

Intimate Recording and Readings of Lives

Methods course

Winter term, 2013-14

Class meets: Tuesday 9-10.40 CET, FT 309

University of Tartu – 3 credits

Central European University Gender Studies and Cross-listed with History and the Medieval Studies, 2 credits

Faculty: Leena Kurvet (University of Tartu), Andrea Peto (Gender Studies, CEU)

Teaching assistant: Sonia Garzon Ramirez (CEU, PhD Student)

Visiting lecturer: Kathrin Thiele (Utrecht University)

Guest lecturer: Jose de Kruif (Utrecht University), Laleper AYTEK (Koc University)

Office hours:

Andrea Peto (petoand@t-online.hu)

-in office (Zrinyi 14, Room 505) TBA

Sonia Garzon Ramirez (Garzon-Ramirez_Sonia@ceu-budapest.edu)

-in office

Moodle Site:

The course has a Moodle 2.0 site, CEU students should contact Gabor Acs (acsg@ceu.hu) concerning any problems with the Moodle site.

Course Description:

We are all struggling with how to record, write, research and interpret lives of the others and our own. The course offers a theoretical, methodological and practical help for how to write about past (and present) lives. Based on recent development of theoretical perceptions of the field of life writing, informed by, for example, research into one's own family history, archival and oral history work as well as investigation of web-based life writing environments that have created new sites of interrogation of the private and the public, of the intimate and the official and formal, the conference aims at facilitating a discussion of the methodologies of the intimate and the ethics of the private.

We will introduce specific *examples of archives*, such as the Visual History Archive, museums (House of Terror in Budapest and KGB Museum in Tartu) so as to give students “hands-on” experiences with exploring museums and how do they collect, preserve and exhibit life stories. There will be a *video mini conference* organized with three researchers from Estonia (Imbi Paju), Hungary (Peter Berczi), Leila Melart (Finland) and Spain (Elena de Sanchez de Madariaga) will share with the class their experiences of doing research on intimate stories: researching their families. Via videolink there will be a *workshop* with Koc University (Istanbul) to discuss subjectivity and photographs led by Laleper AYTEK.

This seminar will involve simultaneous teaching on both sites. Most class sessions will be joint sessions with classrooms in Tartu and Budapest connected through video/internet technologies. Students will work in small groups (across disciplines and distance) to discuss theoretical issues and to prepare joint presentations; small group work will also take advantage of internet technologies.

Learning outcomes:

- Introduce students to various emergent approaches to thinking about oral history and writing
- Question how some knowledges about the past get preserved and some repressed
- Give students a “hands-on” experience of exploring an archive as a site for storing stories about intimate lives
- Offer possibilities for developing a focused research project
- Rethink their own individual research projects in terms of our critical discussion of recording, preserving and analyzing stories of lives
- Rethink their ideas/projects from an interdisciplinary perspective
- Address question of how gendered perspectives on stories have affected their approach to knowledge

Due to its unique integrated use of educational technology, the seminar will be researched by Helga Dorner (dornerh@ceu.hu) from the CEU Center for Teaching and Learning. However, this will not interrupt/disturb/influence teaching, learning and evaluation processes. A note on the nature of the research and on conducting ethical research in this seminar is available on the course website.

Course requirements: (CEU students)

For grading policy see the rubric for evaluation below.

Active participation in the class 10%**Paper on how to use oral history in your MA project (10%) (1000 words min.)**

As a closing of the first module post a short summary of how you see the main methodological challenges and potentials of using oral history in your own research. You will get a feedback on your posting via the moodle.

