



## **University of Huddersfield Repository**

Webb, Christopher

Greenhead Stories: People, Place and Sharing Authority Across Cultural Lines

### **Original Citation**

Webb, Christopher (2013) Greenhead Stories: People, Place and Sharing Authority Across Cultural Lines. Masters thesis, University of Huddersfield.

This version is available at <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/25023/>

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: [E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk](mailto:E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk).

<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/>

# **Greenhead Stories: People, Place and Sharing Authority Across Cultural Lines**

**Christopher Webb**

A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Masters of Philosophy

The University of Huddersfield

November 2013

## List of Contents

LIST OF CONTENTS	2
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>PART I: CONTEXT</b>	<b>6</b>
INTRODUCTION	7
<b>CHAPTER 1: SURVEYING THE FIELD</b>	<b>20</b>
PART A - TPACE, PLACE AND ORAL HISTORY	21
PART B - THARED AUTHORITY	41
PART C - TOICE AND TONE – NILEMMAS IN ORAL HISTORY	65
<b>PART II: PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>82</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 – PHE CONTEXT: GREENHEAD PARK FROM PAST TO PRESENT</b>	<b>83</b>
THE PARK IN CONTEXT	83
THE WRITTEN HISTORY OF GREENHEAD PARK	90
<b>CHAPTER 3 – PHE ORAL HISTORY OF GREENHEAD PARK</b>	<b>98</b>
TURNING THEORY INTO PRACTICE – CUTTING LEFEBVRE AND SAMUEL TO USE	103
GREENHEAD STORIES	109
PROJECT OUTCOMES	112
STORIES MATTER	114
HOW THE ARCHIVE WAS BUILT	117
HOW TO ACCESS THE ARCHIVE	121
DIVISIONS WITHIN THE ARCHIVE	121
BUILDING AN ARCHIVE	127
SOUND QUALITY IN THE ARCHIVE	130
CONCLUSION	133
<b>CHAPTER 4 – P ETHODOLOGY: PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE</b>	<b>135</b>
ETHICS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES	135
THE EXTENSION OF AUTHORITY	139
WORKING <i>WITHIN</i> COMMUNITIES	143
PERSONAL COMMITMENT AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY	147
MOVING FORWARD WITH SHARED AUTHORITY: ADDRESSING THE SHORTCOMINGS	155
A SOLUTION: SHARED AUTHORITY AND STORIES MATTER	158
RELATIONSHIP REVISITED	159
INTANGIBLE INTERCHANGES REVISITED	163
CONCLUSIONS	165
<b>PART III: FINDINGS</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5 – PECLINE AND RESTORATION</b>	<b>168</b>
DECLINE AND RESTORATION: THE STORY OF GREENHEAD PARK	169
REPAIR V. RESTORATION	174
THE GLORY DAYS	177
DECLINE ACCORDING TO WHOM?	183
DECLINE THROUGH RESTORATION	186
CONCLUSION	189
<b>CHAPTER 6 – PLACE: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.</b>	<b>193</b>
GENERATIONAL USE – SPACE AS A CONSTANT WITHIN PLACE	195
GENERATIONS OF USE	200

	<b>3</b>
TRADITION BUILDING AND RE-INVENTION	205
BRINGING STORIES OF PLACE TOGETHER	212
<b>CHAPTER 7 – PROJECT OUTCOMES</b>	<b>216</b>
THE ‘STATIC’ ARCHIVE & STORIES MATTER	216
THE COMMUNITY ARCHIVE	224
EXHIBITION AND AUDIOWALK	225
CLOSING EVENT	231
CONCLUSION	232
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>LOOKING TO THE FUTURE</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>FINAL THOUGHTS</b>	<b>241</b>
<b>APPENDIX A - INSTALLING AND ACCESSING STORIES MATTER</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>APPENDIX B - POSTERS AND FLYERS USED TO PUBLICISE THE PROJECT.</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>APPENDIX C - SAMPLE INTERVIEW SUMMARY, STATE LIBRARY NEW SOUTH WALES</b>	<b>248</b>
<b>APPENDIX D - SAMPLE INTERVIEW SUMMARY GREENHEAD STORIES.</b>	<b>251</b>
<b>APPENDIX E - ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TAGS IN THE ARCHIVE.</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>APPENDIX F - POSTERS AND FLYERS USED TO PUBLICISE THE PROJECT.</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>APPENDIX G – STUDENT CONSENT FORM</b>	<b>265</b>
<b>APPENDIX H – IMAGES OF EXHIBITION AND CELEBRATION EVENT.</b>	<b>268</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>271</b>

## Abstract

The Greenhead Stories project sought to bring a range of voices together to discuss the shared space of Greenhead Park, a Victorian park just a short walk beyond Huddersfield's town centre. Over the course of its history, the park has been the home of many day-to-day leisure activities, as well as serving as a public gathering place for much larger events including silent marches, charity fundraisers, and a number of cultural festivals. In the last few years, local residents have witnessed huge changes to the park after a multi-million pound restoration grant was donated by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Over the course of the restoration, the project aimed to record public memories surrounding the park during a time at which physical evidence of the park's past was disrupted.

In addition to collecting memories of place, the project employed a 'shared authority' methodology through a collaborative recording and contextual documentation process. Beyond the content of what was recorded, the Greenhead Stories project set out to explore the possibilities of building a contextual digital archive as a means of addressing some of the dilemmas currently facing oral history theory and practice. Through building partnerships with local organisations and working with the many different communities who share the space, the project aimed to record a broad history of the park, and explore the ways in which the space is a part of both individual and collective memory in Huddersfield. This dissertation, along with the accompanying digital archive and audiowalk, highlights the project's historical and methodological findings, and in doing so provides solutions to some of the dilemmas and questions facing oral history theory today.

## Acknowledgements

The path to completing this research has been a long one, stretching back long before I ever imagined that I could build a career out of asking questions about the past and listening to people's stories. Consequently there are many people to acknowledge who have supported my becoming the oral historian I am today. Firstly for their love and support, my close (and extended) family who entertained my inquisitive instincts from a young age and provided me with hours of storytelling about far off places and moving to different lands when I was a child. Without the support of my parents, sisters and partner I could not have completed this study; they each play a part of every piece of the puzzle that has been my journey over the past few years. I dedicate my work to them, and especially my father who after encouraging my to take up my PhD has completed this journey with me in spirit.

Professionally, I must thank James Wishart, who made me see that I could enjoy history at an academic level and introduced me to my interest in museums as sites for interpreting history. I have been fortunate enough to have been inspired by some of the best, including Dr. Geoff Smith whose passion for history and justice inspires my work and Dr. Alistair Thomson who supervised my MA dissertation at the University of Sussex and helped me recognise that listening to migration stories has been something I've been doing all my life.

At the University of Huddersfield I have been fortunate enough to receive a tremendous amount of support and guidance from my supervisor Dr. Paul Ward. I have also benefitted from being surrounded by other passionate oral historians in the Centre for Visual and Oral History Research, with thanks to Clare Jenkins, Dr. Robert Light, Dr. Stephen Kelly, Nafhesa Ali and Dr. Janette Martin. Within the University I have also received a great deal of help and guidance from individual staff and fellow students who took the time to support my work and assist me in my journey, and I am thankful for their contributions to my intellectual, physical and mental wellbeing over the course of the last few years.

Over the course of my PhD I have received generous support from the University of Huddersfield, The Royal Historical Society, The Gilchrist Education Trust, The Oral History Society, The International Oral History Association and The Columbia Centre for Oral History. I am grateful for their assistance and the opportunities their support has provided me with.

Finally, for their work on Greenhead Stories, and the work they continue to do in Greenhead Park I am very grateful to the Friends of Greenhead Park group as well as all the members of park community who contributed their stories and time to this project. Without these many voices, I would not have been able to find my own voice as a project manager, researcher, and oral historian within this project.

## **Part I: Context**

## Introduction

Oral historians have been aware that we are amid a ‘digital revolution’ for quite some time now, and yet we continually talk about it as an age that we are entering or waiting to see the results of.<sup>1</sup> We are increasingly aware of what recording and archiving in digital formats affords us in terms of logistical solutions to collecting, the longevity of digital recording, and other ways in which the digital age offers us practical solutions to our method of recording, collecting and interpreting interviews.<sup>2</sup> What we are not yet sure of, and, as this dissertation will demonstrate, what we are often in disagreement over, is how these new digital tools may solve the longstanding methodological, theoretical and even philosophical debates that emerged from oral history practice long before we acknowledged entering the digital age. Although many practitioners of oral history identify themselves first and foremost as oral historians, above the myriad of other disciplinary subjects they come from, and oral historians meet nationally and internationally at conferences to develop their theory and practice as a discipline, there are a great many issues which separate our philosophies. While oral historians work with museums, libraries and archives, and converse as means of bringing together our methods, the speed and efficiency at

---

<sup>1</sup> The coining of the “The Digital Revolution in Oral History” as a major paradigm shift within the discipline stems from Alistair Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History,” *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 49-70 and yet his commentary on the history of oral history relies on sources dating back as far as 2001 (including Mary A. Larson, “Potential, Potential, Potential: The Marriage of Oral History and the World Wide Web,” *Journal of American History* 88, no. 2 (2001): 596–603 and Michael Frisch, “Towards a Post-Documentary Sensibility: Theoretical and Political Implications of New Information Technologies in Oral History,” (Paper presented to the XIIIth International Oral History Conference, Rome, June 2004.)

<sup>2</sup> Numerous oral history guides and books freely comment on the digital recording and backing up as being a part of mainstream, archival practice see, Nancy Mackay, *Curating Oral Histories* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007), in fact the British Oral History Society says that “... ‘solid state’ digital recorders have replaced the analogue recorders (such as audio cassettes) and older digital formats (like minidisc)”. <http://ohs.org.uk/advice/index.php> (accessed 15 March 2013).



which our digital practices are progressing only serve to fragment the theory and practice of our discipline further.

Through my PhD research I set out to use a digital archive format to address a range of practical and theoretical issues facing oral history. It was my aim to create an academically-led but community-driven oral history project which serves as a practical case study for creating contextual digital archives, whilst also providing a platform through which to solve some of oral history's theoretical dilemmas and inconsistencies to be outlined in my research questions.<sup>3</sup> Early on in my work I sought to find a place that could serve as a talking point to generate conversations amongst members of different communities, and unite seemingly separate groups of people through the common experience of a shared place. Greenhead Park, the largest park in the northern English industrial town of Huddersfield, became the virtual and physical gathering point for this project and the platform from which I could explore my research questions. Focusing on Greenhead Park, the project's aim was to record a wide range of stories relating to a single place and foster an understanding of how a breadth of cultural, recreational, religious and generational communities share and negotiate memory within the same space.

The key research question which drove this study was: what are the potentials (and problems) of using collaborative oral history to record a history of place shared by many different communities, and what methodological lessons can be learned from the process of recording a cross-cultural collaborative digital archive of oral

---

<sup>3</sup> This aim connects to a broader trend in oral history, which acknowledges the benefits of projects which connect academic and community history objectives bringing the best of academic "analysis, detachment and critical reflection" and community history's "commitment to process and change" together. Joanna Bornat, "Two Oral Histories: Valuing our Differences," *Oral History Review* 21, no. 1 (1993): 95

testimony? Within this research question, the term ‘collaborative’ refers to my interpretation of Michael Frisch’s shared authority approach, the evaluation of which underpinned the project and its outcomes. The term ‘communities’ broadly refers to the many different groups who use the park, ranging from formally organised groups who affiliate based on shared ethnic backgrounds, hobbies, leisure activities, interests and a range of other factors, to associated but not organised individuals who use the park less formally, but sometimes more frequently: families, runners, dog walkers, new mums groups, etc. Because the research question includes the aim of collaborating and engaging with a diverse array of affiliated and non-affiliated communities, it extends into a broader question about whether shared authority can be successfully applied in a project which seeks to record a range of voices around a specific place or subject, rather than through a typical life-story in-depth approach: asking, what are the results of attempting share authority across a range of different groups, individuals, and organisations all with different interests and capacities to be involved?

Stemming from this main query were a series of underpinning questions, grouped around gaps in the existing literature on oral history theory and broader studies of space and place. Firstly, I wanted to add to the academic discussion of shared authority, and explore the use of this ethos in a non-life story approach, while engaging participants in discussing the social meaning of place through providing opportunities to listen to, reflect on and interpret recordings. Secondly, I asked whether documenting the collaborative process and creating a contextual archive can solve the dilemmas that lie within the growing cleavage between oral history theory

and practice, to be identified in the coming chapters as the ‘dichotomic dilemma’?<sup>4</sup> Is it possible to document the process of sharing authority, and, if so, can evidence of narrators as active and engaged interpreters of their own memories be preserved in the archive for their use and the use of future researchers? Furthermore, where does the balance lie between finding ways to share authority by making project outcomes alive and relevant during the course of the project, and finding ways to preserve that authority for future use – does the former ensure the latter, or are these aims achieved by different means? These questions engage ongoing debate over interpretive authority, which has emerged out of what oral historians have called the ‘post-positivist’ or ‘subjective turn’ in our practice.<sup>5</sup> What influence should those who were a part of the recording process have over those who approach the archive in the future? And furthermore, what role does new technology have in this process, and can it be used to create a collaborative archive which can be made accessible through the use of contextual summaries and digital tagging rather than transcripts?

Lastly, I asked what those who do oral history can learn from other disciplines studying place and space, and what oral history can contribute to this dialogue. By surveying how other academics consider the social production of space and place, oral historians can understand how their work contributes to this process and how place can be used not only to understand the past, but also to provide a home for unheard memories and narratives. This question is important when considering parks and

---

<sup>4</sup> The cleavage between the practice of treating oral history recordings as transcripts in the archive and the oral history interview event as a subjective nuanced experience has been reflected on by many oral historians. See Megan Hutching, “The Distance Between Voice and Transcript,” in *Remembering: Writing Oral History*, eds. Anna Green and Megan Hutching (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004), 168-177, and Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), and Rhonda Y Williams, “‘I’m a Keeper of Information’: History-Telling and Voice,” *Oral History Review*, 28, no. 1 (2001): 41-63.

<sup>5</sup> Alistair Thomson calls this shift “Post-Positivist Approaches to Memory and Subjectivity” in Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations,” 53.

places of commemoration, where specific stories are told implicitly through the design of the built environment: how does the Victorian design of Greenhead Park affect the way that people use it today, and, conversely, how is the park's sense of place affected by narratives which defy or disrupt the evidence within the built environment? Recording a range of memories on the subject of a place provides an opportunity to explore the relationship between oral history, memory and the built environment, so that academics can not only contribute to broader interdisciplinary dialogues, but also share advice with the communities and individuals who are using increasingly accessible digital tools to pilot and create their own projects.

Greenhead Stories was an academic oral history project driven by the process of making meaning out of memory. Rather than focus on the technicalities and particulars of method and try to develop an edited set of questions aimed at placing the researcher at a dispassionate distance to the project, I celebrated my proximity to it and worked to create an archive which was driven by the experience of its participants. I purposefully set out without a finite set of parameters designed to meet particular technical and historical standards; instead I invested in the interests of my participants based on the trust that a valuable and complex archive would emerge as the by-product of the dialogic recording process we embarked on.

Although the research questions outlined in this introduction engage a range of methodological issues, the broader context of this work sits within the 'digital turn' in oral history and explores the consequences of democratising oral history practice in a digital age. Practitioners of oral history are currently in a new era in which the possibilities of digital recording have vastly affected the way in which we collect,

organise and interact with recorded testimony.<sup>6</sup> Advances in technology have presented us with, and ultimately forced us into, a new frontier, and as we move through it there has been great debate over how it will affect the best standards of practice across the discipline as a whole. It is arguable that the last paradigm shifts in oral history, as outlined by Thomson in “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History”, were largely defined and thus controlled by those at the ‘top’ of the field; those who had access to archives, recording equipment, and the academic researchers who debated and discussed the discourse of method. Thomson describes the four major ‘paradigm transformations’ as ‘the postwar renaissance of memory as a source for ‘people’s history’; the development, from the late 1970s, of ‘post-positivist’ approaches to memory and subjectivity; a transformation in perceptions about the role of the oral historian as interviewer and analyst from the late 1980s; and the digital revolution of the late 1990s and early 2000s’.<sup>7</sup> While the initial three transformations were largely influenced by academic exchanges and the work organised by oral history associations around the globe, this newest paradigm transformation is far more interdisciplinary and is largely influenced by technological factors external to the oral history community. Furthermore, the use of digital technology provides increased accessibility to both recordings and recording equipment, meaning that the umbrella of those who practice oral history is ever changing and increasingly broadens to encompass a wider array of self-subscribing practitioners often funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund or other funders which encourage community recording projects. Rather than the top-down practical pedagogy coming from major archives and academics which have characterised the discipline’s past, smaller groups, organisations and individuals can now afford to experiment, redefine, and most

---

<sup>6</sup> Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations”, 68.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 50.

importantly self-define practice standards resulting in a broader scope of projects and a virtually unlimited world of new recordings and archives. Oral history can be recorded, catalogued, stored and made universally accessible online without the approval or support of large archives, as individuals and community groups can easily find the capacity to create and manage their own collections. Editions of oral history guides such as Ritchie's *Doing Oral History* (1995, 2003 and more recent *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History* 2010), Yow's *Recording Oral History* (1994, 2005) and Thompson's *The Voice of the Past* (1978, 1988, 2000), have been updated every ten years or so as discourse developed and technology advanced, but nowadays many new practitioners are able to access theory and method via open access journals and online tutorials, which teach oral history as a digital art in a digital form.<sup>8</sup>

Some oral historians such as Ron Grele have criticised Alistair Thomson's view of digital technology as the 'next frontier' in oral history, by implying that the debate over technology is distracting our focus on method and turning our attention back to the practical elements of our work.<sup>9</sup> It is indeed true that the opening of this digital doorway has provided us with more 'exciting' frontiers and practical debates than the theoretically leaning paradigm shifts we have experienced in the past; however, it is important to remember that this new shift is not solely about practice. There is most certainly ongoing debate about 'best practice' and the finer technicalities of working in a digital age, but the true paradigm shift is related to how

---

<sup>8</sup> For example the *Canadian Oral History Forum d'histoire orale* and the International Oral History Association's journal *Words and Silences* are both peer-reviewed, international, bi-lingual open-access journals.

<sup>9</sup> Grele says "I want to offer a muted dissent to the overly optimistic view of the digital future" and warns that the fourth stage of oral history will not be defined by advances of technology but instead changes in perspectives of history which are related to "changes in the political economy of our world." Grele, Ronald J. "Reflections on the Practice of Oral History," *Suomen Anthropology: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* 32, no. 4 (2007): 19.

these new technologies open avenues for us to revisit the longer-standing methodological issues of our work, by providing us with new ways to work and interact with our recordings.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, this paradigm transformation is reinforcing and reinventing the paradigm transformations which Thomson suggested we have been through in the past; oral history has increasingly become a true ‘people’s history’ as it was intended to be in the post-war period, as new technology allows us to self-define practice and makes the role of ‘historian’ more accessible to the broader public. As the project grew into a collaborative endeavour it became integral to develop a plan for recording the collaborative process so that I could preserve and document the broader narratives and meta-narratives which informed the project’s creation.<sup>11</sup> This dissertation will summarise the debates which informed the project’s methodology and then document how the recording project sought to find solutions within the realm of new technology, and test a model of collection that could be adopted by oral historians of all levels of experience, whether they work on academic projects or community-led initiatives.

As with any oral history project there is clearly also a story of content as well as a story of purpose and creation. Where a number of projects have found success recording specific cultural and subject specific histories in Huddersfield through the

---

<sup>10</sup> Current debates on best practice in the digital age range from practical information as provided in books such as Nancy McKay’s *Curating Oral Histories* to a range of opinions and guidelines which are being established as quickly as the technology is developing. For some oral historians, the digital revolution provides new opportunities to interact with our archives from a collector’s point of view see: Michael Frisch, “Three Dimensions and More: Oral History Beyond the Paradoxes of Method,” in *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy (London: Guildford Press, 2008) while others have commented that the power in the digital revolution comes from new avenues for outputs and dissemination of oral history see: Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 173.

<sup>11</sup> The concept of shared authority was coined by Michael Frisch in Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990) but informed by a wider cross-discipline dialogue about reciprocal research relationships. This concept will be explored in full in Chapter 1.

work done by the Centre for Oral History Research (now Centre for Visual and Oral History Research), Greenhead Stories was a project that aimed to record a cross-cultural narrative of place.<sup>12</sup> Consequently, this dissertation will provide a full context to the project's aims and goals whilst also situating them within current and past academic writing regarding oral histories of place, as well as a broader context of studies in history and place.

While the chief function of this dissertation will not be to interpret memory and narrate a concise history of the park itself, it will draw conclusions from the memories recorded as they relate to the theory and methodology of investigating place and space through a collaborative recording project. The digital archive is therefore necessarily tied to the dissertation so that the reader can understand the archive created using the Stories Matter digital archive platform and interact with it alongside the theoretical ideas behind it and the story of the project itself. Finally, this project will attempt to demonstrate how creating a multi-media digital archive made up of collected testimony, written memory, and project ephemera can preserve the context of the project and provide future researchers with deeper understandings of the recordings. The simple use of extracts and transcripts cannot be enough to demonstrate the value of the archive itself; the contextual archive is as much a part of this thesis as the theory and methodology behind it. Instructions for downloading and accessing the archive are referred to in Part II and are also found in Appendix A, the printed copy of this dissertation includes a detached copy of this appendix which can be referred to freely.

---

<sup>12</sup> Other projects developed through the centre at the University of Huddersfield include the Rugby League, Two Minute Silence and Asian Voices projects more information can be found at <http://www.hud.ac.uk/research/researchcentres/cvohr/> (accessed 15 March 2013).



By setting out a model of collaborative recording and utilising a dynamic multimedia database as a home for the interviews, this project was uninhibited by content-driven recording beyond the limitation of focusing on the park. As a result, what was recorded was the memory and interpretation of that memory by project participants who came forward to share their memories of Greenhead Park. Interviews range from short sound bites to lengthier recorded reminiscences, all of which attempted to record both public memory and opinion on the park. Members of the local community (as well as those further afield) were invited to share as little or as much as they wished with the project and also weigh in on the direction of the project; the resulting archive is one which captures not only a wide range of memories, but also the spirit of how those memories were collected – displaying the varying enthusiasm of participants, their motives for participating, as well as their thoughts on how they make meaning from their memories and situate themselves in the story of the past, present, and future of the park.

This dissertation is split into three parts: context, process and methodology, and findings. Part I (Introduction, Chapter 1) introduces the research project and situates it within the relevant literature which informed my process and methodology. This literature review includes a survey of work engaging shared authority, the context and case for oral history engaging with theories of space and place, and the theoretical discourse that contributed to my model of contextual recording. Part II provides a historical backdrop for the park (Chapter 2) and presents the story of Greenhead Park and Greenhead Stories before introducing the digital archive in full and providing the reader with guidance on accessing and making use of the archive (Chapter 3). After building familiarity with the archive, Chapter 4 brings together the literature that informed the project and outlines the methodology I developed,

including a discussion of the ethics of interpreting and adapting the aim of shared authority within the context of this project. It also highlights some of the successes and shortcomings of my approach through use of evidence of the collaborative process from the archive. In Part III, Chapters 5 and 6 work in two ways: they display some of the findings of the project by showcasing and making use of the archive and the stories preserved within it, whilst also highlighting the interconnectedness and contextual nature of the digital archive, showing how the archive can be explored by theme and content, and highlighting some of the results that came from using Stories Matter as a digital catalogue. Finally, Chapter 7 deals with the audiowalk, exhibition, archive and other outcomes of Greenhead Stories: highlighting issues relating to the sustainability of the project beyond its life under my leadership, and considering the balance between the academic and community outputs of the project. As such, the project archive housed within Stories Matter, including the Greenhead Stories audiowalk (one of the project outcomes), are an integral element of this dissertation and its evaluation; submitted alongside the written component, the interviews, contextual information, and project outcomes housed within Stories Matter account for one-third of my submission.

As a researcher whose background covers both academic research and community engagement work in the heritage industry, this research project was designed to combine both of these often separate spheres of work. Working across these spheres often meant communicating project aims and goals in a range of different voices to different audiences, from presenting my findings at academic conferences to communicating my work aims to members of the community. As a result, this dissertation is the synthesis of many voices, rooting my work in its academic foundation, while also attempting to create a record which pays tribute to

the independent and capable participants of my project. It should be noted that to reflect the growing focus on accessibility in the heritage sector, it is my intention that this dissertation remain accessible to oral historians of all backgrounds, be they community, heritage industry or academic historians. As such, this dissertation reflects the typical academic style of referencing and formal quoting, while at the same time using oral history's convention of referring to my narrators on a first name basis.<sup>13</sup> This is not an effort to separate the two as distinct sources with a different weight or value put on either, but simply to refer to and credit those whose stories or writing informed my work in a manner which is meaningful and most respectful to them. Due to the collaborative nature of this work, it is not always genuine to express the research decisions in terms of "I" or "the researcher" because many decisions processes were informed by the more encompassing "we", referring to myself, my interviewees, and more specifically the Friends of Greenhead Park group who served as a trial group for the first year of the project and a project partner throughout the final stages of recording and exhibiting our work. While I maintained one foot solidly in my academic roots (through my work within the Centre for Oral History Research and the reading and theory which informed my work), I also imparted oral history skills and knowledge to project partners to provide us with a bridge so that project negotiation could be a two-way street and they had the tools to understand my needs and perspectives as researcher within an academic base.

---

<sup>13</sup> According to the American Oral History Association "Because of the importance of context and identity in shaping the content of an oral history narrative, it is the practice in oral history for narrators to be identified by name. There may be some exceptional circumstances when anonymity is appropriate, and this should be negotiated in advance with the narrator as part of the informed consent process." <http://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices/> (accessed 15 March 2013).

By identifying and addressing the range of practical and methodological dilemmas facing oral history as we enter the digital age, this dissertation will attempt to demonstrate that their solutions can be both one and the same, by arguing that the tools provided by the digital age do more than just solve our practical dilemmas. By offering a case-study use of Stories Matter in the context of a cross-cultural collaborative oral history project, this dissertation will make an original contribution to a range of ongoing discourses including that of oral history and place, shared authority in a digital age, and interpretive authority in the archive, but most importantly will provide an accessible example and solution to oral history in practice. The digital revolution has given oral historians the tools to do what we have always wanted to do, and perhaps even the chance to do them better than we could have imagined, but instead of fragmenting our practice further it is time for oral historians to come together and value these digital tools for more simply increasing capacity and basic functionality of access. This research makes a contribution to the ongoing dialogue of oral history theory and practice by demonstrating how the use of a contextual digital archive can address many of the shortcomings of our current methods, not just in relation to community oral histories or oral histories of place, and not just for the sake of our broader scope of practice, but also so that the oral history research method will continue to be recognised and made of use by the wide range of multidisciplinary researchers we collaborate with.

## Chapter 1: Surveying the Field

In order to fully consider the potentials of recording a collaborative cross-cultural oral history project using place as a talking point, it is necessary to review existing literature around three central areas of discourse in order to build a foundation for my research and synthesise the existing literature on the subjects this research and dissertation bring together. Firstly, it is important to survey theoretical discourses on space and place, both within oral history and across broader disciplines which make use of these theories. Secondly, it is integral to trace the evolution of collaboration in oral history, putting Michael Frisch's work on shared authority into context within oral history, and review how others have used his mandate to inform their own approaches to collaboration. Finally, in looking at my own aims for the project it is necessary to bring together elements of current practice in oral history so that I could not only illustrate the dilemmas identified in the research questions, but also build a framework for myself to evaluate my success in building an alternative form of archive. My review of literature regarding oral historians working with space and place alludes to how oral historians are using new technologies to explore place and produce outcomes which give new meanings to our understandings of place, but these dialogues (especially those relating to digital outcomes) developed alongside my new research due to the nature of the rapidly changing impact of digital tools. Throughout my research, new work on audiowalks and making use of digital oral histories outside the archive was being published and coming to light, and as such the literature informed my work 'in-progress' rather than serving as a reference point from the start. The works had a significant

influence on my research outcomes towards the end of the project, and will come in more significantly in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 when dealing with the audiowalk itself and my reflections on running an oral history project in Greenhead Park.

### **Part A - Space, Place and Oral History**

While oral historians have often acknowledged the strong connection between sensory experience and memory, our practice has not always fully capitalised on the very important relationships that connect space, place and memory. In order to address my research question regarding the relationship between oral history, memory, space and place, it was necessary to undertake a multi-disciplinary review of existing theories of place and space whilst also investigating where the work of oral historians intersects with these theories. This chapter will illustrate the development and negotiation of definitions of ‘space’ and ‘place’ in relating to the research project and also trace their roots through a review of relevant literature on both spatial theory and oral history relating to this project and its working definitions of place and space. Past guides on oral history have encouraged, or at least considered, the use of photographs, news clippings, foods and recipes, as triggers for memory, but until more recent years, the exploration of place has been limited due to a number of restrictive reasons, most notably the limitations of technology and the practicalities of recording ‘in the field’.<sup>14</sup> As technologies have progressed, and lighter, more mobile

---

<sup>14</sup> Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005), 264-266. Yow summarises Use of Artifacts and Photographs in Interviewing in listing the ways in which various oral historians have used purposefully saved objects, books, and photographs in the interview scenario to trigger memories. She also encourages interviewers to “be alert to other possibilities – such things as a scrap of paper with a grocery list found at the bottom of a trunk or a faded paisley shawl or a broken toy or a tattered account book or a diagram of a garden”. Yow, 265. In both editions of the *Oral History Reader* several authors acknowledge the use of objects and photographs in interviewing, with particularly attention drawn to the subject in “Ways of Listening” by Slim, Thompson, Bennet, and Cross. Their work suggests that props and mnemonics, visual techniques, as well as historical models and drawings can

and efficient means of recording have made their way into the hands of practitioners, oral historians have opened their doors and walked out into the world not to only record histories and memories in specific places, but also to explore the social experience of place in situ.

Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes summarise how oral historians and public historians made “uneasy bedfellows” in the past, but that from the 1980’s onwards they “have met in community-based projects and developed fruitful partnerships at the local level in a number of countries.”<sup>15</sup> Both groups of professionals now use oral history as a tool within their work, and both fields move closer together as oral historians engage more in not only recording, but also presenting those recorded histories in more and more public ways. Whilst Hamilton and Shopes’s work traces the past separation of the two disciplines along their professional lines, the work of oral and public historians is today bound by their shared outcomes, and in the case of my research, further bound by the tensions surrounding the digital age and the resulting democratisation of practice. As the technology involved in capturing and presenting the past is increasingly accessible to communities outside these professional bodies, groups and individuals have gained the capacity to do quality research and presentation without the assistance of oral or public historians; we must not only benefit from each other’s work, but use our expertise to build links with communities in order to create meaningful partnerships.<sup>16</sup> This progression is only

---

be used to solicit memories and help interviewees explain their stories more clearly. Slim et al., 149.

<sup>15</sup> Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes, *Oral History and Public Memories* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), xii.

<sup>16</sup> Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton summarise this shift in authority acknowledging the fluid nature of authority, from professional accreditation and practice to the types of authority conferred by communities in the form of ‘trust bestowed’ and access granted. Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton, “Connecting With History: Australians and Their Pasts” in *Public*

natural, as the gap between the ideals of the founding theories of recording a ‘people’s history’ and the costly tools we need to put into people’s hands to do so gradually disappears. Oral historians have benefited from the already multi-disciplinary nature of our work, and found a home within the work done by social geographers, anthropologists, cultural historians and a wide range of other academics developing a multi-disciplinary approach to dealing with memory. Why then, should we not collaborate further if our colleagues in these disciplines are also working with the concepts of space and place?<sup>17</sup>

Low and Lawrence-Zuniga argue that “The 1990s demonstrated a renewed interest in issues of space and place across the social sciences” with particularly large contributions made from researchers in the field of anthropology.<sup>18</sup> This shift comes to the forefront of discussion within the academy in an era of multidisciplinary de-specialisation, through which anthropologists, geographers, historians, philosophers and sociologists have increasingly acknowledged space as an “essential component of sociocultural theory.”<sup>19</sup> For anthropologists, “[t]his interest in space and place is not accidental” as Low and Lawrence-Zuniga’s work acknowledges that “it is necessary for understanding the world we are producing and inserting our discipline into the heat of social and political debate.”<sup>20</sup> As such, it is only expected that with memory so linked to sensory perception and experience, oral historians begin to make use of

---

*History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 35.

<sup>17</sup> Alistair Thomson summarises how oral historians turned away from history and to a range of other disciplines to become increasingly informed from areas such as anthropology, psychology, and others. Alistair Thomson, “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History,” *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 54.

<sup>18</sup> Setha Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, *The Anthropology of Space and Place Locating Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 1.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.



mobile technologies to explore memory and in turn add to the discourse relating to the production of space and place.

First and foremost, as relative newcomers to this discussion, oral historians must review and define the terms ‘space’ and ‘place’ in relation to the ongoing discourse. In their volume *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin acknowledge that the terms space and place “are often regarded as synonymous with terms, including region, area and landscape” but stress the importance of working within close definitions of the terms, saying that these ‘twin terms’ have provided the building blocks for centuries of discourse both within geography and its associated disciplines.<sup>21</sup> Hubbard and Kitchin contextualise the use of space within a broad range of sub-disciplines, not with the aim of confining the terms with permanent definitions, but with an eye to highlighting and “illustrat[ing] the diverse ways in which space and place are presently conceptualized and analytically employed to make sense of the world.”<sup>22</sup> Although conducting a review of historical perspectives on space is useful to the oral historian, a better understanding of the past of these highly problematised and widely-interpreted terms does not immediately provide us with working definitions which can both be useful to our own studies and meaningful to those studying space in other disciplines. It does however make sense that having undergone a ‘subjective turn’ as a discipline, and embracing the qualitative rather than quantitative nature of our work, that we work within definitions provided by geographers and anthropologists who study the nature

---

<sup>21</sup> Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin, “Introduction: Why Key Thinkers?” in *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, eds. Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin (London: Sage, 2011), 4.

<sup>22</sup> Hubbard and Kitchin provide a concise history of space in their introduction drawing in the names of the many thinkers who have weighed in on the discourse throughout its history; from the physical geographers who are “fairly uninterested in problematising the idea that space is straightforwardly empirical, objective and mappable” to more abstract thinkers such as Henri Lefebvre who was chiefly concerned with the production of space as a social construct. *Ibid.*, 4-16.

of space and place as a socially produced and socially created construct. Although there is a wide range of definitions within the discourse, Hubbard and Kitchin summarise that space is “‘made up’ through a three-way dialectic between perceived, conceived and lived space’ while ‘place emerges as a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with social spaces.’”<sup>23</sup> In relation to Greenhead Stories it will be documented how the modern day ideas of place and identity within the story of the park have been informed by a range of individual, collective and imposed practices within the park as a public gathering point.

For the purpose of this study, and simplification for the participants of my project I defined “space” as the physical space of the park, where it sits and the position it occupies; not necessarily defined by present, future or past landscapes (either natural or built) but still aware of the physicality of the park, the places within it and their relation to one another, while “place” refers to our human understanding of that space. Place includes both the physical and intangible; from the built landscape and the purposing of space for specific uses which change spaces into places of meaning, to place as something we naturally build a sense of, extending from our past and present experiences.<sup>24</sup> This project was chiefly focused in the “place” of Greenhead Park, understanding the social context and collective memory of those who use it, and facilitating discussions which helped illustrate the way in which space as a physical, unbiased, un-meaningful entity becomes place through the

---

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>24</sup> This definition of “place” draws highly from Nigel Thrift’s work on space, which acknowledges the bond between an understanding of place with an understanding of ‘embodiment’. Thrift’s work associates place with ‘embodiment’; “...the humanistic use of method that evoke the multisensory experience of place...” Ibid., 6, and in Nigel Thrift, “Space: the fundamental stuff of geography”, in *Key Concepts in Geography*, eds. Sarah L. Holloway, Stephen Rice and Gill Valentine (London: Sage, 2003), 95-108.

negotiated use and sharing of it to create meaning. It should be noted that while the above definitions work for the context of this project, within the dissertation these definitions can only be assumed in direct association with my own original work; quotes from past and present thinkers regarding space and place may assume other definitions and in fact, may use the terms somewhat interchangeably, but that is the nature of relaying a history stemming from two contested but inextricably linked terms. Throughout this dissertation I will acknowledge other working definitions of space and place and relate them to my own definitions for the benefit of the reader.

### **Places of Memory – Memory of Place**

In his work *Theatres of Memory*, Raphael Samuel discusses the idea of history as an “organic form of knowledge, and one whose sources are promiscuous, drawing not only on real-life experience but also memory and myth, fantasy and desire; not only the chronological past of the documentary record but also the timeless one of ‘tradition’”.<sup>25</sup> Samuel’s work, as intended, has been read by “different readers in different ways and used for different purposes”<sup>26</sup> and for many new historians, oral historians, public historians and academics of other disciplines, has been a point of inspiration from which they have defined their careers. Samuel’s work has informed the work of a generation of historians who reject the “inbreeding, introspection, sectarianism” of the discipline’s past, and seek to explore the meaning of history to everyday people, in a way which is both academically grounded but also meaningful to the wider public.<sup>27</sup> Samuel makes use of the idea of place, not simply as an allusion in his title “theatres of memory”, tying history to a place of performance, or a

---

<sup>25</sup> Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory* (London: Verso, 1994), x.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 3. Samuel criticises the insular nature of history as a discipline and proposes that history is a ‘social form of knowledge’ that has been written and designed at the hands of thousands of participants of history, not just the historians who uncover and decipher it. p. 8.

stage of experience, but by exploring how popular memory manifests in everyday interactions and experience. This focus of history coming out of everyday experience is not untypical of Samuel's work, which came at a time when "early oral historians had strong links with the emerging new social and labour history in the 1960s and 1970s which advocated for 'history from below'."<sup>28</sup> Samuel advocated for history to be connected with oral tradition, and his work highlighted "the importance of people's own interpretations of their lives".<sup>29</sup>

Samuel illustrates his view of history as a "social form of knowledge" by citing a vast array of sources as potential avenues of alternative inquisition of history. He suggests that there are a myriad of sources, ignored by historians contemporary to his work which unconsciously inform our sense of past and heritage, citing examples that include children's book and children's theatricals.<sup>30</sup> If we are to interrogate the many sources of popular memory, then why not also interrogate space as it has been conditioned, built, and utilised within our memory? Especially when spaces are in fact the stages in which we enact what becomes history, and in turn become the platform for these 'theatres of memory' described by Samuel. Although Samuel's work does not draw outright focus onto the subjects of place and space as 'theatres of memory', he does allude to the ways in which memories are associated with place and grounded in the physical world, with particular attention paid to the built environment through his discussion of the process of place-naming. Samuel discusses the way in which memory and historical understanding are attached to place-names, and the ways in which historical origins and understandings are traced by etymologists and the 'place-

---

<sup>28</sup> Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2010), 155.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 5.

name society' turning fragments of nomenclature into narrative wholes.<sup>31</sup> Although its primary function is necessary to allow us to find and locate ourselves within the physical world, it is arguable that the process of place-naming also allows us to root meaning into the physical world we live in, and in turn, allows us to locate memory in a specific environment which, when accessed, either reminds us through a connection to place or disrupts our memory by allowing us to recognise change in the natural and built environment that surrounds us. Memory, and in fact history, are just as much formed, created and reinforced by the mundane (place, maps, books, television) as they are by the scholarly pursuit of history in archives and academics.

### **Samuel and Lefebvre – Uncovering a philosophy of space and place**

In his chapter on unofficial knowledge, Samuel introduces his view of history by demonstrating the ways in which popular conceptions of history are formed, through three subsections he calls popular memory, invisible hands, and graphics. Popular memory, he says “is on the face of it the very antithesis of written history” and represents the processes of history making which we unknowingly partake in everyday as individuals and communities, while ‘invisible hands’ extends that activity to organised but unacknowledged forms of historical representation outside the academy; the history told on television, through museums, through fiction and even through aesthetics.<sup>32</sup> Finally Samuel discusses the power of graphics to inform our perceptions of history, explaining how visual manifestations of the past through illustrations, art and maps define and reinforce a specific view of history.<sup>33</sup> One cannot help but notice that these distinct separations mirror Lefebvre’s work in *The Production of Space*, which considers the way in which space becomes socially

---

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 27.

constructed, redefined, and reinforced in a cyclical fashion through the three stages of spatial practice, representation of space and spaces of representation.<sup>34</sup> Lefebvre's work is highly philosophical and chiefly concerned with a neo-Marxist view of space in relation to the convergence of capitalism in cities, and criticism of the "more customary reduction of space to part of one of production, exchange and accumulation".<sup>35</sup> The three stages of the production of space as mirrored in Samuel's work concerning the production of history as a social form of knowledge provide an interesting theoretical framework within which to consider my own research. By situating Samuel's work, which has served as a foundation for the work of many modern-day historians, within the work of Lefebvre, which built the foundation for studies of space and place, it is possible to establish a stronger bridge between these two disciplines, and in fact better understand the cyclic relationship between how the built environment informs social memory, and how social memory informs the built environment.

In Lefebvre's work he breaks down his three dimensional analysis of spatial production to spatial practice, the representation of space and spaces of representation.<sup>36</sup> Spatial practice refers to what activities we do within space, and how those activities define our understanding of place (ie. places for work, home, leisure, etc) noting that we define space through the activities and modes of production we use to inhabit them, and dismissing the opposite assumption that space has predetermined meanings.<sup>37</sup> Lefebvre's oppositely-termed 'representation of

---

<sup>34</sup> Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

<sup>35</sup> Rob Shields, "Henri Lefebvre" in *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, eds. Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin (London: Sage, 2011), 281.

<sup>36</sup> Christian Schmid, "Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space" in *Space, Difference, Everyday Life Reading Henri Lefebvre*, eds. Kanishka Goonewardena, et al., (London: Routledge, 2008), 36.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

space' and 'spaces of representation' have an interactive and somewhat contradictory relationship. The representation of space refers to space as it is imposed by our hierarchical society, modes of expression which give "an image and thus also define a space" regardless of worker/public use (i.e. maps, plans, documented information, signs, etc), while spaces of representation is the inversion of that understanding; the more practical and functional interpretations of space, which disrupt the hierarchical order of the established and seemingly permanent representation of space.<sup>38</sup> Thus, spaces of representation can represent changing spatial codes, the impact of nature, the more humanised (and for Lefebvre anti-capitalist) expression of space. While the understanding of space, in relation to means of production and understandings of capitalism, are not priorities for this research, Lefebvre's model for the production of space, and his description of how our understandings of space are both established and interrogated provides an interesting viewpoint. Samuel and Lefebvre are both critics of overspecialisation and academic isolation within their fields of study. Samuel argued for a non-hierarchical approach to understanding history and memory, while Lefebvre was a critic of "overspecialisation in economics, geography and sociology, which he argued 'parceled-up' the study of space".<sup>39</sup> If dialogue is to be had between those studying space and place and those who define themselves as oral historians, the work of Samuel and Lefebvre provides a strong meeting ground and a starting point from which academics from other disciplines may begin to understand one another's work.

