

**Oral
History
Network
Ireland**

Líonra Stair Bhéil na hÉireann

ICAN Networking Event

Remote Interviewing

18 Feb 2021

About this session



Introduction to OHNI



Some initial thoughts on remote oral history interviewing



Share experiences, expertise, perspectives and make connections



Online resources for remote interviewing

What is OHNI?

A formal network of practitioners who:

- Promote the value, relevance and inter-disciplinarity of oral history
- Advocate for official recognition and protection of oral heritage and history
- Promote best practice in the collection, dissemination and archiving of oral history
- Organise training workshops, events and an annual conference for the oral history community
- Have a website with oral history resources
- Provide a forum for OHNI members

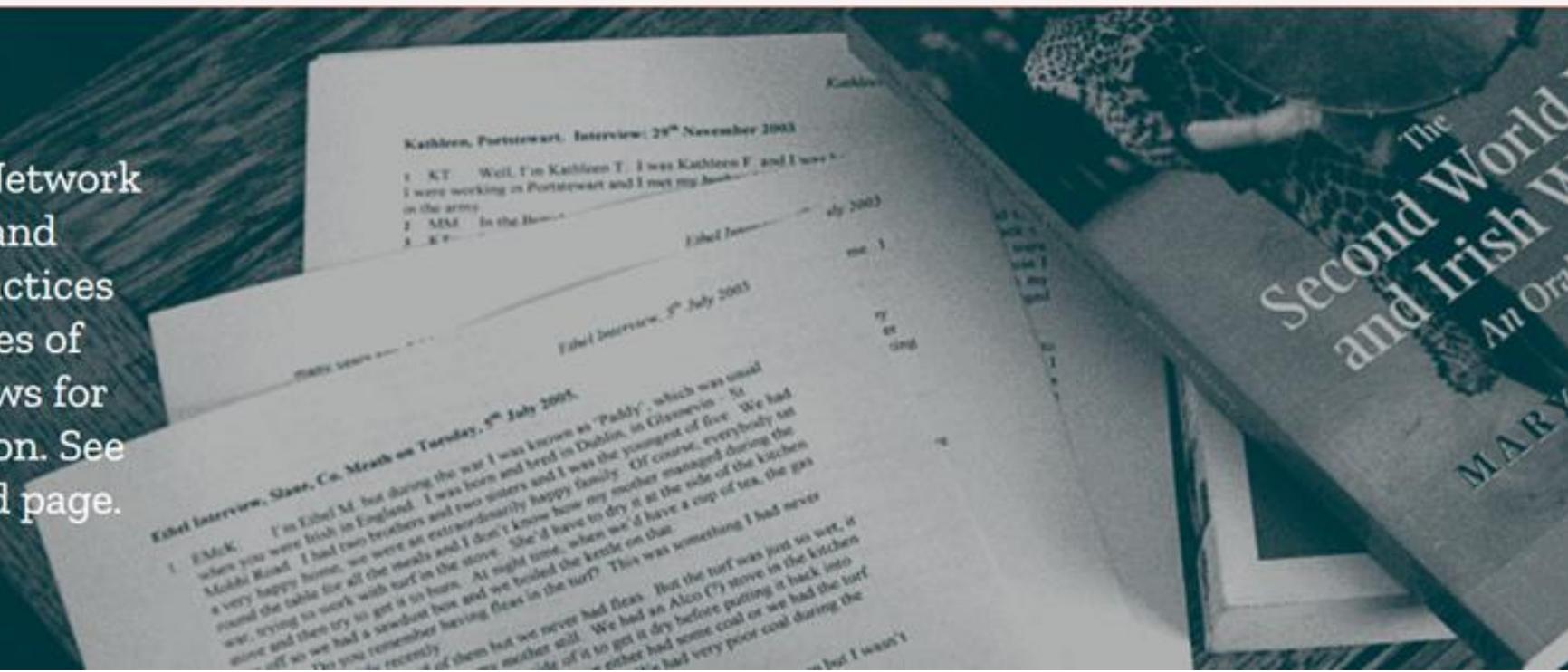
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www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie



The Oral History Network Ireland advocates and advises on best practices in the various stages of preparing interviews for public dissemination. See the Getting Started page.