Posting (paper, visual material) about the field trip 20%: During the field trip, using any appropriate media (such as your cell phone, a camera, or even pen and paper!) students from each campus will collectively gather and then “archive” records of their field trip on the appropriate field trip wiki of the Moodle site. Students on each campus will thus have access to this archive of records of each other’s field trip experiences

Group project related to the readings 30%

Form groups around the topics Motivation and desire for researching somebody else’s life, transferring stories: post generation, lost stories narrated we are discussing together: with signing up on the wiki (make sure that CEU and Tartu students are equally represented in each group) and prepare a joint presentation. Presentation should be one joint presentation, but NOT an individual PowerPoint! Film or any kind of medium will be very welcome to illustrate the points. Your contributions to the group project will not be evaluated individually, but your performance and contribution to the group work and the presentation will be recorded by using a group evaluation sheet available on the moodle that describes the group’s joint work process.

Final paper about the digital archives 30% (2000 words min.)

Write a paper on one of the online archives (VHA is recommended). Reflect on (at least some) the following aspects from the gendered point of view: principles of compiling the archive, ways of online display of archived materials, the dynamic of private and public of the archives, ethical issues concerning the display of archived materials digitally, the story the archive tells and point of view of the story, challenges of recording intimate lives. CEU students are requested to submit a short description of their planned paper for approval and as a basis for discussion.

Class schedule

14 January Introduction, overview of the tasks and the schedule (CEU term starts)

Module: Recording Intimate Lives

21 January Oral History: Definitions and applications

28 January Ethical and legal dilemmas

Guest lectures by Kathrin Thiele (Utrecht University) on that week

4 February Questioning and practicalities

10 February Analyzing oral histories (Tartu University Term starts)

Guest lecturer: Jose de Kruif (Utrecht University)

20 February deadline for posting paper on oral history at CEU

Module: Theoretical Considerations of Reading Intimate Lives

18 February First joint session with Tartu: Introduction of the joint activity, VHA session: analyzing testimonies of the others

Postings related to the group presentations are due by Sunday 18.00 CET before the class

25 February (24 February national holiday in Estonia) Joint session: Motivation and desire for researching somebody else's life

4 March Joint session: Transferring stories: post generation, roundtable on researching intimate archives

5 March: CEU students are requested to submit a short description (min. 300 words) of their final paper for approval/basis for consultation

11 March (15 March National holiday in Hungary) Joint session: Lost stories narrated

Module: Exhibiting and Storing Stories of Intimate Lives

TBA visit in House of Terror (BP), KGB Museum (Tartu) during this module

Postings on field trip to the Museums are due by the week of 17th March

18 March Joint session: Student presentation of field trip

25 March Joint session: Student presentations continue

1 April Joint session: Wrap up

Semester in Tartu continues

10 April submitting the paper to the moodle by CEU students

Readings

Week 1 – 14 January:

Introduction

Required reading:

- (1) Andrea Petö, Berteke Waaldijk, "Histories and Memories in Feminist Research" in *Theories and Methodologies in Postgraduate Feminist Research. Researching Differently* eds. Rosemarie Buikema, Gabriele Griffin, Nina Lykke. Routledge, New York, London 2011, pp. 74-91.

Module: Recording Intimate Lives

Week 2 – 21 January:

Oral History: Definitions and applications

Required reading:

- (1) Grele, Ronald J. (1998) "Movement without an Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems of Oral History" in Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 38-53.
- (2) Abrams. Lynn. (2010) "The Peculiarities of Oral History" in *Oral History Theory*, Routledge, pp. 18-33.

- (3) Reinharz, Shulamith (1992) "Feminist Oral History" in *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford UP, pp. 126-144.

Recommended/ not required reading:

- (1) Portelli, Alessandro (1998) "What Makes Oral History Different" in Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 63-75.
- (2) Thompson, Alistair (1998) "Fifty Years On: An International Perspective on Oral History" in *The Journal of American History* 85(2) pp. 581-595.
- (3) Portelli, Alessandro (1995) "Research as an Experiment in Equality" in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*. Albany-New York: Suny Press
- (4) Sangster, Joan (1998) "Telling our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History" in Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 87-100.
- (5) Abrams, Lynn. (2010) "Power and Empowerment" in *Oral History Theory*, Routledge, pp. 153-175.