While Samuel directly quotes a reliance on oral history work in his preface, the methodologies and approach used by oral historians to establish a 'people's history' through a non-hierarchical mode of questioning historical tropes, clearly align

---

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>39</sup> Shields, 279.

with the sentiment of Lefebvre's work.<sup>40</sup> In fact, when compared, Samuel's discussion of what makes up the 'unofficial knowledge' that represents broader understandings of history, parallels the work of Lefebvre. Samuel's chapter on 'popular memory' extends an understanding of history beyond the acceptance of what has been recorded as fact, and considers the social construction of memory and the history making activities of a broader range of people within his defined hierarchy of historians. Much like Lefebvre, who asks us to reconsider the assumption that our practice is defined by space, and accept that we in fact define space through our practice, Samuel asks his readers to recognise the role they place in asserting and defining the meanings of history. Both authors seek to question the established narrative and trace our knowledge and experience of either place or history to their socially constructed roots: Samuel through the subjective turn and Lefebvre through the spatial turn.<sup>41</sup> Samuel's work also discusses the way in which graphics, "those sleepy images which spring to life unbidden, and serve as ghostly sentinels of our thought" provide us with "our stock figures, our subliminal points of reference, our unspoken points of address."<sup>42</sup> These visual representations of history are much like Lefebvre's representations of space (maps, diagrams, paintings), defined by those at the top (historians, governments, artists, intellectuals) and used to reinforce our acceptance of our surroundings as they are narrated to us. Contrary to this assertion, Samuel's concept of 'invisible hands' and Lefebvre's spaces of representation describe the way in which individual and personal experience change those narratives, and disrupt the notion of history/space as it is accepted and expressed. Samuel's

---

<sup>40</sup> Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, xi.

<sup>41</sup> The use of the 'subjective turn' relates to one of Alistair Thomson's four paradigm shifts in oral history, already cited in Chapter 1, while the spatial turn is in reference to Low and Lawrence-Zuniga's observation of the resurgence of spatial studies in Low and Lawrence-Zuniga, *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, 1-3.

<sup>42</sup> Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 27.



unofficial reproducers and tellers of history disrupt the 'top-down' history told by academics, just as Lefebvre's describes how actions which disrupt the capitalist appropriation of space (spaces of representation) overthrow representations of space.

In fact, in his writing Samuel encourages historians to

draw up fresh maps, in which people are as prominent as places, and the two are more closely intertwined. He or she can then explore the moral topography of a village or town with the same precision which predecessors have given to the Ordnance Survey, following the ridge and furrow of the social environment as well as the parish boundaries, travelling the dark corridors and half-hidden passageways as well as the bye-law street. Reconstructing a child's itinerary seven years ago the historian will stumble on the invisible boundaries which separated the rough end of a street from the respectable, the front houses from the back, the boys' space from the girls'.<sup>43</sup>

Samuel's work provides historians with a platform from which to rewrite, redraw and re-envision history and create what Lefebvre might call new spaces of representation; that is, representations of space and place which create truths out of social meanings and make fiction of the more historical and hierarchical representation of the past.

From our collaborative roots, oral historians sit in a unique position not only to record memories of place, but also preserve those memories of place even in circumstances where spaces and built environments change and remove the physical evidence of those memories. One example of this comes from the work of Mexican American singer Mary Ann Villarreal, who without knowingly doing so perfectly illustrates the way in which oral history can be used to better understand Lefebvre's social construction of place; her work uses the stories regarding the practices of space, and plots them against traditional representations of space (American road maps between Corpus Christi and San Antonio) to create a new representation of how the

---

<sup>43</sup> Raphael Samuel, "Local History and Oral History," *History Workshop Journal* (1976): 199.

Spanish-language music industry has thrived through the spread of music and the creation of performance and dancing venues along the plotted touring road routes.<sup>44</sup>

The result of her work not only reveals interesting stories about daily life, but extends further to illustrate and “fleshes out the narrative in Mexican American history” in relation to the location and movement of work, culture and agricultural practice.<sup>45</sup>

Public historian Helen Klæbe uses geographic definitions of place as a methodological springboard in her work which sought to record a community history of Kelvin Grove Urban Village, a modernised area of Brisbane, Australia with strong historical ties to local and regional indigenous communities. Through recording histories and facilitating digital storytelling, her work sought to preserve stories and the interpretation of those stories during an ongoing urban development process that was redefining the space and location of these histories.<sup>46</sup> Although the physical space and land was still there, new urban developments sought to redefine the place within it, and as such, Klæbe’s project aimed to preserve the sense of place lost through a range of digital and print forms.<sup>47</sup> Klæbe’s work also had collaborative aims and her self-reflexive approach and summary of experience proved useful as she describes how she had to empower the work of the community while also incorporating “the roles of facilitator, curator, writer/producer, editor and artistic director” into her own work.<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> Mary Ann Villarreal, “Finding Our Place: Reconstructing Community in Oral History,” *Oral History Review* 33, no. 2 (2008): 46-47.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>46</sup> Helen Klæbe, “Sharing Stories: Problems and potentials of oral history and digital storytelling and the writer/producer’s role in constructing a public place.” (PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2006).

<sup>47</sup> In addition to the oral histories collected, and digital stories made as a part of the project Klæbe’s dissertation includes a lengthy creative piece which ties together the many threads of narrative recorded in the project.

<sup>48</sup> Klæbe, 145.

Both of these oral history projects demonstrate the fact that while space is somewhat permanent, the construction of place is transitory and can not only be moved from space to space, but also recorded and used to re-inhabit space or at least re-contextualise space in relation to its past.<sup>49</sup> As such, digital forms of recording allow us to preserve place beyond the shackles of its inextricable link to space. When restorations, regenerations and completely new landscapes are built within space, oral historians are given an opportunity not just to record memories of the past, but also to record memories relating to representation of space before they are changed or lost. In creating new recordings and making room for them in a new digital space in the archive, we can preserve perspectives of place from a specific moment in time and keep them locked so that they are unaffected as the potential cues and/or stumbling blocks for memory change in the built landscape that surrounds us.

Moving the focus to oral history within the UK, there are many oral history projects engaged with space and place, including oral history work tied specifically to park and public places. *Oral History*, the journal of the Oral History Society in the United Kingdom, dedicated both volumes of the 2000 edition to work connecting landscapes, memory and place, as a follow-up to the “Oral History and the Environment” conference which was held in Brighton in 1999.<sup>50</sup> Many of the papers in these volumes highlight the trend of oral history being used not just as a tool for

---

<sup>49</sup> Other examples of the use of place to interrogate established narratives or record hidden histories include Roxane Caftanzoglou, whose work draws in voices to record a ‘counterdiscourse’ in the area surrounding the Acropolis (see Roxane Caftanzoglou, “The Sacred Rock and the Profane Settlement: Place, Memory and Identity Under the Acropolis,” *Oral History* 28, no. 1 (2000): 43-51), Rina Benmayor, whose work investigates social and cultural claim to place within Salinas’ Chinatown (see Rina Benmayor, “Contested Memories of Place: Representations of Salinas’ Chinatown,” *Oral History Review* 37, no. 2 (2010): 225–234.) and Gabriel Moshenska, whose oral history work documented stories alongside a community archaeology project in East London (Gabriel Moshenska, “Oral History in Historical Archaeology: Excavating Sites of Memory,” *Oral History* 35, no. 1 (2007): 91-97).

<sup>50</sup> *Oral History* 28, no. 1 (2000) themed ‘Landscapes of Memory’ and no. 2 themed ‘Memory and Place’.

documentation but also “as a mechanism of social action itself” with a particular eye for linking oral history with the environment and using oral histories to impact decision making on environmental issues.<sup>51</sup>

More recently, the theme of the Oral History Society conference in 2011, was “Creation, Destruction, Memory: Oral History and Regeneration” and the conference literature suggests that;

Oral history’s contribution to ‘regeneration’ has ranged from it being used as a tool to encourage or improve community engagement and participation to inspiring pride in a local area or reaffirming or creating cultural identity. Its role, however, has so far been ill-defined and remains unexplored both in theory and in practice.<sup>52</sup>

Although the conference attempted to bring together a discussion on oral history and regeneration, and a number of place-focused projects were featured, the results of the conference only highlighted that the vast majority of work being done in association with place (particularly in relation to public places) through community-led practice are being done without a connection to either oral history discourse or the discourse of place within our field. Examples of other projects recording oral histories of space and place include projects on the Sunderland Heritage Quarter, Southampton’s St. James’ Park, Manchester’s Moss Side, and Hebden Bridge. These are just a sample of the work featured at the 2011 conference. However, the majority of these projects are community led and lack a connection or element which actively engages theory on space and place. Perhaps this is indicative of the need for cross collaboration, and echoes Samuel’s interest in seeing the divisions between the hierarchies of historians fade.

---

<sup>51</sup> Editorial, *Oral History* 28, no. 1 (2000), 2.

<sup>52</sup> Programme of the 2011 Oral History Conference

<http://www.ohs.org.uk/conferences/confdocs/2011-conf-prog.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2013).

While other disciplines have found that space and place provide a meeting point for multidisciplinary discourse, oral historians have yet to fully discuss our approach and define what we are able to bring to the broader discussion and debate over place making. Perhaps the theme of the 2011 conference marks a movement towards that, although neither ‘space’ or ‘place’ appear within the themes of the last two International Oral History Association’s Conferences (2010 and 2012), with the exception of the discussion of the archive as a place for accessing memory. This work aims to fill that gap by defining what oral history can offer and creating an archive within which place is at the heart.

Most recently a group of mostly British oral historians made a significant acknowledgement of the growing use of place within the field, in the book *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History* edited by Shelley Trower. While this collection of work illustrates that place is now firmly on the radar of oral historians, it does not clearly identify how the work being done by oral historians can contribute to the wider discussion of the social construction of place and space. In Trower’s book, many of the oral history projects cited look at place and locality from a perspective of documenting changes or losses; how oral history can be linked to the landscape to understand changes to industry, agriculture, and the environment.<sup>53</sup> Oral history naturally fulfills the role of preserving testimony which could be ignored, or is on the brink of being lost, but the scenarios of environmental loss or loss of industry are not as relevant to a project like Greenhead Stories where there were dual narratives of loss and restoration. Part two of the collection of work focuses on ‘Oral History and Local Environments’ drawing on Trower’s own work recording stories of the declining clay industry in mid-Cornwall which elicited strong views to the incoming

---

<sup>53</sup> Shelley Trower, *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

Eden Project and the outsiders it attracts to the area, as well as a project based in Wivenhoe, Essex, where Paul Thompson investigated the decline of industry alongside “...the repurposing of landscape for tourism and leisure”.<sup>54</sup> While both these projects aim to record what is being lost and the ways in which decline in industry has changed people’s relationships with the landscape, neither is chiefly focused on recording a contemporary sense of the project or building bridges between the existing communities and the incomers associated with the new tourist-driven industries. *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History* engages stories of oral history projects with ecological aims, specifically the Ouse project which serves as a case study for how oral history can be linked with the study of ecology and historical geography to solve dilemmas and facilitate dialogue as a means of better understanding the fragile ecology of a local area. Although this project did not explicitly set out to both record and re-inform narratives through dialogue in the way that Greenhead Stories did, the research revealed that the practitioner’s own mapping and documenting had an effect on the farmers they worked with in terms of their understanding of the landscape, and the place-naming they used throughout the project.<sup>55</sup> In this sense, the project team was inadvertently using the past to inform the present through the research, much in the way that Greenhead Stories contended with historical and contemporary presentations of the past within the park during the recording phase.

Within Trower’s edited work a number of other chapters focus on the use of oral history within place, including work from Heike Roms and Rebecca Edwards,

---

<sup>54</sup> Shelley Trower, “Regional Writing and Oral History, from China Clay to Eden,” in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 83-84.

<sup>55</sup> Andrew Holmes, “The Ouse Project: A Cast Study of Applied Oral History,” in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 141.

Toby Butler and Steven High, all of whom investigate the use of oral history through mobile playing technology in specific places and locations. Some of these works, specifically Toby Butler's, will be drawn upon in Chapters 6 and 7 in relation to the social process of place-making and in relation to the exhibition and audiowalk in the conclusion, as they are chiefly focused on what to do with oral history as a product rather than as it is produced. What is not fully explored within the book is the use of recording equipment to record stories of place within their given locations, or what the oral history interview can contribute as a technique within the wider multi-disciplinary dialogue of space and place.

While Trower's edited collection documents the ways in which place and memory are being made use of in these specific ways, a collection of essays entitled *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, engages a more in-depth approach to placing oral history work within the wider multidisciplinary dialogues on space and place. This collection of works explicitly focuses on engaging with "public memory"—memories that are made, experienced and circulated in public spaces—in Canada, with a specific focus on the construction of place "as a site made meaningful by memory and commemorative practices" as well as the reverse link of how the act of 'placing' is critical to memory.<sup>56</sup> This links strongly with dialogues on place and space by engaging Lefebvre's model of place-making and presenting a strong case for how oral history aligns with this ethos and what oral history can contribute to understanding place.<sup>57</sup>

In an increasingly interdisciplinary world, it is clear that place is becoming a common lens through which different disciplines look to better understand the human

---

<sup>56</sup> John C. Walsh and James William Opp, *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

experience. Public historians have discussed and made use of place in numerous ways, exploring histories and identities attached to specific places, and how our understanding of spaces can be transformed into interpreted places through exhibitions, re-enactments, changes to the built environment, and various forms of media which present more abstract interpretations of history within place.<sup>58</sup>

Numerous public historians have done work that supports the research questions surrounding what oral history has to offer in working with space and place. This work has not happened solely in museums and exhibition spaces, but also out in the open realm of parks and commemorative sites. In one example, Paul Gough reads the built landscape of the National Memorial Arboretum as a commemorative place for memory, acknowledging the tension between presenting a site of memory as ‘finished’ or ‘complete’ when in the future the physicality and abstract notion of the place will be subject to change (however minor these changes may seem).<sup>59</sup> In another example, John Siblon explores London’s public places and monuments with an eye for reading how the presence of black and Asian presence in London has been reflected, examining the “junction between art, memory and landscape.”<sup>60</sup> In a sense, public historians not only have experience in reading space for what Lefebvre would

---

<sup>58</sup> For examples of re-enactments see; Meghan O’Brien Backhouse, “Re-enacting the Wars of the Roses: History and Identity,” in *Public History and Heritage Today: People and their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 113-130, For examples in museums see; Darryl McIntyre “Creating New Pasts in Museums: Planning the Museum of London’s Modern London Galleries,” in *Public History and Heritage Today: People and their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 131-145.

<sup>59</sup> Now a complete site, Gough underlines the ways in which overt and subtle change will affect the landscape of this memorial site; perspective will change through the “ongoing process of remembering” and the physical site will change through what he calls “a slow encroachment of individual voices achieves through private plantings, small words, handwritten tags and modest captions.” Paul Gough “‘Garden of Gratitude’: The National Memorial Arboretum and Strategic Remembering,” in *Public History and Heritage Today: People and their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 100.

<sup>60</sup> John Siblon, “‘Monument Mania’? Public Space and the Black and Asian Presence in the London Landscape,” in *Public History and Heritage Today: People and their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012), 147.



have called spatial practice and representations of space, but they also create public events, exhibitions, and projects which can either reinforce those elements of the production of space, or reinterpret them through new spaces of representation.

If the work of public historians show that “landscape is memory’s most serviceable reminder” then it is important to understand the context of personal memory and the power of oral history testimony within Lefebvre’s and Samuel’s understandings of the production of these social forms of knowledge.<sup>61</sup> Though some memorial sites and public spaces such as the National Memorial Arboretum engage the public in the design process, and are ultimately explored and interpreted by the public, all these sites inevitably serve as a presentation of the past from a specific time and viewpoint (however widely informed that viewpoint may be). Oral historians can contribute to this dialogue by finding out how individual stories and experience fit in to these presentations of the past, and contribute to new spaces of representation by showing how memory lends to the established narrative of the physical landscape, or, in many cases, disrupts what the built landscape has been design to clearly present.

While the literature shows an acknowledgement of the role oral history has to play in the study of space and place, oral historians have not yet fully joined the multidisciplinary conversation: perhaps this is because those actively using oral history methods are already part of the conversation but chiefly identify as anthropologists (as Setha Low does) and thus mainly contribute to journals and texts associated with that discipline. Or alternatively it may be because we continue to move forward, excited and armed with new technology, in a field which, according to Alistair Thomson, “has never been so exciting or uncertain” while not fully understanding where we are heading, or communicating with each other so that we

---

<sup>61</sup> Gough, 96.

can move in an asserted direction.<sup>62</sup> Until we acknowledge that we have something to contribute to this multidisciplinary dialogue, and stop, listen, and analyse the interrogations of space and place we are unknowingly engaged in, oral history's potential to enhance the preservation of place, and bring new spaces of representation into the equation will either go unnoticed or be used without due credit in the ongoing discourse. This research set out to find a response to the question of what oral history can contribute to discussions of space and place, and this dissertation will attempt to address the gaps identified in the reviewed literature, specifically relating to the connections between oral histories, memory and place-making. It will make a significant contribution to oral history theory by showing how one study has utilised space and place as a meeting ground and incorporated the presence of place-making into the subject, dialogue and outcomes of an oral history project. While focusing on understanding the impact of recording stories of place, this research also touches on the effects of using those recordings to establish, synthesise and disseminate new, shared understandings of place.

## **Part B - Shared Authority**

In approaching what set out to be a collaborative research project, it was important not just to review the literature surrounding Michael Frisch's concept for shared authority, but also the longer-standing movement for collaborative work in oral history. This literature review provided the platform from which I was able to consider the potentials and problems of using collaborative oral history to record a history of place, and highlights some of the ways in which the ethos of shared authority had to be interpreted as I approached my project.

---

<sup>62</sup> Alistair Thomson expresses concern uncertainty over the future of oral history amid the excitement of new advances in technology. Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations," 70.

Before exploring Frisch's work, and the work it has inspired, it is necessary to situate his concept of 'shared authority' within the history of oral history, starting with Paul Thompson's first edition of *The Voice of the Past* which alludes to the co-production methods which Frisch later capitalized on. Thompson's work does much to remove the historian from his or her stereotypical place in the ivory tower, and suggests that the act of interviewing places them "at the feet of others who, because they come from a different social class, or are less educated, or older, know more about something."<sup>63</sup> Thompson's work acknowledges this process and describes history making as a "much more widely collaborative process, in which non-professionals must play a critical part" but his terminology and discussion of co-production only hints at the collaboration that Frisch's work would later develop into a precise approach. This wider collaborative strand of oral history is the legacy of the first period mentioned in Alistair Thomson's historiographical summary of the paradigm transformations in oral history; his survey includes Thompson's work as part of the culmination of the first paradigm shift (the post-war renaissance of memory as an historical source), contextualising the discourse which followed the publication of *The Voice of the Past* as "a standard textbook - and a standard-bearer - for oral historians around the world when it was first published in 1978."<sup>64</sup> Thomson acknowledges that, as a socialist, Paul Thompson's work democratised history making and broke boundaries between the academy and the "ordinary public", giving oral history, for some, a political importance in regards to recording voices which have been left out or oppressed.<sup>65</sup> Paul Thompson first published *The Voice of the*

---

<sup>63</sup> Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 11.

<sup>64</sup> Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations," 52.

<sup>65</sup> Thomson cites the work of Susan Armitage and Sherna Gluck who argue the "urgent political importance" that oral history retains for many. *Ibid.*, 53.

*Past* in 1978, during the same period that Alistair Thomson's defines as the start of the second transformation relating to post-positivist approaches to memory and the subjectivity of oral history testimony. In this transformation, oral historians responded to critics of the discipline and looked beyond history into social psychology, anthropology, sociology and other disciplines whose theory "provided useful signposts for reading memories and for combining them with other historical sources to find out what happened in the past."<sup>66</sup> In summarising this transformation, Thompson cites Frisch's work regarding memory and sharing authority to explain how oral historians began to understand the potential of memory not just for understanding how people make sense of their pasts, but also "how the past becomes a part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them."<sup>67</sup> Although these two paradigm shifts happened in succession, Thomson distinguishes them within in his work: the first bringing participants actively into the process of history making through validating the use of memory and engaging 'ordinary' people, whilst the second transformation focuses on subjectivity and makes those 'ordinary' participants more active not just in sharing their memories, but also in dialogues which help contextualise and interpret them.<sup>68</sup> Paul Thompson's work acknowledges the interview relationship and two-way benefits of the oral history process, highlighting the way in which the interview process can give participants a sense of purpose and dignity amongst many other benefits, whereas Frisch's work extends those meaningful outcomes by asking oral historians to work towards practical purposes for the results of their interviews so that the outcomes of a

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>67</sup> Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 188 in Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations," 55.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

project are as meaningful and active as the interview experience itself.

Within their work documenting the relationship between oral history and public history, Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes designate a difference in the collaborative nature of Michael Frisch's work, suggesting that it not only engages collaboration in a "much wider conception of authority in historical practice" but also serves to open up "possibilities for stronger engagement between practitioners in the two fields" of public and oral history.<sup>69</sup> In a sense, Frisch's work calls for a gathering of purpose between what oral and public historians do, asking oral historians to consider the public outcomes in the process of a project, and the use of project dialogues, to create meaningful, active uses for the interviews they collect. Though numerous oral and public historians acknowledge that Frisch's work has fueled a change of approach for a generation of historians, it must be acknowledged that his work stood on the shoulders of the broader movement towards collaboration within oral history.

Not unlike the 'ground up' ethos of Samuel and Lefebvre, Frisch advocates for a reimagining of oral history in a way which gives interviewees more authority and capability in establishing alternative narratives of history. Since being published in 1990, Frisch's work and his concept of 'sharing authority' have been employed in a wide array of interpretations. In this seminal work, Frisch highlights the problematic way in which the ongoing explosion of oral history projects results in a flooding of new archives of oral testimonies. He argues that while new projects achieve the very important task of recording history, they often leave out room for the consideration of the memory of history itself. Frisch makes a call for change within the realms of history making; he writes,

---

<sup>69</sup> Hamilton and Shopes, xii.

“[w]e need projects that will involve people in exploring what it means to remember, and what to do with memories to make them active and alive, as opposed to mere objects of collection.”<sup>70</sup>

Frisch’s work is essentially his challenge to historians, which begs them to encourage active remembering and interpretation within the communities they seek to engage. This chapter will summarise Frisch’s concept of shared authority while also bringing in the experiences of other oral historians who have made use of this ethos in order to give context to the shared authority ethos which formed the basis of Greenhead Stories.

Frisch’s collection of essays shows that authority can be shared throughout all stages of collecting and disseminating new histories. Through examining the use of shared authority in a number of case studies, Frisch’s work embarks on a strong critique of oral history practices and processes. Within his critique, he highlights two dilemmas which arise during the post-interview phase of our practice. The first he calls “the relation between oral history as data... and oral History - capital H - as intelligible, communicated knowledge derived wholly or partially from that data”.<sup>71</sup> By calling to attention the idea that “...information alone is not History...” Frisch demonstrates that narrators not only provide us with words and data, but also with a performance which inextricably ties deep memories and meanings to the words they utter.<sup>72</sup> Frisch’s second major concern lies in finding an understanding of “what, if anything, is unique about oral historical method and the evidence it produces”; not to suggest that there is no value in this type of work, but rather, to ask historians to be reflective of their method, and in turn make use of its strengths by “actually *doing*

---

<sup>70</sup> Frisch, *A Shared Authority*, 27.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

something with collected interviews’’<sup>73</sup>. In other words, if we believe oral history to be a unique and worthy method, we should also treat the records it produces as useful objects of meaning. These two dilemmas draw attention to the fact that what we record becomes part of, or is already a part of, public consciousness; as historians collect stories, they must consider the form their work will take as archives and transcripts, as well as accept that their actions in preserving and providing access to these stories will vastly affect how and if they are used and interpreted by other researchers.

Frisch’s concern with the post-project life of the interview extends to his critique of public history as well as oral history. While oral history has moved towards practice which values meaning found within the subtleties of the interview, he argues that public history has not yet become as self analytical about its research processes. Frisch contests that the two practices are very much one and the same, and argues that historians should work towards more public outcomes, not just by engaging members of the public in consultation, but also through looking critically at “the very process of engagement, in the altered relationship between historian and ‘source’ ”.<sup>74</sup> He believes that historians and participants can be more aware of their influence in collecting and recording, and make more use of this analytical standpoint as interviews occur and are interpreted. This approach requires a blurring of roles between historian and participant; Frisch denotes that his interest in shared authority stems from an interest in the root word ‘author’ – and asks his readers to consider who the true authors of oral history are.<sup>75</sup> Is it our narrators? The interviewer? The academic writer who turns interviews into a full-length book? Although oral histories

---

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., xvi.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., xx-xxi.

become archival sources, they are also very much authored, edited sources which convey particularly framed views of history. We must consider this dual nature of the interview and be critical about understanding what people and which cultural motifs have had a hand in authoring the stories we record. This refers back to Frisch's first dilemma, regarding words and data; an interview is not simply a person expressing their history in words, it truly is a performance of their identity, contextualised within the cultural narratives and modes of expression they feel they belong to.

Frisch looks closely at the trends in oral history and public history which were contemporary to his writing, and divides them into two camps. On one side, he looks at public and oral history as attempts to "create, legitimize, colonize, credentialise, and protect new professional public and private sector jobs for historians at a time of decreasing academic opportunity", noting that historians pay distinct attention to new methods and public engagement, without much consideration for the "scope and legitimacy of that authority itself".<sup>76</sup> The reverse of this view reflects a sort of 'guerrilla war' against the notion of scholarly authority, doing history under an aim of empowerment and returning authority to communities and individuals. He says that this opposite process works at "generating from within them the authority to explore and interpret their own experience, experience traditionally invisible in formal history because of predictable assumptions about who and what matters."<sup>77</sup> Frisch's work attempts to find a balance between these two extremes by sharing authority with his participants at all levels of the project process. Frisch says that

[T]he hegemony of scholarly authority indeed must be challenged and often qualified, but not by rejecting the insights of scholarship by definition, if only because such an approach vastly underestimates the

---

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., xxi.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.



power of new ideas to challenge deeply entrenched assumptions so often internalised in conventional, popularly grounded categories.<sup>78</sup>

Frisch's work highlights a number of case studies of his experience with oral history, and connects his concerns about oral history and public history practices to a broader concern over issues pertaining to memory and cultural literacy. He denotes that memory represents 'living history'; "the remembered past that exists in the present", acknowledging it as both a source that can be tapped, as well as a tool of cultural power and authority which is mediated by various institutional forces.

In relation to *Greenhead Stories*, this idea of capturing 'living history', the past contextualised within memory, presents a golden opportunity not just to document the past but also to look at how notions of the past affect the use of a space in present day life. Frisch asks us to challenge the notion of the finality of scholarly interpretation, while maintaining some amount of critical distance from our participants, in order to fully acknowledge the capacity which 'ordinary people' and communities have to communicate and interpret their own histories: a philosophy that was built into core of *Greenhead Stories*.

### **Reciprocal Ethnography within Shared Authority**

Parallel to Frisch's book, a similar method and approach has been developed and explored by folklorist and feminist scholar Elaine Lawless. Lawless's method of 'reciprocal ethnography' has been equally influential in shaping the works of a wide range of academics whose studies investigate personal testimonies. Lawless's approach roots itself in the history of anthropology, and echoes Frisch's criticism of academics as producers of texts:

Their focus on text making and rhetoric serve to highlight the constructed, artificial nature of cultural account... it undermines overly

---

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

transparent modes of authority, and it draws attention to the historical predicament of ethnography, the fact that it is always caught up in the invention, not the representation, of cultures.<sup>79</sup>

Lawless's concern clearly lies with researchers who approach storytelling with absolute authority; according to Lawless, although oral historians extract history from their sources, they are not simply authors who then retell and write the stories; they should have higher concern for the interpretation and representation of vocal exchanges.<sup>80</sup> Frisch's work seems to agree on this principle, and applies this notion more closely to historians, saying that "oral historians need to understand that their method involves much more than the extraction of knowledge from human history mines"<sup>81</sup> Frisch urges historians to accept that "there is something offensively patronizing in the notion that ordinary people and communities have little capacity for communicating with and incorporating approaches to their history..."<sup>82</sup> Essentially, both Frisch and Lawless seek the same thing; what Lawless calls, "true discourse, both among participants and between the participants and ethnographer", although as a secondary concern, Frisch also writes in detail about the life of testimony after the end of a project and its longevity in the archive.

In reflecting on her research processes, Lawless admits that though it was necessary to begin with at least some conceptual frameworks and particularities to her research, the meaningful dialogue and "(w)holistic" approach which came from interviewing women within a specific narrative genre surpassed the expectations of her original research intentions. Lawless calls her study "postmodern" and uses the term as a means of empowerment which affords her more fluid definitions between

---

<sup>79</sup> Elaine Lawless, *Holy Women, Wholly Women; Sharing Ministries of Wholeness Through Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), 58.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Frisch, *A Shared Authority*, xxii.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., xxi.

what is the ‘research process’ and what is the result of the research. She attributes the success of her findings to her flexible and reflexive approach.<sup>83</sup> While Frisch’s work champions shared authority through a scattering of different examples and case studies, Lawless’s work provides one case study, about which she has written extensive and dense accounts. Her work provides a very clear approach, as well as her recommendations for other academics who also wish to implement this concept of ‘reciprocal ethnography’.

While Lawless attributes the success of her study to her approach, she does admit that one key element which added to her results is the fact that the women with whom she recorded stories, were ‘women of ministry’ who were reflective about “their lives, their beliefs, every single day”.<sup>84</sup> While Lawless provided a forum for focused discussions, she is aware that the process of exchanging and analysing stories and experiences was not foreign to the women she worked with. Furthermore, most of her work and study worked within a “naturally formed lunch group” which also provided her with a comfortable gathering place in which her participants already felt accepted and heard.<sup>85</sup> Lawless refers to this occurrence as fortunate, when perhaps a better word would be “ideal”; as her conclusions reveal that recording stories in circles and circumstances where they are already exchanged added strength to her research. Although the presence of a historian will always alter what is said and recorded, it seems that Lawless’s efforts to work within existing social structures have minimised the extent to which the recordings could be considered manufactured or artificial. Although Lawless does not make this conclusion outright, her methodology suggests that such an approach certainly adds value. This was certainly the case with

---

<sup>83</sup> Lawless, 59.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

my experience in Greenhead Stories; working with the Friends group provided me with access to a range of participants within different communities of the park, and interviews recorded through specific networks (for example working with the Caribbean Carnival organisers) resulted in higher numbers of collected testimony than person by person recruitment to the project.

Alongside this group of women Lawless solicited the help of a smaller group who were willing to devote more time to the project; these women served as a ‘working group’ who not only exchanged their stories, but also gave feedback on the development of the research, interpretation and writing which followed her study. This is where Lawless’s postmodern approach blurs the line between who is involved in the “research process” and who is involved in the “research”. Lawless calls this approach both ‘reflexive’ and ‘reciprocal’, in the sense that she acknowledges and analyses her presence in the research equation, while also establishing with her participants a dialogue which engages both narrative and interpretation of that narrative. Lawless does note, that a reciprocal method does not necessarily reflect the meaning of “reciprocity” in that “obligation, or payment is the motivating factor – but reciprocal in the (I hope) best sense of sharing and building knowledge based on dialogues and shared/examined/re-examined knowledge.”<sup>86</sup> This echoes Frisch’s call for exchanges of memory not only for the sake of remembering, but also to search for meaning and understanding among those who remember.

In both Lawless’s and Frisch’s work they acknowledge that the process of sharing authority is not always easy or convenient. Lawless describes several situations where her narrators were unhappy with what was recorded and how recordings came across on transcribed pages of narrative when they were returned or

---

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 61.

exchanged for discussion.<sup>87</sup> These anxieties were comforted by open discussion of their stories, and through exchange of discourse regarding the shape and structure of life stories, which was fostered when Lawless provided her participants with a range of resources which reflected current dialogue and discourse on women's life histories. In this way, the women's interpretations of their stories were not only shaped by their exchange of narratives, but also by an exchange of intellectual academic approaches. This approach of reciprocal ethnography empowered the women with the authority to analyse their own stories, through discussions which provided Lawless with additional "metanarrational information" which in turn provided her with a unique "lens through which to read and understand the stories the women actually told."<sup>88</sup>

### **Shared Authority in Practice**

After the publication of Frisch's book on shared authority, his concept became well known and an oft-implied buzzword in the fields of public and oral histories. In order to develop the project plan for Greenhead Stories it was necessary to review and take lessons from the strengths and limitations of Frisch's philosophy in practice from those whose work has attempted to employ it.

Over the years many projects and studies have drawn on his work for inspiration, and done work under the methodology of sharing authority. In the thirteen years that followed his 1990 publication date, his method became so universally drawn upon that the American Oral History Association chose to dedicate an issue of the *Oral History Review* to updating discussion on the subject. This publication was based on a discussion panel which was held at the XI International

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 62.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 80.

Oral History Conference held in Istanbul in June 2000.<sup>89</sup> This collection aimed to address a number of issues including a debate over the benefits of collaborative research, the practical difficulties of pursuing shared authority, as well as how researchers negotiate the tensions and limits of this methodology. According to Alistair Thomson who wrote the introduction for the special issue, the collection of writing attempts to trace the “breakthroughs and breakdowns of collaborative oral history and reflect upon the challenges and opportunities of shared authority”<sup>90</sup>

Within the collection of essays, which focuses on two examples of projects from the United States, and two from the United Kingdom, the authors attempt to answer Frisch’s challenge of making more out of the history we record. One particular author whose work clearly embodies Frisch’s call to historians is Daniel Kerr, the head of the Cleveland Homeless Oral History Project (CHOHP) which not only recorded oral histories, but used those oral histories in advocating for its participants. Kerr set out to create “a democratically organised research project built on the framework of what Michael Frisch terms shared authority” by going beyond imparting the skills of interviewing and recording to his participants and working to develop a meaningful dialogue which proved useful in policy making. His work proves that recorded history can not only have an impact on “the way we view history, but also influence the way we design public policy and more importantly, the way we reproduce the social organization of the communities we live in.”<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>89</sup> Alistair Thomson, “Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process,” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 24.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>91</sup> Daniel Kerr, “‘We Know What the Problem Is’: Using Oral History To Develop a Collaborative Analysis of Homelessness from the Bottom Up,” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 31.

While Kerr's research demonstrates the potential to transform the role of the homeless from 'victims' into 'agents of social change', and successfully built links between groups who might otherwise not have a platform to meet for discussion and debate, he does however acknowledge that this type of research at times had a problematic effect on his academic goals. Kerr notes that while his project aimed to develop the authority of his participants, he also had to be wary of maintaining his own authority as author and researcher. He writes "as I research and write my dissertation, knowing that my committee will not accept a co-authored product, I take solace in the fact that the most important product for my collaborators is not my thesis, but the movement for social change". This observation in some way deals with the issue of academic authorship, of course, researchers do have final authority in how their activities and work are presented in academic circles, the fact that we cannot share authority completely in this realm may not be entirely negative, if we are able to leave our participants satisfied and engaged with the way their stories have been treated and exchanged in the public sphere.

Kerr's study also draws on Lawless's influence, and includes a close description of the way in which interviews were analysed by his participants. Kerr notes that his narrators did not all share the same analysis of the issues relating to homelessness, but that over the course of completing many interviews a number of common themes seemed to arise. Choosing these themes and interpreting narratives presented problems regarding collaborative authority, so Kerr drew on Lawless's research model which stressed "the importance of building a research structure which includes spaces for collective discussion of research and development of analysis"<sup>92</sup> Like Lawless's core group of participants, Kerr set up a weekly workshop and

---

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 37.

research session in a drop in centre, where recordings were viewed and discussed. These participants took part in collective analysis and had a hand in the direction of the project. It seems that Kerr's study benefited from the same fortunate circumstances as Lawless's; where she had a group of women who already met regularly to exchange experiences, he benefited from working within shelters and drop-in centres where participants gathered regularly and had the time and motivation to participate.

While Kerr and Lawless were fortunate to have an array of ready-to-participate collaborators, other authors have raised issues over the difficulties faced in attempting to extend authority, noting that there are often limits on the extent to which participants may or may not choose to be involved in the collaborative process. This is addressed clearly by Wendy Rickard, whose research sought participation from individuals whose activities were taboo and/or illegal; her work in recording the stories of sex workers presented a number of difficult roadblocks to sharing authority, and serves as a good example of when the circumstances of a project are not ideally conducive to such a methodology. Rickard's project was a UK wide project called "Oral History of Prostitution", which ran from 1996 to 2000.<sup>93</sup> Although her work is analysed under the framework of shared authority, Rickard did not originally set out to work specifically in this method. She writes; "in terms of sharing authority, the project originated in mutual ideas between me and early interviewees... I encouraged interviewees to shape their own material, and they were eager to do so" indicating that she found much enthusiasm for participants directing the recording of their own stories. Although many people were happy to give their stories, Rickard discovered a general unwillingness when it came to reviewing interviews and managing the data

---

<sup>93</sup> Wendy Rickard, "Collaborating With Sex Workers in Oral History," *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 49.



collected; she attributes this tendency to a number of factors including, the general secrecy of the sex industry, the fact that editing transcripts appeared to be an ‘academic’ task to the participants, as well as the perception that editing their words was inconsequential compared to the other important everyday tasks and general busy pace of their lives. Rickard says “once we gained interviewees’ trust, it was often extraordinarily strong; we were forced into a position of being the textual guardian for their words”<sup>94</sup>

Rickard’s situation shakes the association of shared authority with its assumed potential to empower participants. Firstly, because she worked with a group of men and women who placed importance on recording, but not on interpreting their stories (thus limiting the extent to which she could truly engage interviewees past the recording phase), and secondly because of conflicting views she faced on whether “empowering” sex workers in this way was potentially disempowering them by promoting prostitution and the sex industry, a view she faced especially from health workers. While most participants were not enthused about collaboration in the research process, the interviews themselves played an important role in Rickard’s work in activist groups which promote the rights of men and women in the sex industry, as well as sparking a number of additional projects including “the organisation of a UK conference for sex workers, and the initiation of a health education project using extracts of OHP tapes as the basic resource”<sup>95</sup> Although the empowerment of her participants may not have been as direct or obvious as Frisch’s ethos intended, and her participants may not have felt the same collaborative belonging to the project as Kerr and Lawless’s groups, she does address Frisch’s challenge of making memories active and alive. Rickard’s reflexive approach to

---

<sup>94</sup> Rickard, “Collaborating with Sex Workers,” 51.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 54.

recording has resulted in resources which not only have value to historians, but also resources which have proven to have significant value to the community her participants belong to. Several years after publishing the results of her experience sharing authority with her participants, Rickard revisited her research to reflect on the success of sharing authority and re-apply the ethos to the use of her archive. In her article entitled “What Are Sex Worker Stories Good For?” Rickard revisits the archive from five different perspectives, including her own hindsight, three users who accessed the archive for different one-off purposes, and finally the viewpoint of one of her participants whose story was accessed by the four others.<sup>96</sup> Her conclusions consider the importance of providing context within the archive when making meaning out of qualitative sources, and the question of whether or not the collaborative nature of her oral history interview imposes a sort of ‘moral hierarchy’ on the data, which then influences how it is handled and interpreted by others; the latter notion of course may have positive or negative implications depending on perspective.<sup>97</sup> Rickard’s work shows that the process of sharing authority does not stop, and that hindsight, the passing of time, and understanding of context are significant factors in evaluating the results of a collaborative oral history project. These were important factors to consider for Greenhead Stories, which had a time frame limited by the structure and nature of it being a part of my PhD research.

Another example of obstacles to sharing authority arises out of the work of Alicia Rouverol, who faced similar difficulties in sharing authority and engaging her participants past the stage of recording. Rouverol’s work faced collaborative hurdles on a number of fronts, many of which stemmed from the complicated dynamics of

---

<sup>96</sup> Wendy Rickard, Nikita, Sarah Evans, Saskia Reeves and Gail Cameron, “What Are Sex Worker Stories Good For? User Engagement with Archived Data,” *Oral History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 91-103.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 102.

power and authority inside the American correctional system. Working in such a setting meant that it was difficult to maintain absolute structure and guidelines for her behaviour as a researcher. While working with different groups of inmates, Rouverol found it necessary to constantly re-negotiate the boundaries of her authority in the project. She writes,

You're on trial with these guys daily... I was constantly having to reassess my own sense of "right authority" or integrity in the field, while at the same time determining when I absolutely had to let go of my own expectations or vision of what we were trying to accomplish.<sup>98</sup>

She further explains that sharing authority "took on unexpected guises; sometimes I shared it... but sometimes they took it."<sup>99</sup> In such an unusual dynamic of exchange, authority had to be negotiated minute by minute, and the results did not always reflect what was anticipated or expected. Rouverol reflects on the issue of oral history research serving a 'social purpose' and concludes that said purpose was not necessarily found in the production of specific agreeable outcomes, but a value found in the very act of exchanging discourse and expressing disagreements.<sup>100</sup>

While Kerr, Rickard and Rouverol summarise their attempts to share authority with a wide array of participants, Lorraine Sitzia provides a closer analysis of the interview relationship through an exploration of her attempts to share authority with a single narrator. Of all four authors Sitzia provides the most transparent and clear outline of how sharing authority plays out in both theory and practice. Sitzia's writing reflects her experiences recording the life story of one narrator, and reflects the negotiations of her collaboration with him. This work looks closely at her interview

---

<sup>98</sup> Alicia Rouverol, "Collaborative Oral History in a Correctional Setting: Promise and Pitfalls," *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 73.

<sup>99</sup> Rouverol, 74.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

dialogues and the dynamics which informed their creation, and emphasises the need for clarity when collaborating with authors. In her case study, she worked under an ‘unspoken’ agreement of collaboration, which she later saw as a mistake in hindsight.<sup>101</sup> Sitzia’s research shows that although there must naturally be some ambiguity in an interview dynamic, certain aspects of the project must be established in clear, documented, understandings which exist among organisers and participants. She writes that her experience of collaboration raised a number of questions “such as who owns the material produced, who decides what material is made public, and how these decisions affect the history told...?”<sup>102</sup>

Sitzia’s writing is also particularly useful because she provides a clear outline of the editing process of her recordings, while reflecting on the positives and negatives of her method. Overall she concludes that clear identification of roles and project deadlines are very important in managing collaborative relationships, and that ambiguity in the interview dynamic will only breed confusion over ownership when it comes to editing, interpreting and establishing outcomes. Sitzia also notes that it is important for both parties to have a chance to write, and reflect independently outside of the built relationship and that much success can come from participants and researchers to reflect personally in ways which they feel one another “may or may not like”<sup>103</sup> While Sitzia’s research provides very clear ‘lessons learned’ which can be of use to anyone attempting to share authority, her situation of developing a one on one relationship with her interviewee is very different from a collaborative project which engages a wide range of voices. Her approach of establishing clear boundaries and

---

<sup>101</sup> Lorraine Sitzia, “A Shared Authority: An Impossible Goal?,” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 90.