[Getting Started](#)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Virtual events through June 2021

More events will be announced later in the year

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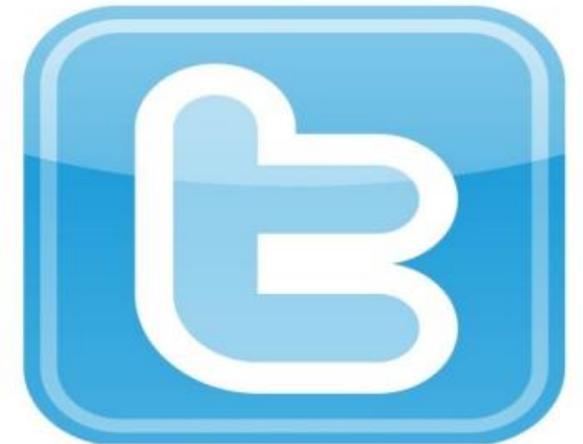
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Event	Date	Time
Training Oral History Basics	Saturday 20 February 2021	10am-12:30pm
Networking celebration Happy 10th birthday to OHNI and new website launch	Tuesday 23 March 2021	7pm
Training Ethics and Oral History	Friday 23 April 2021	2-5pm
Conference Storytelling and Oral History	18-19 June 2021	All day

<https://www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie/>

Contact us & Connect with us

- Website:
<http://www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie/>
- Email:
info@oralhistorynetworkireland.ie



What is oral history?

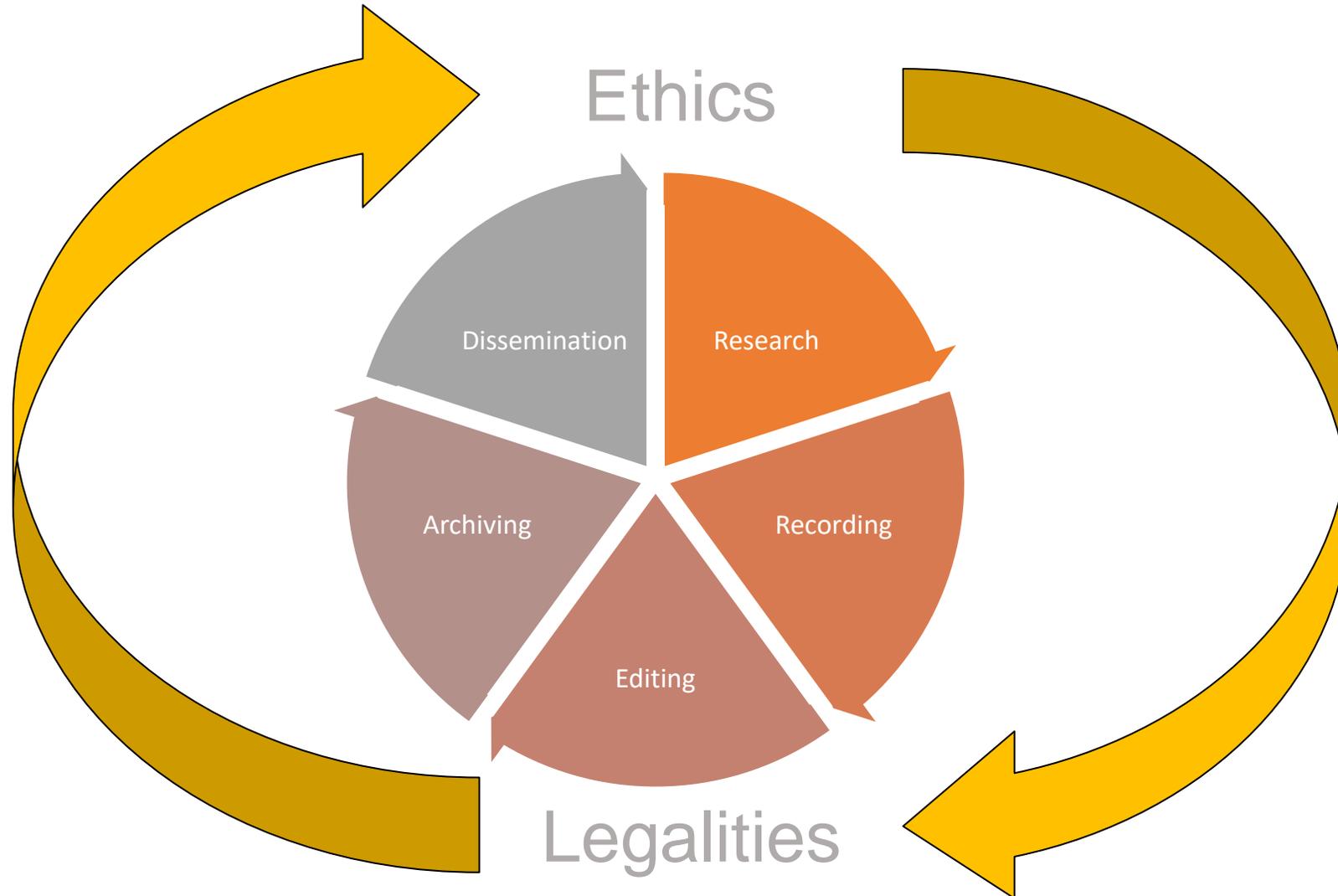
'Memory is the core of oral history, from which meaning can be extracted and preserved. Simply put, oral history collects memories and personal commentaries of historical significance through recorded interviews'
(Don Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, 2015)