Week 3 – 28 January:

Legal and ethical issues

Required reading:

- (1) Borland, Katherine (1998) "That's not What I Said': Interpretative Conflict in Oral Narrative Research" in Perks, R. and Thomson, A. (eds). *The Oral History Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 310-321.
- (2) Shopes, Linda (2007) "Legal and Ethical Issues in Oral History" in *History of Oral History: Foundations and Methodology* eds. Charlton, Thomas L., Myers, Lois E. Alta Mira Press, pp. 125-159.
- (3) Kurvet-Käosaar, Leena, "Vulnerable Scriptings. Approaching Hurtfulness of the Repressions of the Stalinist Regime in the Life-writings of Baltic Women" in *Gender and Trauma*. Ed. Fatima Festic. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012, pp. 89-114.

Recommended/ not required reading:

- (1) K'Meyer, Tracy, E. and Crothers, Glenn, A. (2007) "If I See Some of This in Writing, I'm Going to Shoot You': Reluctant Narrators, Taboo Topics, and the Ethical Dilemmas of the Oral Historian" in *The Oral History Review* 34(1) pp. 71-93.
- (2) Jolly, Margaretta, "Sisterhood and After: Individualism, Ethics and an Oral History of the Women's Liberation Movement." *Social Movement Studies* 11:2 (April 2012): 211–226.

Class: "The Impossibility of Not-Sharing': Working-Through Transgenerational Trauma in-with Bracha L. Ettinger" (guest lecturer Kathrin Thiele, Utrecht University)

Required reading:

- (1) Ettinger, Bracha L. (2005) "Copoiesis" in: *ephemera: theory & politics in organization*, Vol 5(X), pp. 703-713. access online (free):
<http://www.ephemerajournal.org/sites/default/files/5-Xettinger.pdf>
- (2) Pollock, Griselda (2006) "Femininity: Aporia or Sexual Difference?" in Ettinger, Bracha L. *The Matrixial Borderspace*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 1-38.
- (3) Butler, Judith (2011), 'Disturbance and Dispersal in the Visual Field' in Catherine de Zegher and Griselda Pollock (eds.) *Art as Compassion. Bracha L. Ettinger*, London: ASA Publishers, pp. 149-165.

Public lecture: *A Different Difference: An Ethico-political Reading of Ettinger's Matrixial Borderspace*

A *different difference*, providing us with an alternative model to binary, oppositional and antagonistic stratifications, is not only an ongoing ethico-political urgency in an increasingly differentiated and unequally globalized world. Envisioning a different difference so that processes of othering and exclusions, and the appropriation of difference into sameness are put to a halt represents also one of the core motivations of feminist research and activism as such. In this lecture I want to introduce the ‘feminine different difference’ that artist-philosopher Bracha L. Ettinger develops in her theory-practice of the matrixial borderspace. With it she calls forth ‘*originary jointness-in-differentiating*’ that enables us to supplement the common image of separation and splitting from, and the negation of the other, into ‘co-emergence’, ‘besidedness’, and ‘borderlinking’.

Week 4 – 4 February:

Practicalities and questioning

Required reading:

- (1) Ritchie, Donald A. (1995) *Doing Oral History: Practical Advice and Reasonable Explanation for Anyone*, New York: Twayne. Chapters: “Conducting Interviews”, “Equipment, Processing, and Legal Concerns”, Ethics from the Oral History Association
- (2) Diamond, Lisa M. (2006) “Careful What You Ask For: Reconsidering Feminist Epistemology and Autobiographical Narrative in Research on Sexual Identity Development” in *Signs* 31(2) pp. 471-491.

