contain inaccuracies in the details of incidents and spellings and dates. These inaccuracies arise from a dependence on informant knowledge, the use of any one of several personal names, non-standardised spelling and age estimation. London Missionary Society (LMS) records

of individual baptisms, marriages and burials from the 1870s through 1914 have not survived, although other church records are a rich source of information. Early travellers rarely name individuals and the few who are named can no longer be identified. Occasionally, one *can* identify an individual – for example, the Pacific Islander, Palen, living on Saibai in 1884, is almost certainly Farlane from Maré, New Caledonia, the apical ancestor of the Kawane family.[8] Recorded legal status, nationality and/or ethnicity 'may not correspond to lived experience'.[9] Any Thursday Island-born 'non-Aboriginal' was routinely called 'Malay' and, until the 1950s, Australian-born women who married immigrants assumed their husband's nationality, as did their children. For example, the 'Aboriginal' woman, Erub-born Louisa Caraballo who married Philippines-born Magno Lloren (rendered as 'Floren') is recorded as an 'Australian-born Filipino'.

Transcription errors occur because of illegibility, unfamiliarity with Islander names, idiosyncratic spellings, fatigue, carelessness or previous inaccurate transcriptions. There are also linguistic reasons for early spelling variants and inconsistent representations of names, which were not full standardised until the 1960s.[10] Sometimes the closest English name is recorded, such as Massey Satrick for Masiur Satrick, Morgan Elu for Mugai Elu, William Davis for Willem Dewis and George Morrison for George Morseu (with Morseu's son variously recorded as Sweeney (Suane) Morseu, George Sweeney and Sweeny George). Birthplaces are not always accurate. For example, according to family members, John and Norah Morrison were born not on Thursday Island but on Goods Island, where their father worked at the pilot station. The four children of Sam and Aiaka Savage, officially recorded as born variously at Adam and Poid on Mua (Banks Island) and Badu (Mulgrave Island), were born at Dabu, another Mua settlement. There are also discrepancies in recorded dates. Dan Mosby is estimated to have been born in 1872, 1878, 1880, 1881, 1882 and 1885, and Joseph Peter was not 113 but about 90 when he died in 1973.

However, tombstone inscriptions are sometimes the only source of information about early unrecorded deaths. For example, Rebecca Sailor, wife of Robert Athow, buried on Erub in 1913 as Rebecca Robert, and Kitty, first wife of Lui Samoa, buried in 1901 at Badu. Written records can also be the only source of information about individuals who: died young, unmarried or without issue; permanently left their home islands and so gave up their land claims; were traditionally adopted or fostered; or whose non-Islander fathers left the region. However, in the past, adoptions were not officially registered. In many cases, oral accounts are the only way to trace family relationships, especially when the children were raised elsewhere. Simplicio Manantan, born in 1904 of Filipino-

Aboriginal descent, was adopted by Sonny Lifu at St Paul's Mission, Mua where he was known as 'Semples'. He is recorded as both 'Sam Zitha Manantan' and 'Sam Zitha'. Gaps in written accounts reveal contemporary attitudes, such as the routine absence of Islander names and the names of biracial children in pre-war obituaries. For example, William Noelke's daughter, Polly, is not mentioned in Noelke's obituary in *The Parish Gazette* of 1 February 1939, although she and his grandchildren also lived on Thursday Island. Other examples include James Doyle's daughter, Nancy, and George Pearson's son, Olandi.

The child of a mother who died is sometimes recorded later as the child of the father's subsequent wife (traditionally the first wife's sister). The child may not even remember his or her birth mother. The very existence of a deceased mother and child can be forgotten. The descendants of the Filipino, Canuto Palancio, were not aware that his first wife was English and that she and their child had died – his recorded surname then was 'Platt'. He used the surname, 'Palancio' when he married again, his children first signing 'Palancio' and then 'Canuto'. Prior to World War II it was the practice to record as a surname of illegitimate children the name of the mother or maternal grandfather, e.g., Harriet Moka, the daughter of Moka Kudub, Telita Wrench, the granddaughter of Wrench Mills.

Torres Strait Islander personal names

Personal names are the basic units of genealogical investigation but one individual may have many names and several individuals may share a name. This can render problematic the identification of a particular individual. Names are personally and culturally significant – they symbolise connectedness and, to this day, are bestowed with great care. Gamalai Passi from Mer had eight names and most Islanders have at least three, including a traditional name (usually a grandparent's or clan-affiliated name), a European name and a *pleinem* 'nickname'. The *pleinem* is often conferred as a commentary on a person's physical appearance or moral character and is used when the traditional name is tabooed. Some individuals assumed a new name to mark a transitional life event. This practice continued until fairly recently, with a new name given at Christian conversion, adult baptism or confirmation. Any or all of these names may occur in the written record or in conversation. The examples below are drawn largely from conversations with descendants as well as educated linguistic and/or cultural guesswork.

Each watershed event in Torres Strait history has left a residue of personal names. The earliest nominal

Torres Strait Islanders in procession to Kemus, Darnley Island, to celebrate the 110th anniversary of The Coming of the Light, 1 July 1981. Courtesy Anna Shnukal photographic collection, AIATSIS.

substrate indicates New Guinea origin: Dabangai, Parama, Surum (female); Auda, Kebisu, Maino (male). Some traditional female names were anglicised: Anai (Annie), Dabangai (Debbie), Eded (Edith) and both variants are recorded for the same individual. The Pacific Islanders introduced names such as Talapasa, Tanu, Tupoa (male) and Penina, Sangul, Wasada (female). Biblical names taken at LMS baptisms include Asera (Ezra), Dawita (David), Satraika (Shadrach) and Rasella (Rachel), Sarai (Sarah) and Zipporah.[11]

The marine industries introduced names like Beimop, (Beam up), Bosun (Boatswain), Capsize, Captain, Faiud (Firewood), Jib, Kilarap (Keel-her-up), Lowatta (Low water), Luff, Mate, Pilot, Ropeyarn, Sailor, Salepapela (Charlie Propellor), Tipoti (Teapot) and Whaleboat (some of which became surnames) and, for women, Bigboat and Posel (Foresail).[12] The assumption of English names was not always 'entirely a matter of native choice'.[13] Employers replaced names they could not pronounce with English first names, which became surnames. Each of the four different Billy families, three Charlie families and two Harry families has different apical ancestors. Nonetheless, Islander agency should not be discounted. An old man from Mua in the 1840s was called 'Doughboy'. Having boarded a passing ship, he 'heard the sailors speaking about some doughboys they were having for dinner. When he heard it, he thought it was a very pretty name.

He said, "I am Doughboy" and he has always been called Doughboy on the island ever since.'[14] Females were named after boats (e.g., Woodbine for Udabai) and vice versa, especially during the interwar period – for example Lavinia, Lily, Nadine, Nancy, Petta, Rebecca, Sania, Teleai, Timena.

Although surnames did not become universal until the second half of the twentieth century, the Pacific Islander immigrants often adopted – or were assigned – surnames based on the English version of their island of origin. There are nine different families named Lifu, six named Tanna, six Ware (Ouvéa), five Gela (Nggela), five Motlap (Mota Lava), four Savage (Niue – others kept Niue or Newie) all with different apical ancestors. Some men are recorded with multiple surnames such as Tom Boota or Tom Solomon, Fusi Samoa or Peter Bee and Joe Rotumah or Joe Keripo. Local pronunciation obscures the origin of some surnames: 'Murray' derives from Murray Island (Mer), Maré (New Caledonia) or Maori (this family now signs 'Mari'). Prior relationships might be forgotten over time, as the grandchildren of Pacific Islander immigrants took their father's first name as surname. The Rotumans Sebasio and Kabiere (whose children signed 'Sebasio' and 'Harry' respectively) were full brothers, but there is no written record of that relationship. Descendants of each of the sons of Yalla from Tanna signed variously 'Neliman', 'Panuel' and 'Jakonia' while the children of Reuben Gela or Albert Reuben signed 'Reuben', obscuring the relationship with their father's brother (New Guinea missionary Richard Bourke).[15] Lui Samoa's children from his second marriage signed 'Lui' – a different family from the Lifouan-descended 'Lui' family. Tom Lowah's father, born at Lau Lagoon, Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, is first recorded as Willie Solomon but he was persuaded by his countrymen to change his surname to Lawa (Lau), later regularised to Lowah.[16] Torres Strait Islanders began to copy the practice: Zaman ('Harry') from Yorke Island took the surname 'Yorke'; two families from Stephens Island took 'Stephen'; and Gamiga became Jimmy Dalrymple. Muslim 'Malays' introduced the surnames Ahmat (from Muhammad), Assan (from Hassan) and Doolah (from Abdullah) and Catholic Filipinos adopted the surnames Angeles, Blanco, Canendo, Canuto, Cubillo, Durante, Elarde, Guivarra, Lohado and Sabatino.

The bestowal of a name establishes a 'road', which 'goes both ways' – it entails reciprocal respect and obligation and symbolises a person's incorporation into a family, clan or new sociopolitical order. The missionary couple at Saibai won over the previously hostile chief, Zawai, by naming their newborn baby after him: 'The old man felt flattered. I have often seen him caressing the child most tenderly.'[17] Many of the Masig (Yorke Island) men took English names to symbolise their incorporation into the new economic order – for example Johnson (Apelu), Charlie (Bedhe), Jack (Giwe), Gilbert (Ikul), and Harry (Zaman). Japanese skippers bestowed Japanese names on young crew members such as Koiki Mabo, Kosaka Tamwoy, Kura Newie and Sobo Lowah.

After World War II, when Islanders were permitted to reside on Thursday Island and attend its segregated cinema, names from popular culture such as Spencer Tracy Billy, Bogart Barry Nona and Elvis Terrington Warusam became fashionable. Today, Black America is an important source, for example, Latoya, Tahjee, Tallisha, Kantesha for girls and Jamestyn and Tré for boys. There are, in addition, new coinings, such as Nakoa for the granddaughter of a man named Nako and the Zimbabwean name, Jondayah, to honour a man, John, who was to adopt the baby. This baby's second name, Hilisha, is constructed from syllables in the mother's three sisters' names. While it is still unusual to innovate in this way, Mauare Eseli, born in 1917, told me that her name was a combination of her grandparents' names, Mawe and Ari.[18] It remains to be seen whether these new constructions will be passed on.

Names reflect not only historical, family and life events but also spiritual relationships. Islanders gave their children the names of LMS missionary teachers (such as Aragu Bob, Elia Ware, Tamate Alfred (from Revd James Chalmers or 'Tamate') and teachers' wives (for example Orepa Peter, Penina Charlie, Seluia Gizu) whom they respected and whose admired qualities would thereby be transmitted to the child. Later, they chose the names of Anglican priests (MacFarlane Lowatta, Guy Henry Darke Garnier, Poey Baira) or government officials (such as Jardine Kiwat, William Lee Bryce Kebisu, Oleary William, Edith Lowatta, Ethel Hosea, Stella Warrior).[19] Naming a child after a person not only honours that individual but forges a spiritual and emotional connection. In Bamaga in the 1980s I was struck by the resemblance of a young girl – her mannerisms and temperament rather than physical appearance – to the grandmother of my family on Erub. On meeting her for the first time, she immediately put her arm through mine in a gesture entirely reminiscent of that grandmother. I remarked on the gestural similarity and learned from her mother that, indeed, she bore that same name.

