



Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling
Centre d'histoire orale et de récits numérisés

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Distances and Intimacies

8th Emerging Scholars Symposium on Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice

March 19th, 2021

The Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University invites graduate students and recent graduates to submit paper and research-creation proposals for our 8th Emerging Scholars Symposium on Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice. This virtual on-line event will offer emerging scholars an opportunity to present their work at any stage, to exchange ideas, and to connect with other researchers and creators.

Distances and Intimacies is the title and main theme of the symposium. The many spheres of reciprocal relationships that exist within oral history processes emerge as intimacies that are temporally, spatially, virtually, historically, and socially situated. The Program Committee invites participants to map and explore the production of intimacy and distance in their research, and to engage with these two concepts from a range of different disciplinary, theoretical, methodological, and creative perspectives.

We are open to accepting proposals that engage with the conference theme in creative ways and take it into unexpected directions. We strongly encourage proposals of work-in-progress as well as finished work. Emerging scholars are welcome to submit proposals on:

Is Distance the New Intimacy?

Digital media signals new possibilities and challenges and provokes a re-examination of our research processes. This shift has been particularly acute in this moment of global pandemic, when distanced and virtual communication has become an act of communal care. How does your research engage with digital methodologies? What happens in the context of remote interviewing, and can the distanced nature of these interviews shift the dynamics of intimacy? What happens to the repositories of language and memory in the transition between the digital/virtual and in-person?

Embodied intimacies and distances

The intimate and the affective process of oral history interviewing occurs through the embodied presence of both the interviewer and narrator. As oral historians, how can we capture the emotional resonance of oral history interviews? What role does intimacy play in the individual's construction of their past and their present? What happens in the interview space when tensions arise to reveal difference and distance? And how can the embodied

content of these interviews, their intimacies and estrangements, contribute to their interpretation?

Temporal intimacies

More and more researchers are transforming life-narratives into art installations, performances, graphic novels, documentaries, memoryscapes, historical walking tours, etc. Can we approach these archival and creative outputs as delayed forms of intimacies that alter our experiences and understanding of the interview?

When working with archived oral history interviews, how do we deal with the temporal distance between the researcher and the voice from the past? How can time consciousness and everyday rhythms challenge how we (and future historians) engage with the oral record and its affects? How does research-creation allow us to think through this distance?

Resilient Intimacies and necessary distances

As an assemblage of ideologies and power relations, intimacy could exert normative pressures on indigenous and racialized bodies. Settler colonialism, for example, restructures intimate relationships within indigenous communities and between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. What are some of the ways in which intimacy processes could enable or constrain the experiences of the communities we are working with? How can we revisit existing intimacies or cultivate new ones to reimagine the workings of power, authority and reciprocity?

Relational Intimacies

Oral history is fundamentally about the relationship between the researcher and participants placing the notion of shared authority front and center. This involves nurturing a relationship based on trust, respect, and shared decision-making between the two. To what extent is this relationship informed by the subjectivities and respective histories of the two? How do we listen across differences? We are interested in learning more about the ways in which emergent scholars – in Montreal and beyond – are engaging with the principal of shared authority and the highly political issue of representation.

We welcome submissions that are inspired by these questions, as well as those that interpret this year's theme differently.

This symposium is an interdisciplinary gathering that invites proposals from emerging scholars in oral history, digital storytelling, and creative practice. Scholars in related fields, including museum studies, education, documentary filmmaking, memory studies, literature, creative writing, new media arts, geography, sociology, and anthropology, are encouraged to submit proposals.

How to apply

Participants may present their work in a variety of formats via video conference, including research-creation projects and paper presentations. In order to be able to showcase a broad range of projects, presentations will be limited to no more than 15 minutes, followed by time for questions and discussions. We particularly encourage creative forms of expression other than papers (e.g., poetry, fiction, video/audio submissions, artwork, etc.).

The symposium is bilingual; presentations may be in either French or English.

To submit your presentation proposal, please email us at cohds.chorn.symposium@gmail.com with the subject line

- "TITLE – "Presentation application (*type of presentation: paper, video, artwork, etc.*)" with the following:
- Short statement of how your research engages the conference themes (300 words)
- Your CV
- A brief bio (70 words): We do not require you to have published your work before, and especially encourage works from emerging scholars/artists!
- Technical specifications: Please tell us if you need to play audio or video as part of your presentation.

As this year's symposium will be taking place remotely, we welcome innovative approaches to conferencing online. If you have creative ideas for a conference session beyond a talk or webinar-style presentation – especially those that inspire interaction and active engagement – we encourage you to submit!

We get how overwhelming it can be to submit a proposal, especially for the first time. We're here to help! If you have any questions, please email cohds.chorn.symposium@gmail.com. The deadline for submissions is **January 13th, 2021**.