HISTORY
An Introduction to Oral History
Toby Butler PhD AMA FHEA

Study Day 7 June
Friday 10am - 4pm
Course code: 18TON385 Course fee: £42

This course may also be useful to Creative Writers

Oral history interviews are widely used to portray the lived experience of community, family, work, leisure and wartime history. This study day will focus on oral history practice including preparation, designing questions, interviewing and recording technique, ethics, copyright, transcription and how to publish and archive interviews for history and writing projects.

We will begin with an overview of the development of oral history and its strengths and weaknesses as a historical source. We will then cover the practical stages of the interview process including finding interviewees, how to prepare for a recording session, how to use recording equipment effectively, how to design interview questions, interviewing and listening technique and what to do when things go wrong.

We will then consider how oral history interviews can be used in publishing, public history projects, websites, artworks and archives, including issues of ethics, copyright, summary, transcription and archival issues. The day will include practical interviewing exercises and the use of digital recording equipment. I will provide equipment, but if you have a digital recorder you would like to practice with (this includes most mobile phones), do bring it along.

Suggested reading

No preparatory reading is required.

The Oral History Society has an excellent reading list that includes that is regularly updated: http://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/publications/
Additional information

No previous knowledge or experience required; suitable for anyone interested in recording oral history for personal use or for publishing, websites or exhibitions. This course allows you to spend time exploring a subject for interest, among like-minded people, without formal assessment. There will be discussion and practical interviewing exercises during the course.

Intended learning outcomes

By the end of the course students should:

- be able to identify the various stages necessary to record an oral history interview to a professional standard and understand the process by which oral history recordings are collected and stored in archives.
- be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of oral evidence for history projects, and to have strategies to overcome the weaknesses.
- be ready to prepare, conduct and process an oral history interview, meeting current ethical and legal standards.

About the tutor

Dr Toby Butler is a research fellow at Birkbeck, University of London with a particular interest in oral history, digital heritage and mapping memories. Toby has devised and led numerous oral history projects in London, Wales and India and is known internationally for his work exploring how history and memory can be mapped and used to interpret places and their pasts. Projects include Ports of Call, working with community groups and artists around the docks of East London to map and historically interpret the area (www.portsofcall.org.uk); the Bethnal Green Disaster Memorial Project (www.bgmemorial.org.uk) and most recently he has been interviewing museum founders across the UK for Mapping Museums: The history and geography of the UK independent sector 1960-2020.
Short Course Programme
General information, terms & conditions

How to book a place
These courses are usually very popular so you are advised to apply as soon as possible. Places cannot be held without payment of the course fee.

- **Online Booking is preferred. Please visit** www.kent.ac.uk/tonbridge
- **By post** to us at the address below, using the application form in the programme booklet. Please note that you will not receive an acknowledgment of your paper application; your payment will usually be processed when the course becomes financially viable, otherwise we will notify you of cancellation approximately seven days prior to the course. A paper application affirms acceptance of our terms & conditions.

Course cancellation
As these short courses are self-financing, each course can only proceed if there are sufficient enrolments. Therefore, if a course is cancelled due to insufficient enrolments we aim to notify applicants approximately one week before the course start date; if there is no suitable alternative course, we will refund the appropriate course fee in full. The University of Kent reserves the right to cancel a course for this or any other reason in which case the relevant course fee will be refunded in full. We advise that you do not buy books or other course materials until that particular course is confirmed as taking place: please contact us if you are unsure.

If you find it necessary to cancel your place on a course, please let us know as soon as possible. Refund requests, including the reason, should be made by email or in writing to us at the address below. We reserve the right to retain all or part of the course fee if you request a refund after 14 days of your online booking being made or paper application being received. Discretionary, partial refunds may be made, after the deduction of an administrative handling fee as follows:

- a course fee of up to and including £42 will incur an administrative handling fee of £10.00
- a course fee of £43 and over will incur an administrative handling fee of £12.50.

The University reserves the right to:
  a) exclude any student if the student’s presence is making it difficult for the class to function properly
  b) cancel or amend the length of any course if the circumstances so warrant.

Neither the University of Kent, nor its staff, can be held responsible for any damage, loss or injury, however sustained, suffered by participants attending courses. Insurance is the student’s responsibility.

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- Parking. There is plenty of public pay and display car parking locally, but please note that only selected car parks permit parking in excess of four hours; detailed information is available from www.tmbc.gov.uk. No parking is available here on site.
- Refreshments are not provided; food and drink can be purchased from any of the nearby café outlets - we are closely situated to the High Street and town centre. A hot drink vending machine is usually available on the ground floor of this building.

Mailing List and data protection
Those attending our courses are automatically added to our database and kept informed about new courses. This information is not released to outside organisations. Please write to us if you do not wish your details to be kept on our database.

*Please contact us if you have any queries or would like to register your email address to receive our course information updates. We look forward to welcoming you here soon.*

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