<sup>102</sup> Sitzia, 88.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

working structures are nevertheless still important, if not perhaps more important, in managing expectations of participants when working with a larger group.

In the same issue of the *Oral History Review*, Linda Shopes attempts to tie the work of Sitzia, Rouverol, Rickard, and Kerr together by providing a thoughtful commentary on the subject of shared authority. She reflects on the fact that over the years, the concept has gone from “becoming something of a mantra among oral historians” to what she calls a “conceptual shorthand... at times [being] glibly invoked to give authority to otherwise quite unremarkable work”<sup>104</sup> Shopes appreciates the work of the papers she has commented on, but notes that there is a distinct lack of attention paid to “shared authority” within the dynamic of the interview itself, a sentiment also echoed by Frisch in his commentary which follows. She writes, “greater attention to the narrative context of the material quotes – the dialogue that elicited it – is worth our attention”.<sup>105</sup> While Shopes argues that it is effective to share authority throughout the entire process of a project, she comments that the natural balance of an interview is one of inequality; and that closer readings of interview texts would be useful in truly assessing how and if authority can truly be shared within the interview stage.

Within this commentary, Shopes lays out four key issues which historians must consider when undertaking this ethos. Firstly she emphasises that shared authority is “long haul work” which naturally takes time and cannot be rushed. Secondly, she notes that sharing authority is an intellectually and personally demanding task, and that opening dialogue can result in difficult conversations and negotiations. Thirdly she tries to draw attention to the fact that many oral history

---

<sup>104</sup> Linda Shopes, “Sharing Authority” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 103.

<sup>105</sup> Shopes, 104.

projects are linked with “broader social goals” and are thus inextricably tangled up in questions relating to what she calls “the objectivity question”.<sup>106</sup> In some cases these goals may be agreeable by all parties, but in others they can lead to very difficult dilemmas and disagreements if authority is to be shared among parties who fundamentally disagree. This leads to Shopes’s final point, which is that collaboration through shared authority may not always be possible or desired. She writes;

collaboration is a responsible, challenging, and deeply humane ideal for some oral history work, but in certain kinds of projects, beyond a basic respect for the dignity of all persons, it seems not an appropriate goal<sup>107</sup>

Shopes’s observation is not made in critique of the articles she is commenting on, but as an offer of another perspective, as she notes that the authors published within the edition of this journal “all share both a general intellectual orientation and broad social goals” with their participants. Shopes’s general critique comes out of her concern for the overuse and perhaps misuse of the term shared authority. Throughout the issue of the journal a number of the authors comment on the fact that this term has become a bit of a catchall within the field of oral history, and it seems as though Shopes’s articles seeks to clarify that while the method of sharing authority can be subscribed to with fruitful results, it is by no means a prescriptive method which is suited to every project.

Following the special edition of *Oral History Review* which focused on the strengths and limitations of shared authority, many oral historians have drawn inspiration from Frisch’s collaborative approach, adapting it in various ways depending on the context and requirements of their projects. What is clear from

---

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 109.

the range of applications of this ethos is that although Frisch's call to action resounded with many oral historians, the interpretation of that call (and the mode of putting it into practice) is not universal. Hamilton and Shopes write that Frisch's ideas

were certainly taken up by a range of people employed in public and private cultural institutions over the next few years, but in reality "sharing authority" proved to entail a more complex negotiation over control of interpretation than practitioners imagined.<sup>108</sup>

Though this quote implies that the application of shared authority has been a failed experiment lasting only a few years after Frisch's initial publication, the fact that sharing authority proved to be complex is no surprise, and many oral historians have continued to put the ethos to use in adapted ways, while citing Frisch's work as an integral stepping stone to collaboration. Oral historians continue to exert Frisch's point that the democratisation of history must happen beyond the simple act of recording 'ordinary' voices. In his work on reconsidering 'history from above' Kevin Blackburn summarises the challenges of shaping collective memory in Singapore when working with the collections of Singapore's state-run Oral History Centre. He draws on the work of historian Lysa Hong who says that "history from below [does] not automatically come about when ordinary voices are taped," acknowledging that the tapes must also engage the interpretational abilities of the narrator to fully contextualise their own stories, and collaborate beyond the act of narration.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, Jo Stanley's work acknowledges an underlying interest in collaborating beyond the act of the

---

<sup>108</sup> Hamilton and Shopes, *Oral History and Public Memories* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), xii.

<sup>109</sup> Kevin Blackburn, "History from Above: The Use of Oral History in Shaping Collective Memory in Singapore," in *Oral History and Public Memories*, eds. Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 38.

interview: she alludes to Frisch's work by expressing her "commitment to working with shared authority, rather than extracting knowledge from 'human history mines.'" <sup>110</sup> Her work with female travel workers on palatial ocean liners applies this ethos by using women's stories to rectify the injustice of silences surrounding seawomen's experiences. Although Stanley is committed to Frisch's approach, she acknowledges the limitations which are beyond her means of control:

Ideally interviewees should be re-consulted on all outcomes, such as articles about them, and allowed to make any changes where possible... but as such re-consultation is not possible (most have died) anonymising names is a crucial act of respect.

The considerations of anonymity is particularly necessary in her work which deals with stories of shame in oral history interviews, but more broadly it invokes an important question over the balance of anonymity and authority, relevant to any research which attempts to extend authority into the archive.

Alistair Thomson's book *Moving Stories: an Intimate History of Four Women Across Two Countries*, published in 2011, is one of the most recent and comprehensive examples of a project which embodies shared authority. Thomson's work brings together over ten years of intensive work he did recording the migration stories of four women and reflects on the challenges and benefits of this style of co-authorship. <sup>111</sup> Thomson's work acknowledges that collaboration is indeed innate to the experience of the oral history interview, "at

---

<sup>110</sup> Jo Stanley, "'We Were Skivvies/We Had a Ball': Shame and Interwar Ships," *Oral History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 70.

<sup>111</sup> Thomson comments on the collaborative working process in his article, Alistair Thomson, "Moving Stories, Women's Lives: Sharing Authority in Oral History" *Oral History* 39, no. 2 (2001): 73.



best, the two parties in an oral history interview become the co-authors of the narrative and in the dynamic... there is more or less of a 'shared authority'", however his commentary also shows that true collaboration occurred in the dialogues which followed the interview. Thomson stresses that the deeper collaborative process came through editing and presenting the stories in consultation with each of his participants.<sup>112</sup> Thomson's work was not just about combining the narratives and stories captured in letters, diaries, photos and interviews, but also about answering questions about the process he and the women went through when making sense of these histories.<sup>113</sup> Thomson reflects on this process in his book, and also in the commentary mentioned in *Oral History*. One factor which he acknowledges in the success of sharing authority is the time-span of his work: he acknowledges that he had the luxury of ten years, and suggests that shared authority "can't be hurried" and consequently cannot be fully evaluated within the time span of a short project's life.<sup>114</sup> In the case of *Greenhead Stories*, where my research was limited to a specific time-span, this meant considering a way to ensure uses for the archive so that it could have purpose beyond my work. Though I would not have the luxury of hindsight or time to revisit my work in the way that Thomson or Rickard have, it was important to consider the possibilities for future access by myself, my participants or other researchers, so as to not close off those opportunities beyond the end of my research.

---

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>113</sup> Alistair Thomson, *Moving Stories: An Intimate History of Four Women Across Two Countries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 14. When describing each of the different sources he used, Thomson emphasises their narrative function both at the time and from today looking back at the past. For example he asks; "How did the women use letters to make sense of migration and family life, and about themselves, and what do their letters conceal as well as reveal?"

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 325.

Today the ethos of shared authority is employed in many ways, and perhaps through many other names, as the entire interview process becomes viewed as collaborative in nature. A wide range of individual academics still employ the ethos of 'shared authority' (including many mentioned here), as well as larger organisations such as the Life Stories Community-University Research Alliance (now the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University in Montreal), who believe that "collaboration need not end when the audio or video recorder is turned off, but that it is an ongoing process of dialogue and sharing."<sup>115</sup> For the purpose of this study, the difference between the collaboration which naturally occurs within the interview dynamic and the process of shared authority which I tried to make available to the participants of my project, was what Steven High neatly terms as the difference between "community-engaged oral historians who believe in the power of 'knowing with' rather than simply 'knowing about'".<sup>116</sup> The literature reviewed here provided a platform to build a framework and methodological approach. Greenhead Stories provided participants with an offer (which they could chose to accept or decline) to engage beyond the interview, including opportunities to be engaged in asking questions, and determine new ways of sharing and re-telling the histories we recorded.

### **Part C - Voice and Tone – Dilemmas in Oral History**

Through reviewing the relevant literature and oral history theory relating to my research questions, it became apparent that in order to answer issues

---

<sup>115</sup> Steven High, "Shared Authority: An Introduction" *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 43 no. 1 (2009), 13.

<sup>116</sup> Steven High. "Telling Stories: A Reflection on Oral History and New Media" *Oral History*, 38 no. 1 (2010), 104.

surrounding the problems and potential of a digital archive, and to evaluate the outcomes of contextual collaborative recording, it was necessary to bring the literature together and build a model which not only illustrates the problems the research sought to address, but that also serves in evaluating the success of the digital archive. Drawing from oral history methodology and theory, I used current discourse to pinpoint what I call the 'dichotomic dilemma' facing oral history practice and theory, and then built a model that illustrates this gap for the purposes of exploring it fully and evaluating success in bridging it.

Within the discipline of oral history much of our discourse has been devoted to analysing the complexities of the interview dynamic. As oral historians, we now accept that one of the keys to unlocking the most meaningful historical value of our interviews is to contextualise and analyse the relationships which inform their creation.<sup>117</sup> Throughout the history of our discipline, oral historians have turned sceptical views which questioned the reliability and subjectivity of our work upside-down, by demonstrating that it is within the subjective nuances of the interview that the richest meanings can be found. Oral historians have redefined their discipline's respectability by embracing a post-positivist approach and refusing to measure itself against any kind of objective criteria.<sup>118</sup> While this is a very liberating notion for oral history practitioners, it does not come without its difficulties; accepting the interview as a subtlety-riddled negotiation of narrative between participants brings into light the many degrees of meaning which are inevitably lost through an interview's occurrence, recording, and eventual transcription. Joanna Bornat

---

<sup>117</sup> This shift is summarised as 'Post-Positivist Approaches to Memory and Subjectivity' in Thomson, "Four Paradigm Transformations," 53.

<sup>118</sup> Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different" in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 32-42. Portelli's discipline defining article (originally published in 1979) praises oral history for its subjectivity and is attributed to the subjective turn within our practice and theory.

acknowledges the need to understand context as an outsider accessing a collection of interviews in her article “A Second Take: Revisiting Interviews With a Different Purpose”, showing concern over the ethics of accessing interviews without context, and expressing a need to preserve the original intentions of interviewees.<sup>119</sup>

Accepting the subjective turn as one of the discipline’s major defences puts oral history practitioners at odds with our goal of recording for posterity and future use. Fortunately for us, new technologies provide solutions to typical recording-to-transcript models (though these solutions do not come without their own complications). Using a model I have developed to trace the loss of ‘Voice’ and ‘Tone’ in the interview, I will demonstrate how the use of meaning and content mapping software such as Stories Matter can preserve interviews in new ways.

For many oral historians conducting interviews serves two main purposes within the goal of making history: firstly, we co-create a record which provides deeper meanings and first hand experiences towards our own research, and secondly, we collect testimony and reminiscences which serve to enrich the wider historical record in the archive. As a discipline, oral history works towards filling the gaps in the historical record and preserving the memories and experiences that are left out of traditional historical collections. While these two intentions naturally complement one other, they also stand in contrast under the scrutiny of one of the discipline’s major tenets. The process of preserving interviews, creating transcripts, and adding narratives to the historical record effectively turns what was once the exchange of knowledge through a highly sensory experience between two individuals into a catalogued, indexed, and searchable transcript. During this process the experience goes through a number of ‘filters’ which take away meanings by shedding access to

---

<sup>119</sup> Joanna Bornat, “Second Take: Revisiting Interviews with a Different Purpose” *Oral History* 31, no. 1 (2003): 47-53.

the sensory aspects of the interview event. This process presents me with the ‘dichotomic dilemma’, an awkward crossroads where aspects of our practice and theory are mutually exclusive to one another. Treating the interview as a transcript, relying only on the recording and related testimony of those involved in the original interview dynamic, spoils the aim of recording for posterity and makes the archive inaccessible to outsiders. In reviewing the ‘filters’ which diminish the many layers of experience that give meaning to the interview, this literature review will consider this dilemma and propose where collaborative research can fill the gap. Drawing from the discourse previously considered on shared authority, this chapter will also suggest ways in which oral historians might be able to move forward from this dilemma through creating new contextual and multi-vocal archives.

### **Dichotomic Dilemma - Voice and Tone**

During an oral history interview, as in everyday conversation, we express and perceive numerous sensory tracks which we both consciously and subconsciously interpret to give meaning to our experience. The interview process presents the oral historian with a frenzy of activity to juggle; the core practices of asking questions, actively listening and preparing follow up questions are constantly affected by judgements made by all participants as they interpret the nuances of body language, tone, pitch and silence, in order to gauge the social order of the situation. These interpretations occur whether or not an interviewer is consciously aware of all the judgements they are making. It would be futile, if not impossible, to attempt to record every instinctual reaction as they occur, and yet they play a chief role in guiding each story and how it will be interpreted.

Rhonda Y. Williams discusses the importance of considering the intangible in constructing histories from recordings with an emphasis on the overall mood and

impression created by the interface of the many dynamics of words, voice, tone, and behaviour. Williams denotes a difference between the terms she calls ‘voice’ and ‘Voice’, ‘voice’ relating to the traditional definition of sounds made through the mouth and spoken word, and “Voice” being more inclusive of all the other ways in which we communicate both vocally and physically.<sup>120</sup> Voice with a capital “V” includes: “...the utterances as well as non-vocal expressions such as a gesticulating body or a silent moment”; ‘Voice’ is everything communicated by the interviewee inclusive of their words. The Voice which Williams speaks of therefore also represents some of the completely elusive aspects of the interview which are impossible to record, difficult to document, and troublesome to interpret.

In echo of Williams’s definitions, I aim to make a similar distinction between the terms ‘tone’ and ‘Tone’. For the purpose of this dissertation ‘tone’ implies the meanings derived from the aural properties (pitch, volume, etc) of the voice, while ‘Tone’ will imply meanings interpreted from the interconnected sensory tracks within the interview (established through body language, the interview relationship, etc) as well as other factors contributing to the context of the interview.<sup>121</sup> Unlike ‘Voice’, which focuses on the expression of the narrator, ‘Tone’ is inclusive of the sensory tracks projected by both interviewee and interviewer, and represents the dynamic built through their interchange of tangible and intangible communications and their understandings of each other’s motivations for creating this historical record.

---

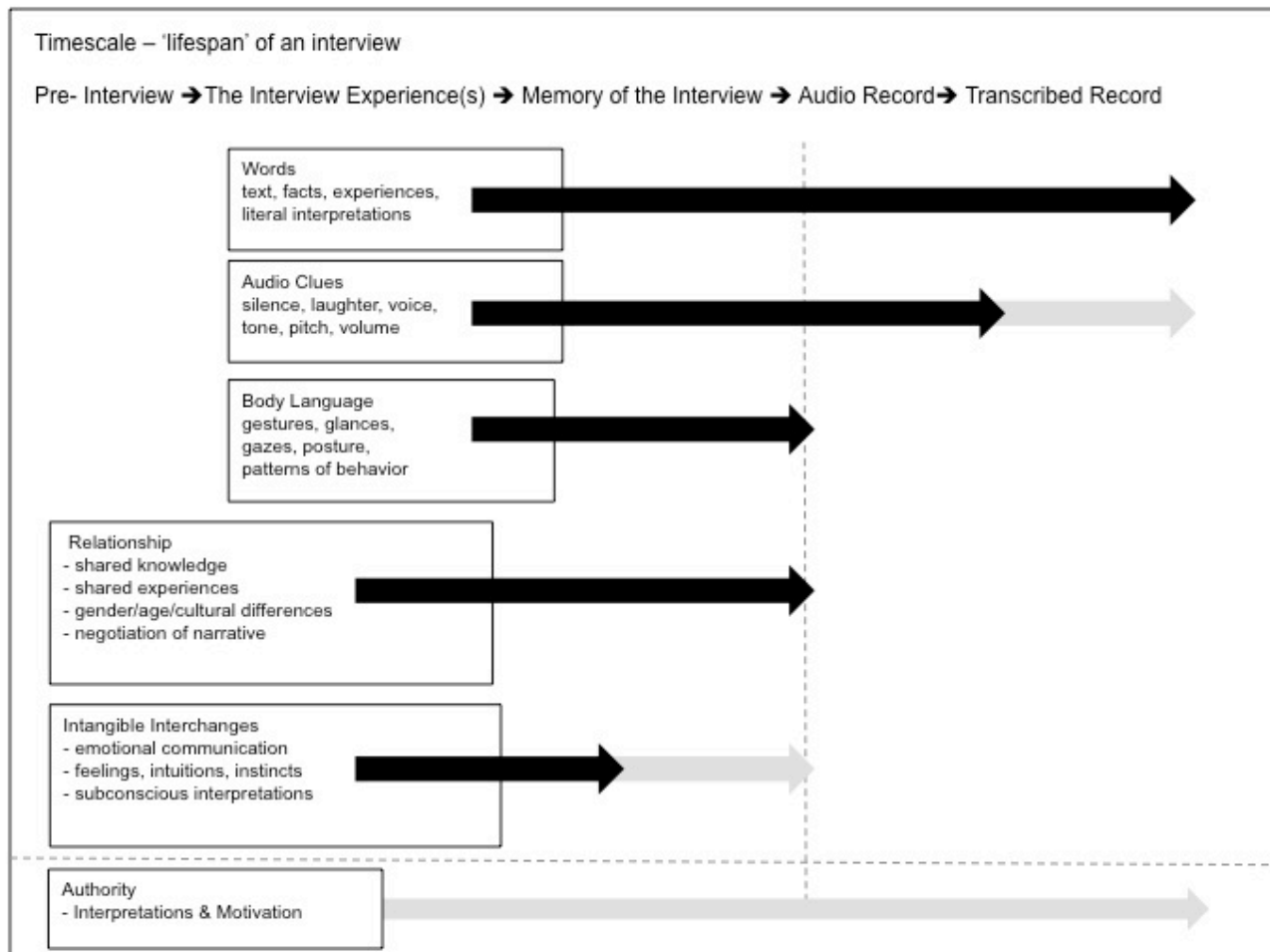
<sup>120</sup> Rhonda Y. Williams, “‘I’m a Keeper of Information’: History-Telling and Voice,” *Oral History Review* 28, no. 1 (2001): 43.

<sup>121</sup> The term ‘sensory tracks’ was chosen to illustrate that although these influences on the interview dynamic are not necessarily audible or visible within the recording (whether audio or video) they are still present, and exist within the recording scenario as ‘tracks’ of experience. Much like we have an audio track, vocal track or video track, I have chosen the word ‘track’ to draw awareness to the intangible tracks which are recorded and remembered in more subtle ways.

## Tracing the loss of Voice and Tone

I propose that there are several layers of meaning which become lost in our current practice of oral history collection, and have illustrated this through a model which traces the elements of 'Tone' which are lost in the recording and documentation process. Figure 1 situates factors which occur throughout the course of an interview and affect its subsequent interpretation. These factors are listed as they appear alongside the 'lifespan' of an interview from its inception to the creation of a transcript. The diagram plots the presence of the factors which affect meaning from the point in which they are established to the point in which they either remain or disappear from the record. The fading arrows imply the fading of meaning or memory, for example: despite being able to document pauses and laughter in a transcript, the best clues to their meaning certainly lie within the audio layer. The vertical dotted line marks the point from which an impartial third party researcher might access the interview experience.

Fig. 1 – ‘Lifespan’ of an Interview.



### Words

This category reflects the verbal expression of both the interviewee and the interviewer, which are added to the historical record as they are expressed, and eventually become the most permanent representation of the exchange in the form of the transcript. Despite being the most heavily evidential form of expression within the interview, these are in a sense, the most basic artefacts coming from the exchange. Words are our chief mode of expression; using language, the interviewee provides us with stories and first hand experiences which can then be contextualised within other



produced texts and narratives. In their discussion of intersubjectivity and interviewing, Allan Futrell and Charles Willard draw attention to the way in which historians depend on this ultimate product of ‘text’. They make the important point that “[f]ocusing on the text succeeds in getting transcriptions analyzed and in generating narratives (more texts), but it also abridges the narrator’s insight.”<sup>122</sup> A transcript-focused project inevitably “...obscures the communication practices that make up the interview” and in doing so removes aspects of the record which are essential to its interpretation.<sup>123</sup> Although the arrow in the diagram proves that words have the ultimate permanence, an increasing number of oral historians argue that they should not be considered without consultation of the audio clues which accompany them.

### **Audio Clues**

The information contained in the audio layer is another integral part of interpreting an oral history interview. Words provide us with an understood mode of expression, but our voices give clues to the intended meaning behind those words. More and more, oral historians are turning from the transcript to the audio file, as we place a stronger emphasis on using audio clues to interpret the exchange within an oral history interview. This is not just in reference to the audio of the interviewee, but also to hear the tone and context of the interviewer’s questions. Audio clues focus on not just aurality of verbal expression, but also the nuances of laughter, silences, tone, pitch and volume, which may be marked or noted in the transcript, but ultimately are only recorded in the audio version of the interview. This focus on the aural properties

---

<sup>122</sup> Allan Futrell and Charles Willard, “Intersubjectivity in Interviewing,” in *Interactive Oral History Interviewing*, eds. Eva McMahan and Kim Lacy Rogers, (New York: Routledge, 1994), 85.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

of interviews is making an impact on how archives provide access to their collections, for example, the State Library of New South Wales whose transcript-free model treats the audio file as the primary document.<sup>124</sup> By providing their users with interview logs that guide their navigation of the audio recording, the library is ensuring that all users will interact with the audio recording as the primary source.

In the model, audio clues are represented with a solid arrow throughout the interview process starting when they are recorded and lasting until the point at which they are preserved within the audio file. Because transcription practices vary, audio clues are also marked with a fading arrow to reflect the common practice of signposting silences, laughter, and meaningful pauses within the transcript; these have some permanence in the written record, and yet they are recorded to serve as markers which will inevitably lead researchers back to the audio file.

### **Body Language**

Just as body language is a very important part of our everyday interactions, it also has a serious effect within an interview scenario. Whether or not an interviewer and interviewee are familiar with one another, they will be aware of one another's body language and demeanour and interpret it either based on personal knowledge of one another or through common understandings of non-verbal communication. When giving advice on 'detecting trouble' within the interview, Valerie Yow writes "...pay attention to nonverbal signs..." citing a range of commonly read non-vocal expressions including squirming, drooping eyes, yawning, stretching, and crossing arms, and suggesting that the best response to these actions is a returned "expression

---

<sup>124</sup> Rosie Block, Curator of Oral History State Library of New South Wales, e-mail message to author, 12 April 2007.

of appreciation for what [the narrator] has offered”.<sup>125</sup> Body language not only provides an interpretive context for the words of the narrator, but also directly affects the behaviour of the interviewer, who makes decisions and chooses to follow (or not to follow) certain lines of questioning based on the combination of verbal and non-verbal feedback they received from the narrator. While these factors have a direct impact on the creation of the interview artefact, they are highly subjective and left unrecorded except for perhaps in the interviewer’s notes and the quickly fading memory of those present at the time of recording.

The impermanent presence of body language can be preserved somewhat through the use of video interviews, which do capture how hand gestures and expressions affect Tone, however as Yow’s advice notes, and human nature demonstrates, body language should be responded to with returned body language and video interviews rarely (if ever) record the physical expressions of the interviewer. Furthermore, recording both interviewee and interviewer would make for a very troublesome recording to both view and interpret, as it is beyond the means of most oral historians to be able to fully integrate multiple videos of participants into one readable video event. Although the Stories Matter software does allow for video interview files, for the purposes of this project it was not possible to conduct interviews given the complexities of having to record both the interviewer and interviewee, as well as the complications associated with video-interviewing ‘in the field’ (i.e. around the park, in different spaces, etc). This project focused on oral history interviewing in its traditional sense of creating an audio record, with the aim of using that to preserve other less-tangible elements denoted on the diagram.

---

<sup>125</sup> Yow, 112.

## Relationship

This aspect which shapes interview content is easier to document than it is to interpret. Relationship refers to known factors which may affect the narration of the interview; differences of age, sex, gender, race, etc are recorded in the accompanying documents which are archived with an interview and come to represent the factual similarities and differences which might affect what is exchanged within an interview dynamic. Oral historians often reflect on these differences in order to analyse meaning from their interview as well as to develop their practice as conscientious interviewers. There is an almost unlimited array of differences which can come into play, and oral historians have demonstrated the value of querying the effect of these differences through our discourse.

In one example, Jieyu Liu effectively analyses the interview relationship as an ‘insider’ when researching the life and work experiences of Chinese women, noting the ways in which she had to adapt her interview approach and style based on the expectations of the women with whom she sought to work with.<sup>126</sup> Conversely to this, Susan Burton examines how her presence as an English interviewer working with Japanese women living in England opened new avenues of communication and story telling.<sup>127</sup> The experiences we share with our interviewees open doors for us and help us find common ground, trust, and empathy while our differences often make room for more explicit description and detailed responses which fill gaps in our shared knowledge. These illustrate just one way in which awareness of the interview dynamic heavily shapes and informs our practice; oral historians have documented the

---

<sup>126</sup> Jieyu Liu, “Researching Chinese Women’s Lives: ‘Insider’ Research and Life History Interviewing,” *Oral History* 34, no. 1 (2006): 43-52.

<sup>127</sup> Susan Burton, “Issues in Cross-Cultural Interviewing: Japanese Women in England,” *Oral History* 31, no. 1 (2003): 38-46.

effect of the interview across a vast range of noted similarities and differences. In her guide to oral history practice and theory, Yow devotes an entire chapter to “Interpersonal Relations in the Interview” drawing close attention to the exchange of self which goes on between interviewee and interviewer as well as ways that race, gender, age, class, ethnicity and subculture affect the interview relationship.<sup>128</sup> She devotes three further chapters to summarising the nature of community research, biographical research and family research, further illustrating how the research scenario informs the research relationship not just through the interpersonal dynamic but also factors such as interview length, narrative style and expectations of the interview genre.

### **Intangible Interchanges**

The term ‘intangible interchanges’ reflects the most fleeting aspects of the interview, the perhaps impossible-to-fully-document nature of experience in the oral history interview. The senses and memories triggered by our notes and the audio clues form a layer of understandings somehow linked to the memory of the interview event. Where relationship describes the factors affecting the interview dynamic, intangible interchanges are the result of those factors in play. This category of ‘clues’ most represents the concept of ‘Tone’ in the sense that it encompasses the very nuanced nature of an oral history exchange. These intangible interchanges include the wide array of uncategorised evidence which informs the “surrender” and “discipline” phase of interpretation, as noted by Valerie Yow in her chapter on analysis and interpretation.<sup>129</sup> She introduces the work of John and Lynn Lofland, quoting;

---

<sup>128</sup> Yow, 169.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., 282.

The surrender entails opening yourself up to your personal sensibilities, insights, and proclivities, as these interact with the data. The discipline entails challenging and evolving these personal interactions with the data in terms of relevant units of analysis, appropriate questions, and the constraints of what is interesting.<sup>130</sup>

Yow's choice of quotation demonstrates the balancing act we perform as oral historians; we take the highly subjective intuitions and subconscious interpretations we derive from the Tone of the interview, and use them to make reasonable interpretive conclusions on our research. In that process, not only do we make judgements for our own research purposes, but we also make value judgements based on what we expect might be of interest to both the public and other researchers. All of these factors of Tone go into our interpretation process and yet there is no real way to document them in the archive.

Leader in oral history theory Alessandro Portelli recognises these intangible elements of exchange in the highly interactive process of the interview, attributing agency to both interviewee and interviewer in shaping the ultimate outcome of the narration: "A good interviewer facilitates the history-teller's agenda and overall strategy, but a good history-teller subtly shapes the tale according to the presence and manner of the interviewer."<sup>131</sup> The interviewer has a unique role in the interview through which they can break up comfortable avenues of storytelling by imposing query, asking unexpected questions, and "encourag[ing] the history-teller to explore new areas of experience".<sup>132</sup> At the same time, the relationship between participants and the manner of their interaction will certainly affect the success of the interviewer's efforts. This shaping of the interview as a two-way exchange has become a major part of our interpretation and reflection processes as oral history

---

<sup>130</sup> John Lofland and Lynn H. Lofland. *Analysing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1984), 135. in Yow, 282.

<sup>131</sup> Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia*, 24.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

practitioners, and yet these intuitive factors have little to no permanence within the records we are preserving.

### **Authority**

A final and additional element of the interview dynamic, which is not typically considered in the oral history collection process, is that relating to the authority of the interviewee. In the case of this study, when working within shared authority methodologies it is important to consider that this additional category refers to aspects of a participant's interview which inform the listener of their intentions and motivations in participating as well as their interpretations of their own memory. The 'authority' element of this model is set outside the interview dynamic as it is not just a part of the individual interview dynamic but extends throughout the project and manifests in different ways for different participants, cropping up more in recorded meetings, short reflexive clips, and additional recordings outside the interview: nonetheless this is a 'track' of the interview process that must be collected and preserved, and so it cannot be left out of the model. Authority is represented as a persisting phenomenon exterior to the interview dynamic (but still in close proximity to it) by the faded line and arrow which reflects authority's appearance as a resource to oral historians which, when appropriate, can be of great value to the recording process.<sup>133</sup>

### **Preserving 'Voice' and 'Tone'**

While the diagram clearly presents the way in which oral history artefacts 'lose meaning' as transcripts, there are no obvious or clear ways to prevent this loss or

---

<sup>133</sup> Linda Shopes questions whether or not sharing authority is something that all oral historians should aspire to adopt, stating that it is not always possible or agreeable to adopt the aims of this philosophy. Shopes, 104.

to document our fading instincts and intuitions. During the course of the interview where the negotiation of narrative occurs, it is near impossible to catch all of the subtleties, let alone have time to consider the weight and meaning of each one. In her discussion of the dynamics of interpretive conflict in oral history research, Katherine Borland denotes that during a narrative performance, "...both narrator and listener are caught up in the storytelling event..." meaning that neither individual is in a position to reflect analytically during the interview process.<sup>134</sup> In fact she implies that it would be counterproductive to "... to break the narrative flow in order to move to the very different rhetorical task of interpretation and analysis".<sup>135</sup> To focus entirely on jotting down remarks on body language and behaviour for the purpose of interpretation would ultimately cause the interview to deteriorate, and yet, this analysis must at some point occur by route of the interviewer's notes and memories of the exchange. Hence in Figure 1 the line representing the documentation of 'intangible interchanges' fades as it enters our memory, as we have only our core memories and the senses triggered by our notes and audio clues to help us remember and interpret these less-tangible aspects of the interview dynamic.

The model aims to show that 'Tone' (the vast array of intangible factors we call on to interpret the words and audio of an interview recording) is lost soon after the interview event. This documented loss presents a number of dilemmas for the posterity of our archives, particularly with regards to the question of who has the authority to interpret and, even further, query the interpretations others have made from oral history archives. Today, when we interpret our own interviews, we look for

---

<sup>134</sup> Katherine Borland, "'That's not what I said' Interpretive conflict in oral narrative research," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 317.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.



the meanings which stem from our experiences, and yet we expect that those who access them in the future will interpret them based solely on content.

## Summary

Emphasis on the interview experience brings up the difficult dilemma over authority, and the question of who has the authority to be an interpreter of an oral history document? In plain terms, authority for interpretation and publication lies in the copyright and access restrictions, but as an ethical dilemma for researchers there is much to consider when drawing conclusions from an interview. In the work of Frisch and almost all the many academics who continue to take up his goal of sharing authority, it is agreed that authority should extend from the original interviewer to the interviewees, though there is no fixed consensus over where that situates new users seeking to access collections of recordings. Is the authority then preserved within the context, and/or the ‘moral hierarchy’ imprinted in the recording as Rickard’s work suggests? And if so, how does that influence the views of new users who access the interviews? In sociological and anthropological tradition (including studies relating to place) “...scholars who recorded the traditions, arts, and history of a particular culture group gave little thought to the possibility that their representations might be legitimately challenged by those for and about whom they wrote”.<sup>136</sup> Those who spent time ‘in the field’ felt, and were in many cases awarded, a sense of authority regarding their unique understanding of said cultures. While in many ways first-hand experience is a clear vantage point, necessity begs that within the discipline of oral history there be room for additional interpretations in the future: we make our records public, share our notes and record for posterity. If the parameters of understanding space and place are constantly shifting, then is it also necessary that the archive also

---

<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 311

be adaptable, contextual and perpetually growing? Who then, has the ultimate authority to interpret these documents, if the vast array of what we use to draw meaning from our own interviews is not preserved in our records? Is it possible to alter our practice towards a goal of contextual recording and documenting a project's 'metanarratives' as a means of better preserving oral history interviews as the collaborative exchanges we know them to be? The coming chapters will show how the methodology of my oral history research, defining my aims of sharing authority, investigating dialogues about space and place, and testing the contextual digital archive for its ability to preserve not just 'Voice' but also 'Tone' emerges both from existing literatures in the field and the gaps within them. Using the example of *Greenhead Stories*, the dissertation will critically reflect on the successes and shortcomings of this research, drawing on the already reviewed discourse and suggesting ways to move forward through these dilemmas facing our theory and practice.

## **Part II: Process and Methodology**

## Chapter 2 – The Context: Greenhead Park from Past to Present

The inhabitants of Huddersfield, like many other mill-towns in Yorkshire, share a complicated array of interconnected histories which have become intertwined through the peaks and falls of the textile industry over the last two-hundred years. In the last fifty years, Huddersfield has undergone many shifts of identity stemming from changes of industry as well as an influx of migrants arriving from the former British Empire, Commonwealth, and European Union. Places such as Huddersfield, whose populations of minority migrant groups rank them above the national average of multiculturalism, provide an opportunity to consider the impacts and implications of diversity in the UK outside of larger urban centres such as Manchester and London.<sup>137</sup> The diverse make-up of Huddersfield presented an opportunity to pilot a project which aimed to record a shared experience or memory across a range of communities. This chapter will introduce the ‘plain’ history of the park, situating it within the history of Huddersfield, before highlighting the many different communities which have made use of the park throughout its history. It will allude to how the concept of ‘community’ was applied within the project and introduce some of the silences within the documented history of the park. It will outline the setting up of the oral history project and some of the dilemmas it attempted to address.

### The Park in Context

---

<sup>137</sup> According to the 2001 census the former (pre 1974) Huddersfield Borough area is made up of a 81% white population (including White: British, Irish and other White, and Mixed: White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, and other Mixed) while the wider Kirklees area reflects an 85.6% of the population with the categories, both of which are over the national average of 91.3%.

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/statistics/census2001by-town/HudderCB.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2013).

There have been numerous written histories of Huddersfield, as summarised by Hilary Haigh in her introduction to *Huddersfield: A Most Handsome Town*, an edited anthology which brings together work from a range of academic and local historians.<sup>138</sup> While the story of Huddersfield as a textile town has been well documented in Haigh's edited work and the work of numerous other historians, it may be particularly useful to summarise some of the town's migration history in relation to Greenhead Stories. While no chapter within *Huddersfield: A Most Handsome Town* is specifically devoted to the story of immigration into the town, mentions of Huddersfield's growing diversity are interwoven into the subject-specific chapters on settlement, religion and industry. George Redmonds's work, which examines the pre-1800 settlement patterns in Huddersfield, suggests that Huddersfield entered the nineteenth century with very humble beginnings: a population of just 7,268, a figure which demonstrates the significance that the nineteenth-century expansion of industry would have on the small town.<sup>139</sup> Redmonds reports that "as the Industrial Revolution got under way Huddersfield was still really a small village, its market and church ensuring that it served as a focal point for its own widely scattered population as well as for the district as a whole."<sup>140</sup> Contrast this to David T. Jenkin's depiction of the textile industry in 1851 and it is easy to see how much of an impact industry had on the town; from 7268 people in 1801, to having a male workforce of just over 10,000

---

<sup>138</sup> Hilary Haigh, introduction to *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh (Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992), vii. lists several histories of the town written between 1859 and 1968 including work by C.P. Hobkirk, G.W. Tomlinson, D.F.E. Sykes, Taylor Dyson and Roy Brook; acknowledging the "honoured place in Huddersfield's historiography" held by these works, while suggesting it was time for a modern publication to update the work being done in a modern style.

<sup>139</sup> Redmonds's work summarises the history of the township from the Middle Ages up to the early stages of the Industrial Revolution. George Redmonds, "Settlement in Huddersfield before 1800," in *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh (Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992), 17.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

and a population of 30,880 in 1851, just fifty years later.<sup>141</sup> Edward Royle's work on tracing the history of religion within Huddersfield reveals that this population increase can be partially attributed to an influx of Irish labourers and hawkers coming into Huddersfield in the early 1800s with further increases through the 1840s, enough to warrant "the appointment of a second priest at St. Patrick's in 1858", noting that the "Catholic Church in Huddersfield had always had the character of an immigrant church. St Patrick's supplied the needs of the Irish community and of successive waves of further immigrants for over a hundred and fifty years."<sup>142</sup> He also notes that the Second World War saw a further influx of Irish immigrants, as well as new Catholic arrivals in the form of Polish and Ukrainian migrants from Europe.<sup>143</sup> Though migrants arrived in different waves, the rapid influx of migrants who came to Huddersfield during its years of industrialisation were mainly white, European communities whose arrival transformed Huddersfield from a small 7000 person settlement at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to an industrial town with a mixed population midway through the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The next wave of migration came after the Second World War, as mentioned in Royle's conclusions which allude to "the new diversity" of Huddersfield. He cites the religions which came with newer arrivals to the town, with small revivalist and prophetic churches springing up in connection to the Caribbean arrivals in the 1970s and 1980s and substantial immigration from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh "settling

---

<sup>141</sup> David T. Jenkins, "Textiles and other Industries, 1851-1914," in *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh (Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992), 214.

<sup>142</sup> Edward Royle, "Religion in Huddersfield since the mid-Eighteenth Century," in *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh (Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992), 110 (on the establishment of Catholic masses) and 129 on the further increases to the Catholic population.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

in inner suburbs such as Fartown and Thornton Lodge” in the same decades.<sup>144</sup>

Though Royle’s work attributes these influxes of migration to the 1970s and 1980s, in truth these new arrivals were a part of the post-war influx of migration from across the empire, which was experienced across Britain as a whole.<sup>145</sup>

The 2005 report entitled *Ethnic Groups in Kirklees* by the Corporate Development Unit of Kirklees Metropolitan Council provides a clear picture of what the ethnic composition of Kirklees is like today, not only through revealing population statistics on the ethnic groups, but also by mapping and plotting statistics in a way which gives insight into the ethnic makeup of each area in Huddersfield and across Kirklees. The report plots the location of several different ethnic and religious groups against a map of the region, including individual maps for White, Pakistani, Indian, Asian Other, Black, Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Mixed White and Asian Ethnic groups as well as Hindu and Sikh groups.<sup>146</sup> With so many individual maps plotting the location and concentration of each group or religion, the White Ethnic Group map perhaps gives the clearest indication of how the spread of all minorities sits across Kirklees (see Fig. 2).

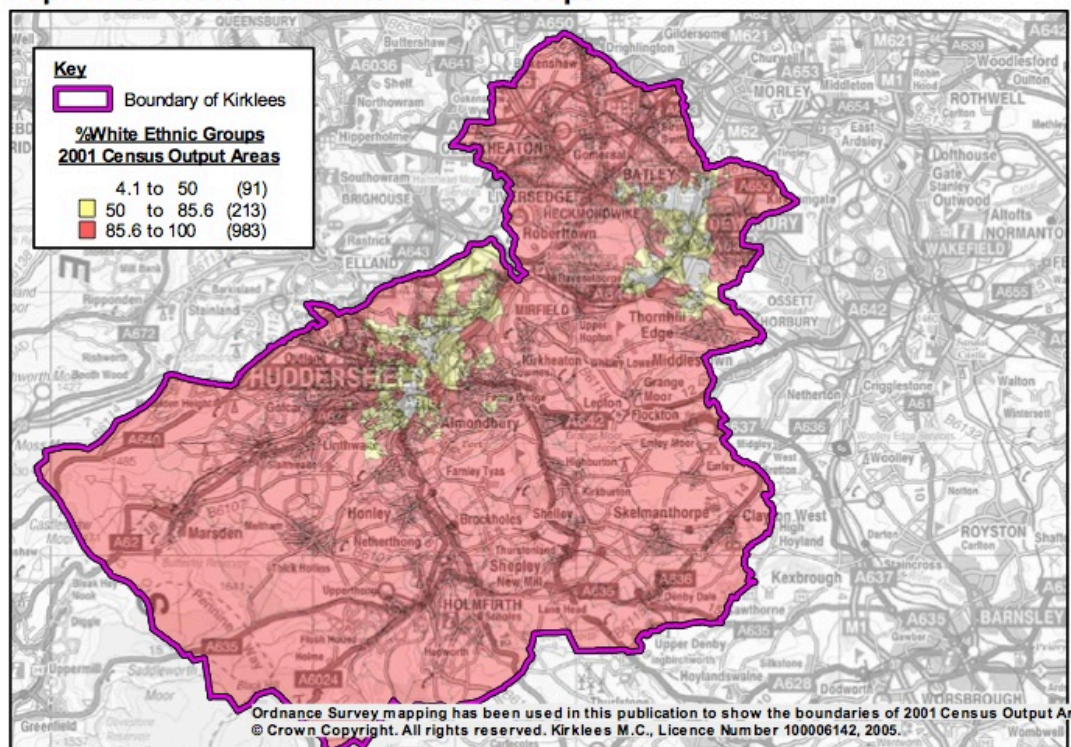
---

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 139. Though many narratives collected in the project suggest arrivals in the 1960s.

<sup>145</sup> This post-war migration trend is described as a world-wide phenomenon in *What is Migration History?* This work summarises “Decolonization and New Global Patterns of Migration since the 1950s” in Chapter 2.9, showing how reverse migration, displacement migration and labour migration redistributed populations from around former the British Empire. Christiane Harzig and Dirk Hoerder, *What is Migration History?* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 45-51.

<sup>146</sup> The *Ethnic Groups in Kirklees* report can be found at <http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/statistics/ethnicgroups/Appendix.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2013).

