

OHA Biennial Conference 2024

The Power of Oral History—Risks, Rewards & Responsibilities

Presented by Oral History Victoria and Oral History Australia

Dates:	21-24 November 2024
Location:	Trinity College, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Victoria, Australia
Deadline:	Closing date for presentation proposals – 1 April 2024
Links:	OHA website – www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au EasyChair submission portal – https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=oha2024

Call for Presentations

Oral history can be powerful in so many ways. Interviews generate potent emotions. Recordings capture the power of voice as well as the power of silence. Multimedia productions engage and connect new audiences with the complexities of the past.

Fundamentally, oral history transforms the historical archive and challenges mainstream histories. It can shift traditional power dynamics, bring forth new voices and perspectives, reshape policies and politics, and shake up old certainties.

Yet those possibilities come with risk as well as reward. Recording sensitive subjects is never easy. Creating an oral history production takes time, skill and care, and sometimes goes wrong. Imaginative re-uses of oral history recordings can raise ethical and legal complexities. And oral histories that disrupt accepted narratives can generate pain and conflict, in families, communities and nations.

Our conference welcomes participants who use oral history in their work across the many fields and disciplines that contribute to community, professional and academic histories. We welcome presenters from Victoria and around Australia, from across the Tasman and throughout the oral history world, from First Nations and culturally diverse backgrounds. We invite proposals for individual presentations, workshops, performances, and thematic panels that speak to *The Power of Oral History – Risks, Rewards and Possibilities*.

Join us in Melbourne in November 2024 for a celebration of the power of oral history. Our conference venue is the state-of-the-art Trinity College Gateway Centre on the campus of the

University of Melbourne, in inner city Parkville, close to cafes, restaurants, parks, public transport and accommodation. The venue is accessible with a dedicated lift.

On Thursday 21 November oral history training workshops will be followed by the conference welcome reception in the evening. The main conference will be on Friday 22 and Saturday 23 of November, and on Sunday 24 participants may enjoy a variety of history tours in Melbourne and Victoria.

Keynote speakers

Alessandro Portelli

Over more than 50 years, **Alessandro Portelli** has been one of the most influential oral historians in the world. In Italy in 1972 he founded the Circolo Gianni Bosio, an activist collective dedicated to studying folklore, oral history, and people's culture. He has served as Professor of American literature at the University of Rome 'La Sapienza', as historical advisor to the mayor of Rome in the early 2000s, and as a founder of Rome's House of History and Memory. His award-winning publications have transformed our understandings of memory, narrative and oral history, and about the relationships and politics of oral history, including: *The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (1991), *The Order Has Been Carried Out: History, Memory and Meaning of a Nazi Massacre in Rome* (2003) and *They Say in Harlan County: An Oral History* (2010). In 2015 he was awarded the prestigious international Dan David Prize for his outstanding contribution to the study of history.

We look forward to announcing our other keynote speakers in coming months.

Conference sub-themes

Conference sub-themes may include, but are not limited to:

- Indigenous oral histories and oral traditions
- Oral history, culture and language
- Interpreting memory in oral history
- Transgressing boundaries with oral history
- Documenting diverse voices with oral history
- Histories of protest, activism and rights
- Contested memories and histories
- Oral histories of working lives and social class
- Migrant and refugee oral history
- Gender and oral history
- LGBTIQ+ oral histories
- Ethical issues in oral history
- Technology and oral history
- Archiving and oral history
- Giving voice to history through music

- Oral histories of family, community or place
- Creative uses of oral history recordings
- Oral history in galleries, libraries and museums

Requirements

All proposals to present at the conference must be submitted using the conference EasyChair submission portal (see below) no later than **1 April 2024**.

We welcome proposals for presentations in a variety of formats and media, including standard paper presentations (typically 20 minutes); short 'lightning' accounts of work in progress (typically 5 minutes); participatory workshops; performances; or thematic panels comprising several presenters. Presentations should involve oral history. Contact the Chair of the Conference Program Committee, Professor Alistair Thomson, (alistair.thomson@monash.edu) if you would like to discuss the format or focus of your presentation before you submit it.

Proposals for presentations / papers / panels / posters should be no more than 200 words (single space, 12 point font in Times New Roman) and must include at the top of the page, your name, institutional affiliation (if applicable), postal address, phone number and email address, the title for your presentation/panel, the sub-theme/s your work best connects to, and the presentation format (standard 20 minute paper; 5 minute 'lightning' account of work in progress; thematic panel; performance; or participatory workshop).

Presenters will be encouraged to submit papers to the refereed, online Oral History Australia journal, *Studies in Oral History*.

Submission

New proposals should be uploaded to EasyChair. via this link:
<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=oha2024>.

To use this online conference management system, you will need to create an author account (a simple process) and then submit your proposal by uploading it as a PDF document (with full details as listed above).

If you are unfamiliar with EasyChair, please follow the instructions available via a downloadable PDF on the conference website: https://oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/OHA_conference_2024_EasyChair-instructions.pdf.

If you are unable to use this system, please email your proposal as a PDF attachment to ohavictoria2024@gmail.com

Further information

For conference information or to join the conference mailing list, email our Oral History Victoria hosts at ohavictoria2024@gmail.com or go to the conference website at <https://oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/biennial-conference-2024/>