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A Digital Oral History Experiment: Creating *Australian Lives*

Drawing upon an archive of 300 life history interviews comprising 1221 hours recorded with Australians born between the 1920s and 1989, the Australian Generations Oral History Project pioneered innovative technologies for documentation of and access to oral history, and experimented with different media – radio, websites, essays and e-books – to highlight the aural qualities of our recordings. This presentation will showcase and discuss two of the multimedia productions that I co-produced with my colleague Anisa Puri: a web-based oral history exhibition titled ‘From Glory Boxes to Grindr: Dating in Australian 1945-2015’, and the oral history book *Australian Lives: An Intimate History*. The book is both a paperback and an e-book, taking advantage of new digital and online technologies for oral history. The web exhibition and the e-book contain direct online links to each section of interview audio, and enable readers to become listeners, and indeed to listen beyond the published extracts and back into the oral history archive. I will explain and discuss the technical, methodological and ethical innovations and issues posed by these new types of oral history productions. Specifically, I will focus on the uncanny ‘stereo’ experience (for want of a better word) of listening to a passage while reading an edited transcript that will never be exactly the same; and the ways in which such a product opens up the oral history archive to users and makes the oral historian’s editorial processes and decisions more transparent.

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See also :

<https://www.ioha.org/useful-readings/> (International Oral History Association)

<http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/> (Oral History in the Digital Age)

<http://www.oralhistoryaustralia.org.au/useful-links.html> (Oral History Australia)

<http://www.oralhistory.org/resources/> (Oral History Association, USA)

<http://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/> (Oral History Society, UK)

<http://tellhistory.com/index.php/oral-history-projects/> (Oral History Projects Worldwide)