To my knowledge, the traditional practice of name exchange no longer exists but was another way of creating 'roads' with outsiders, or honouring someone, or marking significant events. MacGillivray ceremonially exchanged names with Siwai of Erub in 1845 and Joe Tongatabu exchanged names with Noedhai of Dauan in the 1860s. By this means 'a connecting link – a bond of friendship between our Tongan friend and his Papuan brother' – was formed.[20] Haddon found the custom widely followed on Mabuyag in 1888, for

George Mye (in traditional hat) at the dedication and blessing of the new primary school at Erub (Darnley Island, 13 August 1982). Anglican priest, Father Stanley Waigana at left. Courtesy Anna Shnukal photographic collection, AIATSIS.

example, 'Nagu now Wairu of Badu' and 'Kanai, now Gizu, the chief of Badu'.[21] It had, he believed, 'a purely friendly significance' and 'a name was never changed more than once'. The Mabuyag mamoose, Ned Warria, and his wife, Uruba, exchanged names with American Ned Mosby and his wife, Kudin, from Masig.[22] Kudin was baptised as 'Uruba' in 1917 and buried as 'Uruba' in 1938. This reciprocal act not only established a connection between the couples but also indicated the similar position each occupied at the summit of their islands' hierarchies. To complicate things further, sometimes the men's wives and sons also exchanged names.[23] Moreover, fictive kin relationships were established through the customary practice of calling one's countrymen or close workmates 'brother' and naming children after one's new friends. The men's descendants now claim a biological connection, especially since some personal names are restricted to, and thus diagnostic of, family membership.[24] A custom among the Pacific Islanders was to name children after deceased single countrymen without issue: at his father's request, Harry Kiwat, son of a Rotuman diver, named his first son 'Setareke' after Cedric Rotumah, a great friend of his father's.[25]

Various coinages are employed to avoid name taboo, which is the still-practised prohibition on saying the name of an in-law or any word which resembles the name. Failure to observe this causes offence and requires some recompense 'to cover the shame'. In 1845 MacGillivray observed that 'a man must carefully avoid speaking to or even mentioning the name of his mother-in-law, and his wife acts similarly with regard to her father-in-law. Thus the mother of a person called Nuki – which means water – is obliged to call water by another name.'[26] In the 1930s, the penalty was having to give the person wronged 'the best thing you have in the house' or, in lieu, to 'make a feast at which he or she is the honoured guest'.[27]

Lalawa is the name of the tallest hill on Erub and it is still forbidden to say its name when an in-law named Lala is within hearing. The creole has coined *amagel/atheboi* to allow an affine to address or refer to a girl or boy named respectively for a grandmother or grandfather. Such coinages must be kept in mind in order to keep track of people being discussed. A subset of this custom is the prohibition on using one's own name as an address term. I still find it difficult to address another 'Anna' by name, preferring either *nasem* or *natham* 'namesake', depending on the dialect.

Nicknames (*pleinem*) are based on personal or physical characteristics or, as in Polynesia, memorialise a significant person or life event. Examples include Apan (a woman who lost a finger while diving and had only 'half a hand'), Kantok (a man who was rendered speechless after drinking strong *tuba*) and Wandana (a woman who used to go from house to house to gossip, just as the boat *Wandana* delivered cargo from island to island). Many names have conventional equivalents that are used in conversation but rarely officially recorded: James (Aki), Daniel (Danto), Jacob (Duke or Zuk), John (Kusa), Mathias (Mandi), Fred (Mislam), Sam (Nita), Richard (Saiki), George (Sios or Seahorse), Frank (Tarau), Celestino (Tinoi) and Wilson (Yapoi); Charlotte (Buri) and Angela (Mana).

Islanders do not share the Aboriginal taboo on speaking the name of the dead and the next-born child of the same sex was often given the name of a deceased child. Vera Eileen Lui was born in 1925 but died in 1926 and the next daughter, born in 1927, was also named Vera Eileen. Robert John Mye, born in 1931, died in 1932, was followed by two female siblings before the next Robert John Mye, born in 1938. In some families these early deaths were not mentioned or recorded and could be forgotten.

I have my own story about the emotional significance of personal names. On my way to Erub to begin my research, I was stranded on Masig, where I regularly attended Anglican church. A few days before I was to leave, Revd Langley Warria asked me to visit him and his wife, Akabu. He asked me my age and whether I was an Anglican, to which I replied truthfully that I had gone to Anglican scripture at high school and been confirmed an Anglican. He and his wife worried that I would have no kin, no 'road' to anybody on Erub, but their son, Jeremiah, had married an Erub woman and they offered to 'adopt' me. I was to go to my 'brother' and explain and make sure I called his wife *oman* 'sister-in-law', since affinal names are taboo. Although flattered and willing to take on the material responsibilities of kinship, I took it less seriously than I should have. It was only many years later that I discovered that my adoptive parents had had a daughter, Anna, born in 1940, who died in 1947.

Conclusion

I take seriously my debt to the *giz le* and see it as my responsibility to respond to all requests for genealogical information from Islanders and related Aboriginal people. In return, I have been privileged to receive stories, written family genealogies, copies of birth and marriage records, newspaper cuttings, family bible entries, photographs of tombstone inscriptions and memorial booklets. Genealogy is a collaborative endeavour and my work has depended crucially on the support and collaboration of hundreds of Islanders from every island and mainland community. These exchanges are based on the foundational Islander principles of respect, reciprocity and connection.

Why undertake such detailed and problematic research? And should outsiders assist in compiling Islander genealogies? Naturally, I do see a role for the impartial, empathetic, respectful and intellectually engaged genealogist who takes care to emphasise she can always be wrong. Viewing the signature, photograph or name of an ancestor in an old record can be an emotional experience. Christine Anu wept on seeing the name and signature of her grandfather, Nadi, in seamen's registers, while filming an episode of SBS *Who Do You Think You Are* in the QSA.

Many Islanders are unaware of their biological heritage and it is probably impossible to trace it now without DNA evidence. Contemporary Murray Islanders vaunt their absence of Pacific Islander ancestry but, according to the long-time Mer schoolmaster in 1908, 'You can hardly say that there is a pure Murray Islander on the island, because in former days when the bêche-de-mer fishers came here there was a mixing with South Sea Island men and others.'[28] An Islander once asked me to identify his great-great-grandfather, one of the many Pacific Islanders who worked on a central island pearling station in the 1870s. I could not and his family tree contained no indication of that ancestry, since the information was passed down orally. The child was 'custom' adopted either by the mother's family or a relative: 'You can adopt', I was told, 'provided you got the blood.'

New discoveries can heal family rifts, such as when two 'different' wives are revealed to be one woman whose two names were recorded in different contexts, or when the true 'line' of an ancestor is revealed through conversation with members of the original family (on a different island), bringing new connections and answering longstanding puzzles. However, the findings are not always welcome. A family may not wish to acknowledge New Guinean connections which may compromise native land title claims. Or an ancestor may be demonstrated to belong to a less prestigious lineage than was believed. On the other hand, one can occasionally uncover written corroboration of an oral account. Reverend Waiaka Zawai told me indignantly about a woman from his Saibai family being 'stolen' by a Pacific Islander, who had taken her to Mabuyag.[29] Traditionally, a man could not marry without a sister to exchange for a wife. If he had no sister, he could borrow or steal one but this disadvantaged newcomers, who resorted to taking women either by force or persuasion. Because no bride price was paid, both were characterised as 'stealing'. Gill recounts how, sometime before 1872, Zawai's eldest daughter 'was stolen by a party of [armed] pearl-divers, who also robbed the plantations in open day.'[30] This woman went on to have six children with her husband but her descendants were unaware of this story. *Their* version was that their grandfather had met the sister (not daughter) of Zawai on Saibai while he was working pearlshell and she went willingly. When I have passed on a previously-unknown story kept within the birth family, with supporting documentation, people generally accept it but say 'Oh well, that's *theirs*.'

I generally restrict myself to Australian records but the fact that every Islander has at least one biological ancestor from elsewhere can suggest novel sources of information, such as the Latin records of French-speaking Catholic priests on Thursday Island or legal proceedings from German New Guinea. Nineteenth-century birth register entries led me to New Zealand in 1994 to complete the family tree of an extended Maori family of nineteenth century pearlers. In 2006 I visited the Catholic archives in Issoudun, France, for Filipino-descended Islanders in New Guinea and the Quiberon registers for information about Jérémie Garnier. This information was read at his daughter's tombstone opening in 2012. Also productive have been research trips to Norfolk Island, Vanuatu and New Caledonia, where a Lifouan archives employee recognised two men who died in Torres Strait in 1887 as his grandfather's missing brothers. In 2017 I interpreted for two friends searching (successfully) to connect with relatives in Noumea, Ouvéa and Maré. It is a great privilege to work with Torres Strait Islanders and, despite the setbacks and disappointments, I continue to be buoyed by the intellectual challenge, a desire to be useful and the support of many, many families.

Biography

Anna Shnukal began a Post-doctoral Fellowship in Sociolinguistics in Torres Strait in 1980. Now retired, she has been a Senior Policy Officer, Queensland Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy; ARC Australian Research Fellow, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland; Senior Lecturer in Linguistics, University of Queensland; and is currently an Honorary Associate, Queensland Museum. She was a writer/researcher for SBS TV *Who Do You Think You Are? Christine Anu* (2008) and ABC TV *Blue Water Empire* (2019) and has authored or edited almost 100 publications on aspects

of Torres Strait language, ethnography, culture and history.

Endnotes

1   This article began life as 'Some practicalities and pitfalls in compiling Torres Strait Islander genealogies', delivered in May 2019 at the Waves in Time Family and Local History Conference at Lake Kawana, Queensland. A short extract was published, with the organisers' permission, as 'Compiling Torres Strait Islander genealogies', *Traces* no. 7, 2019, pp. 40–41.

2   Rivers also popularised the use of some common genealogical conventions including capital letters for males, males to the left of a marriage dyad, island of origin and clan affiliation.

3   G. Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land Marquesas 1774-1880,* Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1980, p. 93.

4   A.C. Haddon, *Head-hunters: Black, White, and Brown*, Methuen, London, 1901, p. 124.

5   A. Shnukal, 'Language Diversity and Torres Strait National Identity', in R. Davis (ed.), *Woven Histories, Dancing Lives: Torres Strait Islander Identity, Culture and History,* Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 2004, pp. 107–123.

6   L. Ryan, 'Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders', in A. Patience (ed.), *The Bjelke-Petersen Premiership 1968-1983: Issues in Public Policy*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1985, p. 120.

7   See, for example A. Shnukal, *Bibliography of Torres Strait*, *Ngulaig* no. 20, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland, Brisbane, 2004, with 3,000 bibliographies, theses, books, pamphlets and articles arranged chronologically by subject category (1862-2005) online as (www.uq.edu.au/ATSIS/tsbibliography/index.html   http://www.uq.edu.au/ATSIS/docs/ngulaig-20.pdf).   Genealogical information is, for example, available in J.J.E. Done, *Wings Across the Sea*, Boolarong Press, Bowen Hills, Queensland.; the diaries and newspaper articles of Reverend W.H. MacFarlane ('C. Coral'); in P. Eseli, *Eseli's Notebook, Translated from Kala Lagaw Ya into English, edited and Annotated by Anna Shnukal and Rod Mitchell,* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland, Research Report Series no. 3, Brisbane, 1998; J. Devanny, *By Tropic Sea and Jungle: Adventures in North Queensland*, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1944; P. Hetherington, (ed.), *The Diaries of Donald Friend*, vols 2 & 3, National Library of Australia, Canberra, 2003 & 2005; G. Ohshima (ed.), *Toresu Kaikyo no Hitobito: People of the Torres Strait*, Kokon Shoin, Tokyo, 1983; J. Hodes, 'Torres Strait Islander Migration to Cairns Before World War II', Master of Letters in History thesis, Central Queensland University, 1998; and recent memoirs, beginning with T. Lowah, *Eded Mer (my life)*, Rams Skull Press, Kuranda, Queensland, 1988; and E. Gaffney, *Somebody Now: The Autobiography of Ellie Gaffney, a Woman of Torres Strait*, Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, Canberra, 1989. A.C. Haddon's Torres Strait diaries have now been transcribed and edited and will be published in 2019 by Sydney University Press.