Fig. 2

**Map 1: Distribution of White Ethnic Groups**

The map illustrates how areas with lower concentrations of the White ethnic group (therefore a population with higher representation across the other listed ethnic groups) centre around and extend from the Huddersfield town centre, with a secondary concentration around Dewsbury. This 2005 report is largely based around data from the 2001 census; although basic statistics of the 2011 census have been reported, detailed plotting and mapping of this information is not yet available. The 2011 census does, however, reinforce the trend of Huddersfield becoming increasingly multicultural. Comparing the 2001 figure of Kirklees borough being 83.7% White British (UK) to the 2011 figures which shows that the same population



now makes up only 76.7%, indicates a significant drop over the course of ten years, a result which shows that the story of a changing Huddersfield is not over.<sup>147</sup>

Work on the history of Huddersfield has been extended since the publication of Haigh's edited collection of works, not just within the academic discipline in history, but also by Huddersfield's active Local History Society and the oral history work done within the Centre for Visual and Oral History Research at the University of Huddersfield.<sup>148</sup> In particular, oral history collections and sources such as Vivien Teasdale's *Huddersfield Mill Memories, An Oral History* show the diversification of the town of Huddersfield. Teasdale's book divides the interviewees into categories based on the date of their birth (before 1920, 1920-1930, and born after 1930), and shows how the incoming migrants found work within the textile industry. It includes interviews from Polish-born Czeslaw-Jozef Puackz, whose family came to England as a result of the events of the Second World War; Maria Borsukiewicz, whose story follows a similar narrative of displacement from the war; Ridley Simpson and Ephraim Freeman, who arrived from Jamaica in 1955 and 1957 respectively; and Gurmit Kaur Atwal, who arrived from India in 1965 after her husband had already established himself with work in the textile industry.<sup>149</sup> Although these individuals frame their stories within their migration experience, the focus of this collection of oral histories is quite technical, focusing on documenting the process of mill work and recording the "specialist, dialect and technical terms that need qualification and

---

<sup>147</sup> Documents can be accessed at:

<http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/statistics/census2001by-town/HudderCB.pdf> and <http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/community/statistics/factsheets/minethnicgroups11.pdf> (accessed 15 March 2013).

<sup>148</sup> The Huddersfield Local History Society delivers a range of talks and publications relating to the history of Huddersfield and its surrounding area, including a yearly journal which has been published since 1990. <http://huddersfieldhistory.wordpress.com/publications/> (accessed 15 March 2013).

<sup>149</sup> Vivien Teasdale. *Huddersfield Mill Memories* (Barnsley: Wharncliffe Books, 2006).

explanation”.<sup>150</sup> Although the stories of migrants are a part of this text, the book does not in any way engage with their experience as migrants, though some interpretation can be made from their testimony.<sup>151</sup> A study with a much stronger focus on migration is the ‘Asian Voices’ oral history project and book as researched by Nafhesa Ali within the Centre for Oral History Research at the University of Huddersfield, a project which sought to document the migration experiences of individuals and families who came to Huddersfield from the Indian sub-continent.<sup>152</sup> Ali’s project looks more closely at stories of experiences of settling as newcomers, documenting what life was like for these migrants working within the textile industry in the 1960s within a much wider narrative of coming to Britain and settling into everyday life in Huddersfield.

While there has been a number of subject-specific and community specific heritage projects in the region which documented the migration and assimilation experiences of those who have found a home in the town, I set out to create a project which would unite different communities and truly be something that anyone and everyone could be a part of. In search of a platform to bring people from many different walks of life together, my attention was drawn to Greenhead Park. Being the park which is the most central to the town, it is also the park that is the most accessible from *all* of the surrounding areas, with high concentrations of migration communities as well as being a central gathering place for major events and special occasions. Over the course of its history, Greenhead Park has been home to many

---

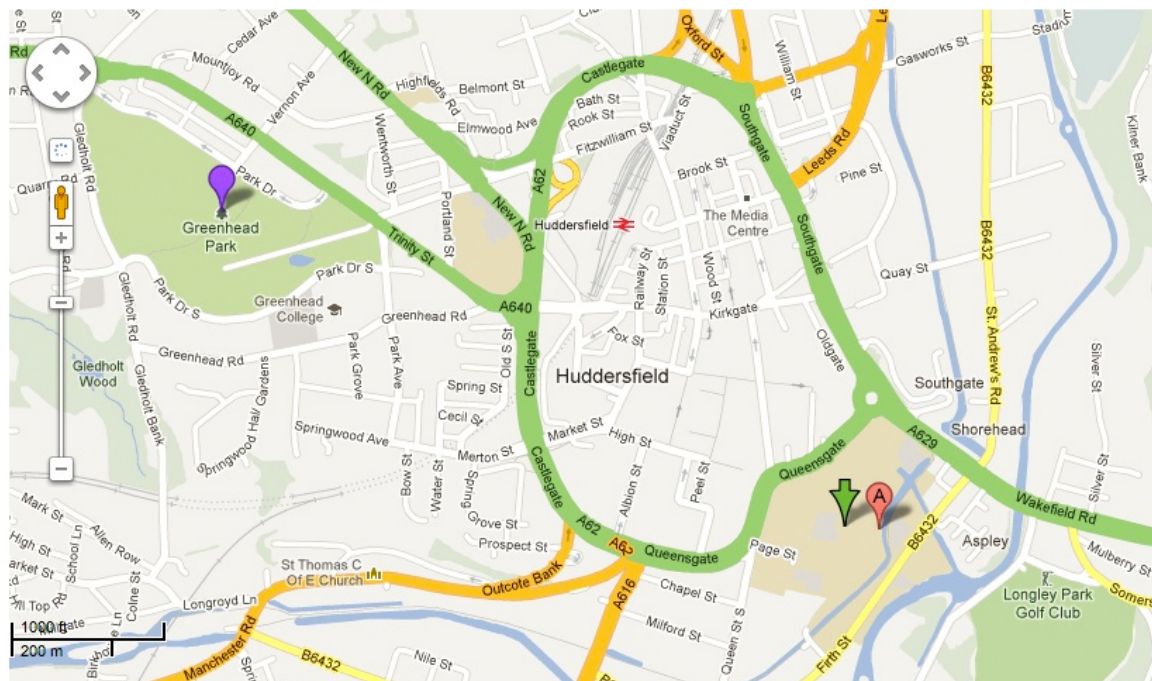
<sup>150</sup> Ibid., ix.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 139. Although interviewees do not particularly comment on the social climate or environment working within the mills, their stories document joining the unions and allude to mills adapting to employing a workforce without English as a first language, implying that the narrators experience certain levels of acceptance and integration within their workplaces.

<sup>152</sup> Details about the project and excerpts of interviews can be found in Nafhesa Ali, *Asian Voices: First Generation Migrants* (Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield, 2010).

leisure and cultural events, and it has also served as a public gathering place for larger causes ranging from silent marches and political protests to hosting the Huddersfield Caribbean Carnival and Asian Mela (now called Worlds Together).<sup>153</sup> During the course of the project it was also undergoing a multi-million pound restoration and regeneration project, which meant that the many different groups who make use of the park were especially active in voicing their opinions about the future of the space, with differing opinions circulating about the present, past and future of the park.

Fig. 3 – Map showing proximity of Greenhead Park to Huddersfield Centre, Rail Station and University of Huddersfield (Point A).



### The Written History of Greenhead Park

While Greenhead Park officially opened for the use of the people of Huddersfield on Saturday 27 September 1884, the story of the park and those who

<sup>153</sup> David Griffiths, *Secured for the Town: The Story of Huddersfield's Greenhead Park* (Huddersfield: Friends of Greenhead Park, 2011), 60-64. Griffiths's work recounts the recent history of the park with a brief summary of the events which have taken place since 1974 including the Caribbean Carnival and Asian Mela event. This work will be drawn upon further in this chapter.

worked to secure it for the town dates back to 1869.<sup>154</sup> The full history of the park, its founders, and its transformation from a Victorian-era gathering place to modern day recreational facility is well documented by local historian David Griffiths, who has written a detailed account of the park based on documents, maps, letters and other archival materials. His work traces the park from its inception, when it was conceived as a public green space secured for the town during a time of growth in Huddersfield which “led to shocking housing and sanitary conditions... public health was poor and recreation very limited by long working hours.”<sup>155</sup> Griffiths associates the establishments of boroughs within the region and the rise of elected councils in the 1840s with the development of municipal parks, citing other towns such as Bradford, Halifax and Oldham, which established parks in the late 1840s and early 1850s, though for Huddersfield this did not come until the 1880s due to “12-years of on-off negotiations between the Corporation and the Ramsden estate,” owned by Sir John Ramsden, the single largest landowner who owned much of Huddersfield at the time.<sup>156</sup>

Griffiths, with support from the Friends of Greenhead Park, undertook the writing of *Secured for the Town: The Story of Huddersfield's Greenhead Park* before the inception of the Greenhead Stories project. However, as both projects moved forward we worked together to include interview quotes in the parts of the book pertaining to the history of the park within memory.<sup>157</sup> Griffiths's work follows the history of the town as evidenced through photographs, local archives, ephemera and a

---

<sup>154</sup> Griffiths, 2-6, 2011.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>157</sup> John Marshall, “The Sense of Place, Past Society and the Oral Historian,” *Oral History* 3, no. 1 (1975): 19-25. John Marshall advocates for this connection between local historians, oral history and academic work, explaining how their different backgrounds and roles uncover different elements of history, encouraging humility among academics so that they may recognise what they can gain from engaging with local historians.

sampling of written personal testimony, but focuses largely on the Victorian story of the founding of the park through to the post-Second World War period focusing on the “Holidays at Home” events and the regular summer programming born out of them in the 1950s and 1960s. Griffiths’s work concludes with “The Park Since 1974”, a short section which includes mention of the Carnival, Asian Mela, the Huddersfield Society of Model Engineers, the establishment of the skateboard/BMX park and other physical changes to the park, with illustrative images, but does not go into deep detail of this period or draw from archival sources apart from a Council report from the year 2000 which attributes maintenance issues within the park to a decline in budget citing that “the Council’s budget has both reduced and been increasingly focused on statutory responsibilities in such areas as Education and Social Services.”<sup>158</sup> Though Griffiths’s summary of the post-war period is short, it concisely indicates a shift in the use and maintenance of the park. The quote from Kirklees Council acknowledges a decline in staff and funding since the reorganisation of Huddersfield County Borough in 1974, and the summarised social history of the park indicates a quasi-democratisation of care within the park, as services and events became delivered by community groups.<sup>159</sup> As the council reduced its management of the park, there was an increase in community-organised events such as the Huddersfield Carnival and Asian Mela. Furthermore, hobby and interest-based organisations such as the Huddersfield Society of Model Engineers began running a model railway, and the Friends of Greenhead Park came into existence in 1993: these groups filled the void left by the council’s absence, but some would also seek to return the duty to the council, pushing for a council-led redevelopment and restoration

---

<sup>158</sup> Griffiths, 61.

<sup>159</sup> In Chapter 5 this dissertation will look more closely at 1974 as a turning point in the care of the park, and the narrative which links the changes to local government in 1974 and the decline of Greenhead Park.

effort. Given the depth of detail Griffiths's work went into in the Victorian age of the park, and the apparent lack of traditional sources relating to the care and use of the park in 1974, it worked well to establish a project focused on testimony so that I could begin to record the undocumented history of the park, as well as 'unofficial' stories, myths and memories, which would otherwise remain unrecorded or were seemingly unexplored and unrepresented within local archives.

Since the ceremonial opening of the park in 1884 and up until to the park's 127<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration event which marked the completion of the restoration and the closing of the Greenhead Stories project on 25 September 2011, Greenhead Park has been witness, and played host to, a vast array of events and activities which together paint the picture of a changing Huddersfield. In its early years, the park "provided a stage on which the life of the town could be acted out..." hosting the flourishing local brass band culture in the bandstand, numerous public and private social and charitable events, local fetes, holiday events for children and families as well as the local Floral and Horticultural Society annual show (established in 1906).<sup>160</sup> As the story of the park moves through the twentieth century, the gaps in its story begin to be filled by living memory which paints a picture beyond the documents, photos and ephemera that can be found in archives. The oral history recorded through Greenhead Stories both reinforces the park's Victorian foundations through telling the tales of continued tradition, while at the same time diverging from this narrative as new voices appear and new uses for the park begin to emerge. These new voices include stories of how the park became a gathering ground for specific cultural groups (especially the Caribbean community), stories of protests and

---

<sup>160</sup> Griffiths, 20-21.

Fig. 4 – Greenhead Park, courtesy of Britain From Above circa 1926.



Fig. 5 – A Modern Map featuring plans for the restoration of Greenhead Park.





demonstrations, as well as stories which document the decline and deterioration of the park in more recent years, and its subsequent regeneration. The voices recorded within Greenhead Stories also document the uses of the park which are not as obviously tied to cultural belonging, recording the stories of individuals who used the park for their own hobbies and leisure activities, and the organised community and hobby groups who used the park a gathering place to meet like-minded people.<sup>161</sup> The combination of these narratives shows how past, present and future are subtly negotiated on a daily basis by those who make use of the historical setting of Greenhead Park.

In 2009 Kirklees Council and the Heritage Lottery Fund began a multi-million pound restoration and regeneration project which aimed to bring new life to the park, while also restoring and preserving the park's heritage as a Victorian gathering place. Through the restoration process, the park was often the focus of attention in the local media as well as being a major point of discussion amongst local residents and town councilors; the portrayal of the park in local media will be discussed in Chapter 5. This renewed enthusiasm for the park made it an ideal time to record not only the memory of the place, but also current opinion regarding the restoration process and future of the park. While a number of people participated in the Greenhead Stories project from the public at large, a large portion of the participants were individuals who devoted their time either personally or professionally to the park in some way; those with a specific passion who got involved in the restoration consultation process or those who have worked or volunteered in the park throughout their lives. In this way we collected two levels of testimony to the park, one from those who make the

---

<sup>161</sup> Ross Mckibbin's work acknowledges the emergence of hobbies and leisure activities (including "craft" hobbies and sporting interests) emerging as a part of white British within the nineteenth century. Ross Mckibbin, *The Ideologies of Class : Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 141-143.



park a priority and focus within their lives, engaging with the park on a more formal level as well as another from those who simply make use of the park as users. Both groups of interviewees played an important role in sharing stories of the park, and gave a different, though equally enthusiastic, perspective and approach to the park.

Using oral history to document the history of the park still within memory not only filled the gaps in knowledge about the experience of using the park in more recent years, but also presented narratives which disrupted those present within the local press, publicity surrounding the redevelopment of the park, and within accepted narratives (including Griffiths's very detailed work). Further to this, the process of collecting oral history highlighted pathways to unexamined archival material and exposed my research to sources not included within Kirklees Archives or the Local Studies Library. Some participants came forward with their own collected ephemera and news clippings, which pointed the research to new sources and gave new clues to the unwritten history of the park. If we consider the 'official' sources and plain history of the park to be representative of the park as it has been documented in government meetings, news clippings and other saved ephemera, then this evidence is very much a part of Lefebvre's concept of representations of space: these pieces of evidence are all known representations of Greenhead Park which largely portray and reassert the pre-1974 history of the park, before the council's change of focus in maintaining it to the level it had in the past. In the coming chapters this study will show that these representation of space had a strong impact on the sentiments of those who called for a restoration and the nostalgia that informed public discussion and media coverage of the funding bid and process of starting work. Though not as plainly visual, the oral histories recorded which blend

together pre-1974 and post-1974 memories bring out a range of voices, some of which match these representations of space and some of which provide alternative spaces of representation: unofficial accounts of the park, which do not necessarily support the images, stories and narratives which have produced the broader sense of place linked to Greenhead Park. Fundamentally, these stories have a power to disrupt the dominant narratives and bring to light the wide range of spatial practice which has been going on in Greenhead Park, despite the fact that they have not been represented in history.

### **Chapter 3 – The Oral History of Greenhead Park**

This chapter will introduce how Greenhead Stories was used as a platform to record the unwritten history of the park, by bringing together some of the literature covered in Chapter 1 and outlining the rationale behind the project. It will also introduce the digital archive as housed within Stories Matter, going through practical instructions on accessing the archive in order to provide a platform for the following chapter which will go through the methodological considerations which came as a result of putting this project into practice. Through bringing together the relevant work of Samuel and Lefebvre this chapter will make the case for an oral history of Greenhead Park and introduce the parameters of the Greenhead Stories project.

This work has already suggested that oral histories can provide alternative stories of place, and that they may serve as Lefebvre's spaces of representation by highlighting new or undocumented forms of spatial practice. By recording them, Greenhead Stories sought not just to document these spaces of representation, but also to put them to use, as a means of illuminating the changing spatial codes and practices which despite being present throughout much of the park's history, have not been included in official stories of the park.

While the reviewed literature on the work of Raphael Samuel and Henri Lefebvre studies comes from separate academic disciplines and deals with different subtexts, both cast an anchor in a similar area of subjective discourse. Lefebvre's analysis of spatial production presents an interesting framework within which to consider the way the physical layout of Greenhead Park and the recorded history of that layout informs the public's sense of the park as a place, and provides an

interesting platform from which to consider the juxtaposition of his three factors of spatial production. For example, the Greenhead Stories recorded testimony that documented the use of the space (Lefebvre's 'spatial practice') during a time in which maps, reproductions of photos, and past representations of space were on display all around the park and within the media. Depictions belonging to what Lefebvre would have called the 'representation of space' were highly visible during the recording phase of Greenhead Stories, re-informing memory of the past for some, while disconnecting memory from experience for those whose memories did not match these 'official' representations. As oral historians we know that although maps, photographs, and documents can enable the process of memory, they can also distort memory and distress the recollection process by highlighting disparities that exist between memory and experience.<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>162</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991) 1-28. In Chapter 1 Portelli introduces the story of Luigi Trastulli to highlight the ways in which memory, even when distorted or mis-remembered, can serve to enlighten the oral historian's view of how events are remembered and what their meanings become in the process of making history.

Fig. 6 – A series of 10 informational boards were put up throughout the park by Kirklees Council and the Friends of Greenhead Park which provided context about the history of the park during the restoration period.



Furthermore, the changing nature of the space we recorded within meant that past representations, the present physical state, and plans depicting future representations were constantly in flux and interrupting one another; a memory of the lake could at one point in the project be re-sparked by a photo, or later by witnessing the reconstruction of the lake to match the historical representations we have of it. In this capacity, representations of space were being reinforced through the restoration of the park's physical past, where in other areas both the representation of space and spatial representations were being torn down, and in that process disrupting connections between memory and space. Throughout the recording phase of the project, images from the Kirklees Image Archive were on display throughout the park through various efforts made by the Friends of Greenhead Park, and many of these images appeared on the project's flyers and publicity (See Appendix B). To promote the project, I also used images which contextualised the past with the present

including two images which blended past images of the park from the archives with modern images of the park I had taken mid-restoration. These images were used in publicity for the project and public presentations by both myself and the Friends of Greenhead Park.

Fig. 7 – The Persistence of History - An image I created and used to promote the project, to show the aim of recording the past, present and future of the park.

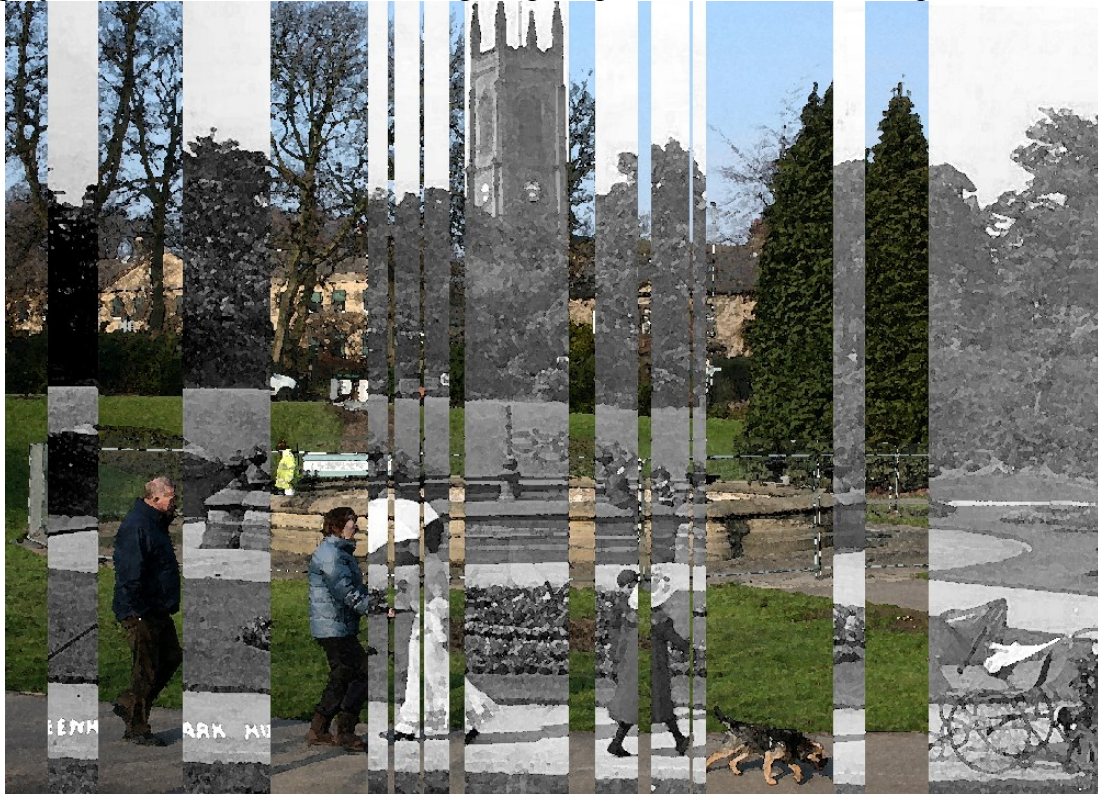




Fig. 8 – A Glimpse of a Fading Past. Another image I created to promote the project. The image shows a clear mix of an image from the past, with the remains of the harbour and fencing in the front.



If we consider the park to be a space with several sub-places and areas within it, all home to memory, then the restoration of the park both prioritises memory associated with the more traditional Victorian aesthetic of the park, by restoring the area to match the representations of space we have recorded, while also destroying newer memories attached to the modern elements being replaced or updated. Using Lefebvre's model for the creation of meaning of space forces the researcher to consider the ways in which the past, present and future are continually being built/destroyed/juxtaposed during the restoration process. Truly, no memories are more or less valuable than others, but the restoration seeks to rebuild and impose a picture of the past, and thus prioritises a representation of history which would otherwise be lost or built over both in physicality and memory. Therefore, to restore a park to a former representation of space, be it from a blueprint, photo, map or

document marks a decided choice (whether conscious or unconscious) to impose a particular physical narrative of history upon the space. An exploration of the narratives of the park's decline and restoration will come in Chapter 5.

### **Turning Theory into Practice – Putting Lefebvre and Samuel to use**

Numerous oral historians, geographers and social anthropologists have employed Lefebvre's understanding of the production of space in their work, both in specific relation to Marxist studies of capitalist expression on urban spaces, and in more abstract extractions of this model as used in this project. Setha Low, an American professor of environmental psychology and anthropology, and trailblazing academic in the study of space and place, has conducted many studies of marketplaces and South American plazas, which are highly relevant to my attempt to understand Greenhead Park as a multi-functional public place in Huddersfield. Low says that philosophical "theories on spatialization provide a basis for working out how spatial analysis would satisfy the anthropologist's need to link experience, practice and structure" with the acknowledgement that while these theories may inform our practice, it is difficult to derive sound research strategies "solely from these conceptual approaches".<sup>163</sup> Low's advice is to use these conceptual approaches as a stepping-stone and then find 'domains of action' as an intermediate step, which allow for the collection and data for empirical analysis. My interpretation of this from a collaborative oral historian's perspective is to find avenues for recording memory about place, whilst also facilitating the interrogation of space as a socially produced construct (though to my participants it was simply described as "recording memory and interpreting that memory" for ease of understanding). Low quotes Lefebvre: "space is permeated with social relations; it is not only supported by social relations

---

<sup>163</sup> Setha Low, *On the Plaza* (Austin: University of Texas, 2003), 130.



but it is also producing and produced by social relations”, which summarises my shared approach to the exploration of the park. My aim was to both record the memory which informed our understanding of the past, whilst interrogating that memory and using it to interpret and establish new shared understandings of the same past.<sup>164</sup> Some social relations within the space of the park are overt: for example the formal negotiation of booking and using space, facilities etc, or the understanding that model railway is operated by the Huddersfield Society of Model Engineers and that it operates at times they set and in a fashion they determine. Other social relations and negotiations are subtle or go completely unnoticed; many park users come at different times and make use of the space completely unaware of others who come before or after them. Collecting, presenting and exhibiting this history through the exhibition and audiowalk not only presents the larger picture of the park to all users, but also conveys the varying sense of ownership and attachment that is felt across many different groups and cultures: blending representations of space and uncovered spaces of representation, into a format which highlights the existing wider scheme of spatial practice going on within the park.

One of Low’s most relevant studies compares two parks in San Jose, Costa Rica, one which represents the country’s historical colonial past and another which is a bastion for modern Costa Rica in its new era of independence. Although set in completely different cultures and completely different social and geographical contexts, the studies of these public places bear remarkable similarities to my study of Greenhead Park in northern England. Low’s work puts the theoretical nature of Lefebvre’s philosophy into understandable and practical terms, blending Lefebvre’s theories with practical examples from her anthropological research. Low outlines the

---

<sup>164</sup> Lefebvre, ‘The Production of Space’ in Low, *On the Plaza*, 130.

differences between a modern and colonial style park in San Jose, while illustrating the contemporary interplay between both the historical facts and fictions associated with the plazas and the meanings attached to the physical style of the spaces and their built environment.<sup>165</sup> One of the sites of Low's focus is the ongoing disagreement over the modernisation of the European colonial-influenced, Parque Central which dates back to early Spanish settlement in the area. Low cites anecdotal evidence surrounding a Victorian era kiosk, built in 1890 only to be later torn down and replaced by a cement kiosk in 1944.<sup>166</sup> This destruction should have embodied the rejection of space produced by a specific European-influenced political power, and yet, Low also cites movements which seek to tear-down the cement structure in order to rebuild the Victorian one. Today there continues to be a conflict between the aesthetic interpretations of the park's original historical design and the desires of those who use the park as an everyday place and have "...incorporated the cement kiosk into their spatial pattern of activities."<sup>167</sup> Low's parks, particularly Parque Central, though built in a different context provide an interesting comparison with my study of Greenhead Park. Both parks are meeting grounds for tensions pulling between past, present and future use of the space, economic factors affecting leisure time, generational changes in use, impact of religious expression in public places, and worries over decline, misuse, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Within these cultural spaces, there are constant negotiations between use of space and social

---

<sup>165</sup> Low explains how the colonial style of Parque Central fuels a story which portrays it as an elite gathering place, locked at night, but that photo evidence shows workers and young boys resting in the plaza leisurely. Ibid., 134.

<sup>166</sup> Low traces the European influence of the design of Parque Central, to the establishment of the Spanish American colonial empire the *1573 Orders for Discover and Settlement*. Low quotes Lefebvre's discussion of the planning of South American towns and notes that we would have characterised it as the 'production of a social space by a social power – that is, by violence in the service of economic goals'. She uses the example of the kiosk to illustrate the acceptance and/or rejection of that imposed European aesthetic on the space. Ibid., 133.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 135.

conduct; they are places in which the memory of the past and the experience of the present are overlaid and intermixed.

As an anthropologist, Low is also focused not just on the social experience of the park, but also the sensory experience; making notes of “subtle sensory changes in the environment throughout the day” recording sounds, smells, and other sensory perceptions; she notes that these experiences “are a part of the cultural landscape that is valued, yet these sensations are also being changed.”<sup>168</sup> Drawing inspiration from this anthropological approach, I also recorded occasional soundscapes which captured the sounds of activity in the park. Low’s observations and conclusions serve this study by not only providing a parallel from a socially constructed meeting ground in another part of the world, but also by illustrating the dynamics of theories of space and place through tangible examples and demonstrating a very useful application of Lefebvre’s theories. Furthermore, both of Low’s case studies provide essential insights into how the use of public space is expressed and enforced both individually and collectively. Her examples show the ways in which space becomes characterised and defined so that social codes can define what behaviour and activity “should” and “shouldn’t” be a part of public use. I will draw upon Low’s work more explicitly in Chapter 5 of this dissertation, when I draw more direct comparisons between her work and the stories which emerged from Greenhead Stories.

In Low’s more recent work studying parks within New York City, she re-acknowledges the aforementioned aesthetics of disclusion referring to ways in which potential users of space are excluded as “a by-product of privatization, commercialization, historic preservation, and specific strategies of design and planning” while also adding that post 9/11 issues surrounding security and fear have

---

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 142.

introduced a new dimension of spatial exclusion, which further severs public spaces from become places of cross-cultural socialisation and memory making.<sup>169</sup> Low argues that it is important to combat growing social distance by ensuring

that our urban parks, beaches and heritage sites – those large urban spaces where we all come together – remain public, in the sense of providing a place for everyone to relax, learn, and recreate; and open so that we have places where interpersonal and intergroup cooperation and conflict can be worked out in a safe and public form.<sup>170</sup>

Through her involvement in founding the Public Space Research Group (PSRG) Low has worked with her colleagues with a chief concern over looking at the “social processes that makes spaces into places” through observing and collecting responses and reactions to changes in space, including “efforts to reassert old-order values through historic preservation and to impose greater control over public spaces through surveillance and physical reconstruction.”<sup>171</sup> The concerns of the PSRG are strongly linked to my own research questions, which similarly seek to understand memories of place, and the social process of remembering that informs our sense of place. Low’s work provides a useful context within which to consider the physical impacts of the historical restoration alongside the public opinions and memories associated with the restoration. Not only did the restoration seek to recreate the Victorian ‘old-order’ aesthetic of the park, but in doing so imposed a new order of security on the park (for example, the rebuilding of the complete railings, gates and fences once taken down during the Second World War, redefined the space as a closed area, and thus created a new order around times of accessibility and opening hours of the park). This new

---

<sup>169</sup> Low summarises how a public fears, concern for security and fear of the “other” have manifested in the design and control of public spaces through a range of mediums which has resulted in a ‘loss of freedom of movement and the cultural diversity in public space that has been so characteristics of the American way of life.’ Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanna Scheld, *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (Austin :University of Texas, 2005), 1-3.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., 3.

focus on security, connected to the re-establishment of the fence, linked not only to past aesthetics, but also present concerns about safety expressed by both project participants and media portrayals of the park throughout the restoration.<sup>172</sup> Although it was not exclusively an oral history project, Low's work provides a useful context for this project, through her definitions and explorations of the terms "space" and "place" and also through her "social sustainability" framework which draws from David Throsby's phenomenon of 'cultural ecosystems' and adds new critical dimensions connected to place, cultural ecology theories, and ideas around community participation and empowerment in the process of recording the experience of place.<sup>173</sup>

While ethnographers and anthropologists like Setha Low have provided oral historians with an accessible point of entry into the study of place and space, oral historians have begun to move forward and develop their own discourse and methods for interrogating, interpreting and understanding place. While anthropologists observe and record, oral historians engage their participants in not only telling stories but also interpreting those stories and creating new narratives of history. Oral Historians can learn from the ways in which other academics have approached recording and observing spatial practice. My research questions concerning how oral historians can apply our theory and methods to discussions around place and space have already been tackled within disciplines like Low's. Within the Greenhead Stories project, Low's work provided a parallel from which to consider the impacts of oral histories of place, and a working example to evaluate against my own approach and framework inspired by the work of Lefebvre and Samuel. From Lefebvre's perspective we can use the collected testimony to look analytically at how place has been constructed and

---

<sup>172</sup> These issues will be looked at in more depth in Chapter 5 and 6 of this dissertation.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

expressed within the park; from Samuel's we draw the narratives and look at how the stories of individuals can provide new views on history and the broader public's sense of the past. In a sense the two are one and the same: by linking memory to place the work of both theorists becomes intertwined and inseparable.

### **Greenhead Stories**

Knowing that I was looking to record narratives which represented individual and group senses of place relating to Greenhead Park, I set out to record as many 'spaces of representation' as possible, shying away from an intensive 'life story' approach so that participants could participate to whatever extent they were able to, but did not feel that they were obliged to give an entire life story if they only wanted to share a few memories about Greenhead Park. I started out the recording phase of the project with one very simple principle: if someone wanted to talk about the park's past, present or future, I would listen. The project had a 'soft launch' in the spring of 2010, when I joined forces with a local group called the "Friends of Greenhead Park" and worked with them to find project participants and record public memory, stories, thoughts, and opinions on the park. From this launch, I met with members of the community and recorded over the course of a year and a half until September 2011, including two 'summer seasons' in the life of the park. Alongside the recorded interviews, the Friends also had a wealth of previously collected documents, photographs, and written memories of the park which added to the depth of the archive and provided a launching point for recording memories. I completed most recordings though some were conducted by a number of volunteers from the group and we interviewed in areas around the park, in people's homes, in the building contractor's temporary offices and meeting rooms, and the park's community room. After this initial trial period it had become clear that there was not only a wide range

of undocumented stories but also a wealth of enthusiasm for the park within the local community. There were, however, a number of disruptions to my proposed plans: the project began during the restoration, and during the first summer of recording large areas of the park were closed, a temporary family playground was set up while the new playground was under construction, few events were planned in the park, and there were a string of security related incidents reported in the local news which impacted park usage.<sup>174</sup> Despite all of these issues we were able to amass a small collection of interviews and create a plan for further events for the winter months and through summer 2011.

The project also capitalised on the park as a popular space by setting up a twenty-four hour phone line, which allowed potential participants to call from the park and leave a message of up to twenty minutes length containing their observations, comments or memories. Although we did not receive very many recorded memories through this memory bank, it was a very effective tool for recruiting participants and capturing their interest at the right moment. Rather than waiting for them to return home to either email or mark an upcoming event in their diary, we provided a way for them to call right away and leave their contact details before it slipped their mind. This was also effective in recruiting older participants who were unlikely to find out about the project online or respond by email, and provided me with a way to collect interest and respond to phone enquiries without needing to answer the phone at all times.

After a successful summer of recording with the Friends of Greenhead Park, I continued to promote the project and extend the range of community partners

---

<sup>174</sup> These security related incidents and how they were reported in the *Huddersfield Examiner* will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

throughout the winter months so that we could utilise the summer of 2011 for further recording as well as drawing the project to a close with an exhibition and audiowalk of the park. This included developing relationships with the Huddersfield Model Engineering Society (who run the train in the park), the Park Warden (who eventually took on the role of Park Activities Officer), as well as several other specific cultural community groups and park user groups.

Throughout the course of the project we delivered a number of events ranging from heritage walks, social events, steering meetings, and I also delivered a talk and training sessions on oral history as a method of historical collection for the Friends of Greenhead Park's monthly history talk. Most events including my own presentation were recorded or documented for the archive. In the summer of 2011 the park began to slowly re-open as more areas became finished, and as such I attended a full year's calendar of events and recorded on-site testimony at a wide range of events including the Caribbean Carnival, The Huddersfield Vegetable and Flower Show, and the park's official birthday and reopening celebration (although some of these events were not actually held in the park due to issues with the restoration).

By setting out a model of collaborative recording and utilising a dynamic multimedia database as a home for the interviews, this project was uninhibited by content-driven recording beyond the simple limitation of my focus on the park. As a result what was recorded was simply memory and interpretation of that memory by project participants who came forward to share their stories of Greenhead Park.

Interviews, which range from short sound bites to lengthier recorded reminiscences, all attempted to record both public memory and opinion on the park. Members of the local community (as well as those further afield) were invited to share as little or as much as they wished with the project and also offer opinions on the direction of the



project; the resulting archive is one which captures not only a wide range of memories, but also the spirit of how those memories were collected – displaying the varying enthusiasm of participants, their motives for participating, as well as their thoughts on how they make meaning from their memories and situate themselves in the story of the past, present, and future of the park.

This flexible approach to recording gave the project strength but also came with its pitfalls. Although there had been a great deal of consultation over the park's redevelopment there were still many people who were dissatisfied either with the council's plan for the park or the progress, which meant that I often found myself documenting criticism of the park and the personal bugbears of those who were simply looking for someone to lodge their complaints with. But I decided early on that it was not for me to decide what would and wouldn't be a part of the archive, and that I would record whatever individuals had to say as long as *they* felt it deserved to be on record. In the end, this wide recording remit resulted in a very colourful archive which also captured contemporary opinions on the park as well as some of the politics and tensions between the different project stakeholders and park users.

### **Project Outcomes**

The final Greenhead Stories archive consists of 24 one-to-one and/or group interviews, 8 anonymous or 'vox-pop' type interviews recorded at events or in the park, several other recordings from events and interviews conducted by the Friends of Greenhead Park, recorded sound clips and noises from the park, and a range of contextual recordings from project meetings, presentations and other events.

At the end of the project I collaborated with the Friends of Greenhead Park on creating an exhibition which featured both the history of the park, as it had been

written by David Griffiths, as well as the recorded memory and testimony from Greenhead Stories. This exhibition highlighted the many different uses of the park throughout its history, showing how the park has continued to be a meeting place for leisure, family, courtship, sport, and political gathering since its opening.<sup>175</sup> Excerpts from the various collected recordings were edited into an audio walk around the park made accessible by mp3 players which could be borrowed and a ‘moblue’ station which allows users in the park to access the audiowalk via either wi-fi or Bluetooth.<sup>176</sup> The stories which were edited into the audio walk were based on some of the reoccurring themes which emerged through the online archive, as well as based on feedback from project participants based on the stories they were interested in hearing and the history they felt was missing from the park.<sup>177</sup> The audio walk highlighted some of the same themes as the exhibition, and was designed so that it could be used while walking around the park or while sitting in the café. The content does not necessarily require interaction with the physical landscape, but having some familiarity with the site would benefit a listener who was accessing it as a podcast at home: the audio walk enhances the story of the park by bringing to life the invisible within the site, rather than acting as a complete retelling of its layout and history.

The archive, moblue station, mp3 players and other resources were given homes in the park and passed on to park staff and volunteers who could maintain their upkeep, and the Friends of Greenhead Park group were also provided with a digital Zoom recorder so that they could continue to collect stories and host oral history

---

<sup>175</sup> Further details of the exhibition will be discussed in the conclusion as it is linked to documentation within the digital archive.

<sup>176</sup> Moblue is a wireless device developed by Audio Trails ([www.audiotrails.co.uk](http://www.audiotrails.co.uk)) which offers downloadable content to laptops, smart phones and other devices through either a wi-fi landing page or a Bluetooth connection. (accessed 15 March 2013).

<sup>177</sup> For a concise summary of audiowalk technology, uses, and history see Simon Bradley, “History to go: oral history, audiowalks and mobile media,” *Oral History* 40, no. 1 (2012): 99-110.

workshops in the future. The exhibition itself was funded by Kirklees Council and design work was supported by the staff at Kirklees Museums and Galleries, while the mp3 players, mobile station, recorders and additional materials to support the oral history outcomes were supported by the Research Impact Fund at the University of Huddersfield.

Up until this point this dissertation has only described the digital archive as a solution to the issues facing the discipline of oral history as outlined in the introductory chapters. In order to fully illustrate the outcomes of the Greenhead Stories project and the full potential of the contextual digital archive, it is necessary to link the archive to the dissertation and therefore access it and explore it in relation to this written piece of work. The coming chapters, which focus on illustrating the project's research questions and methodological hurdles, will make use of the archive, quote from it, and direct the reader to audio clips found in the archive which illustrate project outcomes and exemplify solutions to these methodological questions. Therefore the reader also becomes the listener, experiencing both aural properties of oral history in relation to the project itself. Before these oral histories can be used to illustrate the research outcomes, the archive itself must first be explained to the user. This chapter will present Stories Matter as a digital archive tool, and give an in-depth explanation of how interviews and other sound recordings were collected, tagged, and managed to create the project archive. These outcomes will be reviewed further in Chapter 7 alongside further commentary on their successes and shortcomings.

### **Stories Matter**

Stories Matter is free, open-source software created by the Centre for Digital Storytelling at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada. Although oral historians

have been managing with a range of digital softwares and archive platforms, Stories Matter presents a unique, free-to-use software that is specifically designed for the needs of an oral history project. According to the makers of Stories Matter, the software is an “oral history database tool built for oral historians by oral historians, as an alternative to transcription”.<sup>178</sup> Stories Matter is a software that has a collaborative ethos at the centre of its design, in the sense that it “... is intended to allow oral historians and other interested communities to interact with audio and video recordings of interviews in a way that emphasizes individual interviewees as central to stories being narrated”.<sup>179</sup> Though Stories Matter has been available for free use since May 2009, oral historians are only beginning to publish their results and reflections on its use.<sup>180</sup> The emphasis on the interviewee rather than the transcript perfectly presents an opportunity to create a more contextual archive and the purpose-built nature of the software avoids some of the stumbling blocks associated with other archival suites that oral historians have been trialing and making use of in the new frontier of the digital age.

According to Michael Frisch, whose work drives the methodological development of the discipline, the presence of digital technology has pushed us into a new paradox in oral history practice, wherein “some new capacities centered on digitization and the Internet have tended to reinforce convention and turn

---

<sup>178</sup> <http://www.storiesmatter.ca> (accessed 14 November 2013)

<sup>179</sup> <http://storytelling.concordia.ca/storiesmatter/stories-matter-instruction-manual-and-faqs> (accessed 15 March 2013)

<sup>180</sup> One of the first detailed published accounts of a project making use of Stories Matter to evaluate, interpret content and disseminate interviews is the work of Stacey Zembrzycki, “Bringing Stories to Life: Using New Media to Disseminate and Critically Engage with Oral History Interviews,” *Oral History* 41, no. 1 (2013), 98-107.

methodological progress back on itself”<sup>181</sup> Although new software solutions ensure that “...audio and video documentation becomes as richly and easily accessible as a well-organized text-based reference book...”, they truly only overcome the technical side of our professional dilemmas, not the methodological and philosophical side.<sup>182</sup> Frisch’s work describes a range of solutions used by oral historians including his own work with the Randforce Associates who make use of Interclipper, a digital tool invented for use of recording and analysing focus groups for the purpose of market research work.<sup>183</sup> Although their efforts to adapt this software for their own purposes have been fruitful, he acknowledges the limitations of Interclipper in that it is most suitable for small-scale projects.<sup>184</sup> Furthermore, Interclipper is highly expensive (costing around \$495 USD) due to its nature as a market research tool with commercial outcomes, which is not suitable for small-scale projects with small-scale funding, particularly community driven or community led oral history projects.<sup>185</sup> Frisch lists a number of other electronic archives which have been housed in custom built digital archives, but notes that well-known software used extensively by oral historians in the past such as N6 (formerly NUD\*IST), which was suitably designed for qualitative data analysis, relies heavily on texts and transcripts.<sup>186</sup> Frisch writes that Interclipper is “...one of the first tools to permit this kind of qualitative analysis of video and audio directly.”<sup>187</sup> Unlike Interclipper, Stories Matter software was designed to work with a range of oral history methods (including video interviews),

---

<sup>181</sup> Michael Frisch, Three Dimensions and More: Oral History Beyond the Paradoxes of Method,” in *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy (London: Guildford Press, 2008), 222.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 227.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> \$495 USD was the price of Interclipper at the time of this research, more information can be found at [http://interclipper.com/site/audio\\_site/purchase.html](http://interclipper.com/site/audio_site/purchase.html) (accessed March 15 2013).