'We enter a home or workplace and ask people questions that can make them see their lives differently. We come in a special role – as collectors and preservers of accounts of human experience for generations to come – that can inspire people to speak honestly and fully about their experiences. They may entrust us with information they would not normally tell a stranger because they see us as having a special relationship to them, as someone who will tell their story to a wider audience or future generations, as they have told it to us.' **(Yow, 1995; 51)**

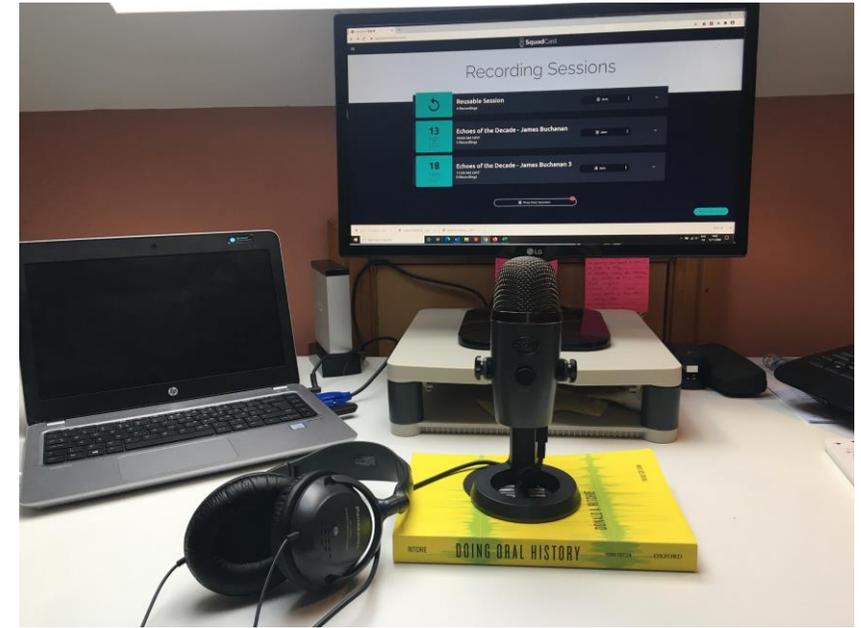
Possibilities of oral history

- Reaching the people and stories hidden from history
- Capturing first hand accounts of 'what it was like when...'
- Documenting various perspectives and the messy realities of life
- Bringing history to life
- Creating meaning from events in the past and generating an understanding of people, places and events
- Engaging communities
- Involvement in the process of creating history
- Leads to privately held material

Life Cycle Approach to Oral History



Remote Interviewing





Remote interviewing – some considerations

Assessing the necessity for interviewing now rather than later. If it must be now considering the following:

- How appropriate your topic is to remote interviewing?
- How suited your interviewees are to remote interviewing?
- What resources/equipment are available to you and to your interviewees to do this?
- How will you need to adjust your interviewing structure and style to accommodate this?
- How will you communicate with your interviewee and acquire permissions needed?
- How will this impact on your project timeline?
- What impact will the remoteness of the interview have on the interviews you record?



Remote interviewing – Initial reflections

- Acknowledging the context of the interview ie The Pandemic
- Adapting the approach for each interview
- Establishing and building rapport
- The benefits of multiple shorter interviews
- Accepting 'good enough' sound quality
- Phone interviews vs Internet based interviews
- More follow up than usual
- The paperwork
- Oral History without borders

Remote Interviewing Resources

Baylor University's Institute for Oral History and the Oral History Association

Webinar Recording: Oral History at a Distance: Conducting Remote Interviews

<https://www.oralhistory.org/2020/03/26/webinar-oral-history-at-a-distance-conducting-remote-interviews/>

Digital Omnium [Doug Boyd's Website]

Recording & Microphones

<https://digitalomnium.com/category/records-microphones/>

H-OralHist [Online Listserv]

Discussion thread: 'Conducting oral history interviews remotely'

<https://networks.h-net.org/node/16738/discussions/6031284/conducting-oral-history-interviews-remotely>

Oral History Society

Advice on remote oral history interviewing during the Covid-19 pandemic

<https://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/covid-19/>

University of Winnipeg

Tutorial: Recording with Smartphones & Tablets

<https://oralhistorycentre.ca/mobile/>

Vermont Folklife Center

Recording Interviews Remotely

<https://www.vermontfolklifecenter.org/remote-recording>