8   J. Strachan, *Explorations and Adventures in New Guinea*, Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington, London, 1888, pp. 21, 27.

9   N. Berkovic, 'The Donor Parent Trap', *Weekend Australian* 22–23 June 2019, p. 17.

10 Pacific Islander English, influenced by Austronesian languages, dropped 'h', used 'r' and 'l' interchangeably, substituted 's' for 'sh/ch' and stops for most fricatives, devoiced stops and rejected consonant clusters; thus Lepeka for Rebecca, Littia and Ritia for Lydia, Salat for Charlotte; Uruga for Olga; and Aretika for Harry Tiga, Maratta for Malaita, Palen for Farlane and Satareke for Cedric. The pidgin and early creole incorporated some of these features, e.g., pronouncing the surnames Bond, Bon and Bourne as 'Bon'. Or, having had the differences drilled in school, older Islanders would hypercorrect and pronounce and write Neavu for Neabu, Djawai for Zawai, Sefa for Sepa. The vagaries of English spelling, the result of changes in pronunciation during its long written history, are reflected in, for example, Gemai, Gemi and Gimai, Mooka and Muka. The Torres Strait 'o', midway between English 'o' and 'u', led to both being recorded: Elo and Elu, Largod and Largud, Luata and Lowatta, Olai and Ulai (though Ulai is a man's name; Olai a woman's name). Recopying from the handwritten Somerset registers has produced multiple errors in the online version: Amu for Aviu, Apues for Agnes, Cimma for Emma, Ledu for Nedu, Lepa for Sepa, Lola for Lota, Manga for Mauga, Mosepa for Mesepa, Nadana for Madua, Nukem for Newcamp, Paula for Pauna, Relben for Reuben, Repu for Kepu, Sauia for Sania, Tailee for Taita, Tetom for Titom, Timura for Timena, Waind for Waina, Wud for Ulud.

11 Other examples of New Guinean names are Gur, Mackipilly, Mawat, Mogor, Neabu, Siai, (female); Maira, Uria (male). Other anglicisations include Olai (Ella), Luzai (Louisa or Lucy), Muguzi (Maggie), Nazir (Nazareth), Pagai (Peggy); and other biblical names are Aviu (Abihu), Elia (Elijah), Enoka (Enoch), Ione (John), Mareko (Mark), Ubram (Abraham); and Atalia, Seba (Sheba), Zillah.

12 See also G.H. Darke, 'Torres Strait Names', *The Carpentarian*, vol. 34, no. 136, 1934, pp. 592–594; MacFarlane, 'Names', pp. 622-624; J. Singe, *The Torres Strait: People and History*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland, 1989, p. 62.

13 W.H. MacFarlane, 'Names in the Torres Straits', *The Carpentarian*, vol. 34, no. 137, 1935, p. 622.

14 D.R. Moore, *Islanders and Aborigines at Cape York: An Ethnographic Reconstruction Based on the 1848-1850 Rattlesnake Journals of O.W. Brierly and Information he Obtained from Barbara Thompson*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, 1979, pp. 162–163.

15 Done, *Wings Across the Sea*, p. 12. In '"The bridegroom cometh": The Lives and Deaths of Queensland Melanesians in New Guinea, 1893-1956', *Pacific Studies*, vol. 12, no. 3, 1989, p. 78, D. Wetherell (a meticulous scholar) assumes that Reuben's surname must therefore be 'Bourke'. This illustrates the pervasiveness of Eurocentric assumptions.

16 Lowah, *Eded Mer*, p. 12.

17 W.W. Gill, *Life in the Southern Isles; Or, Scenes and Incidents in the South Pacific and New Guinea*, Religious Tract Society, 1876, p. 209.

18 Mauare Eseli, interviewed by author, April 1995, transcript held by author.

19 Other examples include Kapua Gutchen (from Kaupua and Guceng), Samuel Mosby (from Samuela), Yatamo Gela (from Iotamo), Pabai Banu (from Fa'avae), Sweeney Morseu (from Siwene), Tomkins Billy (from Revd Oliver Fellows Tomkins).

20 J. MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. Rattlesnake, Commanded by the Late Captain Owen Stanley, R.N., F.R.S. During the Years 1846-1850*, vol. 2, Boone, London, 1852, p. 44; A.W. Murray and S. McFarlane, 'Report of a Missionary Voyage to New Guinea', 1871, LMS Papua journals, reel M11, p. 42.

21 A.C. Haddon, 'The Ethnography of the Western Tribe of Torres Straits', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1890, p. 405.

22 .G. Ohshima (ed.), *Toresu Kaikyo no Hitobito: People of the Torres Strait*, Kokon Shoin, Tokyo, 1983, p. 75.

23 A.C. Haddon, *Sociology, Magic and Religion of the Western Islanders*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1904, p. 125.

24 Examples are Ettie, Getano, Jomen, Kalemu, Kemuel, Mislam, Olandi (males); Bakoi, Dalassa, Genua, Gimai, Saimo, Wasie (females).

25 Wasie Kiwat Tardent to author, September 2015, notes held by author.

26 MacGillivray, *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. Rattlesnake*, pp. 10–11.

27 J.W. Schomberg, 'Christian names in the Torres Strait', *The Carpentarian*, vol. 35, no. 139, 1935, p. 651.

28 J.S. Bruce, *Report of Queensland Pearl-shell and Beche-de-mer Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Working of the Pearl-shell and Beche-de-mer Industries ...*, Government Printer, Brisbane, 1908, p. 211.

29 Revd Waiaka Zawai, interviewed by author, October 1981, transcript held by author.

30 Gill, *Life in the Southern Isle*, p. 209.

Appendix I: Written sources for Torres Strait Islander genealogies

Institutional digitisation of records has revolutionised genealogical practice but not everything is available online. The following Australian institutions hold material relevant to compilers of Torres Strait Islander genealogies:

National Library of Australia: early naval surveyors' and travellers' reports from the 1820s; microfilmed LMS reports and correspondence, *The Chronicle of the L.M.S.* (1872-1927) and *Torres Straits Pearler* (early 1900s); numerous histories of the LMS New Guinea Mission; Annual Reports on British New Guinea (1886-1906) and Papua (1906-1940); diaries of notable residents and visitors to Torres Strait, notably Benjamin Butcher, Donald Friend, Lawrence Hargrave, Frank Hurley and Colin Simpson; recently indexed photographic collections and *Bamaga High School Magazine* (1973-1974). For a guide to Australian Indigenous source materials, including manuscripts, pictorial collections and oral history records, see aiatsis.gov.au/collection, an online index to digitised newspapers and other material.

National Archives of Australia digitised and indexed records of immigrant founders of Islander families: arrival dates, indenture agreements, departures, exemptions from dictation test, naturalisations, and 1917 alien registrations with birthdate, place of origin, physical description, two photographs and current address; also enlistment records for every Islander member of the Australian armed forces.

Australian War Museum individual Islander servicemen's records indexed and online but containing numerous errors: inaccurate names and birthdates, often hastily recorded by servicemen unfamiliar with Islander names and Islander English; does not include World War II members of the US Army Small Ships Section.

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (aiatsis.gov.au/collection): major deposit library for Indigenous material, much of it restricted; has digitised the 1898 Cambridge Anthropological Expedition reports with Rivers' genealogies; holds John Stewart Bruce's Register of Births, Marriages, and Deaths at Murray Island, 1891[-1928] (also available at QSA as microfilm Z1627), although entries are often made either the following day or two days later, according to family bible entries; Wolfgang Laade's western island genealogies (1964-1970); Peter Gillan's field notebooks from Masig (Yorke Island) (1980-1981); Alick Jackomos's Aboriginal genealogies; Richard Lauriston Sharp's genealogies and field data (1933-1935); and Philip MacFarlane's transcription of parts of his father's diaries – Revd W.H. MacFarlane served as Anglican Torres Strait Mission priest 1917-1933; also issues of *Koori Mail* (now online), *Torres Dribbler* and other Indigenous-themed newsletters and newspapers.

Queensland State Archives (QSA): Somerset letterbooks (also in Sydney's Mitchell Library, along with Revd Butcher's LMS marriage consent forms for minors), Colonial Secretary's correspondence, Queensland Governor's despatches, reports and correspondence from Queensland Premier's Department, Home Secretary's Department, Treasury, Northern Protector of Aboriginals, Department of Native Affairs, of Harbours and Marine Fisheries, of Health, of Mines, of Public Instruction and of Public Lands as well as old Torres Strait maps and photograph albums, lease files, inquests, indigence files, school registers, court transcripts, the 1915 Indigenous war census, men-in-charge and discharge registers for boat crews. Also available is Paul Mackett's name index from various registers, letterbooks and other QSA documents, e.g., register of Aboriginal deaths 1910-1928 cifhs.com/qldrecords/A58973_Qld_Deaths_1910_1928.html, the Cooktown Hospital and Normanton registers of patients discharged, and removal records cifhs.com/qldrecords/removal.html, and copies of Tindale's Yarrabah, Cherbourg and Palm Island genealogies. QSA is increasingly putting early fragile material on line, including the Colonial Secretary correspondence and Cook electoral rolls.

State Library of Queensland early naval surveyors' and travellers' reports; microfilmed copies of LMS reports and correspondence, the Margaret Lawrie collection of genealogies, biographies, photographs, interviews, biographies and research notes. About two-thirds of Lawrie's collection was removed

without outside consultation in the mistaken belief that photocopied material could easily be obtained elsewhere. SLQ also holds letters from Hon. John Douglas, Government Resident of Thursday Island 1885-1904, as well as an imperfect microfilmed run of *Torres Straits Pilot and New Guinea* Gazette (1888-1942) and issues of *The Islander* (1936-1938), *Torres News* (1957-present), *The Sentinel* (1977-1978), *Torres Strait Islander* (1981-1984), *Cape Times* (1983-1984) and *TSIMA Newsletter* (1984-1992), a large photographic collection and Colin Sheehan's three-volume 'Torres Strait names index' compiled in 2010. Like the NLA it has an excellent collection of books on north Queensland and Papua New Guinea and valuable MSS, including the digitised diary of Jessie Scott (1880-1881). Relevant published annual reports, some digitised, include those of the Police Magistrate, Thursday Island; Government Resident, Thursday Island; Chief Protector of Aboriginals (1904-1920); Aboriginals Department (1921-1938); Department of Native Affairs (1939-1965); Director of Aboriginal and Island Affairs (1966-1974); Director of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement (1976-1983); Department of Harbours and Marine; and Department of Public Instruction. Other useful Queensland sources available at SLQ are *AIA News*, *Blue Book, Government Gazette, Monthly Bulletin of the Queensland Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Islanders, Pacific Islands Yearbook, Post Office Directory, Pugh's Official Almanac Directory and Gazetteer* (now online), *Police Gazette, Thursday Island Business and Community Directory* and *TSRA News*.

Church records: Roman Catholic Church baptisms from 1886 (with birthdates, parents and godparents) and burials (deaths sometimes unrecorded elsewhere) held in its Sydney archives; Church of England Diocese of Carpentaria registers of baptisms (sometimes with birthdates), confirmations (sometimes with original names), marriages and burials from 1900; the bishop's correspondence (1915-1920) held in its Townsville archives (microfiche copies in Brisbane archive); publications such as *The Carpentarian* (1901-1951), *Missionary Notes* (1906-1910), *Parish Gazette* (1913-1941), *Year Book of the Diocese of Carpentaria* (1927-1966) and *A.B.M. Review* (1910-1974). Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church records are held in the Mitchell Library, the papers of Revd JRB Love, Mapoon Mission superintendent 1919-1927 in the State Library of South Australia.