<sup>186</sup> Frisch, “Three Dimensions and More,” 228.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

and being made by oral historians is an effective platform for both dealing with the practical element of developing a digital, transcript-free archive, and the methodological issues which faced this study, namely the issues of orality and authority of interpretation.

### **How the archive was built**

Although the Greenhead Stories project was recorded and collected through a range of interview formats and scenarios, the typical interview style was a one-on-one interview which included questions about the restoration, future hopes for the park as well as a chance for participants to ask questions and suggest elements of the park's history they were interested to know more about. Each interview was treated differently based on the context or interview relationship; this was a necessary measure due to the very different nature and interests of each participant who was attracted to the project. It did not make sense to try to ask each person the same set of questions. Each interview had to be both subject and participant specific in relation to how they approached the project or what story they had to tell about the park.<sup>188</sup> Further to this, some interviews used a sort of 'mini' life-story interview model, in that participants expressed a 'life story' of their involvement with the park, narrating briefly from childhood to present before revisiting that narrative in the same order led by the probing questions of an interviewer.<sup>189</sup> For some interviewees who had a long-standing relationship with the park, this was the most effective interview style, while

---

<sup>188</sup> Although some interviews within the project followed the life-story narrative, this type of project rested on mostly 'single-issue testimony' which "...can be shorter than a life story, but more detailed" which focus on gathering diverse views on a single issue, event or place rather than fewer, longer, personal narratives. Hugo Slim, Paul Thompson, Olivia Bennet, and Nigel Cross, "Ways of Listening," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (London: Routledge, 2006), 146.

<sup>189</sup> Robert Atkinson. *The Life Story Interview* (London: Sage, 1998), 2-8. Atkinson's book presents the life story model as a model for interviewing which keeps the interviewee's natural order of narrative in tact.

others interviews were about specific events or one-off connections or memories of the park. Once complete, each interview was summarised using a model based on the State Library of New South Wales in Australia, which is a transcript-free oral history collection which works “...on the basis that the oral/aural recording is the primary or original document and anything after that is necessarily an edited version” (See Appendix C for a sample of the State Library’s tape logs).<sup>190</sup> This model was adapted slightly for the purposes of this project, so that each summary conveys information through four columns, the first a time count, the second a summary relating to that time count, the third a list of people, places and events mentioned in the interview, and the fourth a column for the researcher to mark possible key words or reoccurring themes (see Appendix D for a sample of Ron Berry’s interview summary).<sup>191</sup> As the project progressed a list of the emerging key words and themes coming from the people, places or events and theme columns was compiled. As themes began to recur, or were given importance through interviewee feedback, the list was edited, streamlined and shaped to create the end result of the list, which went into the archive. In this manner, I created a sort of ‘controlled vocabulary’ for the project.<sup>192</sup> The controlled manner of collecting and editing this shortlist of keywords allows for ease of access; for example, numerous participants refer to the park’s conservatory as “the greenhouse” but tagging all references as “Conservatory” leads to ease of access and clarity in the catalogue.

---

<sup>190</sup> Rosie Block, Curator of Oral History State Library of New South Wales, e-mail message to author, April, 12, 2007.

<sup>191</sup> Ron Berry’s summary, also illustrates an example of where a ‘mini’ life story model is Ron Berry’s interview, where the first thirteen minutes quickly lists some of his memories of the park, while the remaining part of the interview revisits that narrative through questions which reveal more detailed memories, through following the narrative structure he established in the first part of the interview.

<sup>192</sup> Nancy Mackay, *Curating Oral Histories* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007), 57. According to Mackay a controlled vocabulary is essential and cataloguers must “analyze the content of the item catalogued and add subject headings based on a controlled vocabulary”

These themes would become ‘tags’ in the archive, which would be applied to each interviewee, interview, and clip they related to. It must be acknowledged that this process of collecting themes and tagging for content and meaning is in no way objective; in fact, each act of indexing and tagging the clips passes on some sort of meaning or bias into the archive; however, indexing is a means to a necessary end of creating a contextual and accessible archive, and this method of content and meaning mapping will be justified and contextualised in oral history discourse later in this chapter.<sup>193</sup> Although cataloguing and indexing is a complicated matter, it is the necessary “difference between the trunk in Grandma’s attic and a library” according to Nancy Mackay’s guide *Curating Oral Histories*.<sup>194</sup>

As the interviews were collected, they were entered onto the Stories Matter database, and then divided into clips which were selected because of their connection to the recurring themes list, or because their narrator gave them some element of importance or fortitude their storytelling. Although the structure of the archive is built ‘top-down’ so that each interviewee branches into their interviews, and then into the clips from each interview, like so:

---

<sup>193</sup> Both within archival and oral history discourses there is a movement towards acknowledging the subjectivity of the archivist’s role, as well as the ‘biography’ of the archive relating to the personal imprint the archivist/collector/oral historian leaves on their collections. A strong summary of this shift has been presented by Mary Stewart, “Unveiling the ‘biography’ of the Oral History Archive” (paper presented at the International Oral History Association Conference, Prague, July 7-11, 2009) which draws from Carolyn Hamilton, “Do archives have lives? And feelings?,” Research seminar as part of NCRM Seminar Series Archiving and Reusing Qualitative Data: Seminar 4: The Epistemology of the Archive, 11 November 2008, Pelham House Hotel, Lewes. And Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, “Archives, Records and Power: the Making of Modern Memory,” *Archival Science* 2, (2002), 6. And Mark A. Greene, ‘The Power of Archives: Archivists’ Values and Value in the Postmodern Age’, *The American Archivist* Vol 72 (2009), 17-41.

<sup>194</sup> Mackay, 57.



## Greenhead Stories Project

Interviewee

Interview # 1

Clip #1

Clip #2

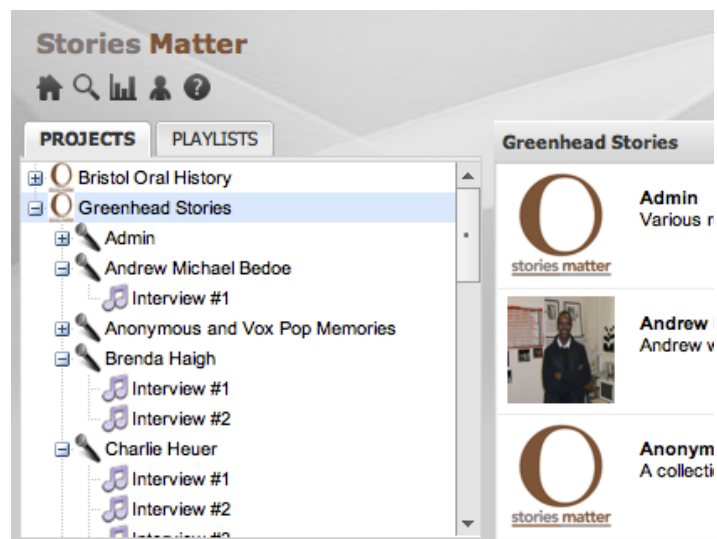
Clip #3

Interview #2

Clip #1

Clip #2

Fig. 9 – Screengrab of file structuring



The tagging was built in from the bottom up, so that each clip is tagged with the relevant keywords which were then also attributed to the interview containing that clip, and then the interviewee themselves. As such, each interviewee is tagged with the keywords, which relate to what is in their interviews, and each recording is tagged with keywords relating to its content and the content of the clips within the interview. For example, if an interviewee speaks about the paddling pool in one of their clips, the keyword ‘Paddling Pool’ was tagged in that clip, in their interview, and in their interviewee profile, but not necessarily in their other clips or interview files if they sat for more than one recording session. This type of tagging allows for simultaneous ‘Item-Level Cataloging’ and ‘Collection-Level Cataloging’ so that at any one time a researcher can get a macro-level sense of all the tags across the archive, while also ‘zooming in’ at a micro-level to investigate each occurrence of the tag, at the interviewee, interview, or clip level.<sup>195</sup>

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 59. Mackay acknowledges that some catalogues allow for both item-level and collection-level records and that new technologies allow archivists to link from one to the other.

## **How to access the archive**

To access the archive, follow the technical instructions found in Appendix A, which explains downloading, installing and logging in to the Stories Matter database, in the printed copy of the dissertation this is included as a detachable document so it can be referenced freely. These technical instructions should provide the steps necessary to get free access to the archive as it has been built and designed for a researcher or evaluator. The following instructions will assist the reader in accessing the archive and understanding the structure better. These instructions are not necessarily an ‘exercise’, but if followed will provide some familiarity with the archive as a whole, and will provide some insight into the dynamics of the archive as well as different ways to explore the archive itself.

## **Divisions within the archive**

As archive software that is driven by interview content and puts the interviewee at the centre of the story, the Stories Matter package organises information primarily by project and secondarily by interviewee. In the case of this archive, there is only one featured project (Greenhead Stories), which always appears in the upper left hand section of the screen with a collapsible list (see Fig. 9) of all the interviewees listed within the project. At all times the Project/Playlist frame will appear in the top left of the screen and the Tag Cloud frame will appear in the bottom left of the screen, so that at any time you are free to explore by either interviewee or tag (keyword). In addition to the interviewees which are found here in alphabetical order by first name, there are also a number of other subheadings which are not necessarily individual interviewees, but are catalogued alongside the interviewees to work with the structure of the archive. Among these are headings such as

“Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories” (which includes shorter clips and one-off stories which do not fit into the category of interviews), “Contextual Clips” which include soundscapes, meeting recordings and presentation recordings, as well as a number of other headings which include relevant contextual information about the project.

### **Access by interviewee**

If the user begins by selecting and clicking on the project heading in the top left frame of the screen (Greenhead Stories) a list of all the interviewees will appear in the centre panel of the screen. If you select an interviewee, the centre panel will then change to a list of each of their interviews (in most cases just one recording) and in the panel below you will find a short summary, as well as all the tags relating to their interview content. On the right hand side a panel appears where biographical information or interviewee-specific information can be stored. This option allows you to explore the interviewees at the most superficial level to gather basic information about them.

### **Access by interview**

By selecting an interviewee and then clicking on their interview (recording) file in the centre panel, you can then explore the next layer of the archive. Each interview file appears in the centre panel with a play/pause button and basic functions below it. At this level the interview can be browsed and listened to in its entirety. Below the upper centre frame is a frame with information about the interview’s date, location and summary. In the case where the interviewee only has one recording, the tags listed under their interview will match their interviewee profile, whereas in cases with multiple recording the tags will only reflect the tags relevant to each recording.

Within each interview, there are a number of sub-panels available to explore including the ‘transcript tab’ which appears in the lower section of the centre panel alongside ‘session’, ‘interviewer’ and other information. The ‘transcript’ panel provides the time count and summary columns pasted from the interview summary as a guide to the interview’s content. This can be viewed while playing and browsing the interview in the panel above. Users are able to access the full summary file, via the ‘attachment’ tab, where a .pdf file of the full summary is attached and can be copied to desktop. This ‘attachment’ tab may also have additional photos or documents attached which are relevant to each interview and interviewee.

### **Access by Clip**

Within this top-down exploration approach you can select an interview and listen to it in its entirety (as described above) or listen to, or create, clips which relate to specific content or themes. Once an interview file has been selected the lower left hand frame displays the number of clips which have been tagged within it. These clips each have their own tags for content, and can be browsed separately. The Stories Matter software allows clips to be of any length, and can overlap, so that sections of any interview can be included in multiple clips with multiple tags. There are also sections available below and to the right for making notes on clips (these can be used by either the archivist/oral historian or individual users depending on their level of access to create and manipulate content). Clips may also be exported to the desktop, using the function available below where the clip plays.

### **Access by tag**

An alternative method of accessing the interviews is by navigating through the use of tags which provide a route to exploring and working out how interviews and

differing stories may be connected. This is particularly useful to note because the Stories Matter software allows for a range of access levels for different users and individual participants and researchers can download the archive to create their own tagging and levels of interpretation. For the purpose of the project, tagging developed out of listing, revisiting and redefining the recurring themes in order to group them by content, meaning and interpretation (See Appendix E for an alphabetical list of tags). Most tags are quite straightforward and relate to content, for example when a specific place, event, or activity is mentioned it is tagged. The result of this is tags such as Paddling Pool, Lake, Fishing, Fireworks, and others which emerged from people, places and events being listed in the interview summaries. Some tags are slightly more abstract as they relate to a person-specific period of time or memory; for example, the ‘Childhood’ tag appears when any participant reflects on their childhood, regardless of what era or time that person’s childhood took place in. The tag ‘Parent’ appears when interviewees talk about visiting the park as a parent. In these cases, the tags are subject-specific and potential researchers can refer to other information in the archive to find date and time context; these tags were defined out of a trend of people describing various stages of visiting the park from childhood, to teenage years, as a parent, as a retiree, etc and are purposefully linked to life-stage time frames over specific dates.

No tagging has been done by date. This is not just because oral historians are focused on, as Portelli says, “the knot of memory and imagination that turns material facts into cultural meanings...” but because it did not suit the project to create a linear timeline of events tied to specific dates.<sup>196</sup> Furthermore, this type of single-issue

---

<sup>196</sup> Alessandro Portelli, *The Battle of Valle Giulia* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997), 42.

testimony interview did not always suit date-naming and placing, beyond a simple order of events as participants were not always remembering specific occasions but telling memories which were conglomerated from numerous park visits and occasions. Valerie Yow summarises the different impact and use of episodic memory tied to a specific event and habitual memory of everyday life; rather than being able to pointing out the “flashbulb memories” of specific life events, this sought to record the humdrum details of everyday life which are quite often easier to recall, but more difficult to pinpoint in time.<sup>197</sup> Yow writes

As researchers we would like to pinpoint the time so that we can know the sequence in the chain of events, but our narrators will not be concerned about precise time. Researcher William Brewer found that personal memory typically contains information about actions, location and thoughts, but rarely precise information about time. And, as you would expect, Brewer found that questions about time are the least effective means of stimulating recall.<sup>198</sup>

The tagging of clips is purposefully linked to content, meaning and interpretation. For example, numerous participants refer to the park as a courting ground, but not necessarily during the same time period. Tagging for content relating to ‘courting’ or ‘teenage years’ allows the researcher to access interviews by content on a continuum which is not dependent on decade or time. Time is not left out of the archive entirely: dates are often included in interview descriptions and in summaries. Independent researchers may make use of these details if they choose, but the overall thread that ties the archive together is purposefully space and place over time.

As it was an aim of the project to record interpretive dialogues, some tags are more interpretive and are not place, event or person specific. For example, the tags of ‘Restoration’ and ‘Decline’ are applied to any clip or interview where a participant

---

<sup>197</sup> Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005), 42.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 49

explicitly talks about one of these subjects. If they are sharing a story about the restoration in relation to the conservatory, both ‘Restoration’ and ‘Conservatory’ are tagged. Further to these topical tags, the tag ‘Greenhead Stories’ is applied to any particular clip or interview where the interviewee mentions the Greenhead Stories Project, asks questions about the project or provides feedback on its aims. Other clips which document presentations or meetings relating to the development or delivery of the project also bear this tag. Finally, for the purpose of interpretation a final tag of ‘Meta’ was applied to any clip in which the interviewee made a direct comparison or judgement based on differences between the past and present, or when someone goes as far as interpreting, analysing or contextualising their own memory within history. These tags have been made in order to demonstrate the capability of narrators as active and engaged interpreters of their own memories as a part of preserving authority within the archive.

Users may explore the archive using tags at any level. To begin, select ‘Greenhead Stories’ from the project menu to see a list of all tags occurring across the entire project (this list appears in the lower, left hand frame under the project listings). In a typical ‘tag cloud’ format, every tag which appears throughout the archive is listed, with those occurring more frequently appearing larger in relation to those which occur less often. General tags such as ‘Childhood’, ‘Multicultural Huddersfield’, ‘Restoration’ and ‘Decline’ appear larger, while other tags appear smaller because they are mentioned fewer times. By clicking and exploring any given tag at the project level, users will be provided with a list of what materials are associated with it, which appears in the centre panel, listing interviewees first, then interview files, then clips. When a tag in the tag cloud is selected this tagging function performs an automatic search for the tag in all levels of the archive’s

structure. In the right hand column you can adjust your search by selecting and deselecting the tick boxes relating to the search results display, choosing which levels of the archive's structure you would like to see results for.

### **Access by searching**

In addition to exploring the archive by interviewee, interview, clips and tags Stories Matter also provides a general search function which can be tailored to return results from all levels of the archive. By selecting the magnifying glass icon in the menu in the top left corner of the frame, users may search the database using terms of their choice and selecting the depth of their search via the tick boxes appearing in the right hand column. This option may appeal to some researchers, but is in fact limited in its function as it does not search all text associated with the each interview (for example it does not search the summaries which appear under the 'transcript' tab). This may seem limited, but is quite likely a purposeful choice due to the nature of Stories Matter being targeted as a means of moving away from the full-text-search transcript model.

### **Building an archive**

In his work, Frisch plots a number of axes which were polarised before the digital age and presents some of the dilemmas associated with them. These dilemmas and axes are made into continuums through the use of software such as Stories Matter. For example, his 'cataloguing versus indexing' axis collapses into a single continuum within which the two opposite become one and the same: individual interviews become catalogued in a similar fashion to the way in which a catalogue leads you to books on a specific subject or by a certain author, while within a book,



content is indexed to take you to a specific passage of interest within the book.<sup>199</sup> In *Stories Matter*, interviewees, interviews, and clips of interviews can be separated and accessed by different categories. The presence of the tag cloud allows you to browse by definition of your choice, and then navigate through various levels to pinpoint the information you are looking for. Frisch presents the choice of content vs. meaning mapping (also referred to as analysis-driven or inquiry-driven mapping) and alludes to a debate over the necessity to either map or define content within the archive. Frisch says that archivists have been hesitant to map for meaning, having projected that role onto the researcher, and while this is understandable he also notes that "...without being able to get closer to passages of interest, researchers simply will not be able to explore primary documentation given the time demanded by listening to or viewing recordings."<sup>200</sup> This, says Frisch, is exactly why audio and video archives remain "so underutilized". What is remarkable about the *Stories Matter* software is it allows the oral historian to map for either meaning or content, while also giving the external researcher a choice in how they interact with that mapping. For example in the *Greenhead Stories* archive; through the use of the tag cloud, researchers could interact with the tags of 'Restoration' and 'Decline' to find correlations between the occurrence of these themes, thus finding their own meanings, while also being free to ignore these tags completely. Further to this, by giving researchers a level of use which allows them to edit content and manipulate content either locally or remotely, new researchers can also use the archive as a tool to do their own content mapping and find their own correlations and meanings. Both the original research and future researchers have the option of working within either content or meaning, or working on a continuum, which allows them to tag and index both simultaneously.

---

<sup>199</sup> Frisch, "Three Dimensions and More," 2008. 229.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, 230.

Frisch's final dimension connects both of these previously mentioned axes in contrasting text versus audio-video. Frisch asserts that while oral history is moving away from seeing text transcripts as the 'end result' of oral history projects, we can never entirely do away with text and should not therefore rule out its usefulness in the archive.<sup>201</sup> Text and audio, meaning and content, and all levels of indexing can work together; in the Greenhead Stories archive, text provides a useful tool in the 'transcript' tab of each individual interview, where a copy of the text summary appears to help researchers access the file with summaries appearing alongside the linear time count. All these elements can work together: just as Frisch says that rarely does a narrator say "And now I will tell a story about gender relations in farm work" my narrators rarely say things like "Now I will connect the physical decline of the park with a social decline in our community".<sup>202</sup> Through mapping meaning and content at all levels and through providing text summaries researchers are able to access the points in which content, meanings, and stories intersect be it gender relations and farm work, or social and physical decline.

Frisch's work encourages us to move towards what he calls a 'postdocumentary sensibility' which allows for accessible, meaningful, fluid and non-privileged access to the content of oral history. He uses a metaphor of the archive as a 'raw' collection, which is no longer left unprepared for use. Today everyone who accesses archives can make use of these ingredients: in fact, "the same tools that provide that access permit anyone continually to "cook"-to explore a collection and select and order meaningful materials".<sup>203</sup> This is particularly true in the case of

---

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 231

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 230

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 237

Stories Matter, which unlike other software is free to access and relatively intuitive to use.

### **Sound Quality in the Archive**

Greenhead Stories aimed to follow the most current models of method and practice, as advised by oral history handbooks and by oral history associations, however there were a number of areas where the most commonly accepted modes of collection had to be adapted to suit the needs of the project. Some of these adaptations were methodological, for example having a flexible interview style, recording contemporary opinions and commentary in addition to memories, while others were more practical, such as accepting limited recording qualities.

Although recording quality is a highly important and much discussed subject among oral historians, most oral history handbooks and guides do not give detailed guidance on what standards and quality must be adhered to. Due to the ever-changing influence of technology, oral historians often rely on advice provided by specific archives and oral history societies who lay out recording standards in their collection policies. The Greenhead Stories project presented me with a number of interesting challenges when it came to the technicalities of the interview setting, and typical (or preferential) recording scenarios had to be adapted. For example, Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, M. Rebecca Sharples's *The Handbook of Oral History* presents itself as a full guide to oral history, with contributions from many prominent scholars in the field and yet when the book is read closely for instruction on particular recording styles the text is only lightly peppered with pieces of advice pertaining to radio quality, quality of interview style, and practical advice regarding recording

equipment but not its best use.<sup>204</sup> In his chapter entitled “Oral History Interviews: From Inception to Close” Charles T. Morrissey does however describe the ideal interview setting;

I glance at the dining room and suggest we sit across the corner of the table, using a third chair for placing the tape recorder where I can see it easily but my respondent cannot. For interviewees this follows the time-worn adage “Out of sight, out of mind.” Respondents are less likely to be nervous about a tape recorder in a room if they can’t see it.<sup>205</sup>

Morrissey’s description provides typical suggestions such as choosing a room with large heavy furniture or many books (for acoustics), interviewing people in their homes, away from appliances, pets and street noise, placing the recorder on a pillow to minimise noise from it shaking or being adjusted, and keeping the recorder out of sight to put the interviewee at ease. The American Oral History Association also echoes this advice: “Unless part of the oral history process includes gathering soundscapes, historically significant sound events, or ambient noise, the interview should be conducted in a quiet room with minimal background noises and possible distractions.”<sup>206</sup> As does the Oral History Society in the United Kingdom, although they also suggest that all recording be done using two external microphones in order to capture a more focused, cleaner sound quality, stressing that a high quality external microphone is a more important part of the equation than a high quality recorder and that built in microphones may not be sufficient.<sup>207</sup>

It became clear early in the project that most interviewees wanted to meet and share their stories in the park, simply because they had not seen it since the restoration

---

<sup>204</sup> Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples *The Handbook of Oral History* (Oxford: Altamira, 2006).

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 183.

<sup>206</sup> <http://www.oralhistory.org/do-oral-history/principles-and-practices/#best> (accessed 15 March 2013).

<sup>207</sup> <http://www.ohs.org.uk/advice/index.php> (accessed 15 March 2013).

had begun or because it was a convenient and accessible place to meet. This was beneficial as the physical clues in the park aided the process of recollection, but it was also a hurdle to sound quality because there was no suitable interview facility available in the park. This meant sometimes interviewing people in the busy café (while also capturing the ambient background noises and events going on), interviewing people out in the open, and interviewing people in quiet but echoing rooms while restoration work and construction went on in the background. There were some occasions where participants agreed to meet me at the university, where I was able to secure a quiet room for us to interview in, but these were exceptional cases. I had to accept early on in the project that a noisy or inconsistent recording was more beneficial to the project than having no recording at all. In every case I did the best to ensure as high quality a recording as possible but the logistics of meeting in the park, interviewing on the spot, and sometimes even walking and interviewing meant that using anything beyond my Zoom H2 recorder was futile. While external microphones would have been a luxury, it was too logistically complicated to employ them when recording in the park.

In a way, the decision to accept a realistic standard of recording was liberating, as it allowed us to do more ‘on the spot’ recording in the park, collecting anonymous pieces of testimony and conducting short interviews with people as and when they showed an interest, and it also took the pressure off the volunteer interviewers who could focus largely on interview and question quality over recording quality. As the park is home to a number of regular events, I also thought it was important to record sound bites and short interviews ‘in situ’ which tried to capture the spirit of the events and capitalise on the enthusiasm of the day. This meant that a number of interviews do have ‘ambient’ noise which contextualise the interviews

(mainly those interviewed during the Carnival and Huddersfield Flower and Garden show) but it also meant that I could record a number of ‘soundscapes’ which were then used in the audiowalk to give context to other interviews or transition through themes and topics.

## **Conclusion**

In practical terms, Greenhead Stories was a project designed by the people who participated in it: those who came with short stories and anonymous memories were given an opportunity to contribute to the dialogue through the collaborative process of the interview, those who gave more were interviewed more in depth, and asked to reflect on what they felt was important about the park and what they wanted to know about others. Finally, those who had the capacity and interest were invited to participate in events, do some recording, and contribute to the interpretation and presentation of the interviews. Unlike the act of writing history through using archives and records, searching through the collected pieces of information and ephemera which Lefebvre would call representations of space, the act of recording history through oral history interviews allows each participant to curate the collection, deciding what they will share, and contextualising their stories in the way they want them to be presented. At a time when specific representations of the past were being displayed and publicised, and the physical environment within Greenhead Park was being reconstructed to match these official representations, the act of recording oral histories provided an opportunity to record the story of a space in flux, recording the sense of place attached to both the landscape of decline and projects restored built environment. Linking back to the initial research

questions, a review of the history of Greenhead Park suggests that oral history interviews could be used to fill gaps in the histories of place by using history within memory to fill silences and counter accepted narratives. As interviewers who interrogate memories, it is necessary for oral historians to understand how other academics have studied the social production of space, so that they can interrogate narratives and better trace the roots of public memories of place. A survey of Greenhead Park's traditional history reveals gaps, silences and potential misconceptions: oral history is the tool that not only records new views to fill those gaps, but also produces outcomes that can be used to re-inform popular memory and author new collective senses of place. Though it is clear that oral history can serve a clear purpose in studying the history of any place, there are a number of methodological and ethical considerations that must be considered when applying it as a methodology. Once the possible role of oral history was established as my methodology, it was necessary to revisit the literature that informed my decision-making and establish some guiding principles that informed the ethics of putting this method into practice.

## **Chapter 4 – Methodology: Putting Theory into Practice**

Though the experiences of oral historians who have employed shared authority have differed greatly, their lessons learned and critical reflections on the process of extending authority can be extracted and applied to a project such as Greenhead Stories. In order to address my research questions regarding the use of shared authority in a collaborative project, it was necessary to bring the literature together and pinpoint some guiding principles that could be applied to the project. This chapter will summarise how my initial research into the theory and methodology behind shared authority was applied in practice when delivering Greenhead Stories and building the digital archive. This includes outlining the main ethical guidelines that the project adhered to, as well as the three guiding principles which underpinned the delivery of the project (including a discussion of intersubjectivity within the interview scenario). This chapter deals directly with my research questions which asked if shared authority be applied in a project which seeks to record a range of voices and what are the results of attempting to share authority across a range of different groups, individuals, and organisations, all with different interests and capacities to be involved? In order to approach these questions it was necessary to build a working model which not only guided the project, but also helped to identify the ways in which the dialogue of authority could be preserved. After outlining my methodology, this chapter will also revisit the model introduced in Chapter 1, applying it to the project to demonstrate how the digital archive preserves these elements of Tone and context, and how these evidence the aim of shared authority.

### **Ethics and Guiding Principles**



In order to ensure that Greenhead Stories followed ethical research procedures and practices, the project followed guidance provided by the Oral History Society and was informed by the University of Huddersfield's School of Music, Humanities and Media's (SMHM) ethics procedures as they developed in tandem with the project. The ethical considerations of a shared authority oral history research project go beyond that of copyright, data protection and the practical ethics procedures typical of oral history research so it was important to follow established guidelines while also considering the broader implications of the ethics of sharing authority in practice.

In accordance with the School of Music, Humanities and Media's (SMHS) General Guidelines for Research Ethics policies, adopted from the University of Sheffield's Research Ethics: General Principles and Statements, Greenhead Stories represents a 'low risk' research project (see Appendix F). The guidelines provided by the school align with those provided by the Oral History Society, centreing on the rights of participants regarding consent, confidentiality, security and safety and the obligations of researchers to act with honesty, integrity, and cultural sensitivity whilst minimising "possible risk to participants and themselves."<sup>208</sup> Through advice provided by the Oral History Society and informed by a range of practical guidance from oral history handbooks (including the already acknowledged work of Yow, Ritchie, and Thompson), my research considered the impacts of the interview process and the potential uses of recorded interviews. Each participant was given information about the project in advance and at the start of each interview was provided with

---

<sup>208</sup> School of Music, Humanities and Media, Ethics Process General Guidelines. Sections 1.1. and 1.2. (see Appendix F).

information on consent, the aims of the project, and the potential uses of their interviews. At the end of the interview, we went over the use of SMHS's Student Consent Form to record consent (see Appendix G). This consent form provides a link to the university's wider ethics policies and allows the interviewee to limit the use of their interview to whatever purposes and forms they wish. For all interviewees the options were the same (though they could alter or limit use on the form), including the interview in the final archive placed in the university library, use of the interview in publications (books or pamphlets), exhibitions, on our website, possibly on radio, and under other uses "audio tours" was added. Each participant was asked to provide their contact details, date of birth, and signature, before being provided with a copy of the form as well as being given my contact details and the contact details of my supervisor at the university.<sup>209</sup> In accordance with the suggestions of the Oral History Society, consent was discussed prior to the interview and the form was discussed and signed upon finishing the interview, all participants were provided with a copy of their form and were offered a copy of their interview for their own purposes.<sup>210</sup> In this manner, the practical implications of ethics were followed so that each participant made informed decisions around their participation in the research and understood the ways in which their interviews might be used, however there were further implications to consider particularly in regards to the ethics of sharing authority.

The extension of authority within oral history opens up a number of questions surrounding the posterity of the record and the agency of each

---

<sup>209</sup> See Appendix G.

<sup>210</sup> Oral History Society <http://www.ohs.org.uk/ethics.php> (accessed 15 November 2013).

participant. It has already been established that Greenhead Stories sought to offer each participant opportunities to engage with their own story and interrogate the history of the park beyond the typical question-and-answer style interview, with an aim of documenting context within the archive but this aim comes with a number of ethical considerations which must be dealt with, not just in relation to the researcher and his or her participants, but also in relation to how the archive will be accessed in the future. These ethical considerations are included under three guiding principles, which were developed as a result of my review of the literature on sharing authority. The critiques and reflections by those employing shared authority which have already been reviewed in Chapter 1 show that the means of sharing authority must not only be negotiated differently for each project, but also adapted within each project, based on the different dynamics encountered between groups of participants and researchers. Frisch himself says that “a commitment to sharing authority is a beginning, not a destination” implying that though the concept is quite universal, the means of applying it are neither easy nor straightforward.<sup>211</sup> While a single coherent method of practice cannot be extracted from Frisch’s ethos nor the work it has inspired, three main principles emerged from the research which were applied to Greenhead Stories: firstly, the guiding aims of making the ‘extension of authority’ accessible; secondly, working within communities; and thirdly, making a personal commitment to the project (sharing my own stories and insights, and acknowledging intersubjectivity within the parameters of collaboration). Though each principle aimed to facilitate shared authority, they each presented their own ethical and methodological dilemmas that had to be considered and dealt with throughout the course of the project.

---

<sup>211</sup> Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990), 112.

## The Extension of Authority

The first guideline surrounding the process of sharing authority relates to the scope and depth of how the researcher offers the extension of authority. Plainly put, sharing authority is complicated, and many supporters and critics have acknowledged the exhaustive nature of collaborative work.<sup>212</sup> This dilemma extends from the notion of the ‘offer of authority’ and the extent to which participants accept and take on responsibility for their own narratives. In Rickard’s case, working with sex workers, issues of anonymity and extenuating pressures meant that many participants did not engage fully in the outcome of their recordings despite having the option to do so. Most participants put their trust in Rickard to manage and interpret their stories.<sup>213</sup> For Rickard, and in the case of Greenhead Stories the focus was the simple offer of sharing authority: a chance to allow each participant to be involved to whatever extent they feel comfortable or have the time and resources to do. In any given project, we cannot force participants to be involved in aspects of collaboration for which they do not have the time, interest, or capacity; but if we at least make the offer and do as much as possible to make the more academic aspects of interpretation accessible, are we then doing enough to call our work sharing authority? This question is not easily answered, but for Greenhead Stories it would have been impractical and unrepresentative to only allow those who could commit a vast amount of time to contribute their stories to the project. In Rouverol’s work, her participants’s capacity to be involved and share authority is constantly negotiated by

---

<sup>212</sup> Linda Shopes says that sharing authority is “long-haul work” and Alistair Thomson reflects on how the collaborative process of recording and writing the stories of four women took over ten years. Linda Shopes, “Sharing Authority” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 105 and “Moving Stories, Women’s Lives: Sharing Authority in Oral History” *Oral History*, 39 no. 2 (2001): 324.

<sup>213</sup> Alicia Rouverol, “Collaborative Oral History in a Correctional Setting: Promise and Pitfalls,” *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 51.

the boundaries of authority within the prison system; in a sense her participants have the opportunity to be involved to an extent; but in a situation where the activities of individuals are so controlled and monitored within institutional power structures, how much ‘choice’ can any outside historian truly provide? Returning to Rickard’s work again, although the avenues of collaboration were open, many of her participants did not choose to venture down them due to what she groups as the “legal, practical and psychological boundaries” of her participants. In one sense, giving them the option at least exhibits a commitment to sharing authority, but, quite oppositely, it could also be argued that offering someone the chance to collaborate in a situation within which their lifestyle, work and living situation cannot possibly allow them to fully participate, may actually further their experience of *dis*-empowerment. And yet, most of her interviewees expressed sentiments which showed they felt the process of being interviewed to be empowering and personally significant.<sup>214</sup> In cases where the authors were unable to collaborate fully with each individual participant, it was often the case that recorded materials were used to promote discussion and debate within the wider community they belonged to; for Kerr this meant opening dialogues on issues of homelessness, and for Rickard this meant putting recordings to use at a conference and working them in to educational resources. Whether or not the use of material in this way is seen as collaboration by the people who were originally involved in recording it, cannot be measured; however, these authors have satisfied Frisch’s secondary concern about authority when it comes to putting histories to use and finding ways to make memories meaningful in everyday life.

Within Greenhead Stories, it was necessary to make participation accessible to everyone, and thus offer an extension of authority that was not

---

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., 53.

necessarily weighted with long-term commitment and a taxing collaboration process. A sort of self-subscribed, tiered participation was necessary so that each participant could make their own choices of where to draw the line of their contribution: the results ranged from one-off anonymous contributions to much more invested longer term involvement. In her work documenting the experiences of women who worked on interwar ships, Jo Stanley asserts that it is possible to engage a shared authority approach while anonymising the experiences of her interviewees, though Stanley's narrators were anonymised due to the sensitive nature of their interviews. While her aim was to engage interviewees through Frisch's "commitment to working with shared authority" she acknowledges that for interviews with sensitive materials "anonymising names is a crucial act of respect."<sup>215</sup> In cases such as the research of Alistair Thomson and Lorraine Sitzia, where their work focused on co-authorship to compile the life story of one or a small group of narrators, the proposition of anonymising a narrator after a lengthy process of co-authorship clearly seems in opposition to the ethos of sharing authority. In other cases the opportunity to be anonymised may provide more accessible avenues of participation and thus a wider range of participants.<sup>216</sup>

From the outset of *Greenhead Stories*, it was not the aim to record detailed life stories of individuals; rather, it sought to apply the method of shared authority in a way which made participation and collaboration accessible. This follows the models employed by Daniel Kerr's and Wendy Rickard's work, which

---

<sup>215</sup> Jo Stanley, "'We Were Skivvies/We Had a Ball': Shame and Interwar Ships," *Oral History*, 38 no. 2 (2010): 70.

<sup>216</sup> As discussed in Chapter 1, Thomson's work engaged the stories of four women's migration experiences across a working period of over ten years, while Sitzia's approached focused on recording the story of a single narrator.

shifts from a focus on fewer, more intensely collaborative recordings, to a wider process of recording, disseminating, gathering feedback, and engaging participants in producing and creating outcomes that have a lasting use within the communities they sought to work with.<sup>217</sup> In a follow up to Kerr's work recording the stories of homelessness in Cleveland, he credits the success of his work to the parts of Frisch's mantra relating to democracy and dialogue: not limiting the needs of the project to his needs as a researcher, and facilitating a process of recording and interpreting across many participants in a range of styles and venues.<sup>218</sup>

The democratic aims of sharing authority within communities and not with specific individuals, reaches its limit when the process of participation asks so much of each narrator that very few can participate. The opportunity to participate must be made available to more than just those who have the time and capacity to engage for the long term. In the case of Greenhead Stories this would have limited interview participation to only those who had already dedicated their time to the park or those working within the park who could justify longer-term engagement in the project because it fell within their paid or volunteer duties (and in fact very few people who were currently undertaking paid work in the park were able to give testimony). Creating an accessible approach whereby individuals could participate in everything from one-off anonymous 'vox-pop' style interviews to in-depth interviews and review

---

<sup>217</sup> In Kerr's work his outcomes were used to inform policy and practice in Cleveland's homeless community and support services, and in Sitizia's case her outcomes used in a range of ways to inform and educate people working within and to support sex workers.

<sup>218</sup> Daniel Kerr, "Countering Corporate Narratives from the Streets: The Cleveland Homeless Oral History Project," in *Oral History and Public Memories*, eds. Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008), 233-235.

sessions meant that a wider array of voices was drawn into the story. For this project there was a definitive trade-off between reaching the depth of collaboration implied by Frisch's ethos (as achieved by Thomson and Sitzia in their long-haul work) and having the wider-spread democratic process which Frisch says enables "a more profound sharing of knowledges, an implicit and sometimes explicit dialogue from very different vantages" and the creation of meaningful and active outcomes which made use of the recorded archive.<sup>219</sup>

### **Working *within* Communities**

The second guiding principle, and point of ethical consideration was following the aim of working within communities and user groups who make use of the park. While many projects have adapted the method of sharing authority on a case-by-case basis, it seems that all of their research found strength in adapting to and working within existing structures for gathering or vocal exchange. Kerr and Lawless, each benefited from existing groups with established meeting places, while Rickard and Rouverol both had to willingly enter and entangle themselves within the complicated dynamics and power structures which governed the lives of the communities they sought to work with. With Rouverol this meant accepting and embracing the power dynamics within the penitentiary system and the limits they placed on her work, while for Rickard it meant recognising that her work "...while not itself illegal, operate[d] within an illegal framework, involving mostly covert and highly mobile workers...".<sup>220</sup> Rickard had to meet her participants on their terms and turf, recording in working flats and at odd hours in undesirable areas of the city. Through adapting to the working life of her participants, Rickard and her colleagues also took on the risks

---

<sup>219</sup> Frisch, *A Shared Authority*, xxi.

<sup>220</sup> Rickard, "Collaborating With Sex Workers," 51.



of their work, and perhaps gave “...an important signal that [they] were willing to ‘get into the closet’... and to share some threat” too. She writes that “... the type of material we collected ‘on location’ was superior as a record of social history to material that we could have recorded in a safe, neutral interviewing room.”<sup>221</sup>

Working within existing circles not only provided a valuable atmosphere for recording for these authors, but also offered a richer and more active standpoint from which to begin analysis.

Before embarking on Greenhead Stories, and in fact, before the project took shape within the built landscape of the park, the discourse surrounding working within communities led my research to the idea of using place as a virtual and physical meeting ground to approach the communities connected to it. Greenhead Park presented an ideal place for this approach because of the many differing communities who make use of the park in some way: ranging from the highly organised Friends of Greenhead Park, Huddersfield Carnival Committee and Huddersfield Model Engineering Society to the less formal communities of connected people including those who use the café, and those who participate in special events, clubs and sports within the park. If the records of oral history are as alive and performative as Frisch argues, then to record these within the context of the park would be the key to uncovering more insightful stories and exploring avenues of interpretation and connections between seemingly disparate groups of park users. I sought to work with existing groups where possible, approaching organised groups and treating them as project partners in order to identify outcomes which also served their needs. Parallel to this I also recruited non-assembled groups by attending particular events and gatherings connected to the park’s history (for example

---

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 52.

attending the Flower, Garden and Handicraft show at another venue to record reactions to the restoration process and collect stories from when the show had been hosted in Greenhead Park in past years, or interviewing the recently formed ‘Buggymovers’ mothers’ group who meet regularly in the park for exercise and social time). Though the park is home to an array of communities, some more obvious than others, identifying user groups based on the various factors that cause them to associate allowed me to work with groups of people rather than just individuals and also provided individuals with an obvious talking point from which to begin discussing the park.

Of course, another significant point of ethical consideration comes from employing the word ‘community’ and seeking to record stories which are then used to represent the wider experience of various connected groups of people within the park.<sup>222</sup> As with any historical investigation, oral or traditional, a researcher’s conclusions can only be informed by the sources that become available to them. Given that this project applied the term ‘community’ broadly, not just to cultural communities, but also to interest and activity based communities within the park (groups who identified with one another, either through formal assembly or informal interaction) there were certain ethical considerations which had to be made when dealing with individual stories in the context of a collaborative project.

In Fiona Cosson’s experience recording memories for the West Yorkshire Archive Service, her work revealed complications stemming from the project’s

---

<sup>222</sup> Fiona Casson summarises different uses of the word community including its wide-ranging use to “indicate local, political, and social responsibility, interaction, empowerment and engagement’ in “Voice of the Community? Reflections on Accessing, Working with and Representing Communities” *Oral History*, 38 no. 2 (2010): 96.

aim to engage specific groups whose stories were identified as being silent or missing within the archive. She writes:

As soon as the project got underway it was clear that these headings were clichés and disliked by many individuals in the communities they were designed to access. People did not want to be pigeon-holed yet again by stereotypes of Carnival, ‘paddywackery’ and Pride.<sup>223</sup>

Similarly in *Greenhead Stories*, the project sought to work through gate-keepers and work within existing community organisations, but not necessarily with the aim of recording the stories of ‘leaders’ and having them speak for their communities. Though narrators such as Natalie Hamilton and Andrew Michael Bedoe are leaders who organise the Huddersfield Carnival, their interviews focus on their personal experiences, rather than a re-telling of a history on behalf of their community (see: *Greenhead Stories/Andrew Michael Bedoe* and *Greenhead Stories/Natalie Hamilton*). Within the archive and other outcomes, their presence as community organisers is acknowledged, but their stories are not treated as elite nor presented as though they are speaking on behalf of their community (though in some cases they do speak of their own experiences as a community organiser). The collection of content relating to the vast range of park user groups had to be weighed and balanced: for example, the presence of Polish and Ukrainian migrants are mentioned briefly in an interview with historian Frank Grombir (and subsequently his testimony appears in the audiowalk) because it was not possible to record any first-hand stories from older members of these communities within the time limitations of the project.<sup>224</sup>

---

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Though these stories were not recorded within *Greenhead Stories*, a history of these communities in Huddersfield can be found in the work of Frank Grombir <http://hull.academia.edu/FrankGrombir> (accessed 13 November 2013).