Recommended/ not required reading:

- (1) Ballamingie, Patricia and Johnson, Sherrill (2011) “The Vulnerable Researcher: Some Unanticipated Challenges of Doctoral Fieldwork” in *The Qualitative Report* 16(3) pp. 711-729
- (2) Hesse-Biber, Sharlene N. and Leavy, Patricia (2005) “Oral History: Rapport, Listening and Storytelling as Research Techniques” in *The Practice of Qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 157-170.

Week 5 – 11 February:

Analyzing oral histories

Required reading:

- (1) Scott, Joan (1991) “The Evidence of Experience” in *Critical Inquiry* 17(4) pp. 773-793.
- (2) Lomsky-Feder, Edna (2004) “Life Stories, War, and Veterans: On the Social Distribution of Memories” in *Ethos* 32(1) pp. 82-109.
- (3) Culbertson, Roberta (1995) “Embodied Memory, Transcendence, and Telling: Recounting Trauma, Re-establishing the Self” in *New Literary History* 26(1) pp. 169-195.

Guest lecture: Jose de Kruif, “*Textmining*”

Required reading:

- (1) Ted talk Google Ngramviewer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wtj50v7qByE>
- (2) Johan Bos and Malvina Nissim (2009) “From shallow to deep natural language processing. A hands-on tutorial”
- (3) Daniela Oelke, Dimitrios Kokkinakis, Mats Malm (2012) “Advanced Visual Analytics Methods for Literature Analysis”
- (4) Jean-Baptiste Michel et al. (2011) “Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books” in *Science* 331(176) pp. 176-182.

Recommended/ not required reading:

- (1) Sobhan HOTA, Shlomo ARGAMON, Moshe KOPPEL, Iris ZIGDON (2006) “Performing Gender: Automatic Stylistic Analysis of Shakespeare’s Characters, Digital Humanities”

Module: Theoretical Considerations of Reading Intimate Lives

Week 6 – 18 February:

Introduction of the joint activity, VHA session: analyzing testimonies of the others?

VHA session: visit <http://vha.usc.edu> at CEU and <http://vhaonline.usc.edu/> in Tartu

Required reading:

- (1) Pinchevski, Amit, “Archive, Media, Trauma” in *On Media Memory: Collective Memory in a New Media age*. ed. Motti Neiger et.al. Palgrave MacMillan, 2011, 253-264.
- (2) Wieworka, Anette, *The Era of the Witness*. Cornell, 2006, 95-145.

Students at CEU will need to establish a username and password. The VHA is fairly self-explanatory. Please browse the website and look at sections of at least 2-3 videos. In class, we will be doing a close reading of **one video** testimony. It is important that you have had a first look at the VHA collection **before** class. The participants are asked to familiarize themselves how to use the database before the class.

Those CEU students who already took the Gendered Memory of Holocaust class might also find useful this session as it is focusing on *methodology* of doing interviews on intimate stories.

For more see: Andrea Pető, “How to Use the Shoah Foundation’s Visual History Archive for Teaching at the Graduate Level: a Methodological and Theoretical Reflection” in *Jewish Studies at the CEU VII. 2009-2011*. eds. A. Kovacs, M. Miller, Budapest 2013, pp. 205-211.

Week 7 – 25 February:

Motivation and desire for researching somebody else’s life

Required reading:

- (1) Miller, Nancy K., *What They Saved. Pieces of Jewish Past*. University of Nebraska Press, 2011, pp. 3-22.
- (2) Kraus, Carolyn, “Proof of Life: Memoir, Truth and Documentary Evidence” in *Biography* 31:2 (2008), pp. 245-268.
- (3) Hirsh, Marianne and Leo Spitzer, “Ghosts of Home. The Afterlife of Czernowitz” in *Jewish Memory*, 2011, pp. xiii-xxi.
- (4) Kurvet-Käosaar, Leena. “Creating a Habitable Everyday in Estonian’s Women’s Diaries of the Repressions of the Stalinist Regime” in *Speaking the Unspeakable: Trauma and Language* (Berghahn, forthcoming. The article is about two diaries of Soviet Repressions from 1941-45 and 1949, one of them an unpublished manuscript from the EKLA archives).