Community and Personal Histories Section, DATSIP: the most comprehensive source of 20th century Torres Strait genealogical material, although not all of it is accurate and not everyone who now identifies as a Torres Strait Islander came under departmental control; has digitised Indigenous-related Colonial Secretary and Home Office correspondence and Justice Department inquests and the registers of incoming and outgoing correspondence but some material was lost or destroyed before deposit; holds DNA correspondence and personal history cards and genealogies for most Queensland Indigenous families.

Menzies Library, Australian National University: university theses and, in its Noel Butlin Archive Centre, Burns Philp & Company records from the 1880s; Fryer Library, University of Queensland: university theses; microfilmed letters (1890-1904) to Haddon from informants, Revd J. Chalmers, Revd W.H. MacFarlane and R. Bruce, a photograph album from the 1931 Home Secretary's tour, Murray Island Fisheries Ltd records; Cairns TAFE library: extensive collection of Torres Strait material: essays by Islander students containing genealogical information; published indexes to the material.

Australian National Maritime Museum: diary of William Benjamin Norgate, lighthouse keeper on Goods and Booby Islands (1893-1929); Australian Museum: Alan McCulloch's Torres Strait diary (1907); Queensland Museum: log book of Captain John Thomas Bebrouth of Burns, Philp & Coy Ltd; South Australian Museum: Norman Tindale genealogies and photographs (1930s-1950s); Royal Historical Society of Queensland: Somerset Water Police Log (1871-1876), Thursday Island Federal Hotel Register (1901-c.1956), historical photographs; Thursday Island Historical Museum: Thursday Island General Hospital Visitors Book (1894-1978), photographs and other ephemera. Biographical material can also be found in local history society collections and the bulletins of the Cairns, Mulgrave Shire, Royal Historical Society of Queensland and Torres Strait Historical Societies.

Queensland Registrar of Births, Deaths, Marriages began systematic recording of Islanders in 1917. Comparatively little was officially recorded before the arrival of European teachers in the early 1900s and, on some of the less-populated islands, before the 1940s; now online from but beware of multiple transcription errors.

Mainland cemetery records often now online; tombstones inscriptions from Brisbane, Broome, Cairns, Darwin, Townsville and each island cemetery. The *Australian Dictionary of Biography* is increasing its Indigenous entries, as are other Australian biographical dictionaries.

Reviews and book notes

Review

Soledad Quartucci (ed.), *Family Portraits in Global Perspectives: An Oral History Collection, University Students Explore their Roots* (Self-published), ISBN-13: 978-1723188367.

This book contains a collection of the work of diverse students from many different cultural backgrounds including Mexican, Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Korean, Peruvian, Canadian, Philippino, Nepalese, Burmese and Malaysian who participated in the author and editor's Writing 101 course. It was not clear to me from the book's description or content where these students were based until I turned to the biographies provided in the last few pages and discovered that they were studying at Soka University of America. Google revealed that this is a private university, offering 4 year liberal arts degrees, in Orange County California and it has a fascinating history linked to Japan and a Buddhist educator. The University's website also told me that about 60% of the students come from the US while 40% hail from 45 other countries. The book itself revealed (without editorial commentary) that many of Quartucci's students seemed to be from migrant backgrounds and were often the first in their families to undertake tertiary study. As I have probably made clear already, the book would have benefitted from more editorial intervention throughout so that the reader could better understand its origins, process of production and value for oral historians as teachers and researchers.

Quartucci asked her students to undertake several oral history interviews with family members for their final assessment for the unit she taught on writing. She was impressed with the projects they produced and collated edited versions of their assignments to share with others. There is no doubt that this was/is a great learning and teaching project – we all have much to learn, as teachers and researchers, from educators in different national contexts teaching oral history theory and method to diverse students. More scholars around the world need to share their ideas like these and to measure the impact of oral history pedagogy on diverse communities. However, I wonder if a self-published

book is the best way to do this? It seems to me that a project like this is more suited to a digital or web-based format that would allow for a global discussion of important learning and teaching projects like these focussed on social inclusion.

We are shown how students were provided with guides and models of oral history interviewing and writing and how one might approach writing one's own family history. The appendix lists possible questions that may or may not have used by the students in the course of conducting their interviews. While Quartucci aimed for her students to learn from their elderly relatives about their roles as historical actors – and to share those interesting historical stories with others around the world – we are not provided with a clear sense of the students' methods or how they interpreted their family's stories told through interviews. The book is divided into three parts: Survivor Narratives, The Wars and Phenomenal Women. The various life-stories gathered have been divided into these sections.

I would have preferred the stories collected in these interviews to be contextualised more extensively – if not by the students then certainly by the editor/author. We are presented with fascinating snapshots, social histories of intimate lives around the world, but I am not sure what we are supposed to do with them. I wonder also why the interviews and stories were not accompanied by images. This might have produced a more engaging book (but perhaps more expensive too). If students were encouraged to situate the stories of their families into knowledge gained from secondary historical research, they would have gained knowledge, lessons and experience (although, admittedly, this may not have been a priority for writing students). Can the author tell us what the students learned about the practice of oral history? If historical understanding was not key to their learning outcomes then it might have been helpful if students were encouraged to place the data they collected within a broader understanding of migration to the United States. Oral historians can search for what this book reveals about class, age, gender, sexuality, family hopes and dreams in contemporary America but these details are hard to find because the interviews are barely edited and analysed.

There are fascinating migrant stories presented in this book but they are unfortunately offered without analysis. Sadly, this is a missed opportunity.

Overall, the author needed to be more obviously reflective about their purpose in producing this book. Is this a work of research or an example of learning and teaching practice that they want to share and encourage others to do the same? Is it both? For this book to reach a broad audience of oral historians we needed to better understand the rationale behind its production and to appreciate how it might contribute to our knowledge of oral history theory, method, practice and outcome.

Tanya Evans
Macquarie University
tanya.evans@mq.edu.au
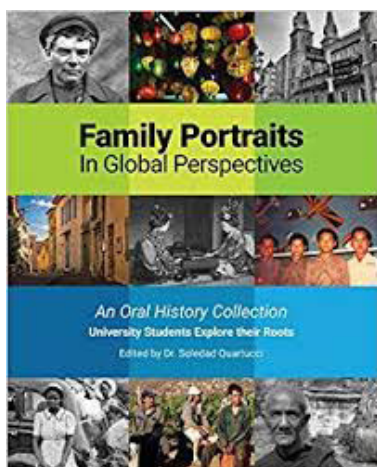
Review

Tragedy and Triumph: Early Testimonies of Jewish Survivors of World War II. Edited and Translated by Freda Hodge. Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2018. 256pp. $34.95 (paperback). ISBN 978-1-925523-67-6.

Until relatively recently it was a commonplace understanding in popular memory and in studies of Holocaust memory internationally that during the first decades following World War Two, memories of the Holocaust were widely suppressed and silenced. Even as this 'myth of silence' is being gradually dismantled by historians, Kirstin Gwyer has suggested that the current cultural emphasis on 'postmemory' in academic and artistic work, a concomitant of this myth, has been retained. There is a tendency within such work to imply that Holocaust survivors (the first generation) were not able, in the decades immediately following the Holocaust, to process, or express what had happened to them; or if they could, it was only through 'raw' accounts rather than conscious creative or political/historical work.[1] According to Gwyer, the second generation has thus been assigned a privileged

position where the trauma of the Holocaust can only *now* begin to be properly processed, through memorialisation, healing and ultimately a successful working-through. Such a narrative occludes an account of the early efforts of Holocaust survivors and their first-generation contemporaries to express their experiences, and collectively interpret and memorialise the Holocaust.[2] *Tragedy and Triumph*, a compilation of thirty early testimonies by Holocaust survivors, compiled and translated into English from the Yiddish, by Freda Hodge, helps provide an important corrective.

These testimonies were originally published between 1946 and 1948, in *Fun Letzten Kurben* (From the Last Destruction), a publication of the Munich Historical Commission, one branch of dozens of Jewish Historical Commissions set up by Jewish survivors after the War to collect and record the history of the Jewish catastrophe under Nazism. As outlined by Konrad Kwiet, in *Tragedy and Triumph's* preface, the testimonies published here represent just a 'tiny fraction' of the approximately '30,000 testimonies … recorded in the immediate postwar period' which sit in archives that are 'huge, largely unexplored, dispersed and fragmented'(xiv-xv). *Tragedy and Triumph* opens with an essay by M.Y. Feigenbaum, originally published in the first volume of *Fun Letzten Kurben,* that makes clear that the purpose of the Commissions was to construct what we could deem a counter-imperial social history of Jewish life during the Nazi regime.[3] He suggested that instead of relying on the great powers to give a true account of the 'Jewish tragedy', Jews 'must document this bloody epoch' themselves, forming part of an ongoing political project to be used 'as ammunition for the benefit of our interests'. To Feigenbaum, this was a collective project of ordinary people's history: 'every eyewitness account from a surviving Jew, every song from the Nazi period, every saying, every story and joke … is important' (17–18).

The testimonies selected by Hodge reflect this general approach which, considered collectively, read as a distinctive genre of social history with a wider objective. As Hodge highlights in the Introduction, the editor of *Fun Letzten Kurben*, Israel Kaplan, requested that there be as much detail as possible in these testimonies, with an emphasis on the names of both Jewish victims and perpetrators. These testimonies were envisioned as serving not just historical purposes but for some form of future justice, whether that be punishment of perpetrators or moral condemnation. Indeed, these accounts often approximate legal testimony, featuring names of perpetrators (including Jewish collaborators) as well as details of the mechanics of killing, including times and dates etc (e.g. 25–26).

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1   Kirstin Gwyer, *Encrypting the Past: The German-Jewish Holocaust Novel of the First Generation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 48–49.

2   Ibid., 45-50.
3   Leader of the Central Historical Commission.

In contrast to the now more familiar individualised life-history format of oral history interviews of Holocaust survivors, the testimonies included in *Tragedy and Triumph* are often depersonalised narratives of particular places or situations. Thus, we have accounts of places such as the town of Dubno or the Mielec labour camp, or the travails of particular partisan brigades. In contrast to life histories, there is no aspect of relief or relatability in these accounts; they often recount the most horrible and brutal parts of their experience and end not with a form of redemption or safe resettlement but as if there was much more trauma to tell. For example, Maurice Kraus ends his horrific account of the most awful suffering on the death march from Bolkenhain concentration camp with the words '[a]ll of this is not one hundredth of what my son and I went through' (43). These testimonies were not written to invoke a universal humanism, instead they were produced primarily as documentation and as a method of rebuilding connections and solidarity. The writers were working on a collective history project, filling in gaps where they could. For instance, Rabbi A. Burstin's account, first published in 1948, begins, '[t]he history of resistance in the Bialystok Ghetto has already been written about to a greater or lesser extent… I want to pass on only the information about the final heroic moments of the last 72 sacred martyrs which I personally witnessed. Until now I have not come across any description of those moments' (116).

The other aspect that differentiates the twenty-four adult testimonies published here from more recently recorded oral history interviews is that they were written by the survivors directly (though the six childrens' testimonies included are based on transcribed oral interviews). As noted by Philip Friedman, a leading Yiddish historian of the period, the vast numbers of survivor testimonials being published in this era were written by people 'who never in their lives dreamed of becoming writers'.[4] Thus there is a lot of variation in the way these narratives are constructed. Some are miraculous chronicles of survival, others chart the fraught ins and outs of Jewish ghetto politics. Some are told like short stories, with interspersed dialogue, use of metaphor and evocative imagery. Others are flatly written lists of events; though of course this circumscription itself is a creative decision. The styling and circumstances of the writing in these testimonies is likely to be what interests contemporary scholars, as most of the events recounted are well known to historians, such as the transport of the children of Bialystok or the bravery of Mala Zimetbaum in Auschwitz. However, there are exceptions here, such as the rare account of Sobibor by Yekheskel (Chaskiel)

Menche, as well as a remarkable account of surviving with two small children in Auschwitz by Esther Weiss.