His interview acknowledges the presence of these stories, but is not a substitute for the voices of that community or those who have first hand accounts of the events he describes. These shortcomings and the limitations of the recording time-frame will be discussed further in the evaluation of the project's outcomes in Chapter 7. The project aimed to be representative and include as many voices as possible. It sought to be empowered shared authority, without overly burdening participants with a compulsory collaboration effort which would be complicated and exhaustive. I could only document and record the stories of people who came forward to be interviewed, and had to accept the limitations of each individual, encouraging active participation but allowing each person to define the extent of their engagement. The principle of working within communities proved successful for those who identified within various user groups of the park; however, it did highlight questions over representation, which will be further evaluated in Chapter 7.

### **Personal Commitment and Intersubjectivity**

The third guiding principle centres around making a personal commitment to the research process, and engaging one's own views and experiences within the collaborative discussion. Within her methodology, Elaine Lawless draws a focus on blurring the lines between participants and researchers and accepting that both sides of the research relationship can benefit from the exchange of skills and viewpoints. In one way, this relates to her postmodern exchange, whereby participants share their insights and experience, while researchers share with them their viewpoints and provide access to more "academic" ways of viewing those experiences. While this exchange is definitely significant, it must perhaps also be an ingredient that

researchers are willing to share something more personal than their intellectual standpoints. Shopes remarks that collaborative oral history is both intellectually and *personally* demanding; in the cases of Rickard and Rouverol, they did not just work within the constraints of the lives of their participants, but they also gave up something of themselves in order to promote trust and communication. In addition to exchanging stories and perspectives, both authors engaged in a very personal and intimate nature, as they took on risks and relinquished personal control and authority in the daily life of the recording project. While it is useful for researchers to share authority and access to the intellectual ideas which inspire their work, this action does not necessarily equate with the very intimate nature of the histories which they ask their participants to share with them. Although Sitzia's case study warns of too much ambiguity and emotional involvement in the research process, it must be noted that even she (along with Rouverol, Kerr, and Rickard) acknowledges the benefit which stems from committing to collaboration on both professional and personal levels.<sup>225</sup>

In the case of Greenhead Stories, my commitment was not as taxing or emotionally strenuous as Rickard's and Rouverol's experiences but I did acknowledge the need to show an investment of myself beyond that of the one-to-one interview, and working in the park required a higher level of correspondence and building personal relationships than accumulating a collection of stand-alone interviews would have. Working with the Friends of Greenhead Park over the course of the two-year recording process meant developing close working ties and exposing myself to the inner politics of the group and the park-wide politics among other user groups. In some cases this personal investment shows through in the interview dialogue; in interviews with Frank Grombir, Chris Smith, David Griffiths and the Friends of

---

<sup>225</sup> Sitzia, "A Shared Authority: An Impossible Goal?," *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 90.

Greenhead Park Gardeners, my presence is more prominently felt within the interview. In some cases there is an awareness of my becoming a part of the story of park as well as my research having an affect on the views of those involved; in my interviews with the gardening group and David Griffiths we explicitly talk about the impact of the project, engaging their views and ‘authority’ through interpretations but also acknowledging my presence as more than just a one-off interviewer. In my interview with Frank Grombir, another oral historian, he in fact turned the interview around, asking me to share my own thoughts on the park and what brought me to study it (Greenhead Stories/Frank Grombir/Interview #1/Why Greenhead Park?).

Given the close working nature of collaboration it is necessary to explore the impact of my personal commitment as one of the guiding principles within the project. Placing myself at the heart of the research involved sharing my own experiences and story in a range of subtle and overt ways, and this understandably had impacts on each interview dynamic. The oral historian’s presence in any project impacts the stories which are told and the shape they take; oral historians are no stranger to discourse around intersubjectivity, and they are encouraged to reflect critically on the interplay of these dynamics within the interview scenario.<sup>226</sup> Of course, the aim of collaboration is to have the interviewee become a fully-fledged participant in the research process by reflecting on their own contributions and having direction in the storytelling event of the oral history interview, but at the same time the oral historians must

---

<sup>226</sup> Most, if not all oral history handbooks acknowledge and consider the impacts of intersubjectivity. The subjective turn has already been acknowledged as a part of Thomson’s “Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History,” *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 49-70, and the importance of intersubjectivity is acknowledged in Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples *Handbook of Oral History* (Oxford: Altamira, 2006) and as “Interpersonal Relations in the Interview” in Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005).

be aware of his or her own contributions and their participant's perceptions of them. As already illustrated within the discussion of the 'dichotomic dilemma' and the explanation of Figure 1 in Chapter 1, factors such as race, culture, age, and gender are just some of the many factors that impact on an interview relationship. In my case, interviewing a wide range of participants meant that the extent of my relationship with each interviewee varied greatly. Some participants were interviewed at the start of the project, after which I continued to work with them, while others chose to be interviewed after meeting me several times and working alongside the project for a number of months. Others I met in passing, having a brief interview with little to no preexisting relationship.

One particular dynamic which was relevant to all the interviews I conducted was my presence as an 'outsider' not just to Huddersfield, but also to the UK. As a Canadian researcher working in Huddersfield, it was clear to my interviewees that I had no pre-decided invested interest in any particular narrative or view on the park: in some ways, I believe this facilitated dialogue as no particular community or participatory group felt that I had a tie to them. My presence as an outsider meant that it was easier for participants to perceive my interest in the park as genuine and not motivated by some ulterior agenda (though in some cases I felt that my presence as a university researcher did affect the ease of dialogue facilitated by my presence as an outsider). Numerous oral historians have commented on the influence of insider/outsider dynamics on the interview process, either as a result of obvious differences based on visible or audible differences (in my case an obviously non-local accent) or

through the much more subtle differences which emerge through the interview process.<sup>227</sup> In the case of Greenhead Stories, I felt that my presence as an outsider allowed me to ask deeper questions and dig for explanations beyond what would have been assumed knowledge: interviewees spoke to me as an outsider offering explanations of the way things were, and acknowledged my presence as an outsider within the interview dynamic. In one example, a group shared a few short memories with me before saying “you’re not from these parts...” asking me what I made of Huddersfield, and quizzing me on what parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire I had visited (Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/A group in the park). In this short clip, as within numerous interviews, participants expressed pride in Yorkshire as a welcoming place, a sentiment which may have been expressed specifically to me as an outsider. Furthermore, I believe my presence as an outsider had an impact when interviewing others who had not always lived in the area, including members of the Friends of Greenhead Park and various people I interviewed during the Caribbean Carnival. One interviewee, Yvette, assured me that there were no problems in the park when she was a teenager, saying “everybody was just really friendly. As you know, Northerners are really, really friendly people” as if acknowledging a friendliness that I must have also felt as an outsider in the North (Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Yvette).

---

<sup>227</sup> Examples of insider/outsider dynamics have already been discussed in Chapter 1 in regards to the interview relationship, this includes obvious insider/outsider relationships as discussed by Jieyu Liu, “Researching Chinese Women’s Lives: ‘Insider’ Research and Life History Interviewing,” *Oral History* 34, no. 1 (2006): 43-52, and Susan Burton, “Issues in Cross-Cultural Interviewing: Japanese Women in England,” *Oral History* 31, no. 1 (2003): 38-46, in “Field Recording Oral History” David King Dunaway describes the subtle tensions surrounding his narrators trying to ascertain his political viewpoints and ties through the interview process, questioning him on his own interests and political ties in, David King Dunaway, “Field Recording in Oral History” *Oral History* 15 (1987): 28.



In numerous interviews my presence as someone not native to Huddersfield eased the interview dynamic, allowing me to ask questions without assumptions about my bias or interest; for other interviewees, whom I interviewed later in the project when I was much more of an insider within the park by the time we finally sat down. One example is that of Park Activities Officer Chris Smith, whom I had worked alongside for the entire course of the project though we had spoken about doing an interview throughout the project it was not until the last few weeks of recording that he provided a time for us to finally record an interview. Throughout the project I had approached him for advice on numerous occasions, making use of his familiarity with the park and his candid advice on how to approach different members of the community. When it came time to interview him in an official capacity, and on record, I had to be self-aware enough to be a professional interviewer and respect his limits in a scenario different to many the peer-to-peer conversations we had over the course of the project. This may not be apparent to the outsider listening to the interview, but it is something I am acutely aware of when listening to the interview and something I have documented in my own notes. On one hand, interviewing him so late into the project meant that many of our previous discussions remained unrecorded, and he spoke to me as if I also knew the ins and outs of the park; on the other hand, it was very difficult to get current Kirklees Council employees to sit for interviews, and Chris may not have been interviewed earlier because he wanted to wait until he had seen some of the results of the project or until he felt that he could trust me as an interviewer. For Chris, as with other interviewees, I have made a note of the more obvious factors affecting the intersubjectivity of the interview within the “reflections” tab of his interviewee profile, as well as within the “reflections” tab within his interview, so that researchers

might access this information whether they explore the archive by interviewee, by theme, or by interview. For some interviewees the shape and content of their storytelling might have been more obvious, with their performance affected by the two-way exchange in the interview dynamic, where for others such as Chris Smith there are clearly also considerations being made about the audiences which exist beyond our interview room. For Chris the perceived audience includes the wider public he has sought to engage in his role as Park Activities Officer, as well as the knowledge that his comments represent that of a Kirklees Council employee, and as such they are tailored to what his employers might expect or want him to say on record.

Ronald Grele says that “evidence is dialectically and dialogically produced in the interview” and that “intersubjectivity in the interview rests on two pillars: difference and equality.”<sup>228</sup> Within every interview in *Greenhead Stories*, as with any oral history interview, the interview relationship was informed by the factors piled upon these two pillars. One common difference extends from my presence as an outsider documenting the stories of various communities and user groups within the park. For some participants (particularly those more involved in the longer term of the project) there were a myriad of differences and equalities which informed the interview dynamic. *Stories Matter* allows these differences to be documented within the “reflection” tab of the interviewee profile and interview sections of the database so that these less obvious factors are documented for posterity.

Finally, as a researcher working with the aim of building an archive, it was important for me to consider the ethics of imposing my own insights and views

---

<sup>228</sup> Ronald J. Grele, “Oral History as Evidence,” in *Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples (Oxford: Altamira, 2006), 74-75.

onto the archive. Though it was clearly within the aims of the project and my research questions, to build a contextual archive, this process engages the question of re-use of archive material. What I might call context (meaning the comments of my narrators, my commentary, and indeed the evidence of my interpretations left in the act of tagging and indexing the archive), others might consider a nuisance or an overstepping of my influence as the original researcher. It is important for any researcher to leave footprints indicating their process within their own work, but what if those footprints were left in the archive? My idea of the kind of contextual archive I would like to access as a third-party researcher is not necessarily what others might wish or expect to find. Oral historians have debated over this for decades, looking at the potential problems of using and accessing archives.<sup>229</sup> For Greenhead Stories the ethical questions were: how does the collaborative archive affect informed consent, and how will new researchers react to the contextual archive, i.e. how might it affect their perception and interaction with the interviews? Beyond the information included in the consent form, interviewees were informed about the broader aims of the project, including the collaborative aims of the project. Interviewees were not invited to speak on behalf of others (except in the case of Frank Grombir and David Griffiths who shared their research and insights as historians) or interpret the stories of others, which may have laid potential traps for conflict and/or defamation. Instead, participants were encouraged to

---

<sup>229</sup> See, Joanna Bornat, "Remembering and Reworking Emotions: The Reanalysis of Emotion in and Interview," *Oral History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 43:53., Wendy Rickard, Nikita, Sarah Evans, Saskia Reeves and Gail Cameron, "What Are Sex Worker Stories Good For? User Engagement with Archived Data," *Oral History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 91-103., Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 266-269., and Linda Shopes, "Oral History and the Study of Communities," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (London: Routledge, 2006), 262-267.

interpret their own stories, and propose questions and areas of inquiry which they wanted the project to explore further.<sup>230</sup> This ensures that the collaborative context of the archive is not based on speculation or conjecture, but from individuals reviewing their own stories and engaging in the process of asking questions. Informed consent was provided by discussions prior to the interview, information circulated to potential participants, and through presentations within the park on oral history, its aims and purposes, so that members of the public had multiple points to engage with some of the ideologies behind Greenhead Stories.<sup>231</sup> To ensure that the context recorded would only impact researchers interested in following that process of collaboration, the archive will be preserved in two ways. Firstly, the digital archive included within the dissertation, and secondly, a more traditional collection passed on to the University of Huddersfield that simply consists of interview recordings, consent sheets, and summaries, which will be kept and catalogued according to the policies of the archive. Both versions will be available to those who wish to access them. These, and other outcomes of the project, will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

### **Moving Forward with Shared Authority: addressing the shortcomings**

Linda Shopes's reflections on shared authority stresses that it must be acknowledged that it is not always possible to find a group of participants whose

---

<sup>230</sup> Linda Shopes outlines the legal issue of informed consent, emphasising the importance of each interviewee understanding about the "nature and purpose" of oral history, and acknowledging that narrators being given rights of control over what they say and do within the interview strengthens their own understanding of the process, in Linda Shopes, "Legal and Ethical Issues in Oral History," in *Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples (Oxford: Altamira, 2006), 139.

<sup>231</sup> Example flyers for the project, and example information sheets can be found in Appendix B and the presentation is included in Greenhead Stories/Admin/.

needs and interests match that of the researcher, and that if we approach on a case by case basis, we must accept that with some cases there will be no room for collaboration. If we accept Frisch's notion that shared authority "is the beginning of a necessarily complex, demanding process of social and self discovery", then it is possible to accept that sharing authority is as much about the process as it is the results, and in fact the two can be one and the same: an accessible, open collaborative process will surely produce results which are compelling and relevant to the wider public.<sup>232</sup> Frisch's notion of sharing authority as the beginning point suggests that the success of a project is not measured by the extent to which authority is shared with each individual participant, but more valued by the very commitment to sharing authority and in turn, the analytical reflections we make on the successes and failures of that commitment in practice.

While many oral historians acknowledge that sharing authority is certainly an effective research method, it may never be possible to precisely document the extent to which authority is effectively shared. We can, however, do more to document the process of collaboration so that we may find more evidence within that process. Shopes's commentary on shared authority calls for closer documentation and critical readings of how the process of sharing authority asserts itself within the interview dynamic. This is further highlighted by Frisch in his response to the article, where, like Shopes, he points out that more attention must be paid to the actual process of sharing authority, and the ways in which authority is shared and negotiated through the lifespan of a project. Frisch believes that there is a dialogue of authority which can be traced within the dialogues of recorded history; noting that he found himself "...wanting to hear more from the interviews..." so as to better understand how the

---

<sup>232</sup> Michael Frisch, "Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process," *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003) 112.

words which were exchanged “...figure in the collaborative problems and possibilities of each context.”<sup>233</sup> This notion, linked with Frisch’s earlier focus on the life of the interview in the archive, relates directly to my research questions regarding the possibilities of documenting the contextual process of sharing authority, and also to the ‘life span of an interview’ model which highlights where this context is currently being lost. Both Shopes and Frisch call for closer attention to the dialogue, and the ways in which authority is negotiated within it. Frisch writes that sharing authority reflects an approach to doing oral history, whereas he suggests that shared authority reflects “...something we need to recognise *in* it...”<sup>234</sup> According to these conclusions, as historians record histories we are, in fact, engaging two very different dialogues: one of history telling itself, and the other being the dialogue of collaboration which controls the telling of history.

Frisch encourages historians to find ways to make histories active and alive for now and for the future; not only within the work that we do, but also in the way we treat the interview as an archival object for collection. If we are able to find a way to record and reflect on performance alongside words and text, then it must also be possible to record the dialogues which inform the way we interview and interpret stories. From Frisch’s work, I conclude that sharing authority engages two inextricably linked dialogues: the dialogue of history, as well as dialogues of sharing authority, which occur in the shaping, interpretation, and recording of that history. Frisch is correct when he says that sharing authority is a starting point, but that does not mean that oral historians can ignore their duty to preserve that authority when projects come to an end; in answer to Frisch’s and Lawless’s call for more (w)holistic histories, I developed the Greenhead Stories project with an aim of creating a

---

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 113.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

(w)holistic archive which preserve not only the words of my narrators, but also their voices as the multidimensional, analytical individuals that I know them to be. With these principles in mind, it is necessary to revisit the ‘life span of an interview’ model to see if Stories Matter is an effective tool in preserving these contextual elements of the project, not just the dialogue of history within each interview and the dialogue of sharing authority.

### **A Solution: Shared Authority and Stories Matter**

New technologies present us with a myriad of ways with which we can manage oral history records, both in terms of collection management and our process of interpretation and analysis. More and more, oral historians are moving away from the recording-to-transcript model of collection, this trend being enabled by new media and software such as the Stories Matter, which provide users with a collaborative platform on which to manage and interpret collections without a reliance on transcripts. Furthermore this new range of project management software offers us new opportunities to interact with our archives. Through interlinking interviews and extracts, cross-tagging themes, and digital referencing our audio files, we can now map our interviews not just for content, but also for meaning.<sup>235</sup> The dichotomic dilemma I have outlined can be solved in two steps. Firstly, using shared authority methods gives us a platform and methodology which allows us to ask the questions that fill the gaps in documenting the interview’s Tone; secondly, using digital archive software such as Stories Matter provides us with the means of documenting and preserving those answers. To demonstrate the ways in which these two factors

---

<sup>235</sup> Michael Frisch discusses and summarises the issues surrounding four overlapping axes of approaches to dealing with history collection, one of which is a ‘The Content-versus Meaning-Mapping Axis’ in “Three Dimensions and More: Oral History Beyond the Paradoxes of Method,” in *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy (London: Guildford Press, 2008), 221- 238.

preserve detail and authority in the archive, I will go through the model again, showing the ways in which lost factors of meaning can be preserved or at least documented, by showing how a trail of interpretative footprints and path markers can be left in the archive for the use of future researchers. I will examine the aspects of relationship, intangible interchanges, and authority from the perspective of a new researcher, and attempt to demonstrate how digital tagging and clipping can preserve insight which would otherwise only be held by the original interviewer and/or interviewee.

### **Relationship Revisited**

The indexing capabilities of the Stories Matter software ensures that oral historians and archives are not limited by choosing between indexing by either content or meaning; in fact they can choose both, and beyond that they can define and index endless sub-themes, subjects, and sub-meanings within their archive. The tagging abilities within a digital archive and the various spaces Stories Matter provides for noting reflections, facilitate an opportunity to document some of the relationship dynamics within the interview (the complicated impact of intersubjectivity described in this chapter). For example, in my interview with David Griffiths, a local historian who wrote a book about the history of the park (see *Greenhead Stories/David Griffiths*), he shared his interest in the park with me, and discussed some of the technicalities of conducting his research, including his motivations for studying the park. In his interview David acknowledges our pre-existing relationship and subtly suggests both the synchronicity of our work and the tension created by that (see *Greenhead Stories/David Griffiths/Researching The Park*). Although we do not outwardly discuss any tension between our research, our involvement in the same local history society and the Friends of Greenhead Park



group connects us. This pre-existing relationship informs our discussion of the park and the way in which we discuss our own work, and contextualises the more analytical and interpretive nature of some of David's observations, particularly those in the clip "Why people remember the park". As an oral historian closely associated with my own work, it is not for me to decide what may or may not be of value to a future researcher; however, it is my duty to make my archive accessible and engaging, and therefore I can use the tools provided to me to leave interpretive links. Within David's interview, I have indicated this relationship within the 'reflection' tab by mentioning the clip that relates to our research overlap;

David and I had a pre-existing relationship through meeting through the Huddersfield Local History Society and the Friends of Greenhead Park. We met one another after separately beginning projects which sought to tell different aspects of the history of the park. As our work progressed we had to define parameters between our work in order to relieve tension and find ways in which our research could support each other's (this is reflected in the clip "Researching the Park").

This same explanation is provided in the reflection tab for this clip as well. By leaving reflective clues in each level of the databases architecture, I can be sure that regardless of the way in which clip or interview is accessed, the reflections are available to the researcher so that they may consider that dynamic if they so choose to. Further to this, I am able to tag the clip and interview with the tag "Interview Relationship" which highlights to an outside researcher that there is a significance to the relationship beyond the typical dynamic.<sup>236</sup> This means that interviewers looking to access the archive from a methodological perspective can immediately follow signposts to see that the interview collection could be used to analyse interview dynamics apart from its content.

---

<sup>236</sup> See Appendix E of Archive Tags and their descriptions.

In another example, there are other cases where the relationship between the interviewee and interviewers can be discussed, as well as situations where additional people who are present have an impact on the interview. For example, in one of the earliest interviews for the project, I met with Dorothy Hargate who was recruited by her friend Helen Claydon (a member of the Friends of Greenhead Park). This interview is particularly valuable as one of the first examples of this collaborative project in play: Dorothy had already talked through her memories of the project with Helen and had come with a prepared list of memories and a sense of what we wanted to know about. Helen and Dorothy were also somewhat preoccupied by the photos on display in the Friends of Greenhead Park's meeting room where we met. Throughout the interview, Helen jumps in with some prompting and directing, which impacts upon the interview relationship between myself and Dorothy and serves to both enhance and hinder the interview process at different times throughout the interview. It is also clear in the interview that Helen had already partially interviewed Dorothy, as Dorothy reads from a written list at the beginning of the recording. This relationship is best reflected in the clip Greenhead Stories/Dorothy Hargate/Listing Memories, and notes regarding this relationship appear in the clip's reflection tab, as well as the reflection tab for the overall interview. Around the 5:00 mark of Part 2 of the interview file, the conversation trails off, to be guided by Helen's questioning and Dorothy and Helen using the photos on display in the meeting room as talking points. Dorothy takes notice of the photo of the statue of 'Rebecca at the Well' a recurring topic of discussion throughout the project; she brings up the topic of the statue and Dorothy cannot answer Helen's questions regarding where the statue stood (Greenhead Stories/Dorothy Hargate/Dorothy Hargate – Part 1/Rebecca at the well).

The indexing of this interview both for content and issues stemming from the interview dynamic is valuable not only to explain the context of the interview to the outsider researcher, but also to display the collaborative learning process of the project: this interview indicated to me that members of the group, such as Helen, were anxious to do their own interviewing and be a part of the interview process from both sides of the microphone, as well as indicating a need for interview training so that project partners better understood the style and methods of oral history interviewing. The result of this was two training sessions as well as field interviewing at a Yorkshire Day event on 1 August 2010, hosted by the Friends of Greenhead Park as well as a 'history hour' which aimed to attract more interviewees and better explain the aims of the project to the community engaged with it (the Yorkshire Day recordings can be found at Greenhead Stories/Yorkshire Day/ and the oral history training recordings and history hour recording and copy of the history hour poster are all included in Greenhead Stories/Admin/). The reflections may explain this interview dynamic, the reason for the break in the interview narration (Parts 1 and 2) as well as some of the lessons learned from the experience. The Stories Matter software allows me to reflect on this as a researcher, which not only clarifies the content to an outside researcher but also tells a part of the story of the project itself.

The shared authority approach encourages researchers to be reflexive and embrace their position and proximity to their work. For me as a researcher, this fell under the guiding principle of personal commitment outlined in this chapter. I had to be willing to answer the questions my participants asked me and to also participate in the dialogue about the park. As a result of this, I occasionally weigh in on discussions about the park or more particularly in discussions about the project. One such example is in my interview with park activities officer Chris Smith, where we discuss

our experiences as outsiders who made a home for themselves in the park. At around the 10:00 mark of Chris Smith's interview (or in the clip: Greenhead Stories/Chris Smith/Interview #1/Meaning of the park) Chris can be heard reflecting on his experience regarding why the park is so meaningful to people. This clip is tagged with the tags "Greenhead Stories" to indicate that we are discussing the project itself, as well as the tag "Meta" in that we are making interpretations and/or referencing the impact of the project. This sort of tagging is useful in allowing me to identify aspects of the archive which embody the shared authority approach, as well as being useful to future researchers who might want to access participant views of the project. This clip is also tagged with 'Interview Relationship' to indicate that there are stronger factors at play, along with the notes I have already mentioned within the reflection tags which give a hint at the dynamics at play within the interview. These notes, particularly the ones which explain how Chris's work benefitted from the project, are significant in understanding that we had a working relationship prior to our interview relationship.

### **Intangible Interchanges Revisited**

As the most elusive of categories, the tracks of the interview experience which set the Tone of the interview through these intangible interchanges truly cannot be recorded in the interview dynamic, except for the occasional moment where the interviewer suggests that the interviewee might be uncomfortable or in some way verbalises their intuition regarding this dynamic. Through the use of Stories Matter, the interviewer can however use the 'reflections' tabs to make notes or judge the situation of the interview. Having the reflection tab provides a platform for the interviewer to share their intuitions with future researchers, without imposing them directly onto the transcript. For example, if an outside researcher notices something out of the ordinary or suspects a particular dynamic might be at play, they can then

choose whether or not they will consider the interviewer's reflections without it being there to affect their assessment of the interview from the start. One example of this is my interview with Tina Blaker; she was happy to share her memories quite briefly but was largely focused on recording her views on the restoration of the park, and most notably the issue of litter and misuse of the park. Her interview provides a valuable insight because it disrupts the master narrative of the park being in total disrepair throughout the 1990s. However, one of the focal points of her interview was her desire to communicate complaints regarding how other people make use of and misuse the park. To an outsider researcher this interview dynamic may seem confusing and out of place given the Tone of other interviews within the project, and my notes in the 'reflection' tab give more context to the interview scenario: those looking for context have the luxury of accessing it while those looking for content can choose to ignore it.

### **Authority**

As already touched upon when discussing the interview relationship, the shared authority approach engages the researcher as a part of the story and also seeks to engage participants in reflecting critically on their own memories. Limitations of the project and its participants meant that this could not happen directly through a 'listen and reflect' type presentation of interviews; however, all interviewees were asked questions concerning their memories, their motivations for participation and their views on the direction of the project. If the user observes the tag cloud function of Stories Matter and clicks to select 'Greenhead Stories' they will find a listing of interviewees, interviews and clips in which participants refer to the project or make suggestions regarding the direction of project. In a similar fashion the tag 'Meta' links to all interviews and clips where participants are reflecting on the project as a

whole or making historical interpretations which are relevant to the project. For example, in Chris Smith's interview he explains why the park is important to so many people and how hearing the memories of other people affects how he does his job in the park today (Greenhead Stories/Chris Smith/Interview #1/Meaning of the Park). This clip is tagged with both the Greenhead Stories and Meta tags to reflect the subject matter and critical discussion of that subject.

There are also clues within the archive which give further context to the recordings and document the act of history making taken up by the Friends of Greenhead Park group who enthusiastically collected both written and recorded testimony. The project archive includes interview and vox-pop clips recorded by the Friends group at their Yorkshire Day heritage event, where volunteers made use of the Zoom H2 recorders to conduct on the spot interviews in the park, as well as the Friends practice interviews from our oral history training sessions (these are located within Greenhead Stories/Admin) alongside other recordings of meetings and presentations which give a extra context to the collection.

## **Conclusions**

The two-fold combination of recording shared authority and making use of a dynamic digital archive help solve the issue of preserving 'Tone' in the absolute terms of preserving the recording by allowing oral historians to access and interact with the interview as a primary source, whilst also leaving more optional tracks for interpretation by future researchers. Recording dialogues about the project and tagging the project's metanarratives is something which could never be achieved through the outdated transcript-focused work model. Punctuation, notes of silence, laughter, sarcasm, and even interviewer's notes added to the transcript cannot be

added without imposing meaning, whereas a digital software allows us to do more, by providing layers of interpretation which researchers can choose to access independently of our own view of their importance.

In this chapter, I have established the ways in which the project defined the extension of authority, through facilitating a range of levels of participation within the project and making the aims and outcomes of the project accessible to the broader public. This interpretation of shared authority addresses the research questions surrounding the application of this ethos to a broader, multi-vocal project, finding a path to sharing authority that balanced its two main aims of engaging participants and producing meaningful outcomes. By beginning to examine the results of the project through the lens of the 'Lifespan' of an Interview model (Fig. 1), this chapter has also addressed the question of the growing cleavage between oral history theory and practice, treating the interview as a nuanced recording and attempting to record the context of the interview within the archive. In this manner, sharing authority can give better permanence to the Tone of a project. This combination of methodology and practical software allows the researcher to better preserve the impact of the relationship, the intangible, and the authority of my interviewees as actively engaged research participants. The depth and value of this combination has much stronger impacts beyond my illustration and subsequent disruption of this recording model. Together, these factors come into play to provide deeper, more meaningful findings, as will be illustrated in the next chapter. The modern oral historian acknowledges that this type of cataloguing and recording enhances the value of interviews individually, but what will also be demonstrated is how recurring themes, interpretations and metanarratives manifest when these interviews come together as an indexed collection.

## **Part III: Findings**



## Chapter 5 – Decline and Restoration

Greenhead Park's story is as much about the park being a physical space as it is about the memories that inhabit that space to give it life and meaning. While for the purposes of this dissertation I am utilising the working definition of space as a constant, and place as the social construction attached to it, it is important to acknowledge that although the physical landscape has not changed very much since its opening in 1884, there have been significant changes to the built environment which have greatly affected the way in which the park has been viewed over its history.<sup>237</sup> Using place as the subject for oral history interviews in Greenhead Stories provided a means to explore the interesting relationship between memory and the built environment. To answer the research question which asked what oral historians can learn from recording memories of place, it was necessary to consider how personal narratives can either reconcile with or defy visual narratives within the built environment. By considering narratives that cohere the physical story of the park and then turning towards the discrepancies which emerge from this recording process process, the research provides insight into individual and public processes of place-making and history making: the very processes which Lefebvre and Samuel sought to better understand.

Due to the ongoing restoration, the subject of the park's physical decline and restoration were central to almost every interview, as indicated by the prominence of the tags 'restoration' and 'decline' in the tag cloud which appears within the project archive. Also often associated with these themes are tags relating to anti-social behaviour and generational change, which show that the perceived changes to the

---

<sup>237</sup> Chapter 1 set out the project's working definitions of 'space' and 'place' drawing from the work of Henri Lefebvre and Nigel Thrift.

park ran deeper than its physical state. But how did these physical changes to the space affect the life of the park, the daily routine of those who use the park, and more importantly the sense of place attached to the park? The oral histories collected both reinforce and disrupt accepted narratives of the decline and restoration, and the inter-connectivity of the archive demonstrates that the stories attached to the decline and restoration have a social meaning far stronger than that which could be gathered from historical source analysis of the physical built environment.

### **Decline and Restoration: The Story of Greenhead Park**

In order to interrogate the recorded narratives of decline and restoration, it is first beneficial to review the way in which the park's story has been portrayed by both the local press and local historians. Most notably, the *Huddersfield Examiner*, the local daily newspaper, had a strong impact on public views of the park as it reported on the progress of the restoration and often published historical pieces focused on the park. Although not all participants of the project were necessarily avid readers of the *Examiner*, it is arguably the widest circulated and most profound source of information regarding the park in terms of informing public knowledge of the restoration and providing historical context and narratives for participants to tell their stories through. Throughout the restoration of the park the *Examiner* reported on a range of topics from the history of the park, the success and shortcomings of the restoration, occurrences of anti-social behaviour and crime in the park, as well as providing a forum for members of the public to express views on the park and the Kirklees Metropolitan Council's work to restore it. Although Kirklees Metropolitan Council made information about the restoration available on their website, through signage in the park and through public consultations, no single other source information influenced people's views on the park more than the *Examiner*, and thus

it was something which the project had to contend with as well as work with in order to record memories successfully.

Naturally, the park was of great interest to the *Examiner* from the time in which first reports were being made about the restoration bid. The paper began to report on the park's state and inform the public perception of the decline and restoration phase of the park as early as 2001 when an important step in the restoration process was achieved. In an article entitled "Celebratory day for park," the Examiner reported on how the park was added to English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historical Interest.<sup>238</sup> The article explained, "Its new status will safeguard its future against any potentially harmful development and could bring in grants for improvements" and mentions the Friends of Greenhead Park as players in the campaign for the park's successful listing. The article also lists improvements to the park including the establishment of the miniature railway by the Huddersfield Model Engineering Society and the return of park keeping and maintenance staff who had previously been absent from an undeclared date up until 1999. It is also suggested that this appearance of the park on the national register was a step towards gathering support for future funding bids to improve the facilities. Following this report, the issue of the park's state of decline appeared in local headlines from time to time, particularly at times when Kirklees Council was perceived to be pouring money into one-off events in the park rather than the repair of the park. One such incident cropped up when word spread of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) bid which included the building of an ice-rink.<sup>239</sup> This mention of the bid and hopes for a summer 2004 building start was reported to have been met with a "cold response" from the Friends of Greenhead Park who advocated for money to be first spent on increased safety and

<sup>238</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Celebratory day for park," April 30, 2001.

<sup>239</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Park ice rink plan under attack," November 28, 2003.

maintenance over entertainment facilities. In particular the article mentioned the need to replace the fences and gates which had been taken down during the Second World War, in order to restore the park to its Victorian appearance.<sup>240</sup> Thus began a long report process on the potential of a HLF bid (although construction would not actually start until much later in July 2009), as well as a new dialogue, which linked the improvement of the park to its intended Victorian design and aesthetic. Although the project would not get funding for a number of years, this link would continue to grow in strength alongside proposals for the park's restoration and also begin to include social dimensions as the restoration moved forward and my research project began.

Over three years later, in December 2006, the Examiner reported that Kirklees Council were preparing for a successful outcome of their funding application, with the article entitled "Step forward for £3m park facelift scheme".<sup>241</sup> This appeared after three years of occasional reporting on the project and reports of public surveys and evaluation measures, with a slightly more definitive depiction and even details of Gillespies LLP, the company which won the construction tender and moved forward to work with Kirklees Council in achieving the bid. In July 2007, the Examiner announced the success of the HLF bid and the plans for the park in the article entitled "Back to the glory days!" This article noted the various parts of the park's infrastructure which needed repair, including the "sorry state" of the conservatory, and confirmed that construction would begin in summer 2008 and last approximately 18 months.<sup>242</sup>

Alongside the *Examiner's* portrayal of the park's needing a return to its 'glory days' came another thorough and historical summary of the park's history, via local

---

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Step forward for £3m park facelift scheme," December 5, 2006.

<sup>242</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Back to the glory days!," July 3, 2007.

historian and member of the Friends group, David Griffiths. Griffiths's *A Park for the People*, 2011 concisely breaks the park's history into a division of characterised eras. Although Griffiths's work is focused on the park's origins, it does make a clear effort to bring the story up to date by organising its history chronologically, dividing the years between 1884 and 1914 into several chapters, then breaking up the history into the stories of the First and Second World Wars and the interim periods between (War and Peace, 1914-24, The Park Between the Wars: A Golden Age?) and then two final chapters which describe the park in the Second World War and the years following. In the eighth chapter entitled 'Make Do and Mend' about 1940 to 1974 the park is characterised as a happy place shining through the dreary impact of the World War II, noting the start of the Holidays at Home programme, and the park's use as a free resource in the years characterised by post-war austerity. The narrative of decline begins here in this period of austerity:

while the park had many activities to offer in these years, post-war restrictions on building meant there was little scope for further development of its facilities.<sup>243</sup>

Griffiths even mentions the allocation of funds to provide new shelters and revive the pre-war proposal to fix the bed of the main lake, but notes that the plans were never fulfilled and in fact a cheaper solution to the then derelict lake was found in 1951 when it was simply filled in completely.<sup>244</sup> Griffith's recap of this period of 'Make, Do and Mend' devolves into a list of ways in which park maintenance was neglected and a list of plans for new projects which never came to fruition. This includes the destruction of the large harbour, the replacement of the paddling pool harbour with a modern one, and a number of other projects gone wrong. Griffiths writes that "The

---

<sup>243</sup> David Griffiths, *Secured for the Town: The Story of Huddersfield's Greenhead Park* (Huddersfield: Friends of Greenhead Park, 2011), 54.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

founding fathers' vision of a large park pavilion was also revived yet again during the post-war years, and indeed became a 20-year saga of frustrated civic ambition".

Griffiths's work lists a number of projects which failed due to lack of funds or the absence of strong direction in the post-war period. This includes the inscription of the dates '1939-45' onto the First World War memorial in lieu of a second dedicated pavilion and the rejection of plans for a floral hall proposed to celebrate the coronation of Elizabeth II, which would have included a 650-seat theatre, 130-seat café, and shelter for dancing and events. One successful bid was the building of a new amphitheatre to replace the war-time wooden stage (which was eventually demolished in 2003) as well as a small veterans' recreation room which later became the bowling pavilion, demolished in 2010.<sup>245</sup> This 'chapter of the park's history' concludes with the significant change in local government in 1974, when the Corporation of the Town of Huddersfield became Kirklees Metropolitan Council.<sup>246</sup> Griffiths alludes to this turn of events as the end of an era for the 'town that bought itself' in 1920 and the town that created Greenhead Park as a 'park for the people'.

Griffiths's final chapter, "The Park since 1974", describes the thirty year period between the 1974 municipal changes to the 2005 bid for a restoration as a series of literal and metaphorical plagues on the park. The first was the appearance of Dutch Elm disease in 1975 and the felling of Dutch Elms in 1976. The closure of the toilets as places for 'anti-social behaviour' and the general neglect of gardens, facilities and maintenance which Griffiths attributes to the "severe constraints of local government finance".<sup>247</sup> Although this chapter does focus on some of the new events

---

<sup>245</sup> The bowling pavilion would be reported as a major bone of contention in the project and would result in the loss of the bowlers as project participants (this will be highlighted in the conclusion).

<sup>246</sup> Griffiths, 58.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.

and communities who made their home in the park, with notes about the Caribbean Carnival, the Asian Mela event, and other events and celebrations, the overall tone of the chapter hangs heavy with the stories of neglect, but ends on a hopeful, brighter note looking forward towards the completion of the restoration.

Both Griffiths's account of the history of the park, and the *Examiner's* reporting on the restoration, provide meaningful insight into the not only the history of the park, but how it is remembered. There is, however, a significant contextual gap which is highlighted within the oral histories of the park, in that it is not always made clear how the story of Victorian and post-Victorian enjoyment of the park transitions into the story of the park left in decline. Many people remember the lake before it was filled in, the Holidays at Home in the post-war period, but those narratives fade out before the narrative begins of a park left to slide into ruin. Griffiths's work is particularly valuable in bridging this gap, as he lists the loss of the lake, the felling of the trees, and other events which serve as pinpointed physical losses to both the Victorian aesthetic and Victorian ideal. These changes could be portrayed as signs of decline or effects of modernisation (depending on your point of view) but it was the story of decline and the subsequent need for restoration which won out, regardless of whatever new stories and memories may have been attached to the park in its interim state.

### **Repair v. Restoration**

It is clear from the portrayal of the park in the media, David Griffiths's account of the park's history and the content that came out of the interviews that the park was in much need of repair towards the end of the 1990s and the early 2000s. But it is important to note the difference between repair and restoration, and to

question how the terminology affected the social perception of the park. It is clear from the news reports that during the proposal of the ice rink in 2003, Kirklees Council and members of the community (most notably the Friends of Greenhead Park) were at odds over the very difference between repair and restoration. Members of the community wanted all funds to be spent on restoration, something which could be more easily argued for and justified after the establishment of the park on English Heritage's list and it being listed as a Grade II historical site.<sup>248</sup> Once the heritage of a space or place is recognized, it becomes difficult to justify any modernisation, especially against such a strong campaign for restoration, as was the case in Greenhead Park. In fact the very process of preserving and acknowledging heritage engages an issue of erasure according to Lynne M. Dearbone and John C. Stallmeyer, whose work deals with the subject of 'inconvenient heritage' in spaces which have been recognised as having 'Outstanding Universal Value' by UNESCO.<sup>249</sup> According to their work, when preserving and restoring heritage, erasures emerge which deal with

particular pasts or inconvenient heritages that are seen as potentially divisive to the local population, unpalatable for tourists, incongruent with contemporary development, or that do not serve the political needs of the state party's government.<sup>250</sup>

While their work focuses on world heritage sites, the principles apply perfectly to the situation of Greenhead Park, where the established narrative of heritage allowed for erasures in both "the physical and the sociocultural realms" of the park.<sup>251</sup> Their work acknowledges that a complicated

---

<sup>248</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Park ice rink plan under attack," November 28, 2003. And *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Frosty response to park ice rink plan," April 3, 2004.

<sup>249</sup> Lynne M. Dearborn and John C. Stallmeyer, *Inconvenient Heritage* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2010), 28.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*



negotiation of heritage occurs between professional historians, members of the heritage industry, local residents, governments, site visitors and the wide array other participants who contribute to or counter accepted narratives of place.<sup>252</sup> The authors conclude their work with a dialogue which encourages stronger communication and engagement between all parties to create heritage which preserves both historical and contemporary uses.

The movement from repair to restoration was almost certainly impacted by the funds coming from the Heritage Lottery Fund. According to spokesperson Fiona Spiers, the decision largely hinged on the park's Victorian past:

Our parks are a much-loved legacy from the Victorian era and play a vital role in our modern towns and cities. But time can take its toll on these green havens and it is our aim that everyone has access to a park they can be proud of. Today's news will ensure Greenhead Park is restored to its former glory for future generations to enjoy.<sup>253</sup>

Again the notion of the 'glory days' prevails. Although the aim of the repair was to provide safety and access for the community, the restoration of a historical aesthetic does not necessarily suit modern needs and thus a balance must be struck to support both the past and present of the park. This links closely to Setha Low's work in Costa Rica, as she discusses the social impact of the Victorian elements of Parque Central in San Jose, Costa Rica.<sup>254</sup> The question in the case of Low's work, and also in the case of mine, is how does a Victorian aesthetic affect the perception of history and belonging in a park, and how does it affect the way in which people use the park today? Low says that "...the symbolic contrasts of Victorian/modern, wooden/cement, elite/working-class provide architectural metaphors for class-based

---

<sup>252</sup> Ibid. Their work summarises the interpretation and erasures affecting the Luang Prabang heritage site, and concludes with a discussion on how to engage local people in an invested dialogue about how the history of their locality will be presented in the future.