Week 8 – 4 March:

Transferring stories: post generation

Required reading:

- (1) Arthur, Paul Longley. “Unearthing the Past: Dwikozy Revisited,” in “Recovering Lives,” ed. Paul Longley Arthur, special issue, *Life Writing* 8, no. 1 (2011): 101–14.
- (2) Hirsch, Marianne. “The Generation of Postmemory” in *Poetics Today*, 2008, Volume 29.1, pp. 103-128.

Week 9 – 11 March:

Lost stories narrated

Paju, Imbi. *Memories Denied*. (A documentary, Tallinn: Allfilm 2007)

Required reading:

- (1) Šukys, Julija, *Epistolophilia: Writing the Life of Ona Simaite*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012, pp. 3–15

Module: Exhibiting and Storing Stories of Intimate Lives

Field trip: *Exhibiting Intimate Lives*

Jake Barton: The Museum of You. TED talk.

http://www.ted.com/talks/jake_barton_the_museum_of_you.html?source=facebook#.UnLTJtKTWdH.facebook

Budapest: **House of Terror** (www.terrorhaza.hu) in Tartu: **KGB Museum** http://linnamuuseum.tartu.ee/?m=2&page=front&change_lang=en

Required reading:

- (1) Otto, Lene, “Post Communist Museums: Terrspaces and Traumasces” in *The Power of the Object. Museums and World War II*. Ed. Esben Kjeldbaek. Museumsetc. Edinburgh, 2009, pp. 324-360.

Suggested websites for final paper:

Museum of Broken Relationships

<http://brokenships.com/>

<http://www.strandlines.net/>

American Life Histories, Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940

Library of Congress, American Memory

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/wpaintro/wpahome.html>

Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1938

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html>

Suffragists Oral History Project

<http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO/projects/suffragist/index.html>

Forced Labor 1939-1945

Note: This archive contains interviews with nearly 600 former forced laborers from 26 countries who had to perform forced labor during the period of National Socialism. There are a lot of introductory materials in English, but the main language of the site is German. The interviews themselves are in about two dozen different languages, including many Eastern European languages. You must be pre-registered to use the archive.

<http://www.zwangsarbeit-archiv.de/en/index.html>

Photo collection from the Stasi Archive (Simon Menner)

<http://simonmenner.com/Seiten/Stasi/indexStasi.html>

Pictures of Native Americans in the United States from the “Native American Heritage” collection at the U.S. National Archives

-introduction at: <http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/>

-image collection at: <http://www.archives.gov/research/native-americans/pictures/index.html>

Image Collection of the German Colonial Society

- Short introduction in English at:

http://www.ub.uni-frankfurt.de/afrika/bildsammlung_en.html

- Photo archive (instructions in English but keywords in German) at:

<http://www.ub.bildarchiv-dkg.uni-frankfurt.de/Bildprojekt/frames/hauptframe.html>

Centre for Popular Memory (University of Cape Town, South Africa)

-introduction at: <http://www.popularmemory.org.za/index.php>

The case of Angelique and the burning of Montreal

<http://canadianmysteries.ca/en/index.php>

Truth and Reconciliation Archive (SAHA)