While *Tragedy and Triumph* is generally very well put together and translated, Hodge's Introduction does leave some information wanting, most notably an explanation as to how and why these 30 testimonies were selected. Hodge suggests that they provide 'as broad a spectrum as possible', but some more information about the seventy testimonies not selected from *Fun Letzten Kurben* would have been helpful. There is a preponderance of accounts from Kovno/Kaunas but this is not explained. A number of the accounts concern parents and children, but this too is not explicitly addressed. A discussion of how *Fun Letzten Kurben* was edited and produced is also lacking. All of this would have served to better contextualise and situate this volume within a broader historical project of rediscovery and translation that is challenging 'the myth of silence'.

However, even without this contextualisation we can gather from this volume that not only were Holocaust survivors telling their stories for wide dissemination, they were themselves processing these events, contributing to a vast collective historical project and using creativity to craft narratives of their experiences. Hodge has rendered us an incredibly valuable service in translating and compiling these early testimonies. They deserve to be widely read by scholars and non-scholars. We can only hope that Hodge has initiated the first step in a long overdue project of translating and (re-)publishing the tens of thousands of early Holocaust testimonies.

Max Kaiser
University of Melbourne
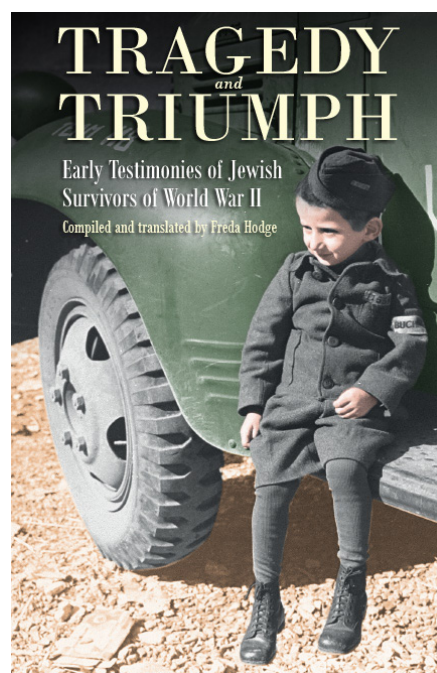kaiserm@unimelb.edu.au

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4   Phillip Friedman, 'Unzer Khurbn-Literatur,' *Yidisher Kemfer*, 31 March 1950, cited in Mark L. Smith, 'No Silence in Yiddish: Popular and Scholarly Writing About the Holocaust in the Early Postwar Years,' in *After the Holocaust: Challenging the Myth of Silence*, ed. David Cesarani and Eric J Sundquist (London and New York: Routledge, 2012), 56.

Review

Serving in Silence? Australian LGBT Servicemen and Women. Edited by Noah Riseman, Shirleene Robinson and Graham Willett. Sydney, NewSouth Publishing, 2018. 293 pages. $39.99. ISBN: 9781742235851.

Since the end of the Second World War there has been a significant shift in attitudes toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service personnel and their participation in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Since 1945, Australia has seen the decriminalisation of homosexuality, the ban on homosexuality in the defence force lifted, and the implementation of anti-discrimination laws that aim to protect individuals regardless of their sexuality or gender, with more recent moves towards enshrining protection for transgender individuals. Alongside these legislative changes, overarching social attitudes have shown an increase in tolerance toward members of the LGBT community – but how was this reflected in a rigidly defined organisation like the ADF over the last 70 years?

Serving in Silence utilises the narratives of fourteen LGBT service people to unpack and challenge Australian military stereotypes from the immediate postwar era to 2018, highlighting the diversity of experience during this period. Illustrating the intersection of identities for LGBT people who were part of the armed forces, this research provides a valuable contribution to both Australian military history and histories of sexuality. By disrupting ideas of the homogenous white male mythology inherent in studies of Anzac and subsequent military representations, *Serving in Silence* shows the complexity of reconciling two seemingly distinct identities. Through personal recollections it examines how individuals navigated notions of belonging and participation within two communities – the LGBT world and the ADF.

The book is divided into three sections that are arranged chronologically to address changing legislation and social attitudes, both within and outside the military sphere. The first section looks at the immediate postwar period and beyond (1944-1973), when homosexuality was still criminalised, lesbian experiences were silenced, and trans visibility was virtually non-existent. From Brian MacFarlane's history, we see the internalisation of entrenched heteronormative structures – Brian believed that gay men should be discreet about their sexuality and not agitate for approval or change, which reinforces the idea that this era of silence around LGB identities could be fundamentally disempowering. MacFarlane was the only participant who was not part of the LGBT community revealing a jarring disconnect between his military life and his sexuality. Carole Popham and Christina Dennis both served in the Women's Royal Australia Air Force (WRAAF) and

share a relationship together that has spanned decades. For Popham and Dennis, the lack of acknowledgement or legitimisation of lesbian experiences played a large part in the way their relationship developed. They were not allowed to talk about their relationship, and this both hindered and helped their lives: there was less of a spotlight on two 'single' women living together than two single men. Popham and Dennis voluntarily left the WRAAF before the intense period of 'witch hunts' that sought to quietly discharge lesbians in the defence forces. Julie Hendy, however, experienced the brunt of this while serving in the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps (WRAAC) in 1968. When Hendy's sexuality was discovered she was abruptly discharged with 'Retention in the military forces not being in the interests of those Forces'. This was at a time where women were punished for fraternising with men, and punished even more so for fraternising with women; the defence forces wanted to maintain an asexual appearance. During this period, homosexuality was pathologised as a mental disorder and homosexuals were seen as 'degenerate', and men were also targeted. Wally Cowin was forcibly discharged from the Royal Australian Navy for engaging in homosexual activities in 1969. The persecution against gay men was heightened as homosexual relations between men were illegal, but there was no legal recourse against same-sex female relationships. While Cowin himself escaped court martial consequences, this difference between homosexual men and women as a persistent theme highlights the inherently gendered mores of the mid-twentieth century.

The second section examines the period of decriminalisation of homosexuality in Australia (1974-1992), and how legislative change was not organically reflected in ADF policies or culture. During the 1970s, gay rights movements were forming in Australia and internationally, and wider societal attitudes were becoming increasingly tolerant of the LGB community. This was not, however, replicated in the defence forces' agenda of identifying and exposing homosexual relationships. Susie Struth's WRAAC time came to an end in 1977 when she was interrogated by military police about her homosexuality. In addition, her interrogators attempted to coerce her into revealing other lesbians in the army. Although Struth refused, this was indicative of a culture of harassment both in and outside the ADF. Richard Gration was subjected to such harassment in the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) after leading a double life during the early 1980s. Gration's use of the term 'double life' is important as it shows a conscious uncoupling between his sexual identity and his military life. Similar to Struth, Yvonne Sillett of the WRAAC was discharged after being 'outed' in the 1980s. Sillett questioned her expulsion through a redress of grievance but was referred to the uncompromising policy that homosexuality was not accepted within the military. Similarly, Mark (with no last name given)

was interrogated and forced to leave, opting for an honourable discharge. Mark's experience was one of trauma and desperation, counterbalanced by a personal rejection of any future association with the ADF. As these cases show, while the 1970s and 1980s were a period of empowerment and freedom for some in the larger LGB movement, this was not reflected in the ADF, where persecution and punishment continued.

The third section of the book focusses on the period from 1992 to 2018, which saw the ban on homosexuality in the military lifted and the slow but reluctant progression toward LGBT tolerance in the ADF. The first interviewee in this section is David Mitchell, who served in the RAAF in the 1980s and 1990s and was able make peace with and actively embrace two identities (namely his military life and his homosexuality). Prohibition against homosexuality in the military was officially lifted in 1992, however this did not stop the tirade of bullying and harassment that many faced. Mitchell, for example, experienced mistreatment, as did Matt Cone, who despite serving after 1992, was unable to come out owing to continued mistreatment and abuse. Cone was discharged for an activity that amounted to assault, but also found a way to connect with the military LGB community through establishing networks and formalised movements.

Bridget Clinch is the only openly transgender person whose story is told in *Serving in Silence*, and her activism was integral in overturning transphobic ADF rules. Clinch's experience speaks to the growing visibility of trans personnel in the armed forces and the previously unacknowledged role that transgender and gender-diverse people have made to the Australian military; her role in ending the ban on transgender people in the ADF in 2010 highlights how new generations in the ADF were pushing for acceptance. Vince Chong and Ellen Zyga have the last chapter in the book, their stories showing the engagement and resilience of this new guard of LGBT armed forces personnel, championing for gender and sexual diversity within the ADF.

Serving in Silence reads more like a series of biographical vignettes rather than a traditional 'history', but this is underpinned by a positive embrace of oral history. The editors privilege oral testimonies over corroborating evidence, and this is a strength. Influenced by social history, oral history as a methodology provides access to compelling narratives, both individual and collective, which demonstrate the complexity and nuance inherent in most historical subjects. More broadly, this impressive body of research has shown the significant role that LGBT service personnel have played in Australia's military history in the post-World War II era. These histories demonstrate the recurring challenges faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the military

world, and the skills, services, and abilities they learned despite these barriers. The chronology of the book sets up the reader to see the progress over time, and the gradual acceptance of LGBT folks into the ADF with the aid of both official policy and cultural attitudes changing with broader society.

Cassandra Byrnes
The University of Queensland
cassandra.byrnes@uqconnect.edu.au
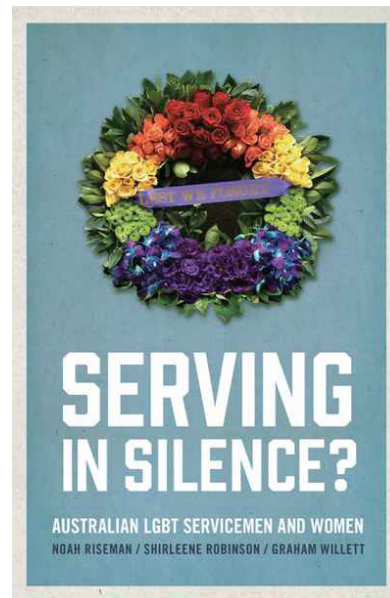
Review

Serving Our Country: Indigenous Australians, War, Defence and Citizenship. Edited by Joan Beaumont and Allison Cadzow. Sydney: NewSouth, 2018. 445pp. $39.99 (paperback). ISBN 9781742235394.

Serving Our Country is the first book to chart the long history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander military service. The product of an Australian Research Council Linkage project between several academic institutions and partner organisations including the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Department of Defence, the National Archives of Australia, the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Australian War Memorial, this rich new collection makes a significant contribution to our understanding of Indigenous experiences of war from colonial to contemporary conflicts.

Skilfully edited by Joan Beaumont and Allison Cadzow and generously illustrated with historic and contemporary photographs, the book features contributions from renowned Indigenous scholars, war historians and experts in Indigenous histories. Experiences of service across the twentieth century, the effects of war on communities at home, the connection between citizenship, exclusion and activism and the ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

peoples' contributions to war have been remembered and commemorated over time are all discussed. The result is a comprehensive history of Indigenous Australian participation in war that emphasises the connections between battlefront, home and aftermath, and challenges the traditional 'whiteness' of Anzac.