<sup>253</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Back to the glory days!" July 3, 2007.

<sup>254</sup> Low, "*On the Plaza*" 136.

taste cultures...” which result in public conflict over symbolic representation.<sup>255</sup> The Victorian/modern dilemma also surfaces in Greenhead Park, with ‘glory days’ stories of the past connected to the Victorian aesthetic and life in a town before the very symbolic turning point of changes in local government which for many participants was the mark of change for the park.

### **The Glory Days**

Once plans of the restoration were underway, the narrative of the ‘glory days’ emerged from several sources, linking the physical structure of the Victorian Park to the myth of Victorian morals and ideals. In fact, the *Examiner* launched a series of articles and commentary pieces which sought to portray the oldest possible memories of the park (including a few articles recapping the history of the park and its opening in the late 1800s as well as an interview with a ninety-five year old woman called Nancy Hocknell who shared her stories of the park in the 1920s).<sup>256</sup> The article’s subtitle reads “As £5.4m facelift goes on, the old genteel park is remembered” and continued to discuss memories of popular events, boating on the lake, and other happy memories of the park but concludes with the somewhat doubtful quotation that “Now it is to be restored to something like its former glory, it will be interesting to see how far that can be achieved”. This reporting is significant because it appeared alongside a number of commentary pieces which constructed the Victorian ideal of the park with criticism of modern behaviour in the park. In his commentary piece on October 22, 2008 Andrew Baldwin writes:

Only if there are constant security patrols, coupled with CCTV cameras, will the park survive the yobs whose mission is seemingly to

---

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Childhood memories of Greenhead Park as work aims to restore its former glory,” April 6, 2010.

blight the lives of right-thinking people. A sad suggestion to have to make, but one which is unavoidable in our present-day society where Greenhead Park – and many other public areas – have become over-run with yobs and vandals, drug-takers, litter louts and irresponsible pet owners.<sup>257</sup>

This contrast between the story of Victorian elegance in the park, and the decline of the park associated with unsocial behaviour was strong throughout the course of the development and certainly informed or was at least subscribed to some project participants. This is especially significant when considering that early reports called on Kirklees Council to bring improvements and suggested that the decline of the park was due to a lack of funds and/or commitment made by Kirklees rather than focusing on the activities of the people who used the park.<sup>258</sup>

This historical narrative of the ‘glory days’ is of course not unique. Popular culture is full of references to each generation being baffled by the next, as well as documented shifts in popular memory which idealise and make sense of the past through a contemporary perspective. These shifts of memory are particularly apparent within oral history, as exemplified by Alessandro Portelli’s famous investigation into the story of Luigi Trastulli’s death in which he discovered that an entire town had retold and re-remembered the story of his death to cast him as a martyr figure in protests and riots in the town of Terni, Italy.<sup>259</sup> Oral history has shown the ways in which memory is idealised by numerous factors including instances of the mainstream narratives affecting the retelling of war stories as well as

---

<sup>257</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Make our parks safe,” October 22, 2008.

<sup>258</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Celebration day for park,” April 30, 2001.

<sup>259</sup> Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories*, 1-26. Portelli’s work highlights the way in which meaning is made by mis-remembering the past in a way which makes sense to those in the present. In the example of the story of Luigi Trastulli, residents of the town remembered that his death happened amid street fighting stemming from “the layoff of two thousand workers from the steel factory in October 1953” rather than as it truly did in a small clash with the police in March 1949. This shift gives meaning to his death and casts him as a martyr for steelworkers’ rights.

the way in which childhood memories are affected by gender in their retelling.<sup>260</sup> This trend is not limited to oral history, but is perhaps in fact a part of human nature. An older historical account acknowledges the rose-tinted view of Annie Hukin, a working-class girl who had grown up in Bolton in the 1980s. Her written account idealises her childhood, while other proof suggests did not reflect the rosy picture her memoir paints.<sup>261</sup> According to the Joanna Bourke, who contextualises Annie Hukin's story, "... many other working-class writers looking back into their childhood seek to convey their nostalgia for a past 'community'".<sup>262</sup>

The contrast between these two depictions of past and present surfaced in interviews throughout the project, and stories of decline, disrepair and anti-social behaviour begin to surface within people's narratives of the 1970s onwards. Much like David Griffiths's division in the story of the park, a distinct division of experience emerges out of the interviews sometime around the 1974 dissolution of the corporation of Huddersfield, and a narrative of 'before' and 'after', 'then' and 'now', 'the past' and 'today' begins to emerge. This division of the past and present and the story of the park's decline does not just relate to the physical manifestation of the park, but also, for a lot of project participants, to a decline in spirit, morals and ethics.

---

<sup>260</sup> Fred Allison compares two interviews conducted with the same Marine thirty-four years apart to demonstrate how popular memory, narratives within the media, and the passing of time allow for memory to be reworked and formed into a comprehensive narrative (see Fred Allison, "Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight: Changing Perspectives Over Time," *Oral History Review* 31, no. 2 (2004): 69-83). In Caroline Daley, "'He Would Know, but I just Have a Feeling': Gender and Oral History," *Women's History Review* 7, no. 3 (1998): 343-358, Daley illustrates how oral histories about childhood from men and women in the same community have been shaped to reflect "gender-appropriate behaviour and values" providing a narrative of what ought to have happened rather than what may have actually taken place. Finally, in Mike Savage, "Histories, Belongings, Communities," *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11, no. 2 (2008): 151-162, Savage calls nostalgic references to 'the way things used to be' "a frequent refrain, especially from older people."

<sup>261</sup> Joanna Bourke, *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Gender, Class, and Ethnicity* (London: Routledge, 1994), 111.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

One significant example comes from an interview with Ron Berry, whose story of the park changes significantly within his lifespan, despite him making regular use of it regardless of its state of decline and ruin. Berry's interview begins with a retelling of his relationship with the space throughout the course of his lifetime; in fact for the first twelve minutes or so he provides a complete narrative from his childhood memories of watching his grandfather's brass band to his contemporary feelings on the restoration efforts in the park (Greenhead Stories/Ron Berry/Interview #1). What is interesting about his narrative is that although his story consistently reflects the park as a space he uses, at first as a child for play, then as a teenager and young adult playing tennis, on to bringing his own children as a parent and finally going for walks in the park as a retired person, the story of both the physical and social environment of the park begins to make drastic changes around the time he became a parent and begins to see the park through a parental protective lens. For example, when remembering his youth and walking to the park with his mother and sister, Ron describes the warm atmosphere of the park, including memories of 'pay what you could' concerts where people gathered to listen to brass bands play in the 1950s (Greenhead Stories/Ron Berry/Interview #1) and then, suddenly his narrative about bringing his own children in the 1970s and 1980s always drifts to certain parental worries:

I remember the toilets being very iffy... the toilets were always iffy in the park. They were always very smelly and you had the feeling that there were perverts lurking down there, so you never actually let the kids go there by themselves. (Greenhead Stories/Ron Berry/Interview #1/6:20)

In fact, in the second half of the interview where Ron and I revisited his listed memories and began to probe them a little more, almost every single one of his memories follows a 'glory days' to decline pattern. At 17:25 he talks about his

memories of the beautiful conservatory and then remarks about how it began to have odd opening hours, which in turn led to increased vandalism (Interviewees/Ron Berry/Conservatory). At 23:15 he revisits the story of the toilets, remarking that they were always smelly, but not particularly unsafe when he was a child, noting a sense of decline in his teenage years and how the idea developed in the 1980s there were perverts there “waiting to pounce”. Ron Berry’s story acknowledges two interpretations of the decline of the toilets: firstly the change relating to the impact of the physical decline on the park and also a social decline in which ‘perverts’ began to make themselves at home in the toilets, and secondly a change in his own perceptions:

As a student, playing tennis up there, they were always a bit smelly, the toilets, but I suppose we were youths back then so there was no fear factor. Its only when you get children that your priorities change a little bit. (Greenhead Stories/Ron Berry/Interview #1, 23:15)

This self-analysis perfectly exemplifies the ‘glory days’ narrative, in that the memory of the past is affected both by physical and social changes and personal attitudes relating to growing older and changing views and responsibilities. To add to his story, he contextualises this change in the toilets to another safety issue in the park, saying that at the time he had no problem with children running around playing in the bushes, despite his concern over the toilets. This acknowledges the changes that have happened since his children were young, where culls of the bushes and shrubbery were done to decrease enclosed areas in the park and or fence off areas where anti-social behaviour could manifest. What is compelling about Ron’s testimony is that he continued to make use of the park, and until this day continues to see the value of the park as an outdoor resource. It was not a case of the park going to social ruin and

detering him from using it, it simply became a part of the narrative of its physical and social decline.

Ron Berry's story about the toilets represents the overall decline of the park, and he was not the only person who had this sort of story to tell. In fact, John Murray approached the project with a specific story to tell about filming the toilets for a promotional film for a toilet cleaner company that aimed to feature the worst toilets across the country. He provides vivid description of these 'absolutely dreadful' toilets in their worst state of decline, and yet he dates his story sometime around 1963, suggesting that the decline of the park pre-dates the 1974 benchmark which is reflected in other interviews (Interviewees/John Murray/Toilets). John's interview refers to missing doors and broken toilet bowls, and yet it predates the usual narrative of decline. It does, however, only portray a physical decline; John mentions that despite them looking derelict, they were still being used by people, but he makes no mention of them being a place for social transgression.

While some interviewees discuss the social and physical decline of the park as part a natural process, one interviewee in particular links the story of decline to governmental and social changes going on in Huddersfield. Geoff Hirst worked for the Corporation of the Huddersfield's Parks and Cemeteries Department from the age of 15, and tells a story about how the park went from running with a 27-man-strong team of gardeners and horticulturalists operating a number of conservatories and greenhouses in 1961 to a much smaller team of maintenance staff over his near fifty-year career. The change from the corporation to the Kirklees Council plays a major role for Geoff in this decline, as well as a major nation-wide financial cutback to parks, which he describes as coming in 'twenty years ago' (Greenhead Stories/Geoff Hirst/Interview #1/The nationwide decline of parks).

Geoff's sentiments indicate that he is pleased with the park's progress and the new life that the restoration has poured into the space, and yet he is still aware of the differences between the past and present where his work was once built around "skill and not just maintenance" (Greenhead Stories/Geoff Hirst/Interview #1/Changing roles in the park). In addition to the undertone of his sadness for the changes to the park, his comments also link the physical change of the park to social changes, citing bushes being cut back to prevent "lurkers and perverts", and his frustration with the changes which he associates with increased vandalism in the park (Greenhead Stories/Geoff Hirst/Interview #1/The park in decline). This part of the interview is particularly interesting as at face value, he argues against the idea that there has been a social decline, by saying that there was just as much vandalism in the 1960s, but he associates the increased visibility with an increase in population as well as limited punishments for the perpetrators. He says "in those days we had park rangers who would clip them with a stick", shirking the idea that young people were better behaved in the glory days, but at the same time expressing a nostalgia for a time where the park staff had more power. It would seem that he attributes the influx of anti-social behaviour not to a social decline in the public at large, but to a decline in the abilities of the park's staff to deter and punish those who behave poorly: together with his sentiments on maintenance versus skill, it is clear that he is describing a park which is socially completely different to the one he started his career in. This is, in itself, still a version of the 'glory days' motif.

### **Decline according to whom?**

In addition to the interviewees whose stories reinforced the notion of decline, there were a number of interviews that thwarted this idea of the park being a 'no-go' zone during the years of decline. That being said, even those whose stories differed



from the 'glory days' narrative, exhibited moments of discomfort or confusion when comparing their story to the more broadly accepted narratives. One such example comes from Dorothy Hargate, who shared stories of attending dances as a teenager in the 1950s, saying that young people did not do 'what goes on today' (Interviewees/Dorothy Hargate/Dances). She is adamant that boys and girls did not go off together, and yet she uses the Yorkshire term for a boy who was a bit too 'hands-on' sharing the words 'leet geen' in reference to knowing which boys to stay away from. This contradiction is subtle but still present, as she tells a rose-tinted story of the past, but then is reminded of the story of a girl who fell pregnant and was sent away. Even though Dorothy is clear that they did not take part in 'none of what goes on today' her story then shows slight signs of conflict not just for the story of the pregnant young woman, but also in her citing her own awareness of the intentions of boys.

This contradiction is often apparent in interviewees such as Ron Berry, who expresses serious concerns for the safety of his children in the park both from the physical state of the place as well as social threats, and yet through this period of decline the presence of the park in his life narrative is just as strong. A particularly good example of this conflict is with the interviewee Tina Blaker, who shared many stories of the park being a place for her family and other members of Trinity Church, which sits just across the road. In her interview she often commented on the poor behaviour she had witnessed in the park in terms of people not picking up their litter and not taking care of the newly restored park, which not only reflects the common theme of social decline, but also implies that the physical restoration is not enough to inspire a social restoration from park users (Interviewees/Tina Blaker/Litter in the park). She says "I can't understand how people can do that, when its such a lovely

area and all this money has been spent doing it up, and now people are just destroying it again by leaving litter everywhere. That really annoys me.” What is interesting about her story is that it demonstrates that throughout the ‘dark years’ of decline, people still made use of and enjoyed the park’s facilities. When I ask her about how the park has been portrayed as no-go zone in the past, she says “no, no, it wasn’t like that at all... we still came and used the playground, and there were always people in here (the café) I think, but its obviously much more attractive now and the access is better...”

Though it manifests in different ways, the relationship between the tangible physical decline and the perceived social decline is obvious. This relationship hinges on the notion of the ‘glory days’ where people were better behaved and took better care of what they had. This theme not only emerges out of the archive, but was also featured in opinions expressed in the local press. On 21 March 2012, a letter appeared in the *Huddersfield Examiner* which not only caught my attention but also that of David Griffiths and the Friends of Greenhead Park. The letter, entitled “Unruly behaviour in park”, weighed in on a local debate about an upcoming organised event called the “Party in the Park”, and criticised the way in which ‘the people of today’ take advantage of a resource provided by the people of the past. The letter expressed concern over the resumption of the plans for the event and reads:

I am sure many people including the Friends of Greenhead Park will have concern about this after the costly restoration. I base this view from what I have already seen in terms of the behaviour of many young people, for example treating the bandstand as though it was a playpen, entering the fountain either filled or unfilled with water unrestrained. I am sure the Victorians never envisaged the heritage they left us would be abused the way it is these days.<sup>263</sup>

---

<sup>263</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Letters,” March 23, 2012.

Here is a perfect example of the emerging depiction between physical and social restoration; the idea that now that the park looks and feels Victorian, we should expect a return to Victorian values. This letter caught the attention of many readers, and also pushed David Griffiths to join columnist John Avison in refuting this notion. A few days later John Avison wrote that “While researching for his recent book on Greenhead Park, Secured For The Town, [Griffiths] came across numerous instances of bad behaviour in the park reaching back virtually to the park’s opening in 1874.”<sup>264</sup> The article quotes a number of reports and meeting minutes which reflect youths doing damage to the park throughout the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s, and onwards throughout the beginning of the twentieth century. In fact Griffiths’s work exposes that from 1916 until the late 1960s park staff were sworn in as “special constables with powers of arrest”. This depiction proves that ‘anti-social behaviour’ is not a new phenomenon and perhaps does disrupt this increasingly present notion that the public is not worthy of the park’s restoration. Geoff Hirst’s earlier remarks about the powers of park staff to deter troublemakers is reinforced by the historical facts of park employees having “powers of arrest” in the past, although Griffiths portrays this change as an advancement rather than a symbol of decline.

### **Decline through Restoration**

The narrative of the ‘glory days’ was not only fuelled by the historical portrayal of the park, and human nature’s natural penchant for nostalgia, it was also perpetuated by a number of events which occurred in the park throughout the course of the restoration which provided an even starker contrast between past and present. For much of the project, large areas of Greenhead Park were sectioned off and under construction; in fact, there were significant periods of time when one of the park’s

---

<sup>264</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Nostalgia: Bad behaviour in Greenhead Park,” March 28, 2012.

main functions (providing an open, direct path towards the town centre) was completely shut down, as the main path through the park was closed, without an alternative route in place. As such, during the initial period of restoration the park dipped into a period of even further social decline as spotlighted by the *Huddersfield Examiner*.

Reporting of ‘anti-social’ behaviour in the park came to a head in the spring of 2011, when the park was beginning to reopen in parts after a long winter of construction and closures. The *Examiner* ran a story entitled “Police say Greenhead Park is not a ‘no-go’ area after pitbull attack” which followed up on their earlier reporting of a series of robberies and attacks in the park, the worst of which was when “...a robber armed with a snarling pit bull dog threaten a father as he walked his toddler through the park.”<sup>265</sup> The article cited three robberies that had occurred within or near the park over the previous weekend, with another happening within the month before. The quotes from the police, which insist that the park is not a ‘no-go zone’, are confusing, because it is not entirely clear where the notion of a ‘no-go zone’ came from. These muggings certainly did spark a lot of debate and coverage within the *Examiner*, and the phrase ‘no-go zone’ had been used a number of times in years before (most notably when local residents were refuting the establishment of the skateboard park), but the *Examiner*’s repetition of the extreme term ‘no-go zone’ certainly stuck and the phrase continued to surface in the letters, articles and online comments which followed.<sup>266</sup>

---

<sup>265</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Police say Greenhead Park is not a ‘no-go’ area after pitbull attack,” March 29, 2011.

<sup>266</sup> Residents referred to the area of the park with the skateboard park as a ‘no-go’ area in *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Action on new park protests,” October 05, 2001 one resident said; “It’s a no-go area. They use it as a drinking and drug-taking den.” These comments and the re-use of the term ‘no-go’ emphasise the perception that a social regeneration was needed

Within the next month two more events spurred on the debate over whether or not Greenhead Park was a ‘no-go’ area. One incident involved a group of preachers approaching and preaching to a group of 11 to 14 year-olds while placing their hands upon their heads, and another was when two teens were threatened by a “20-strong gang” in the park, both in April 2011.<sup>267</sup> Not only did these events and reports provide a stark contrast to the ongoing historical coverage of the ‘glory days’ but they also created hurdles for those trying to engage people in the park and create a safer environment for those using it. The conflict that arises from disrupting the present in order to preserve the past for the future is well documented within the study of space and place, particularly in relation to parks. Setha Low’s work focuses on urban spaces in New York City, and not only documents how historical focus can create exclusive environments for specific communities, but also highlights the logistical challenges presented by imposing a physical past on a space.<sup>268</sup> One of her conclusions, which she calls ‘lessons on culture and diversity’ states that “Contemporary historic preservation should not concentrate on restoring the scenic features without also restoring the facilities and diversions that attract people to a park” and draws specific attention to the results of imposing construction and building works on a public space.<sup>269</sup> Her work cites both good and bad examples of this

---

alongside a physical restoration. Some of the comments linked to a later incident in the park located at <http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/local-west-yorkshire-news/2011/04/08/mum-s-upset-at-hands-on-christian-preachers-in-greenhead-park-what-do-you-think-86081-28481302/2/> indicate that this sentiment still prevails: that residents are concerned that the park has only been physically cleaned up but that, “the muggers and assorted slimeballs have quickly infested the park again” (accessed 15 March 2013).

<sup>267</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, “Mums upset at hands-on Christian Preachers in Greenhead Park,” April 8, 2011 and “Two teens threatened with robbery by 20-man strong gang in Greenhead Park,” April 27, 2011.

<sup>268</sup> Setha Low, Dana Taplin, and Suzanna Scheld, *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity* (Austin: University of Texas, 2005), 200.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.* Low’s work uses the example of Prospect Park which was restored with a “primary allegiance to the park’s design legacy as a work of art”. As a result the priority being a

conflict in play, acknowledging how park management made concessions to specific cultural groups and allowed them to make material changes to the park, which were not in keeping with the design, but were effective in establishing permanent welcoming cultural symbols which countered the otherwise exclusive landscape.

In his interview, Greenhead Park Activity Officer Chris Smith discusses the difficulty he faced in getting people back into the park after the construction (Interviewees/Chris Smith/Activities Officer for a building site). He explains how visitor numbers dropped throughout the restoration, but that things have improved as the park has become more complete. He says, “It was very hard being an Activities Officer for a building site, it’s much more fun being an Activities Officer for a park”, and discusses the way in which getting more people into the park creates a safer and livelier park and reduces the kind of behaviour which increased during the restoration. Chris Smith’s interview provides an interesting insight into the park because he also served as a Park Warden prior to his role as an Activities Officer, so he looks at the park from different perspectives, and is fully aware of the role he plays in creating a social restoration (though his vision looks both to the past and the future). He describes his role:

It’s almost like we’ve done all the architectural and landscape work that we needed to do to get the park back up to the level that it should be, and my position is there to create an events package and activities calendar which matches the new facilities, to really try to get the community back into the park, and using it in appropriate ways. Some of those being new things and some of those are old traditional things that have fallen by the wayside.

## **Conclusion**

---

historical aesthetic, major works have restricted and changed use in the park for years during the restoration and provided too few places for social congregation in the restored design.

It is no surprise that the narrative of decline and restoration was not only shaped by the way the park was portrayed within local media and other public presentations of its history, but also that the media served as a platform for open debate and dialogue over the past, present and future of the park. The impact that public retelling of history has on individual narratives is not undocumented in oral history, in fact an interest in the relationship between individual memory and broader public memory (including presentations within the media) is one of the focuses of this discipline. In her handbook to oral history Valerie Yow summarises the “Power of the Media to Create Popular Memory” citing the works of George Lipsitz, Paula Hamilton and Barbie Zelizer whose research looks into the way in which cultural, film, and media retellings of history create public memory.<sup>270</sup> Most notably, Barbie Zelizer’s work looks at the media’s notion of ‘Camelot’ which idealised the story of John F. Kennedy in the wake of his assassination. Zelizer’s work shows how this portrayal still lasts in the way in which his administration is characterised today in public discussion.<sup>271</sup>

The contrast between Victorian/modern, decline/restoration, and past/present will always be stark, but does not always have to be so absolute. Although a historical imprint has been imposed through the built environment, the social life of the park that inhabits the space will determine how new memories are established and what narratives are perpetuated into the future. It has been shown how the oral histories collected both contribute to, and interrupt, broader public narratives in the case of Greenhead Park, and how the collection of stories and their interpretations in the archives can provide context to the physical changes going on in the park. The narrative of the ‘glory days’ and the lost past connected to the 1974 formation of

---

<sup>270</sup> Yow, 55-56

<sup>271</sup> Barbie Zelizer, in Yow, p. 56

Kirklees Council is significant not just in the story of the park, but also in the perceptions of decline perpetuated through the memories of individuals. This narrative is repeated not just in the press and history books, and not only in council employees but also in individuals who connected the physical clues of decline to broader social changes in Huddersfield.

Although Dearborn and Stallmeyer bring up many interesting points within their report on erasures in world heritage sites, they do not easily come to definitive conclusions for future practice. They conclude their work with a somewhat philosophical dialogue about the act of historicisation:

Stallmeyer: But the other interesting question is that as soon as you conceive of yourself as presenting something to something else or that you see something as having value outside of its social or cultural value for you or for your community that immediately changes the way that you see it. As soon as you plan for it you've altered it.

Dearborn: But if you don't plan for it you also alter it.<sup>272</sup>

Just like the conflicts between large international organisations like UNESCO and the individuals who inhabit or make use world heritage sites, the use of Greenhead Park, like all public spaces, is negotiated by a broad range of stakeholders who hold an even broader range of economic, cultural and social investments in defining the park as a place. Preserving and restoring a place by acknowledging its history and physically representing immediately alters its contemporary meaning in the present, and yet to allow it to decline imposes a value-judgement on the worth of the past. What oral histories serve to do within this complex set of relationships is highlight the ways in which individual stories either configure, or disrupt, broader narratives so that social erasures are preserved alongside the views of those who acknowledge and subscribe to the narrative of the 'glory days' and the built environment which connects to it.

---

<sup>272</sup> Dearborn, Lynne M. and John C. Stallmeyer, 132.



Different members of disparate communities have taken part in their own place-making activities across different points of time and space within the history of the park: bringing these stories together, highlights how some perspectives on place have been informed by both the experience and the presentation of the past, while others tell a story which contradicts the stronger historical narrative of decline. Recording oral histories allows for an exchange of dialogue, and produces new accounts that are accessible to those unfamiliar with how others have used the same space. Collecting and interpreting these differing accounts is the first step in the process of sharing them, so that community members can begin to see how different narratives fit together, and new acts of place-making can occur.

One final element of this story of decline that has not been analysed in this chapter stems from the correlation between the decline period marked by the change of Huddersfield as a corporation and the period in which the make-up of Huddersfield as a multicultural town began to emerge. As narratives of decline come into the timeline, so do narratives of the park being a place for new communities in Huddersfield, and as such new identities come into play which establish new interim histories for the park. Whether or not these narratives withstand physical erasures and manifest within the new built environment will only be revealed as time goes on; however, the digital oral history database can preserve them in abstract form and highlight the ways in which they interrupt broader public memory.

## **Chapter 6 – Place: Past, Present and Future.**

Following the story of the park's decline and the narrative of its restoration, this chapter will look more closely at the ways in which people have made use of the park and actively inhabited it with their traditions and customs. The content of the oral histories collected demonstrate that as a place inhabited by memory, Greenhead Park provides a common ground of experience across generations for the wide range of communities in Huddersfield. For those who have lived in Huddersfield for many generations, the park serves as a place to return to, where memory can be anchored in present experience and the built landscape acts as a point of comparison to measure change and difference. For individuals, families and communities who are relatively newer to Huddersfield, the park also serves as a blank canvas, a place to be occupied with new memories, traditions and experiences which will be relevant for the generations to come. In addition to discovering the ways in which dialogues of place-making can support or disrupt accepted narratives of place, the research also revealed how place can serve as an anchor, collapsing memory and experience for individuals and even across generations. In some communities, new generations carry on the tradition of using the park, but make use of the space in new, modern and different ways, while in other communities public use of the park is centred on maintaining past traditions: both manifestations of this generational use come with their own tensions, and neither is exclusive of the other. By outlining three patterns of use which emerged from the recordings, this chapter will demonstrate how the digital archive has not only preserved the story of the park, but also the act of history making which the park inspires. Through examining the patterns of generational use, generations of use, and tradition building, this chapter will illustrate how preserving

both stories and context in the digital archive documents the negotiation of place and the process of building shared memories.

What is significant about the specific patterns outlined in this chapter is the way in which they exemplify the act of history making taking place within the park. ‘Generational use’ outlines the way in which use of the park is passed down generation to generation and reflects the broader story of the park as a public place used for many different activities by different communities, while ‘generations of use’ outlines the way in which the park has been used in the same way by different communities across different periods of time; these stories reflect how a public place serves similar functions for different people. Finally, ‘tradition building’ refers to the ways in which new communities take up ownership of public places and impose their own traditions on the spaces, in a forwards and backwards-looking exercise of preserving their heritage in a new arena. It is these descriptions of passing on or creating tradition which exemplify Samuel’s concept of history as a social form of knowledge and Lefebvre’s philosophy of place-making: the sense of place and history demonstrated in the interviews do not come from a top-down hierarchy, they are the result of an everyday social process of interacting with the park.<sup>273</sup> Whether it is being done consciously or unconsciously, the park is used by many communities not just as a meeting ground to make sense of the past, but also as a stage on which communities can create and establish a presentation of history which will carry forward into the future. The many visitors to Greenhead Park participate in a cycle of history making and place-making as they socially construct (and reconstruct) their vision of past, present and future within the park.

---

<sup>273</sup> The connection between Samuel Raphael and Henri Lefebvre work in relation to this project’s concept of place and space have already been laid out in Chapter 1.

### **Generational Use – Space as a constant within place**

Within the narratives of many of the white British participants of the project, a story emerges as the park being a place which is passed down from generation to generation: both within the family and within the community. In this fashion, the physical space of the park serves as a reference point and a point of consistency through generations, despite the fact that the use of the space (and presumably the sense of place attributed to it) changes from generation to generation. Linda Milloy's interview acts as a telling case for this trend, as her narrative extends across at least four generations of her family (Greenhead Stories/Linda Milloy/Interview #1/That were the main place to go). In this clip, she links her love of the park to her childhood memories of her mother taking her there on days out, and also speculates that her mother must have had the same memories, implying that this tradition extends further up the family tree. Linda says, "Well, it's where me Mum's memories, from when she were younger, I should imagine, that she took us" and explains that she did what her mother did, taking her own children and then her grandchildren. Linda's generational connections to the park illustrates how the space of the park serves as a constant, and specifically engages the act of passing on memories when she explains how she told the story of the park to her daughter, and how her daughter now tells her own children about the park. Linda's story clearly depicts a picturesque view of her own childhood spent in the park, and she describes her own children as taking part in similar activities: going to the paddling pool, playing on the swings, and riding on the train. For her grandchildren, the park provides different experiences: her grandson skateboards and likes to spray paint in the permitted area, while her granddaughters live further away in Sheffield and do not visit the park as regularly but still come to the park when they visit her. Although the ways in which her family makes use of the

park have changed, she says the park itself has remained as significant to her: “It’s just part of you. It’s part of your life, isn’t it?”

The prevalence of the ‘Generational Tradition’ tag shows that Linda’s story is not unique. Many narrators touched upon the park as a place within their own childhood and again as a place where they went with their own children, sharing how their relationship with the place changed over time, while some shared stories which specifically engage a narrative of the park being passed from one generation to the next as a sort of passing of the torch. Brenda Haigh and Paul Mullany are two individuals who had close friends and family with strong connections to the park, and as such they have taken the care of the park to heart and take the responsibilities left to them by past generations quite seriously. Brenda Haigh tells stories of the park being a gathering point for her family, specifically because her grandfather was the park warden or “park bobby”. She shares stories of being taken to the park as well as coming to the park with friends as a child, one of which involves being caught playing in the shrubs by her Grandfather (Greenhead Stories/Brenda Haigh/Interview #1/Caught by the Park Bobby). Brenda says, “...we go a long way back, Greenhead Park and my family”, and shares how her grandparents and her own family lived close to the park. She expresses a similar sentiment to Linda, sharing how she went with parents and grandparents, and how she now takes her own grandchildren, though she admits her experience of the park has changed somewhat (Greenhead Stories/Brenda Haigh/Interview #2/Taking the family). Though her interview is quite brief, her story invokes a sense of continuity from her grandfather’s role to her own experience in the park. She connects memories of her grandfather being the park warden to her own story of taking her children to the park, and proudly mentions her grandfather’s involvement as the leader of the men’s bowling club, including him being given a set

of snooker balls upon his retirement, which sparked her own interest in the sport. For Brenda the connection between the park and the family is strong. Similarly one of the written memories submitted to the project invokes a very clear sense of this generational connection:

I first came to Greenhead Park when I was a baby over 50 yrs ago. My Grandma lived at Spring Street (now demolished for the ring road). I then came pushing a dolls pram and later pushing my own children in their prams nearly everyday with my dog Lassie.  
Anonymous

Another anecdote which exemplifies the pattern of generational use of the park comes from Friends of Greenhead Park secretary Paul Mullany, who relates his involvement with the park to his interaction with Alderman Gardener, a town councillor who was a family friend. At eight years old Alderman Gardener told him of the park, “if you make sure you use it, then you don’t lose it”, words he has taken to heart in his work to preserve the park and campaign for improvements to it (Greenhead Stories/Paul Mullany/wise words from Alderman Gardener). Paul mentions that he has lived within a few minutes walk of the park his entire life, noting that he came as a child, and remembers getting lost in the park as a child and coming as a regular basis with his family. Living so close to the park, Paul says, “it’s in my blood”, linking his childhood experience, the experiences of his family, and his activism and involvement in the park today (Greenhead Stories/Paul Mullany/Interview #1/The park was like a second home). Paul notes that he is happy to see more people using the park today, and is pleased to see the improvements, but he does express concerns over a minority of people misusing the park, acknowledging that it is used differently today than it has been in the past, but he puts his faith in the majority and is confident that newer generations will continue to take care of the park: “the majority won’t let a minority ruin it”.

For many people the park serves as a cross-generational point of reference, a place which strengthens the connections they feel to generations of the past and those of the future, while others used the park as a narrative form for the telling the progression of their own life story. One telling case of this comes from Ron Berry's interview in which he more or less recounts the stages of his life from childhood, through teenage years, university life, adulthood, marriage and life as an empty nester. For Ron, like many others, it makes sense to recount experience in the park through the life narrative. Although this is a typical method of life narrative sharing, and it is arguably natural for interviewees to tell stories within the order of their life trajectory, it is important to recognise the particularly strong link between place and the life narrative. Ron's story changes as he shares his life story, and while his use of the park changes with the stage of his life he is at, the presence of the park remains as an anchor for his memories, guiding him through the retelling of his story.

What is most interesting about both Ron's and Paul's interviews is their self-awareness about their place-making and the way in which they connect the past, present and future of place in their narratives. Paul's story stems from his introduction to the park and the message from Alderman Gardener about making use of it, a sentiment which still inspires his work to preserve the park, while Ron's story is remarkably reflexive in terms of the way in which he plots his changing uses of the park through the course of his life. It is possible that this awareness of past and present may be something unique to their interviews, given that they are members of the Friends of Greenhead Park group and have dedicated time to the park, and yet this awareness of history making and placing oneself in the history of the park is not unique to their stories. Numerous interviewees express an awareness of the park as an unchanging constant between generations; even some of the written testimony

collected by the Friends of Greenhead Park reveals a similar sentiment. One anonymous contributor cited a very recent memory:

The script @ prom in the park 2008. The classical was fantastic. 1<sup>st</sup> time my two year old went to a music concert. He loved every minute of it! Fantastic place to make family memories together. Anonymous.

Within oral history, there is a tendency for interviews to follow the linear narrative of a lifespan the same way in which Ron Berry tells his story from his childhood to the present day. This naturally linear narrative style is acknowledged in numerous oral history handbooks and guides.<sup>274</sup> This linear telling is as naturally a part of oral history as it is a part of how memory works; Valerie Yow's guide to oral history sums up a number of studies which show that while people may not be able to put memories in perfectly precise order, "in life review research, these groups of events often correspond to eras in an individual's life – grade school, high school, college, marriage and so forth."<sup>275</sup> Furthermore, it has been argued that there is as much to be learned from the misplacement of memory with time as there is from memories which can be precisely verified.<sup>276</sup>

Within typical oral history interviews there are numerous factors which can affect memory, including frustrations stemming from skipping time periods, difficulty pinpointing dates, and other traps of memory-recalling, but the presence of place seems to provide a platform for storytelling which eases the cross-generational experience, binding stories set apart by many years with the same context in the same space. Using the physicality of the park as a jumping point for interviews meant that some narratives were structured around place rather than time. Though Linda Milloy

---

<sup>274</sup> Robert Atkinson. *The Life Story Interview* (London: Sage, 1998). See footnote #189.

<sup>275</sup> Yow, 49

<sup>276</sup> Portelli argues this case in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli*.



does talk about generational change, her narrative skilfully blends past and present thanks to the use of the park as a reference point.

Toby Butler's work on locating oral history touches upon this connection between location and memory with a focus on the user-end perspective of how people engage with recordings relating to their location. While his work is focused on the outcomes of stories about place, rather than recording stories within place, his exploration of location and memory provides a valuable perspective to this study and his work attempts to provide reflection for the wider array of what he called "place-based oral history practice".<sup>277</sup> Butler describes the act of "place-making" for those who took part in his audio walks which featured oral histories that contextualised particular landscapes in London, arguing that the combination of oral testimony and place facilitated and eased place-making for those who were unfamiliar or relatively new to their surroundings.

### **Generations of Use**

While the recordings within the project reflected a recurrence of stories of generational use, stories also emerged which displayed the way in which different communities used the park in the same way across different periods of time. These examples, particularly of stories relating to "courting", exhibit the ways in which oral histories can dispel commonly accepted narratives of place. In David Griffiths's book on Greenhead Park, he writes about the 'Golden Age' of inter-war years and the Holidays at Home, which emerged out of the Second World War. Griffiths's work highlights the nature of the events and lists some of the events included in the six

---

<sup>277</sup> Toby Butler, "The Historical Hearing Aid: Located Oral History from the Listener's Perspective," in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 194.

weeks of Holidays at Home, including a press clipping from the *Huddersfield Examiner*, which highlights the original 1941 programme. “Press adverts give a flavour of the wide-ranging programme, centred on an open air stage near Park Drive North... there was also a temporary pavilion and a dance marquee”, a place which hosted dances and concerts throughout the summer. While press clippings and photos provide descriptions and a brief sense of the events, oral testimonies help to paint a clearer picture of the mood and atmosphere under the marquee.<sup>278</sup> Dorothy Hargate remembers these dances very clearly; describing ballroom dancing with the boys and doing ‘fun’ dances with just the girls, she also recounts what the girls and boys all wore and shares stories which provide a sense of atmosphere (Dorothy Hargate/Dorothy Hargate Part 2/Summer Dances). Dorothy gives an indication of teenage behaviour in her day, providing a glimpse into teenage life and stories of courting. She alludes to the dances being a place where young men and women mixed and mingled. Dorothy says, “you were very innocent in those days... well you didn’t know anything else...” whispering that “if a girl went off... you know... oh it was shocking, and it was really hushed up and they spoke in whispers”. She recalls a story about how a girl on her street was having a baby, and her mother told everyone she was going to Liverpool to have an operation, when everyone knew she was having a baby: “No, we never saw that child. Never, ever saw it. We all knew, you know, but we never saw that child. She was sent away...” (Dorothy Hargate/Dorothy Hargate Part 2/A bit too leet geen).

Stories of Holidays at Home continue in the post-war period, but happy childhood memories of these events fade noticeably as the story of the park’s decline begins to dominate in the 1950s and the 1960s and is characterised by the 1974

---

<sup>278</sup> Griffiths, 50.

formation of Kirklees Council. But as the Camelot-like stories of the pre-Kirklees golden age begin to fade, new stories begin to enter the narrative from new communities who inhabited Huddersfield. In ‘A Park for the People’ David Griffiths writes,

Thirty years passed between the creation of Kirklees in 1974 and the approval in 2005 of the Council’s bid for Heritage Lottery Funds to restore the Park to its Victorian splendour. It is possible to paint a gloomy picture of those years – and there are many in Huddersfield, still mourning the loss of its municipal independence, who are prepared to do so.<sup>279</sup>

But for those whose communities were new to Huddersfield, the park provided a blank canvas for gathering and creating new traditions in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Along with the influx of migrants who came to Huddersfield in the post-war period came a range of new cultures, traditions and memories which would become a part of the story of Greenhead Park. This is exemplified by the University of Huddersfield Centre for Oral History Research’s ‘Asian Voices’ project which sought to document the stories and narratives of Huddersfield Asian community. This project focused on interviewing members of the community to record stories of “...experiences of work, worship, neighbourhood communities, and about the cultural and leisure pursuits they brought with them from their homeland, and the ones they became involved in after settling here”.<sup>280</sup>

Similarly, Greenhead Stories sought to interview people from a range of communities about the ways in which they inhabited the space of the park. Today many people in Huddersfield are aware that the park is home to the Huddersfield’s Caribbean Carnival, but in fact the Caribbean community in Huddersfield has a connection to the park which stretches back far earlier than the first official carnival

---

<sup>279</sup> Griffiths, 60.

<sup>280</sup> <http://www.asianvoices.org.uk/about> (accessed 15 March 2013)

event in 1984.<sup>281</sup> The story of the Caribbean community in the park starts with stories of Sunday afternoons spent in the park and teenagers doing their courting in the late 1960s.

Yvette shared a short story about going to the park which was recorded during Huddersfield Carnival's 'J'ouvert' opening night event for the Carnival. Recalling spending her time in the park as a teenager, she says: "...late sixties, early seventies; it was a great place to be on a Sunday, it was really, really nice. Everyone just meet up there, have a good time, you know, there was never ever any problems, trouble or anything, everyone was just really friendly...It was just a great place to be, you'd meet up with friends, loads of people... and even I did a bit of my courting there..." She went on to share the story of meeting her partner in the park, pointing out her husband and explaining that they've been together since they were sixteen and eighteen (Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Yvette – Carnival Attendee). Yvette's story acknowledges that these gatherings went on before the Carnival was founded in Huddersfield, as she explains that she has lived in London since 1976 and has no memories of the Carnivals during her time living in Huddersfield. Her story, and the story of many others is contextualised by two of the Carnival's organisers, Natalie Hamilton and Andrew Michael Bedoe, who explain the community's longer term connection to the park. Natalie says "... in the seventies, when we were quite young a lot of people would go to the park on a Sunday. I know my Dad used to take us all..." She goes on to talk about how it became a gathering place for her community: "I think that because there weren't many black children and

---

<sup>281</sup> Numerous interviewees from a range of cultural backgrounds mentioned the Carnival either as being an important part of the story of the park, or discuss it as something they would like to find more about in relation to the more recent history of the park. This includes interviewees such as David Griffiths and Ron Berry who mention the Carnival and Mela as possible areas of investigation within the project.

young people around, it was just nice to go and meet up with people. For example in my school, I was the first black child.” (Greenhead Stories/Natalie Hamilton/Interview #1/Going to the park as a child). Her memories include spending Sundays in the park with other black children and families and she recalls listening to soul and reggae music which was always played by a man who brought a boom box to the park. As children became teenagers, Natalie says “it was one of the places, as well, where a lot people met their partners, you know where they met each other and when they wanted to meet up with the boys or with the girls, that’s where they’d go. Without our parents (laughs).” Andrew Michael Bedoe shares a similar sentiment, rooting his memories of the park long before the Carnival took place: “in those days the park was where you used to take your girlfriends, or your girlfriends took you... The park does have a lot of memories for me, because it was an area where people went to congregate, or play football or even meet your prospective partners or take them for a stroll in the park... but equally the memories of Carnival in the park is still there” (Greenhead Stories/Andrew Michael Bedoe/Interview #1/Teenage Years in the Park).

It is not unsurprising that public spaces provide a gathering space for teenagers and young adults, but the narratives of both sets of courting stories exhibit how a public place such as the park provides an important function as a meeting ground for young people. In the case of Dorothy Hargate, the park was a place of familiarity which young people visited initially as children (supervised by adults) and, later, with the trust of their parents, as un-chaperoned teenagers. For the teenagers who were the younger generation of the Caribbean migrant community, the park served as a meeting place for people of their culture, a public and open place where they could gather safely and establish their own social groups within the new culture

they were living in. Natalie Hamilton says of being the only black child in her school as a child: “I mean, not that I minded all my friends being white, which they were, but it was nice to meet up with some black people as well.” (Greenhead Stories/Natalie Hamilton/Interview #1/Going to the park as a child).

### **Tradition Building and Re-Invention**

Natalie’s story alludes to the idea that the park provided a meeting ground where she could meet children like her, something significant for her community, while Andrew’s view extends that significance to an awareness that community gatherings have an educational function for the public at large:

On a serious note, I think it’s more something that’s within you. Whether it’s culturally based on my heritage being a natural born Trinidadian or equal to that it’s about educating, not only realising your culture and the origins of it. So yes, it’s about portraying, it’s about educating. I strongly believe, you know, I’ve watched the carnival grow over a number of years... and one thing that has interested me is that its grown from what was a predominant black or ethnic event, to become a multi-cultural event, and I think that’s one of the beauties of it.

