**SABANCI UNIVERSITY**

**CULT 361/561: Oral History**

**SPRING 2023/ Wednesdays: 09.40-12.30 @ FENS G059**

<https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/3921680787>

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**Course Outlines**

This course will introduce students to the study of oral history. Oral historians collect and examine spoken memories about the past. As one of the newest research tools of academic research, oral history allows us to examine events and experiences not recorded (or differently recorded) by written history, and to interpret their meaning in the present. In this class, students will first be introduced to the essential readings in the field, and then they will engage with the capabilities, controversies, and methodologies of this interdisciplinary field. Students will discuss questions such as the ethical ways to collect oral histories, emic/etic responses to the responsibilities of the researcher to their host communities as well as to their disciplines.

**Teaching Protocol (Online)**

According to the official requirements of the Council of Higher Education of Turkey and the teaching guidelines of the President’s Office of Sabancı University, this course will be taught in an **online** format, meaning that students will attend to lectures via Zoom (the link will be shared via SUCourse). Students should strive to have their cameras **open** during lectures since face-to-face interactions with the instructor and other students facilitates the learning process and is a symbolic act of mutual respect for those sparing their valuable time to be present during lectures as well as those sharing their ideas and stories with others.

**Requirements**

Students are required to attend to class regularly (physically or online) and do the readings weekly. Each week there will be in-class student presentations based on the weekly readings, which are to be assigned to students later in class. There will also be a semester-long research project, which is comprised of three steps. The topic of the research project is to be determined according to the likes of the students.

The project comprises three essential steps, including forming an interview information form and interview questions, conducting an oral history interview (audio recorded), creating a transcript (a text version of the interview) alongside the interview notes, and a final paper of 10 pages. As part of their research project, students must turn in a number of assignments by their due dates throughout the semester. Please take note of the due dates below carefully.

**Assignment Due Dates and Grading Criteria**

* **Attendance/Participation:** 10%
* **In-class Presentations**: 15%
* **Assignment 1:** Interviewee Information Form and Interview Questions (due March 24): 20%
* **Assignment 2:** Interview Notes and Transcript (due April 29): 25%
* Assignment 3: Final Paper (To be announced later): 30%

All assignments will be submitted via Turnitin (SUCourse) Late submissions will NOT be accepted under any circumstances. If you are unable to submit your assignments due to serious illness, you must provide a medical certificate to the instructor prior to the due date. In order to succeed in this course, students need to attend class regularly, complete the readings, meet the assignment deadlines and be prepared to participate in-class discussions actively.

**■ COURSE PLAN ■**

**Week 1 (March 1) Course Introduction**

**Week 2 (March 8) What Makes Oral History Different?**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 1-33.

Alessandro Portelli, “What Makes Oral History Different?,” in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 45-58.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Alistair Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History,” The Oral History Review 34, no: 1 (2006): 49-70.

**Week 3 (March 15): Oral History in Turkey**

Leyla Neyzi, “Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey,” in *Turkey’s Engagement with Modernity: Conflict and Change in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Celia Kerslake, Kerem Öktem, Philip Robins (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 443-459. Barın Görgülü

Arzu Öztürkmen, “Remembering through Material Culture: Local Knowledge of Past Communities in a Turkish Black Sea Town.” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 39, no: 2 (2003): 179-193.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Melissa Bilal and Estelle Amy de la Bretèque, “The Oror and the Lorî: Armenian and Kurdish Lullabies in present-day Istanbul,” in *Remembering the Past in Iranian Societies*, ed. Christine Allison and Philip G. Kreyenbroek (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2013), 125-139.

**Week 4 (March 22): Self/Subjectivity & Intersubjectivity**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 33-78.

Kathryn Anderson and Dana C. Jack, “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analysis,” in *The Oral History Reader*, Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 157-171. Ege Karamelek

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Carolyn Steedman, “Enforced Narratives: Stories of Another Self,” in *Feminism and Autobiography*, ed.Tess Coslett et. al., (New York: Routledge, 2002), 25-38.