The book opens with an introduction by the editors that maps the existing literature on Aboriginal Australians at war and foregrounds the connection between military service and citizenship. Mick Dodson and Siobhan McDonnell then present a detailed overview of colonial (then state and federal) legislation pertaining to Indigenous peoples, including that of military service. Subsequent chapters unfold chronologically. Experiences of service in the Boer War and the First World War are outlined by John Maynard, as is the impact of the latter on Aboriginal communities at home by Sam Furphy. Maynard's fascinating discussion of the role of returned Indigenous soldiers in the nascent interwar Aboriginal political movement precedes several chapters focused on the Second World War, including Beaumont and Tristan Moss on the establishment of Indigenous military units, Geoffrey Gray on the use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as auxiliary labour in the north, and Furphy on the ways in which the war resonated with Indigenous peoples at home. Moving into the more recent past, chapters by Noah Riseman address the changing policies regarding Indigenous personnel in the Australian armed forces, and how this shaped the experiences of those who served in the conflicts of the Cold War era.

Cadzow's chapter about Indigenous women's service across the world wars and in more recent conflicts provides a welcome addition to the mainly male-dominated narrative, and is followed by another contribution from Riseman about Aboriginal activism in the post-war period. This provides an interesting bridge to chapters focused on contemporary Indigenous military service, including the establishment and work of NORFORCE by Cadzow and Shannyn Palmer's analysis of how the Australian Defence Force has attempted to address structural racism and create a more inclusive military. The book concludes with a discussion of official and grassroots remembrance of Indigenous military service. Here Beaumont outlines the tension between incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples into 'traditional' modes of Anzac commemoration and ensuring the continued recognition of other Indigenous histories and experiences of violence, including frontier conflict.

The impressive range of chapters covers a lot of ground. Some themes – such as a sense of equality on active service, repression and exclusion on return, and the connections between service and activism – cut across the chronology of the book and demonstrate how certain issues have continued to affect Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander servicemen and women over the years. Other issues, however, could have been explored further, such as the removal of Indigenous people from Country to provide land for (white) returned servicemen. Moreover, a chapter on frontier conflict and the ways in which Indigenous Australians fought against invasion and colonisation would have provided more context for the long history of Aboriginal defence of country and for the ways in which, as Beaumont and Cadzow note, remembrance of the frontier wars has become intertwined with Anzac commemoration.

A project of this scope and complexity was not without its methodological challenges. The 'bureaucratic invisibility' (12) of Indigenous peoples within the defence forces (historically ethnicity was not recorded upon enlistment), different definitions of Aboriginality at different times and in different places, and a lack of surviving written records such as memoirs, diaries and letters, has made compiling histories of Indigenous service notoriously difficult. Indeed, there is still no definitive list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who served in the First and Second World Wars. One of the key investigative methods of the book, then, was the gathering of personal testimony through oral histories. Over 180 interviews were conducted with former and current service personnel and their families or descendants in a format the research team termed 'Yarn Ups'. This conversational, more informal approach was designed to put interviewees at ease and allow them to tell their stories while "avoid[ing] any connotations of the perfunctory 'consultation' by government practice" (14). Naturally, the material gathered from the oral histories is concentrated in the post-Second World War chapters. The inclusion of the voices of those being discussed offers another, rather poignant, dimension to this latter part of the book. In a boon for teachers and other researchers, edited recordings of the 'Yarn Ups' are available on the project website.

Serving Our Country showcases the benefits of collaborative research across academic and cultural institutions as well as the ways in which oral testimony can offer evocative and unique insights into personal, community and national histories. This timely intervention into the way we think about our nation's war history, and the way historians approach Australia's military past, provides an important contribution to multiple historiographies. Readers keen to learn more about Indigenous history, Australian war history, and Australian history more broadly will find much of interest in this pioneering book.

Kate Ariotti
University of Newcastle
kate.ariotti@newcastle.edu.au
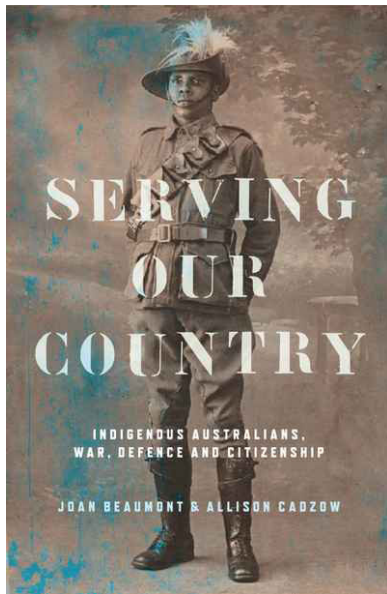
Review

Katie Holmes and Heather Goodall (eds.), *Telling Environmental Histories: Intersections of Memory, Narrative and Environment*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, 2017. 326 pages. ISBN 978-3-319-63771-6.

In *Telling Environmental Histories*, Katie Holmes and Heather Goodall have brought together a team of seasoned practitioners who draw on the methods of oral history to illuminate the ways in which people narrate themselves in places past, present, and future. Holmes and Goodall rightly question why the fields of oral history and environmental history have developed mostly in parallel, rarely engaging with the techniques and traditions of the other. As the contributors to this collection show, there are rich rewards awaiting those who listen – *really* listen – to peopled places as sites of 'embodied and affective memories, reflecting years of knowledge and a strong sense of locale, emotion and identity' (5).

This volume is the culmination of conversations arising from the European Society of Environmental History conference in 2015 that were developed further at a workshop in Australia later that year, as well as at subsequent conferences in India and the United States. The rewards for this collaborative effort are the thorough integration of the chapters, the constructive dialogue between them, and the thoughtful ways in which the contributors shed light on the different ways that doing oral history can draw out stories of place. Not only do they attend to the analytical insights and political potential of oral history, but also critique its practices and the ways in which the practitioner shapes and constructs their archive.

The collection's organisation helps to facilitate this nuanced approach to storytelling places past. Structured in three parts, the volume groups the chapters around particular places and experiences in

Australia, North America, South Asia, and the United Kingdom. Focussing on rivers and their communities (human and more-than-human), de-industrialisation of cities and their surrounds, and environmental change in agrarian settings, this structure allows for productive comparison and contrast across cultures, methods, and purposes. Juxtaposing the case studies in this way not only reveals different ways of narrating places, but also the different ways in which the methods and practice of oral history and environmental history have developed in response to particular political contexts. The South Asian experience, for example, tends to have followed a more ethnographic approach to the collective experience of marginalised groups, in contrast to the focus on 'individual processes of memory and retelling' that predominates elsewhere (6).

Just as oral history has developed a diverse character in different contexts, so too has the field of environmental history. As Holmes and Goodall note, 'If we are to explore what environments mean to people, as we need to do as historians of memory and orality, then we need to recognise the diverse types of "environments" and the differing forms of "environmental history" that have emerged' (10). Together, these chapters show the import of projects that offer the means to listen widely in order to ascertain the complex ways that people relate to places past and present – whether to the Indigenous and non-Indigenous fishers of the Murray Darling Basin (Goodall and Frawley) or to the communities who express ambivalence about urban restoration projects of the River Tyne in the UK and the Mashapaug Pond in the United States (Skelton and Valk).

The political potential of oral history is especially evident in Rama Lakshmi and Shalini Sharma's critical reflection on their curation of the Remember Bhopal Museum. This 'house of memory' (141) offers an important site for the 'counter-memories of the oppressed' (139), and shares the 'difficult stories' of survivors (135) that might be otherwise silenced in government narratives of India's post-colonial triumph. Deb Anderson's chapter, meanwhile, suggests how longitudinal oral history studies can shed light on the lived experience of slow disasters, particularly drought and anthropogenic climate change. Focussing on farming communities in eastern Australia, Anderson (like Frawley, Goodall, Oommen, Twigg and Holmes) finds that environmental change, identity, and practices in place are narrated across generations, with memories dynamic and 'innately revisionist' (269) as informants seek to find stability and identity in destabilising times.

Attending to the agency of the more-than-human world has traditionally challenged historians, but Dudley and Oomen offer innovative ways to overcome tendencies to hold 'nature at a distance' (84). For Dudley, recording the 'sonic impression of the bore'

itself is a means to listen to the many voices of the Severn. In her study of famine and migration in southwest India, Oomen finds productive opportunities in understanding place as a 'mutual context' (244) for animal and human interactions. Here, relationships to each other and to place are central: 'Forest dwellers, settlers, environmentalists, and several cultures of non-human agency all relate to this landscape based on their prior conditioning and experience' (260). The testimonies of her human informants help Oomen to understand these interactions, and to speculate as to the ways in which animals of a 'complex psychology and superior memory' (259) such as elephants and pigs experienced and responded to anthropogenic activities.

This volume also demonstrates the analytical value of attending to the aurality of place. Contributors to this volume show that listening to place as a soundscape is a significant method to understand how informants situate themselves in particular places. For Dudley, the sounds of the Severn Bore are an important means to register and gauge environmental change, while for Piyusha Chatterjee and Steven High, the soundscape of Pointre-Saint-Charles is constitutive of the 'vernacular geography of place' (197). Attending to the sound politics of a place, as these authors show, reveal how particular auditory environments are experienced and how these experiences change over time. Twigg too is cognisant of the affective implications of place on her informants as she takes to the paddock to excavate the 'internal landscapes' of farmers in the Mallee, which she finds to be 'redolent with family stories that speak of resilience, teamwork and survival' (225).

This exciting collection has much to offer both oral historians and environmental historians who seek bold and innovative ways to listen to people in place, and to places over time. If place knowledge, as Dudley suggests, is 'physical as well as temporal' (92), then the immersive and embodied techniques that the contributors demonstrate are productive ways in which to advance the fields of oral history and environmental history, while attending to the demands for environmental justice and representation in a rapidly changing world.

Ruth A. Morgan
Monash University
ruth.morgan@monash.edu
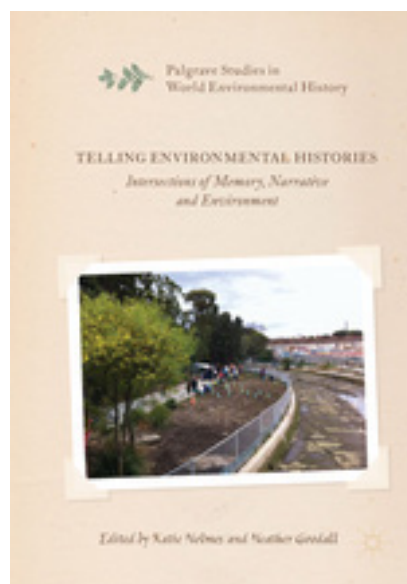
Review

Eve Puodžiūnaitė Wicks*, In Sunshine and Shadow: Reflections on Lithuanian Immigrant Life*, Brisbane, Eve Wicks, 2018. 351pp. $60.00 (Hardback). ISBN 9780648120704. Lithuanian translation by Gintautas Kaminskas.

Eve Puodžiūnaitė Wicks' *In Sunshine and Shadow: Reflections on Lithuanian Immigrant Life*, follows the story of the Lithuanian community in Australia – how they came to be here, what they did when they came here, how they adapted to life so far from their homeland, how they supported their 'captive nation', and finally, what they discovered when they visited Lithuania after it attained independence.

Wicks was born in Brisbane in 1944 of Lithuanian parents who fled Lithuania in 1940. Wicks has a tremendous sense of her cultural heritage which she learned about as a young child – her earliest memories are of singing Lithuanian folk songs with her family. However, as she grew up she lost her Lithuanian language, living isolated in an overwhelmingly 'Anglo-Australian' community during assimilationist years, and an internalised need to 'fit in'. She writes of feeling 'relieved' to lose her 'unpronounceable surname' when she married. Many years later in 1996, Wicks began to research her cultural identity through her mother's photograph album, and when her father died in 1998, she realised that she urgently needed to tell the Lithuanian people's story.

In 2001 Wicks began with a social documentary study with three immigrants, drawing heavily on oral history and photography. The result was a four-month exhibition at the Queensland Museum, South Bank in 2005. Visually impressive, *In Sunshine and Shadow*, created as part of her doctoral study, is a culmination of the research undertaken for the project. The book is well-organised, each of the nine chapters focussing on a different theme relevant to the migrant experience.