http://www.saha.org.za/projects/trc_archive_project.htm

Collection of stories of the famine in the Ukraine

<http://www.sharethestory.ca/>

Rubric for evaluating papers¹

<i>High mastery</i>	<i>Average mastery</i>	<i>Low mastery</i>
<p>Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An inviting introduction draws the reader in, a satisfying conclusion leaves the reader with a sense of closure and resolution. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a clear thesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions are thoughtful and clearly show how ideas connect. <input type="checkbox"/> Uses an appropriate variety of sources, which are well integrated and support the author’s points. <input type="checkbox"/> Quotations, paraphrases and summaries are cited appropriately. <input type="checkbox"/> Sequencing is logical and effective. <input type="checkbox"/> Spelling is generally correct even on more difficult words. <input type="checkbox"/> Voice and style are appropriate for the type of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The paper has a recognizable introduction and conclusion, but the introduction may not create a strong sense of anticipation or the conclusion may not tie the paper into a coherent whole. <input type="checkbox"/> There is a thesis but it is ambiguous or unfocused. <input type="checkbox"/> Transitions often work well, but some leave connections between ideas fuzzy. <input type="checkbox"/> Sources generally support the author’s points, but more or a greater variety is needed to be cited. <input type="checkbox"/> Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries generally work but occasionally irrelevant, or are incorrectly cited. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> There is no real lead-in to set up what follows and no real conclusion to wrap up things up. <input type="checkbox"/> There is no clear thesis. <input type="checkbox"/> Connections between ideas are often confusing or missing. <input type="checkbox"/> Citations are infrequent or often seem to fail to support the author’s points. <input type="checkbox"/> Quotations, paraphrases, and summaries tend to break the flow of the piece, become monotonous, don’t seem to fit or are not cited. <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent errors in format or incorrect format used. <input type="checkbox"/> Sequencing seems illogical, disjointed, or forced. <input type="checkbox"/> There are frequent spelling errors, even on common

¹ Adapted from Stevens, D.D. & Levi, A. J. (2005). Introduction to rubrics. Sterling, VA: Stylus. Thanks for the CEU CTL

<p>paper assigned.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Paragraphs are well-focused and coherent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Sequencing shows some logic, but it is not under complete control and may be so predictable that the reader finds it distracting. □ Spelling is generally correct, but more difficult words may be misspelled. □ Voice and style don't quite fit with the type of paper assigned. □ Paragraphs occasionally lack focus or coherence. 	<p>words.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Voice and style are not appropriate for the type of paper assigned. □ Paragraphs generally lack focus or coherence.
<p>Critical thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The paper displays insights and originality of thought. □ There is sound and logical analysis that reveals clear understanding of the relevant issues. □ There is an appropriate balance of factual reporting, interpretation and analysis, and a personal opinion. □ The author goes beyond the obvious in constructing interpretations of the facts. □ The paper is convincing and satisfying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ There are some original ideas, but many seem obvious or elementary. □ Analysis is generally sound, but there are lapses in logic or understanding. □ The balance between factual reporting, interpretations and analysis, and personal opinion seems skewed. □ Paper shows understanding of relevant issues but lacks depth. □ The paper leaves the reader vaguely skeptical and unsatisfied. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ There are few original ideas, most seem obvious or elementary. □ Analysis is superficial or illogical, the author seems to struggle to understand the relevant issues. □ There is a clear imbalance between factual reporting, interpretation and analysis, and personal opinion. □ Author appears to misunderstand or omit key issues. □ The paper leaves the reader unconvinced.
<p>Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The paper is complete and leaves no important aspect of the topic not addressed. □ The author has a good grasp of what is known, what is generally accepted and what is yet to be discovered. □ Appropriate significance is assigned to the information presented and irrelevant information is rarely included. □ Connections between the topic of the paper and related topics are made that enhance understanding. □ Specialized terminology, if used, is used correctly and precisely. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The paper is substantially complete, but more than one important aspect of the topic is not addressed. □ The author has a good grasp of the relevant information but fails to distinguish between what is known, what is generally accepted, and what is yet to be discovered. □ The paper often uses information in a way inappropriate to its significance or includes much irrelevant information. □ Few connections are made to related topics. □ Specialized terminology is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ The paper is clearly incomplete with many important aspects of the topic left out. □ The author has a poor grasp of the relevant information. □ The paper frequently uses information inappropriately or uses irrelevant information. □ No connections are made to related topics to help clarify the information presented. □ Specialized terminology is frequently misused.

	sometimes incorrectly or imprecisely used.	
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