**Assignment 1: Interviewee Information Form and Interview Questions**

**Due March 24** **by 11 p.m.** on SUcourse

**Week 5 (March 29): Tensions and Decisions in Oral History**

Tracy E. K’Meyer and A. Glenn Crothers, “‘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,” *The Oral History Review* 34, no: 1(2007): 71-93.

Kathleen Blee, “Evidence, Empathy and Ethics: Lessons from Oral Histories of the Klan,” in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, (London: Routledge, 1998), 333-343. Eray Olcay

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Nien Yuan Cheng, “‘Flesh and Blood Archives’: Embodying the Oral History Transcript,” *The Oral History Review* 45, no: 1 (2018): 127-142.

**Week 6 (April 5): Debates in Oral History Melis Gemalaz (specify)**

Anna Green, “Individual Remembering and 'Collective Memory': Theoretical

Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates,” Oral History, 32:2 (Autumn, 2004): 35-44.

Nadia Jones-Gailani, “Qahwa and Kleiche: Drinking Coffee in Oral History

Interviews with Iraqi Women in Diaspora,” Global Food History Journal, (January 2017): http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/20549547.2017.1278347

Additional readings for graduate students/recommended for undergraduates

Michael Roper, “Slipping Out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History,” History Workshop Journal, vol 59 (2005): 57-73.

**Week 7 (April 12): Memory**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 78-106.

Alessandro Portelli, “The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Memory and the Event,” in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001), 1-26.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Ivana Maček, “‘It Starts to Burn a Little’: Intergenerational Transmission of Memories of War in a Bosnian Family in Sweden,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orale* 37 (2017). Ihsan Sabri Yesilyurt

**Week 8 (April 19): Narrative**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 106-130.

Gabriele Rosenthal, “The Narrated Life Story: On the Interrelation Between Experience, Memory and Narration,” in *Narrative, Memory & Knowledge: Representations, Aesthetics, Contexts* (2006), 1-16. Doğukan Yılmaz

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Deborah Schiffrin, “Mother/Daughter Discourse in a Holocaust Oral History: ‘Because Then You Admit That You’re Guilty’,” *Narrative Inquiry* 10, no: 1 (2000):1-44.

**Week 9 (April 26): Performance**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 130-153.

Steven High, “Oral History and Performance,” in *Oral History at the Crossroads* (Vancouver, B.C.: The University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 241-263. Sarp Kaston

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Della Pollock, “Oral History As and In Performance,” Presentation at OHMAR Meeting, New York, 2008. Eylül Aksu

**Assignment 2: Interview Notes** and **Transcript**

**Due April 29 by 11 p.m. on SUCourse**

(In-class discussion of interview experience, how to do presentations and transcript)

**Week 10 (May 3): Power and Empowerment:**

Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 153-175.

Katherine Borland, “‘That’s Not What I Said’: Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research,” in *The Oral History Reader,* ed. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (London: Routledge, 1998), 320-332. Duru Gülsoy

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Lenore Layman, “Reticence in Oral History Interviews,” The *Oral History Review* 36, no: 2 (2009): 207-230.

**Week 11 (May 10): The Limits of Oral History?**

Erin Jessee, “The Limits of Oral History: Ethics and Methodology Amid Highly Politicized Research Settings,” *The Oral History Review* 38, no: 2 (2011): 287-307. Emir Aikan

Antonius Robben, “Ethnographic Seduction, Transference, and Resistance in Dialogues about Terror and Violence in Argentina,” *Ethos* 24, no:1 (1996): 71-106.

Readings for graduate students/Recommended for undergraduates

Monica Eileen Patterson, “The Ethical Murk of Using Testimony in Oral Historical Research in South Africa,” in *Oral History Off the Record*, ed. Anna Scheftel and Stacey Zembrzycki (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 201-218.

**Week 12 (May 17): Silences and Defenses**

In-class student presentations

**Week 13 (May 24): Project Presentations**

In-class student presentations

**Assignment 3: Final paper**

**(TBA after the declaration of the new academic year calendar)**

The final assignment will include a digital copy of all previous assignments, the interview audio/video, photographs and other data collected.