Each begins with the chapter name in Lithuanian and English on a background image of embroidered linen, followed by a themed poem or song with the Lithuanian words on the left page and the English words on the right page. The narrative then unfolds in the same way: Lithuanian on the left pages and English on the right. Then there are photographs relevant to the chapter theme: a collection of sepia-toned historical photographs from family archives, and beautiful photographs in colour taken by the author. The book's silk-finish fine art paper supports the printing of the high-quality photographs.

The story of Lithuania is told in the chapter 'Motherland' where we learn about the country's origins. Independence was declared on 16 February 1918, but the events of the next 70 years would change Lithuania forever. Excerpts from oral histories form part of the narrative telling the story of World War II and the first invasion by Soviet Russia in 1940, and the oppression endured as many people were sent to Siberia. Wicks's parents were amongst Lithuanians and other peoples, British nationals, who travelled by train from the Baltic States, across Russia to Vladivostok and then by sea to Brisbane, in an evacuation by the British government. Initially, the Lithuanians were able to express their culture through their singing and dancing, but this did not last for long. Gathering together and speaking in a foreign tongue were forbidden during the war and the Lithuanians were investigated as suspect subversives and communists.

A subsequent chapter tells of the hardship and tragedy of World War II with Lithuania being torn apart when 'one evil oppressor was replaced by another.' They faced both the Russian mass deportations and German invasion in June 1941, followed by the Russian re-invasion in 1944 when many Lithuanians fled. We hear the voices of the young who experienced these events: Irena, aged 10 at the time, tells of losing her grandmother when she left a wagon in bitter cold and wandered off, 'I think she must have frozen.'

When Lithuanian refugees arrived in Australia in the 1940s and 1950s, they found a climate and lifestyle very different to their homeland. Through post-war migration schemes they were contracted for two years to work as 'labourers' and 'domestics' for the Australian government. Many worked in the cane fields of north Queensland, living in barracks or huts, including women who cooked for the men. Initially unaccustomed to such an environment, they eventually 'became toughened and acclimatised.' Many were white-collar professionals who had not previously performed manual labour, including doctors whose qualifications were not recognised by the Australian government. Some 'New Australians' experienced discrimination from English-speaking Australians demanding they 'speak English!' and claiming they were 'taking our jobs.' When the two-year contract period had expired the Lithuanian migrants were free to find their own work, which was not always easy. Married couples had to work to save for a home and family. If they had the financial means to do so, some professionals and tradesmen were able to have their qualifications recognised after they had done extra study. Eventually, the Lithuanians made a new life for themselves but still maintained their connection to their homeland and culture, supported their relatives in need and engaged in political measures to free Lithuania.

On 11 March 1990 Lithuania declared its independence from the Soviet Union. The Brisbane Lithuanians were 'ecstatic'. There was both joy and sadness, as not all had lived to see this day. Those who were left 'felt free at last to go home', and many returned to their homeland looking to connect with relatives, to find those lost (or their graves), and to see the places which were seared in their memories. For some there were significant encounters and changes which made it 'very painful to go back.' Many found that their old home was no longer there, the forest had gone, or the lakes and rivers were polluted. Some did find their home, now occupied by strangers, and others found that meeting very old family and visiting graves was 'very emotional.' The joy of celebrating their country's freedom was countered by a disappointment when reality did not match their expectations; they bemoaned the loss of the pine trees and the way homes had been replaced by concrete high-rise apartment blocks typical of the Soviet Union.

This visually impressive and beautifully researched book tells the story of Lithuania in English and Lithuanian, giving a voice to Lithuanian migrants. Importantly, it makes their story accessible for future generations in both Australia and Lithuania. Throughout the book the continuous theme is the contrast of 'sunshine' and 'shadow'. There is joy and sorrow, peace and war, freedom and occupation. This may be read as a human story of one people who had faith that their country would one day be whole again. It may also be read as a fine example of a powerful project based upon oral history.

Suzanne Mulligan
mulligan53@iinet.net.au

For more information see
https://www.insunshineandshadow.com

Review

Patrick Nunn, *The Edge of Memory: Ancient Stories, Oral Traditions and the Post-Glacial World*, London: Bloomsbury Sigma, 2018. 288pp. $29.99 (paperback). ISBN 9781472943262.

In 2015, *Australian Geographer* published an article by geographer Patrick Nunn and linguist Nick Reid, 'Memories of Inundation.' The authors trawled through Aboriginal stories about floods, giant waves and coastal drowning from 21 sites across Australia and raised the astonishing possibility that these memories were in fact recollections of a single historical event: the rising seas at the end of the last ice age, some 7,000 years ago. As I write this, the article has been viewed 25,000 times. This is a story people want to know.

In *The Edge of Memory: Ancient Stories, Oral Tradition and the Post-Glacial World,* Nunn elaborates on the original ground-breaking article. The 21 sites and their associated stories form the core of the book, but Nunn also considers fascinating ancient memories from other societies, including those of Europeans. Nunn elaborates on the complex geography - the science of how and why of fluctuating seas - helping us to imagine the lived experience of rapid coastal change. At one time, 14 metres of Australian coastline was lost every day, probably causing political and economic chaos for Aboriginal societies (66). Ultimately, however, the book is an argument for the value of oral memory, its longevity and its usefulness for understanding the past, even for scientists.

In each of the 21 locations, Nunn turns to written accounts of oral traditions. These are normally the earliest instance in which the story was put into writing by 'curious' Europeans. He seeks to work from the 'original content' of Aboriginal cultures, presumed to be 'massively altered' by colonisation (64-64). I was familiar with some of these stories from my own work with Aboriginal communities. The

Anindilyakwa people of Groote Eylandt know about Bralgu or 'North East Island'. Anthropologist David Turner called it a 'land of the dead'. It is where spirits of the deceased travel and is 'somewhere' in the Gulf of Carpentaria (the island has not been identified). During the mission years it became associated with the Christian hell. For Nunn, North-East Arnhemlanders' knowledge of Bralgu are memories of an island that existed before the sea rose (87). Tiwi people likewise talked with me about Murtankala. This old woman formed their islands as she crawled on the ground in darkness with her children on her back, long ago. Her son, Tjapara, became the moon. For Nunn, the Murtankala narrative is, possibly, an encoded memory of the Tiwi migration from the mainland as the sea encroached. Her blindness perhaps represents the uncertainty of the destination. Her crawling, the difficulty of crossing a partly-submerged land bridge (93).

Nunn interprets stories these ways by understanding their function as essentially evolutionary mechanisms designed to ensure the survival of the next generation. Our ancestors were 'never arbitrarily creative' he writes. Their art, music, stories and songs were directed at passing on knowledge that would ensure the survival of the next generation (26). When faced with dramatic natural events – such as a tsunami or volcano – human societies will 'use imagination to supply explanation where none is readily forthcoming' (23). In Aboriginal cultures, he implies, this has meant the invention of Creative Beings or Dreamings and their activities. The more dramatic or fantastic their exploits the better because, for Nunn, vital knowledge – such as how to survive invading seas – must be 'embellished' or 'dressed up in arresting clothing' to make the next generation take heed (25). The more striking a story, the more important it must have been and so the older it may be. These assumptions allow him to sift through the apparently supernatural details of Aboriginal stories to get at, what he considers, the historical core. I wondered what the Indigenous communities concerned might make of their knowledge being interpreted in this way.

Nunn is not the first to theorise that Aboriginal songs and stories encode memories of ancient events (though these claims are also subject to substantial critique) but, in a radical new approach, he goes beyond the local community and its oral tradition about place; Nunn is the first to systematise stories from across the continent, placing them in relation to a single universal event. In 1938, for instance, Norman Tindale raised the possibility that a Tanganekald story about a woman kicking a fire, making a hole in the ground, encoded an ancient memory of a meteorite impact. Subseqently, linguist Robert Dixon and archaeologist Josephine Flood speculated on similar themes. Dixon focused on Ngadayan stories of thunders and clouds as memories

of volcanic eruptions on the Atherton Tablelands some 10,000 years ago. Flood wrote of possible memories of megafauna and, incredibly, recollections even of people's first migration to Australia tens of thousands of years ago.

But historians, and oral historians in particular, have been notably absent in this emerging field. Surprising, perhaps. One might expect that moves to read Aboriginal narratives as historical sources would appeal to historians. I suggest that historians could bring to this emerging field a sensitivity to the diverse natures of historical sources; close appreciation for the contexts in which sources emerge, including the dynamics of the colonial encounter in which these texts were produced (and the ongoing colonisation of Aboriginal knowledge in our settler-context); and an attentiveness to how interpretation of these texts has changed over time. Historians' approaches to cross-culturalising history, such as that of Minoru Hokari, could reveal how various historicities or historical traditions produce diverse knowledges of the past. Oral historians would be especially concerned with the ways memories function for communities today; the embodied, emplaced encounters in which stories are made present; and would bring a familiarity with plurality in memory and meaning.

Most exciting, perhaps, for oral historians is Nunn's affirmation of the spoken word and his challenge to the dominance of the written. Ignorance of the depth and scale of human memory is a function of blind adherence to written texts alone, he argues. If we acknowledged the oral, humanity's self-understanding and understanding of our planet would be all the richer. Aboriginal oral knowledge, he describes as like a 'library' with 'books' that could be 'read only by those who had been taught to "read"' them (51). Following Walter Ong, Nunn presumes that Aboriginal knowledge transmission has been fundamentally altered by the advent of written literacies. This leads to a paradox. Nunn's approach, perhaps inadvertently, privileges written accounts of Aboriginal memory as recorded by Europeans over the orally transmitted knowledge of Aboriginal people today. In a sense, he expects orality to behave like literacy; static through time (hence the 'book' metaphor), rather than alive in tradition. Nevertheless, that a geographer exhorts us to pay attention to oral memory suggests a new appreciation for oral knowledge is seizing the collective imagination. That is reason to celebrate.

Laura Rademaker

Australian National University

laura.rademaker@anu.edu.au
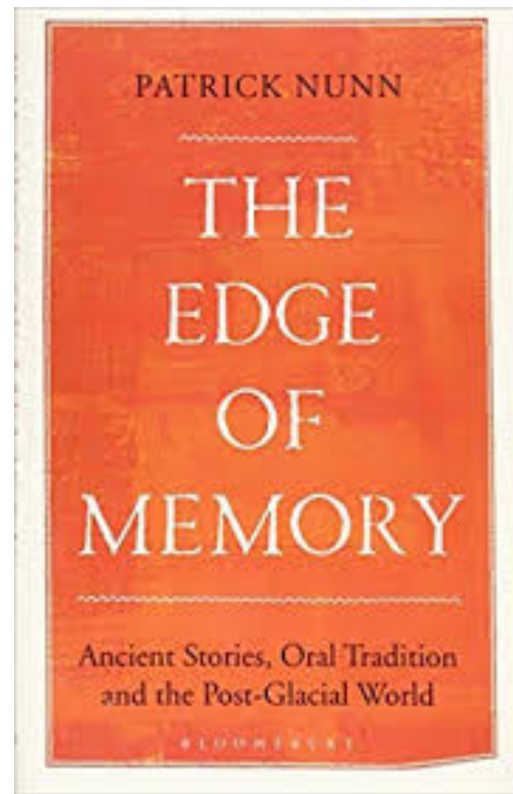
Review

Full disclosure. Hammerton and Alistair Thomson's book *Ten Pound Poms: Australia's Invisible Migrants* (Manchester University Press, 2005) is one of my favourite histories, blending sharp analysis with a fine narrative style. Upon hearing that Hammerton was embarking upon a large oral history project examining British migration from the 1960s, I suggested that he speak to my family. My parents, self-described 'refugees from Thatcher', arrived in Adelaide from north-west England in 1981 with three small children; their life story encompasses financial decline and entanglement with a fundamentalist religion, from both of which I still bear scars. I regretted opening up my personal history for another historian to pick over almost as soon as I had set up the meeting. I need not have worried, my family was in the safe hands of a skilled and empathetic oral historian.

Hammerton has here expanded upon the previous work by interviewing 135 individuals across seven countries. He notes that although British emigration peaked in the mid-twentieth century, large numbers of British migrants still emigrate and live abroad permanently. Focusing on the decades since the 1960s, a defining feature of this cohort is the 'casual attitude' of modern, often 'serial' migrants to global mobility.

While economic migration is still present (and was particularly so during the Thatcher era of the 1980s), motivations around lifestyle and adventure increasingly feature due to a rise in social mobility and, of course, access to mass travel. For some, cosmopolitan identities include serial migrations; others are forced to migrate on or return to Britain because of relationship dynamics. Hammerton describes the modern British diaspora as nomadic – ease of mobility, following the age of empire, is a key theme.

The book is divided into two parts. The first sets out a chronological history of British migrants from the 'post-war pioneers' of the 1940s to the 1960s, who migrated in the context of Britain's imperial history, an 'empire of the imagination'; this travel was subsidised and encouraged by, for example, Australia's 'Ten Pound Pom' scheme and rights to permanent citizenship. The 'decline of British privilege' to the 1970s points to race relations within Britain acting as an impetus to emigration for some individuals. 'Thatcher's refugees and Thatcher's beneficiaries' in the 1980s tells a complex story of both working-class economic losers and middle-class economic winners under Thatcher: both types found reasons to emigrate. The section ends with an examination of 'cosmopolitanism' and 'global citizenship' from the 1990s. This is a very much a 'social history of ordinary people'.

The second part is thematic. The first chapter in this section focuses on work and careers: not only economic (and aspirational) motivations for migration, but also the more traditionally mobile spheres such as academic employment. Family dynamics in 'the push and pull of private life' points to a key theme of the importance of relationships within migrant life stories. Lifestyle migration, treechangers and grey nomads are examined; and then the 'changing faces' of modern migration, including return and serial migration, and the British diaspora. Women's stories and non-Anglo (British) stories are highlighted throughout. In many testimonies, self-improvement and adventure clash with what can be a 'complicated tug of transnational emotional life and fractured identity'.

Hammerton's contribution to oral history methodology is perhaps just as important as his contribution to British migration historiography. The book is a masterclass in how to use oral history interviews. The 'illuminating range of revelations which can emerge from an accumulation of diverse individual stories' are contextualised according to changing social, economic and political frameworks. This contextualisation is scholarly rigorous. For example, Hammerton does not back away from critiquing privileged late twentieth century British migration as born of affluence and preoccupied with 'individual gratification and satisfaction', even acting solely as an 'expression of consumerism'. In making this point, though, he argues

for the importance of personal testimony in migration histories. As motivations for migration turn from the collective to the individual, so then must scholars look to individual life histories.

Jayne Persian
University of Southern Queensland
jayne.persian@usq.edu.au
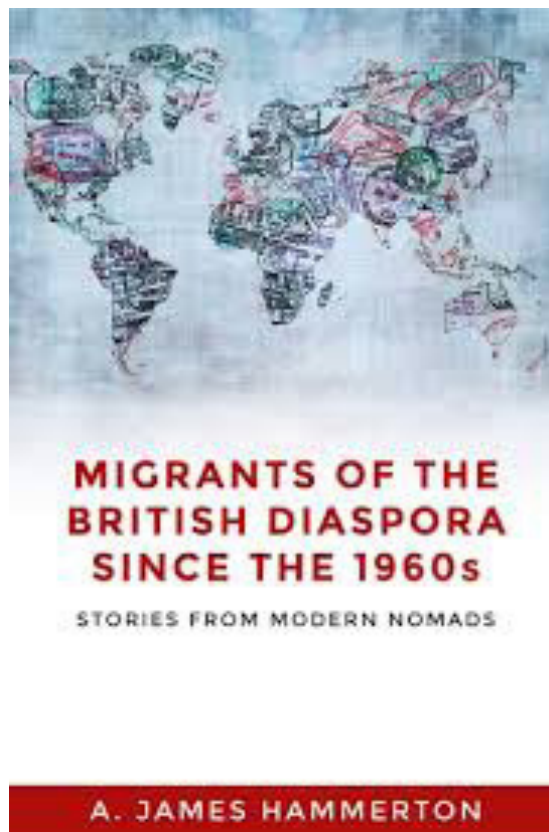
2019 Author Biographies

Annabelle Baldwin graduated with a PhD in History from Monash University in 2016. Her work investigates sexual violence against Jewish women and girls during the Holocaust, particularly as told in the USC Shoah Foundation Institute's Visual History Archive. She currently teaches history at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia.

Portia Dilena is completing a scholarship-awarded PhD at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. She is focusing on the motivators of the Australian student movement from 1950 to 1975, with a particular interest in the role of emotions and the transnational.

Geraldine Fela is a PhD candidate at Monash University. For her doctoral research she is interviewing nurses from across Australia who worked during the HIV/AIDS crisis in the 1980s and 1990s. She has published in *Australian Feminist Studies, Sexuality* and *Labour History*. Her works looks at the intersection of oral history, labour history and social movement studies.

Sophie Howe is completing a double degree in Arts and Law, majoring in Classics and History, at The University of Adelaide. In 2018 she was a recipient of an Adelaide Summer Research Scholarship, through which she furthered her interest in oral history and memory studies.

Francesco Ricatti is Cassamarca Senior Lecturer in Italian Studies at Monash University. His research focuses on migration history, and is informed by transcultural, decolonial, creative, digital and participative methodologies. His most recent book, *Italians in Australia: history, memory, identity*, was published by Palgrave in 2018. He lives and work on the unceded land of the Kulin nations.

Paul Sendziuk is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Adelaide and an experienced oral historian. He has expertise in twentieth century Australian history, particularly the histories of immigration, disease and cultural production. His books include *Learning to Trust: Australian Responses to AIDS* (UNSW Press, 2003) and *A History of South Australia* (Cambridge University Press, 2018).

Jordana Silverstein is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in History at the University of Melbourne, working as part of the ARC Kathleen Fitzpatrick Laureate Fellowship Project 'Child Refugees and Australian Internationalism: 1920 to the Present.' She studies histories of Australian child refugee policy from the 1970s to the present and histories of Jewish Holocaust memory and Jewish sexuality. She is the author of *Anxious Histories: Narrating the Holocaust in Jewish Communities at the Beginning of the Twenty-First Century* (Berghahn Books, New York, 2015).

Alistair Thomson is Professor of History at Monash University and currently (in 2019) President of Oral History Australia.

Call for Papers

Contributions are invited from Australia and overseas for publication in

Oral History Australia Journal No. 42, 2020

Special Issue: Intimate Stories, Challenging Histories

*Please note that papers and articles on other topics will also be considered.

Contributions are invited in the following three categories:

A: Papers on the theme, 'Intimate stories, challenging histories.' Themes might include:

- Intimate, challenging or subversive histories, including:
    - Narratives of gender and sexuality
    - Narratives of disability
    - Indigenous narratives
    - Culturally diverse narratives
- Intersubjective dynamics within the oral history interview
- Ethical considerations in dealing with intimate stories
- How oral history theory enhances historical understandings of subjectivity and memory
- How oral history methodology enlarges the types of histories possible, challenging dominant narratives
- How personal narratives enrich exhibitions, performances, collections and community histories

Papers in Category A may be submitted to the Oral History Australia Editorial Board for peer-review (*limit: 8,000 words*). However, please note:

- Papers for peer-review must demonstrate a high standard of scholarship, and reflect a sound appreciation of current and historical issues on the topics discussed
- Papers for peer-review may be submitted at any time; however, if not received by the Editorial Board by the deadline for submissions of 28 February 2020, they may not be processed in time for publication in the 2020 issue of the Journal. Furthermore, regardless of when offers are forwarded to the Board, no guarantee of publication can be given, due to availability and time constraints of reviewers
- Before being submitted for peer-review, papers will first be assessed for suitability by the Editorial Board
- Authors will be advised of the recommendations made by the Chair of the Board

Deadline for Category A submissions for peer-review: 28 February 2020

Forward to: Dr Francesco Ricatti, Chair, Oral History Australia Editorial Board, email: Francesco.Ricatti@ monash.edu

B: Articles/project reports describing specific projects or conference reports, the information gained through them, and principal outcomes or practice issues identified in the process (*limit: 2,000 words*).

Deadline for Category B submissions: 30 April 2020

Forward to: Dr Skye Krichauff and Dr Carla Pascoe Leahy, Joint Editors, Oral History Australia Journal, skye. krichauff@adelaide.edu.au and carla.pascoeleahy@unimelb.edu.au

C: Reviews of books and other publications from Australia or elsewhere that are of interest to the oral history community: may include reviews of static or internet available exhibitions, or any projects presented for a public audience (*limit 800 words*).

Deadline for Category C submissions: 30 April 2020

Forward to: Dr Gemmia Burden, Reviews Editor, Oral History Australia Journal, email: g.burden@uq.edu.au

Accompanying Materials

Photographs, drawings and other illustrations are particularly welcome, and may be offered for any of the above categories of contribution. Please obtain written permission from image owners and make every endeavour to ascertain the name of the photographer.

Membership information

Oral History Australia

(formerly the Oral History Association of Australia)

The Oral History Association of Australia was established in 1978. In 2013 the name was changed to Oral History Australia. Each State is a member association of the national body. The objectives of the Association are to:

- Promote the practice and methods of oral history
- Educate in the use of oral history methods
- Encourage discussion of all problems in oral history
- Foster the preservation of oral history records in Australia
- Share information about oral history projects

State seminars and workshops are held regularly throughout the year, while a national conference is held every two years. Many of the papers from conferences appear in the Oral History Australia Journal. Members have immediate access to an electronic version of of the annual Oral History Australia Journal and newsletters and publications from their individual State associations. Among other publications, the South Australia/Northern Territory branch of Oral History Australia has published the *Oral History Handbook* by Beth M Robertson, which is available for purchase by members at a discounted rate.

The Oral History Australia website can be found at www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au.

National enquiries can be made to the Secretary at secretary@oralhistoryaustralia.org.au

Enquiries to State member associations should be directed to the following addresses:

Australian Capital Territory
Incorporated into the New South Wales association.

New South Wales
President: Dr Shirleene Robinson,
Oral History New South Wales
PO Box 261
Pennant Hills NSW 1715
Email: president@ohansw.org.au
Phone: 02 8094 1239
Website: www.oralhistorynsw.org.au

Northern Territory
Incorporated into the South Australian association.

Queensland
President: Elizabeth Gondwe
PO Box 3296
Birkdale Qld 4159
Email: info@ohq.org.au
Website: www.ohq.org.au

South Australia
President: Dr Annmarie Reid
PO Box 3113,
Unley SA 5061
Email: presidentohasant@gmail.com
Website: www.oralhistoryaustraliasant.org.au

Tasmania
President: Jill Cassidy
c/- Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery
PO Box 403
Launceston Tas 7250
0418 178 098
Email: president@oralhistorytas.org.au

Victoria
President: Dr Francesco Ricatti
C/o RHSV, 239 A'Beckett Street,
Melbourne Vic 3000
Email: contact.oralhistoryvictoria@gmail.com
Website: www.oralhistoryvictoria.org.au

Western Australia
President: Kyra Edwards
PO Box 1065
Nedlands WA 6909
Email: ohaawa@gmail.com
Website: www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/ohawa.html