Andrew notes that this influence of the carnival may have “helped to achieve breakdowns in areas where prior, people had a negative view of other people’s cultures, other people’s colour, etc.” This observation shows that the organisers of the Carnival are actively engaging in a self-aware effort to both preserve and present their past, while at the same time setting root in the physical landscape of the town.

Mike Savage’s work considers the way in which people express belonging and community within place, refuting the idea of a global ‘placelessness’ and questioning the idea of the decline of community. The idea of nostalgia, as drawn from his work in mentioned Chapter 5, extends further when he brings in the ways in which ‘incomers’ like Huddersfield’s Caribbean community fit into the equation of

‘Histories, belongings, communities’. In parallel to the park serving as a source of nostalgia “...linked to a sense of loss and marginalisation”, the notion of elective belonging means that newcomers and strangers can also use it to measure and inhabit places with new narratives. While nostalgia can be used to define “a group of ‘us’ who remember, as opposed to the recently arrived who don’t”, inhabiting historical spaces with elective belongings establishes new narratives which in turn add to the mosaic of memories of what ‘we’, ‘they’, and ‘us’ remember.<sup>282</sup> Andrew Michael Bedoe describes his view of the Carnival perfectly: “It’s a very good educational tool, it’s not only about celebrating the past, it’s about creating a future from the past, if you know what I mean.” (Greenhead Stories/Andrew Michael Bedoe/Interview #1/The Changing Role of Carnival). Michael engages with the idea that his community has brought a cultural past with them, and is using it not just to strengthen ties within his own community, but also to build a future for all communities, by working the narrative of the Carnival into the future of Huddersfield and into the ways in which the present will be remembered.

It is important that we do not oversimplify and thus patronise our interviewees when looking at their cultural traditions. This reflexive process of presenting one’s heritage in the public sphere is more complicated than it might seem; it is not as simple as hosting an event which has commonality to all participants, as the carnival organisers themselves come from a range of distinct backgrounds and cultures across the Caribbean. The process of creating a new Huddersfield Carnival is as much about mixing and integrating with other Caribbean people as it is about establishing the acceptance of Caribbean people in Huddersfield.

---

<sup>282</sup> Mike Savage, “Histories, Belongings, Communities,” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11, no. 2 (2008): 153.

Sociologist Harry Goulbourne theorises and debunks some of the arguments surrounding the notion of the Caribbean diaspora in his work *Caribbean Transnational Experience*, criticising its overuse and ambiguous definition when applied to Caribbean peoples:

...the concept of diaspora, not unlike many concepts in the social sciences over the last thirty years or so, may now be at the juncture where it collapses so many different experiences into a seemingly common whole that the concept is losing its meaning or usefulness in social analysis.<sup>283</sup>

In particular, Goulbourne draws attention to the way in which the so-called Caribbean diaspora is actually a meeting of numerous other diasporas including those with African, Chinese, Indian, Jewish and Irish linkages due to the various waves of forced and voluntary migration to the area.<sup>284</sup> With varying mixes of ethnic populations from island to island, it seems impossible that one could define a particular ‘Caribbean experience’, especially considering that the term ‘Caribbean’ is merely a geographic definition, and yet the Carnival organised in Huddersfield has done just that.

Goulbourne seems at odds in his study because he rejects the term diaspora but must also employ it throughout his book in order to build new definitions of Caribbean experience. In making his own definition of the term, he lays out five aspects which define a diasporic community, which include both feelings of exile and a sense of belonging which transcend geographical definitions, but he ultimately concludes that the key to the concept is the existence of a “collective consciousness of belonging to such a collectivity.”<sup>285</sup> According to Goulbourne the notion of communal experience must exist within the minds of the community members who

---

<sup>283</sup> Harry Goulbourne, *Caribbean Transnational Experience* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), 3.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.



are a part of that diaspora. While such a consciousness is imagined by people of all walks of life, Goulbourne notes that it is most commonly articulated by those community members belonging to the world of intellectuals; politicians, religious leaders, poets, artists, writers, etc.<sup>286</sup>

Though Goulbourne asserts that the key to recognizing a diaspora is in understanding the ways in which the community articulates and adopts a diasporic consciousness for its self, I argue that it is equally important to understand the ways in which the concept has been imposed by outsiders. This should be especially true when dealing with cultures of people who have been moved forcibly by imperialist hands. Whether or not Caribbean people who came to the UK recognised any commonalities between themselves and those coming from other islands, the group was perceived to be homogenous by the Britain which greeted them. Goulbourne criticises historians and sociologists for their overuse of ‘diaspora’ yet he does not explore how the imposition of this term may have affected everyday people’s notions of shared experiences. His definition of diaspora relies on an understanding of shared experience within the community, but his analysis does not delineate whether such a consciousness must be self-created or whether it can be imposed and in turn adopted.

In his writing, Goulbourne demonstrates the ways in which migration to England has in some ways facilitated the growth of the so-called diaspora, by acknowledging the ways in which it has fostered new cultural connections. He writes that

the existence of all these populations in England... has facilitated dynamics and relationships which have otherwise not developed within

---

<sup>286</sup> Ibid.

the Caribbean, in that groups have discovered much of their commonalities and developed ethnic bonds in different ways.<sup>287</sup>

Regardless of whether people living in the Caribbean have imagined cultural links with other Caribbeans throughout history, the experience of those who have come to the UK, combined with the commonality thrust upon them as migrants within British society, denotes the existence of a changing diaspora under Goulbourne's definitions. This duality of experience is echoed in the work of Gemma Romaine whose work on ethnic life historians in modern Britain describes a 'double-consciousness' experienced by new migrants, one in which individuals are forced into categories of associated diasporas by their host communities, while at the same time they must also rely on other members of those so-called diasporas and forge new relationships in their new homes.<sup>288</sup> Thus, from a theoretical perspective the presence of the Caribbean Carnival in Huddersfield and its location in the concept of the place of the park can be seen as both the anchoring of a cultural tradition as well as the marrying of distinct cultures who have come together to create a new practice. One of the participants, Maurianne, describes it as just that: "Everyone has a different float, ...we mix together, because it's Barbadians, Trinidadians, Jamaicans, the whole lot live in Huddersfield though everyone is entirely different..." (Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Maurianne – Carnival Memories).

Use of the public space of Greenhead Park as a part of new communities establishing themselves in Huddersfield is not unique. Though not documented within this project, the Asian Voices oral history project revealed that the Mela was established soon after the Carnival as a summer event which both brought together and showcased the presence of the Asian communities in Huddersfield:

---

<sup>287</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>288</sup> Gemma Romaine, *Connecting Histories A Comparative Exploration of African-Caribbean and Jewish History and Memory in Modern Britain* (London: Routledge, 2006), 42.

Mela, I was an elected member at the time and I helped get it established. It was set up for the people who were just coming into England and a way for people without families to get to know the community. It was a community festival and I went to the director of services at the time to see if they would be interested in an event like this and they were. It started in 1988. There was a Mela in Leeds and other people started celebrating things like St Patrick's day and other events, so our community asked why didn't we celebrate our festivals and that was the thing that pushed for the Mela in Huddersfield – Jamil Akhtar<sup>289</sup>

Other stories emerged over the course of the project which linked the park to the earliest roots of the Polish Ex-Combatants Society who used the park as a meeting ground before they had an official gathering place. This story emerged from research done by another historian, Frank Grombir, whose research into the Polish and Ukrainian communities highlighted further connections to Greenhead Park, including Anti-Soviet political protests held at the War Memorial and a Ukrainian Festival held in the park in 1952 (Greenhead Stories/Frank Grombir/Interview #1/ various clips).

In addition to tradition building by specific cultures and communities, Greenhead Stories recorded a number of stories which reveal that the park is not just a place for individuals and groups to exhibit their customs, hobbies, or cultures, but that is it also a meeting ground and mixing ground for different groups to come together. When interviewing exhibitors at the Huddersfield Flower, Vegetable, and Handicraft show in 2011 many interviewees were pleased to share stories about how the park served as a meeting ground for flower and vegetable enthusiasts from around the country. Most notably, David Willoughby talks about Huddersfield's position in attracting gardeners and farmers from a wide range of places (Greenhead Stories/David Willoughby/Interview #1/The Gladioli Society and the Flower Show and Greenhead Stories/David Willoughby/Interview #2/Staying overnight and meeting exhibitors). But numerous stories also emerge which show that for some

---

<sup>289</sup> Ali, 89.

these gatherings provide a chance to meet one's neighbours as well as new friends from around the country. One particularly telling case comes from David Willoughby's interview when he shares a story about trading gladioli for curries at the end of the day (Greenhead Stories/David Willoughby/Interview #1/Gladioli and Curries) showing how the traditions are changing and adapting. Numerous interviews where Huddersfield's multiculturalism is mentioned are tagged with the tag "Multicultural Huddersfield" whereas stories like David's which actually exhibit different cultures and groups mixing are tagged with "Cultural Mixing".

Within his work, Mike Savage draws on the work of Brian Jackson, whose insight into the condition of working-class communities presents an interesting glimpse into the lives of working-class couples living in Huddersfield in the early 1960s, just before the large increase in numbers of migrants from around the globe.<sup>290</sup> Savage summarises Brian Jackson's work and reinforces the conclusions Jackson comes to: respondents did not express a particular attachment to Huddersfield as a place, nor any sense that their location in Huddersfield was the result of a particular choice. Respondents drew on a number of considerations when answering questions about their local attachments but ultimately expressed no strong attachment (or lack of attachment) to the town and their sense of belonging or identity: 'There is no aesthetic sense regarding the quality or aura of place on display; no idea that place is a feature of consumer choice. However, the familiarity of living in the city gives residents a sense that they belong in the place, albeit ambivalently'. It is interesting that the very pragmatic and ambivalent responses to this survey were recorded in what, within the dialogue of the story of the park, has been characterised as the Camelot-like pre-1974 formation of Kirklees era. Moving forward from this era, just

---

<sup>290</sup> Savage, 155. Mike Savage quotes numerous responses to Brian Jackson's interviews.

as the restoration sparked memories of some of the former sights and areas within the park for communities who remembered the Holidays at Home, the story of the park's more recent history will always remain preserved in the place. While for some the park represents a Victorian ideal, a place what was, Huddersfield before 1974, for others incoming the park was a chance to occupy the place with new memories and create a new sense of belonging, adding new stories into the narratives and creating a visible presence for their communities within a public space.

### **Bringing Stories of Place Together**

In addition to the strong evidence which has shown how the use of place in the act of the oral history interview can illuminate unknown stories of place and undocumented processes of place-making, it must also be acknowledged how the outcome of the recorded interview provides a significant product which can be used as a tool to build a sense of place for the future. In her introduction to *Place, Writing, and Voice in Oral History*, Shelley Trower queries the terms 'oral history' and 'oral tradition' and suggests that they are inextricably linked in ways which may be underestimated by academics who study them separately. Certainly there are numerous dialogues about tradition which surface within the archive: those within families, within circles of friends and associated people, and those which are passed down within specific cultural communities. Trower writes that "Oral traditions often seem to belong to a place – originating and surviving within a specific locality." For her purposes these are defined as "stories, songs, and dialects passed down through generations by word of mouth".<sup>291</sup> Greenhead Stories recorded not just examples of this kind of oral tradition testimony, but also short narratives which capture how these

---

<sup>291</sup> Shelley, Trower. "Introduction," in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1.

dialogues passed from generation to generation, and the impact these oral traditions have had. Examples of these generational dialogues come from Linda Milloy who recalls telling her grandchildren about coming to the park with her own mother, and Paul Mullany who explains his passion for the park was inspired by his interactions with Alderman Gardener as a child. No matter how insignificant these traditions may seem, through recording them oral historians secure a way of preserving them and allowing them to be disseminated.

In his work using oral history soundscapes to inhabit trails along the Thames, Toby Butler reflects on the remarkable way in which the use oral history recordings as a ‘historical hearing aid’ within place “...had the power to evoke strong feelings of empathy” among those who trialled his audio walks. His participants expressed surprise at how quickly they felt a connection to the landscape, despite being “of a different age, class or culture than the speakers”.<sup>292</sup> While the oral traditions of each family, group or community may be passed down within their own inner circles, the act of recording and disseminating history within place, as will be discussed in the conclusion, facilitates a way for outsiders to become privy to the traditions outside their own communities. Butler’s work suggests that exposure to these types of recordings can assist newcomers in understanding unknown surroundings while “...for locals or those with an existing knowledge of the landscape, the memories might add to, amend or challenge, their existing understanding and mental map of a locality.”<sup>293</sup> Though Butler is keen to suggest that influencing individuals place-making is not unproblematic, it serves to reason that the collection and subsequent dissemination of oral histories among both new and established communities can have an significant impact on public understandings of space. This dissemination of oral

---

<sup>292</sup> Butler, 212.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 213.

histories across families, communities and cultures disrupts the traditional linear way of passing on oral tradition, and makes tradition available to anyone and everyone: those who link the Caribbean to the park primarily through the Carnival may learn that that community's history took root in the place long before they expected, and those who are relatively new to Huddersfield may see connections between their experiences and those which are a part of the broader public memory from before their arrival. Individuals who plot and juxtapose their memories on the same space and place of others may discover how their view of Greenhead Park is overlaid and interlaced with the experiences and views of others.

This approach to oral history in place embraces change and sheds the trend of simply documenting what might be lost, instead documenting a history which reflects what is being gained. The power of oral history to record, preserve and transform is particularly useful in a situation where physical landscape is being restored to a specific aesthetic, and the strength of place as a talking point through which people can accessibly juxtapose the past, present and future has significant implications for oral history theory and practice. The latter phenomenon does not just impact on how oral historians and public historians might record, interpret and share stories of place, but also significant potential for broader dialogues of space and place: oral history could be used to facilitate shared understandings in places to which ownership is contested or places within which different groups experience conflict, and recording understandings of place could be used as consultation at the start of restoration or new town planning projects in both urban and rural landscapes. Rejecting the traditional approaches which, as Trower summarises, depict places as “single, essential identities” and moving towards a more interdisciplinary view in which place “should not be idealized as static, but conceived of as processes,” Trower warns that “they

should not be conceived of geographically as having boundaries to define enclosures in counterposition to an outside—which is what seems to make them so vulnerable to invasion by newcomers—but rather should be defined precisely in terms of linkages to that outside.”<sup>294</sup> Clearly oral history methodologies provide a strong toolkit of practice and theory when it comes to exploring the making of space, but what is most important is that it provides the tools to achieve both what Trower recommends and warns against: the means to record narratives of loss and difference in a changing place, but at the same time show commonality, share understandings and create new meanings of place in times of transition.

---

<sup>294</sup> Shelley, Trower. “Introduction,” in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 12-13.



## **Chapter 7 – Project Outcomes**

After introducing the research questions behind Greenhead Stories and outlining the development and delivery of the project's methodology, it is necessary to review and audit the project results in order to assess the research and community benefits of this collaborative work, and acknowledge the project's successes and shortcomings. Throughout Part III, this dissertation has highlighted how the method of collection and documentation can facilitate new ways of interacting with the archive whilst also answering the research questions surrounding how oral history can provide new insights into historical understandings of place. To conclude this part of the dissertation, this chapter will review the main project outcomes, drawing further from the archive to highlight how it contributed to the ongoing dialogue around place and space, and critically acknowledging some of the hurdles and lessons learned for the benefit of future research.

### **The 'Static' Archive & Stories Matter**

Though the project produced a range of results and outcomes, the foundation which underpins all of the results is the digital archive contained within Stories Matter. This archive can be fluid in how it is interpreted and used by researchers; it is also 'static' in the sense that the content remains final and fixed, however many ways the interviews are tagged and reflected on. This contextual archive can serve alongside a traditional archive, so that researchers may choose to work with either Stories Matter or to access a classic archive made up of interview recordings, interview summaries and materials which relate to the project (i.e. ephemera given by interviewees, written contributions,

and project details such as flyers, posters, consent forms, etc). Unlike the traditional archive, which remains unchanged after being accessed by future researchers, the digital archive not only records traces of the original research process, but also has the capability of documenting the interpretive process of others. Though technological hurdles meant that there were limitations around engaging project participants in using the software, Stories Matter serves to act a tool for third party interpretation. In Stacey Zembrzycki's work with Stories Matter, she found that the software itself facilitate outcomes which were more critically engaged.<sup>295</sup> Though I could not facilitate my participants using the software to interpret their stories, I used the software to document the context of their stories enacting interpretation within the park and recording that process within the archive. Stories Matter provides secondary use researchers with the original researcher's and narrators's insights, and it may also be used as a tool to trace third-party interaction with the archive. Given the right permissions, new researchers can access the archive online and choose to work with it to create their own locally-saved tags as they work with the archive for their own purposes. Though testing this was not the focus of the project, Stories Matter provides this capability, and it presents an option for further work and further research questions surrounding the longer term impacts of the collaborative recording process which were beyond the time-frame and content parameters of this research.

The discussion of authority and secondary use presented by Rickard's review of sharing authority could be evidenced within the archive, if researchers

---

<sup>295</sup> Stacey Zembrzycki, "Bringing Stories to Life: Using New Media to Disseminate and Critically Engage with Oral History Interviews," *Oral History* 41, no. 1 (2013), 98-107.

decide to share evidence of their archive use with one another, so that the archive becomes a place where secondary researchers document their own perspectives.<sup>296</sup> Stories Matter can be used to facilitate a dialogue of creation and interpretation, extending authority further by creating a means of sharing authority within research. The results of the project will provide access to both the Stories Matter digital archive and the more traditional archive through the University of Huddersfield's Archives and Special Collections. Thus the official records of the project as preserved in the archive facilitate the study of the story of Greenhead Park (stemming from the content and context of the archive), the story of sharing authority in the archive, as well as the process of preserving Voice and Tone as evidenced within this dissertation.

Though the archive preserves an extension of authority for those whose voices have been included, it must be acknowledged that as with any oral history project, it cannot be viewed as completed or a fully informed version of memories and opinions on Greenhead Park. Although the project attempted to engage as many voices as possible, there were hurdles engaging some communities which could not be surpassed within the limitations of the research. Though the archive documents the extension of authority to all those who participated, there are a number of silences that must be acknowledged when evaluating the extension and offer of authority across all communities. One impact on the research stems from the time frame of the project: although the recording period of took place over the course of nearly two years, the

---

<sup>296</sup> Rickard facilitated a dialogue through her multi-authored journal article, whereas this sort of dialogue could be evidenced through the digital archive, depending on how researchers choose to use it. Wendy Rickard, Nikita, Sarah Evans, Saskia Reeves and Gail Cameron, "What Are Sex Worker Stories Good For? User Engagement with Archived Data," *Oral History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 91-103.

combination of disruption to the park's services, and the first spring and summer spent piloting with the FoGP group, meant that there were some limitations on the time in which to communicate and allow word about the project to spread through the communities it sought to engage. Thomson's recent work, which employed a focused one-to-one shared authority relationship with only four narrators, took the better part of ten years.<sup>297</sup> Though this research did not seek out such intensive one-to-one research relationships, oral historians have acknowledged that the act of engaging communities requires both ample time and a demonstration of commitment, a practice that intensified in the case of Greenhead Stories where I sought to work across multiple communities and user groups within the park.<sup>298</sup> The collaborative style of the project's development meant that my narrators were generally unknown until they presented themselves to me, or came as a result of my relationship with a community group or individual gatekeeper. I could not draw up a list of potential narrators (though I did identify a list of park user-groups which I added to throughout the course of the project), nor could I employ a specific means of identifying a saturation point for specific types of stories or perspectives.<sup>299</sup> Applying Frisch's shared authority and Lawless's (w)holistic approach, meant that beyond the

---

<sup>297</sup> Thomson comments on the collaborative working process in his article, Alistair Thomson, "Moving Stories, Women's Lives: Sharing Authority in Oral History" *Oral History*, 39 no. 2 (2001): 324.

<sup>298</sup> Yow's work summarises the complexities of working with communities, bringing together literature surrounding work with different types of communities (ethnic communities, work communities, etc), while acknowledging the complexity of approaching narrators, interviewing gatekeepers and decision makers, and selecting narrators. Valerie Yow, *Recording Oral History*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005), 200-208. This complexity is also acknowledged in Mary A. Larson, "Research Design and Strategies," in *Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Thomas Lee Charlton, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples (Oxford: Altamira, 2006), 105-135., and Linda Shopes, "Oral History and the Study of Communities," in *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (London: Routledge, 2006), 261-270.

<sup>299</sup> Yow, 83.

overreaching parameter of recording stories related to Greenhead Park, the definitions of what I interviewed participants about, developed as each lead or hidden story unveiled itself and suggested new avenues of exploration.

Though time played a part in the scope of the project, there were limitations imposed by the physical landscape of the park and the impact of the restoration and works going on. Some groups who used the park's experiences were so disrupted by the restoration they did not return to the park over the course of the project, and may not return in the future. In one example, after months of seeking an invitation to record at one of their practices, I made arrangements to interview the Greenhead Grasshoppers veteran bowling team only to see read a headline in the *Examiner* which read "Bowlers abandon Greenhead Park after pavilions are knocked down" published on the very morning I was set to meet them in the park.<sup>300</sup> The team spent the rest of the season moving practice spaces around the region, making it difficult to reach the organisers with whom I had previously communicated within the physical place of the park. In instances where I was able to approach some individuals, they were hesitant to speak due to the ongoing publicised tensions between their team and the council, leaving their experience unrepresented in the archive. In another example I had to travel to Ravensknowle Park to meet with the organisers of the Huddersfield Flower, Vegetable and Handicraft Show, many of whom expressed a desire to see the show return to its original home after the restorations were completed in Greenhead Park, which it eventually did after the

---

<sup>300</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Bowlers abandon Greenhead Park after pavilions are knocked down," July 11, 2011.

2011 reopening, though not until August 2013.<sup>301</sup> Though the recordings to represent the flower show were limited due to the relocation and scaled-down size of the event, and recordings for the bowlers are not represented in the archive, their silences highlight a recurring issue regarding the relationship between user-groups and Kirklees Council in the park. They highlight the tension (acknowledged in Chapter 5) regarding the role the council played in allowing the park's 'decline', and the tensions which came from communities urging the council to take responsibility for restoration, whilst also wanting to be consulted and continue to fill the roles they had taken on within the park.

This complex relationship between the council and community is exemplified in Chris Smith's interview, where he describes his paid role to bring people to the park and create self-sustaining ways for the community to continue his work after his intervention (Greenhead Stories/Chris Smith/Interview #1/Activities Officer for a Building Site). The void of council involvement left by the 1974 restructure of the council was filled by communities: though they sought to hold the council accountable for restoring the park, they also sought to maintain their autonomy within the park, keeping their authority within their groups, and not forfeiting their influence under the council's intervention.

One example where there is a strong sense of desired autonomy came through the recordings I did at the Huddersfield Caribbean Carnival, recording stories at the 2011 carnival which was hosted in the town centre. When asked about seeing the event return to the park, numerous participants shared their

---

<sup>301</sup> *Huddersfield Examiner*, "Green fingered enthusiasts compete at Kirklees flower and vegetable show." August 13, 2012.

thoughts and wishes, but also gave insight into the possible tensions between the council and the carnival organisers without prompt (see: Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Carl and some other carnival goers and Greenhead Stories/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Serene). Carl said “The park belongs to the people, and there is no way that Kirklees should resent the community, from keeping activity in the park” continuing to comment on the town centre as the home to the carnival, “we feel at this point in time, that this particular situation is a substitute for the park because it is under renovation, but hopefully, when it finishes completely, there shouldn’t be no doubt that the carnival should be back in the park.” Michael Andrew Bedoe’s interview suggests that the benefits of working with Kirklees on the carnival (Interviewees/Andrew Michael Bedoe/Growth of the Carnival) while other memories suggest that the changes have made it too commercial and less diverse: Serene’s Vox Pop memory associates the music curfew and the reduction of speaker systems playing a diverse array of music, with the council’s involvement (Interviewees/Anonymous and Vox Pop Memories/Serene). There was certainly a dialogue around how the carnival had been supported by the council, but this dialogue also reveals what aspects of the carnival had been negotiated as a result of that support. This partly stems from the financial cutbacks and lack of support mentioned by Carl in his commentary, but it also echoes the example of how things changed for Huddersfield’s Asian Mela event, which was run in Greenhead Park by community members for many years, before Kirklees Council took over the event and it grew to become a multi-cultural festival called “A World Together” which is now hosted annually in Dewsbury.<sup>302</sup>

---

<sup>302</sup> <http://www2.kirklees.gov.uk/news/onlinenews/newsdesk/fullstory.aspx?id=4754> (accessed

The tension between community groups wanting more council involvement in the park, but not council interference, could account for some of the other silences within the project. With the aim of sharing authority across cultural and community lines, one specific community which the project sought to engage was those who had been involved in organising the Mela. Unfortunately, the council employees who are the current organisers of the event declined invitations to be interviewed (as did most current council employees), and many of the original organisers also declined or were unresponsive due to their participation in the already highly successful Asian Voices project. This change in how the mela is planned meant that the project was not able to approach an existing organising group or committee as a way of building trust and gaining access to participants through community gatekeepers.<sup>303</sup> Though the project sought equally to engage stories relating to the carnival and the mela, it was only largely successful in the former.<sup>304</sup> Many people mentioned the significance of the mela, but the archive does not hold any detailed accounts from organisers or attendees; supplementary stories are available in the Asian Voices project archive at the University of Huddersfield.

There are other narratives which are alluded to within the interviews but were not documented with detailed first hands accounts. These include first hand stories of the Polish and Ukrainian communities as mentioned by Frank Grombir in his interview. Though throughout the summer of 2011, I made

---

10 November 2013).

<sup>303</sup> Both Frisch and Lawless suggest this kind of approach (see Chapter 1: Shared Authority).

<sup>304</sup> Within the second year of recording, I specifically set out to get more participants who could share stories about the mela and carnival, through targeted flyers, through approaching community groups, through story-specific posters, and through providing interviews for the Huddersfield Examiner: <http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/greenhead-park-project-seeks-visitor-4974885> (accessed 15 March 2013).



several attempts to interview community members suggested by himself and others, including Tony Sosna, a first generation Polish migrant who regularly contributes to *The Examiner*, but due to a range of hurdles and timing issues, this was not possible within the recording phase of the project.<sup>305</sup> These stories may remain silent in the static archive and digital archive as held within the university, but they are at least acknowledged in the exhibition and audiowalk through the inclusion of vox pop memories which were recorded, and the historical perspectives of local historians David Griffiths and Frank Grombir, whose testimony at least shed light on these histories so that they may be included in future projects or the extension of the community archive. Further to these acknowledged stories, there are also narratives which are a significant part of the story but may not ever be recorded; stories which are no longer within living memory, stories of the people who make use of the park in a more transient way, including the perceived 'anti-social' uses of the park as mentioned by numerous interviewees.

### **The Community Archive**

Within Greenhead Stories the extension of authority in the archive went beyond the methodology of producing a contextual archive. Authority has been shared and extended within the community through the process of engaging groups such as the Friends of Greenhead Park and sharing the tools required to continue to collect, interpret and display stories within the park. Through the relationship developed with the FoGP, this research has addressed Frisch's

---

<sup>305</sup> Some of Tony's photos of the park featured in the *Examiner* following the 127<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations and the launch of the exhibition and audiowalk.  
<http://www.examiner.co.uk/lifestyle/nostalgia/family-history-tony-sosnas-camera-4968791>  
 (accessed 10 November 2013).

challenge of building understandings of “what it means to remember, and what to do with memories to make them active and alive, as opposed to mere objects of collection.”<sup>306</sup> Through oral history training, securing recording equipment for the future use of the Friends of Greenhead Park through funding from the University of Huddersfield, and providing the FoGP group with copies of the interviews and archive, the project has also established a means of continued collection and presentation of oral histories within the park. As a group which maintains relationships with a range of community members and employees within the park, and maintains a regular presence in the park through events, talks and weekly coffee mornings, they are able to share the continued value and adopt the goodwill of the project within the park. Numerous project outcomes bring the archive to life in the park, but one of the most significant and long-term potentials lies in facilitating future recording and interpretation. This not only ensures a future, public use for the interviews which have been recorded, but allows the dialogue to continue and grow, drawing in the voices of newcomers to the park as well as securing the potential to fill gaps in the archive and record testimony to address the acknowledged silences.

### **Exhibition and Audiowalk**

In addition to the public events, oral history training sessions and talks which were hosted with an aim to draw people together and create momentum for the project, the exhibition and audiowalk aimed to bring participants back to explore what they had been a part of while also presenting the work of the project to the broader public at-large. As already mentioned in this project, an

---

<sup>306</sup> Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990), 27.

exhibition and audiowalk was born out of the histories collected: the exhibition being hosted in the park's conservatory and opening in time for the park's official reopening and 127<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2011. Both the exhibition and audiowalk came together through a collaboration with the FoGP group along with the themes which emerged from the sound archive and the research done by myself and David Griffiths; we collaborated through discussing themes and bringing content together, with the FoGP leading the production of the exhibition and myself producing the audiowalk. The exhibition blended local history research with oral history testimony collected in the project along the theme of 'A Park for the People' with an introductory panel and closing panel framing the park's past, present and future and four further panels set around the themes of the park as: a place to meet, a place for families, a place for sport, and a place for entertainment. (See Appendix H for images of the exhibition and the park celebration event). The process of writing the exhibition was itself a dialogue, which is recorded and embedded in the archive (Greenhead Stories/Admin/Exhibition Meeting).

Also supporting this exhibition was the audiowalk, a thirty-five minute podcast style walk around the park which was made available to park-users via mp3 players on the day of the event (which are now housed and maintained by the Friends of Greenhead Park) as well as via the 'mobblue' closed wi-fi and Bluetooth connection which provides a virtual hub that park users can use to download the audiowalk to their smart phones and devices from within 100 meters of the café. The audiowalk blends some of the social history recorded and collapses several different narratives into specific places around the park –

shifting through time within a given place and providing insight into the wide array of people who make use of the park. As with all elements of the project the audiowalk is available within the archive found at (Greenhead Stories/Admin/audiowalk).

Increasingly, oral history audiowalks and podcasts are becoming efficient and accessible ways of making interview content available to the public. Where oral histories have been used to bring stories to life within museums and exhibitions for many years, audiowalks have developed rapidly alongside the development of the digital technologies that make them accessible.<sup>307</sup> From mobile players which allowed users to listen to CDs and tapes to the current use of digital devices which allow for a wide and more fluid use of audio and video files, technology now eases access in many ways. Cellular data communication and portable wi-fi enabled devices have made it so that oral historians can make oral histories available virtually everywhere, and can also offer users choice over what content they engage with. For Greenhead Stories this facilitated the place-making Toby Butler describes as “place-based oral history practice” (acknowledged in Chapter 6), by providing different options for making histories accessible within the park.<sup>308</sup> The Greenhead Stories audiowalk was developed out of the themes which emerged through the digital archive and the results of the exhibition meeting recorded with the FoGP. Following the themes of the exhibition, I edited the audiowalk so that it highlighted some of the different uses of the park framed within the exhibition (a place to meet, a place for families, a

---

<sup>307</sup> Simon Bradley, “History to go: oral history, audiowalks and mobile media,” *Oral History* 40, no. 1 (2012): 99.

<sup>308</sup> Toby Butler, “The Historical Hearing Aid: Located Oral History from the Listener’s Perspective,” in *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 194.

place for sport, and a place for entertainment), whilst also drawing on some of the lesser known recorded stories, including the stories acknowledged but not recorded in the archive (such as the missing stories of the mela, and first hand experiences of Polish and Ukrainian use of the park). The audiowalk blends a range of voices and sources, bringing different narrators together to create a new way of exploring the physical space of Greenhead Park. As Simon Bradley acknowledges, “audiowalks readily merge public history, local history and oral history together with many other disciplines and art forms, thus forming part of a general movement towards interdisciplinary collaboration.”<sup>309</sup> As such, the voices of park users, local historians, employees, academic historians, all come through within the dialogue of the audiowalk.

Because of the large layout of the park, the format of the audiowalk reflects a ‘podcast’ style play-and-go approach: although stories were tied to a suggested route around the park, it does not match the typical audiowalk approach of “a series of sound files designed to be listened to through headphones at various points or sections along a pre-defined route.”<sup>310</sup> To accommodate the landscape of the park, and make the audiowalk accessible for all visitors, it can be enjoyed either from a suggested route through the park (as described by the narrator) or from a single spot sat within the park. If a user chooses to access it in-situ and move through the park, the narration includes numerous visual ‘hooks’ which focus stories of place into specific places within the park.<sup>311</sup> Accessing a single

---

<sup>309</sup> Bradley, 100.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>311</sup> Toby Butler presents users with these “visual ‘hooks’ to understand the context of the memories they were hearing” while the reality of the present environment tempers that experience of the past. Toby Butler, “‘Memoryscape’: Integrating Oral History, Memory and

audiowalk track means that visitors can either download the full story within the 100 meter reach of the mo-blue station or from the internet, without requiring a further connection to download subsequent tracks. Participants who choose to follow the intended path can actively explore the park but may also choose to pause playback or go off-route at any point: once the single-audio file is on their device they are in complete control of it.

Professor of performance Mike Pearson combines performance with a background in archaeology to engage participants in experiencing place through a more active style of participation than that of the Greenhead Stories audiowalk. His innovative work uses audiowalks as site-specific sources of performance “from which performers are *absent*, but within which the audience member places an active and generative role in meaning creation as a *participant*.”<sup>312</sup> His approach also incorporates Frisch’s shared authority through engaging the user in an immersive virtual history-telling event which is “at once multi-sensory, multi-disciplinary and polychromous.”<sup>313</sup> Though Pearson’s work allows the user to navigate their own path through given routes, their own routes or through their imagination, he encourages personal meaning-making through what he refers to as “taskscape” or methods of way-finding.<sup>314</sup> Though the Greenhead Stories audiowalk is not as focused on engaging participants in performance, it does allow for these different tiers of participation which audiowalks tied to specific GPS locations may not. Participants are given a choice

---

Landscape on the River Thames,” in *Public History and Heritage Today: People and their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 235.

<sup>312</sup> <http://carrlands.org.uk/images/carrlands.pdf> (accessed 10 November 2013).

<sup>313</sup> Bradley, 103.

<sup>314</sup> <http://carrlands.org.uk/images/carrlands.pdf> (accessed 10 November 2013).

as to whether they wish to follow the path, create their own, move within a group or as individuals, or listen from a single location anywhere in the world.

For those who choose to listen to the audiowalk from a single point, the narrative serves more like a podcast. In fact, making it available online has meant that project participants who live further away are able to listen to it from anywhere, hearing how their voices fit in to the story and returning to the park virtually through their memories and imagination. Creating a single audio file meant that functionality relied only on a user's ability to select play and pause. Through this format, I was able to achieve Butler's use of simultaneity which "opens up and 'thickens' space by placing sounds and memories back in the outside world" whilst also recreating spaces for users unable to access the park physically.<sup>315</sup> Whether accessing through the mo-blue station in the café, borrowing an mp3 player or listening in a completely different location, participants have the freedom to experience the audiowalk on their own terms. Although there are seemingly endless possibilities to apply new location-based smartphone technologies to oral history, the choice to make the audiowalk technologically simple was deliberate. This decision was based on two factors. Firstly, it was necessary to ensure that those accessing the tour through borrowed mp3 players would get the same experience as self-sufficient smartphone users; despite the latter users having devices with higher capabilities, I wanted the experience to be universal, and the usability to be based on the technological capabilities of the average person rather than the average device. Secondly, in creating an audio tour which can be edited, remixed and redeveloped, I wanted to leave the employees of the park and the FoGP

---

<sup>315</sup> Butler, 237.

group with a set of usable tools and devices which could be used to create further audiowalks beyond my involvement in the project. The feedback from potential users, project participants and the volunteers who would take on the responsibility for caring for the technology reinforced this decision-making. Furthermore this decision better embodies Frisch's 'shared authority' approach: to ensure that the audiowalks remain used and continue to be developed, it was necessary to design them so their continued use was practical and sustainable.

### **Closing Event**

On the 127<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the Park project participants and the general public were invited to the park to see the exhibition and listen to the audiowalk. There were also opportunities to join in the array of events and activities happening in the park that day, some put on by local community groups and others organised by Kirklees Council. Several participants of Greenhead Stories attended the event and borrowed mp3 players featuring the audio tours over the course of the day (images of the event included in Appendix H). By setting up an exhibition in the new conservatory café and embedding the audiowalk in a wi-fi resource which I designed to also serve as an information point for week-to-week events in the park, the project succeeded in finding ways to make the outcomes accessible to everyday users of the park: visitors enjoying lunch or tea in the conservatory can access a presentation of the work done by local historians and the stories collected from Greenhead Stories, while park users can also access the history of the park via a landing page on their smart devices when finding out what weekly and monthly events are happening in the park. In the sustainability plan for the project it was agreed that the Friends of Greenhead



Park would maintain the ten mp3 players equipped with the audiowalk, with the possibility of creating their own audiowalks and interviews through use of the recording equipment provided by the University of Huddersfield. It is also their intention to use the equipment and their oral history training to continue to collect stories about the park and possibly document the history of their organisation by recording future meetings and events. The mobile wi-fi station remains in the care of the Chris Smith, the Park Activities Officer, who has made use of it and will include it in his own sustainability plan as he moves out of his job at the end of his contract (Chris talked about his requirement to build sustainable resources for the park in his interview Greenhead Stories/Chris Smith/Interview #1/5:10). These measures establish the authority of the project in the broader sense of Frisch's definition: by making oral histories which are relevant and accessible to people so that they can be used in a meaningful way to help people make sense of the past.

## **Conclusion**

The project's outcomes range widely in their form and finality, in order to create as many potential uses for the oral history as possible. The traditional and digital archives will be available through the University of Huddersfield to anyone who is interested in looking at either the bigger picture of the project or the fine detail of narrative within the recordings, whilst the public outcomes have a use and meaning in the park. The exhibition, intended to be a temporary installation for the autumn of 2011, remains posted in the conservatory two years later at the end of 2013, and although the text and images are static, the dialogue it creates by describing the park as a changing, multi-dimensional

gathering space for the people of Huddersfield is ever changing. The audiowalks and community archive will be subject to change as new stories are recorded and new events take place in the future. Though these listed outcomes make up a significant part of the “results” of the project, the shared authority extends beyond the use of the material, audiowalk or exhibition. The lasting impact also comes from the skills exchanged in taking on collaborative work in the park and the strengthened and newly formed relationships between groups whose stories are represented in the archive. By building sustainable uses for these resources there are therefore also sustainable relationships within the community and an ongoing conversation which is designed to be open to newcomers so that acknowledged silences and the silences yet to come may continue to be filled.

## Conclusion

Nearly twenty years after his call for shared authority went out to oral historians, Michael Frisch wrote that

the deep dark secret of oral history is that nobody spends much time listening to or watching recorded and collected documents. There has simply been little serious interest in the primary audio or video interviews that literally define the field and that the method is organized to produce.<sup>316</sup>

This is indeed a very sad and worrying statement, and yet it is not clear what the cause of this symptom is. Do oral historians prefer to record new interviews than use those recorded by others? Have we embraced the subjectivity of the interview dynamic so much, that we feel hopeless at the thought of working with a collection we do not hold personal insights into? Or are we ignoring analogue collections, whilst we are too busy coping with the digital age and too inconvenienced by the hurdles of outdated technology to access what our fellow interviewers have recorded in the past? The answers to these questions are not clear, but as an oral historian, community historian and educator, my instinct is to work towards creating a collection that would appeal to me if I approached it as an outsider in any of these roles, by working to document what would make a collection useful and accessible. This research asked the question: what are the potentials (and problems) of using collaborative oral history to record a history of place shared by many different communities, and what methodological lessons can be learned from the process of recording a cross-cultural

---

<sup>316</sup> Frisch, “Three Dimensions and More: Oral History Beyond the Paradoxes of Method,” in *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy (London: Guildford Press, 2008), 223.

collaborative digital archive of oral testimony, using Huddersfield's Greenhead Park as a testing ground for a collaborative oral history project?

Through engaging the many communities which make use of Greenhead Park (including an array of different user-groups), I set out to test a collaborative recording model and discover if there were ways to preserve authority and create a deeper, richer and more accessible digital archive. By considering the process of engaging a diverse array of groups in a collaborative recording process, this project explored the limits of sharing authority to discover the possibilities of applying shared authority amongst many narrators. Where many oral historians have applied Michael Frisch's ethos as a literal sharing of authorship through in-depth relationships with four or fewer narrators, I applied the term more broadly, engaging participants in a dialogue of place and employing his aim of producing more active and meaningful uses for the history making conversations I recorded. Diverse groups, individuals and organisations don't require a shared experience to engage in a collaborative conversation, when place serves as a common ground that unifies experiences typically divided by cultural, interest and generational lines. The caveat of sharing authority in such a widely applied manner was offering tiers of participation, and ensuring that the interview served the interests of the narrator as well as the researcher. Some participants followed the project over the entire recording period, engaging multiple times, while others lent only a few minutes and participated at a greater distance. The results of Greenhead Stories show that shared authority can be applied in a non-life story approach, engaging multiple

participants in discussing the social meaning of place through providing opportunities to listen to, reflect on and interpret recordings.

To address some of Linda Shopes' concerns for the over-application of shared authority, this research aimed to provide an example of an oral history which worked across cultures and communities while at the same time explicitly paying "greater attention to the narrative context of the material quotes – the dialogue that elicited it".<sup>317</sup> By providing an example of a shared authority project in the digital age, this project aimed to document the authority of contributors and interviewees where possible and appropriate, while also arguing that collecting context must be a part of the equation of documenting the dialogues of authority which Shopes yearned to discover in the work she reviewed. The Greenhead Stories project shows that documenting these narratives of authority requires two shifts in the researcher's mind; one which stems from extending authority within the interview by allowing the interviewee to reflect analytically, question the interviewer and make suggestions towards the project, and the second which comes in the archive; tagging for authority as well as meaning and content, so that the researcher has way-marked the story for those who may access the collection in the future. In addition to making use of the technology available by fulfilling Frisch's criteria of mapping for meaning and content, the Greenhead Stories archive shows that testimony can also be mapped for context both through the addition of contextual recordings such as the discussions surrounding the exhibition, and through the presence of tags such as Greenhead Stories, Meta, and the use of the options to record reflections and reactions to interviews within the archive.

---

<sup>317</sup> Shopes, p. 104

Further to the initial research question, my work set out to address the shortcomings in oral history theory and practice, which are at the root of Michael Frisch's "deep dark secret". I set out to test if a collaborative recording process could result in a contextual archive and produce a more nuanced and detailed archive for the future. Through my preliminary research I defined the 'dichotomic dilemma' whereby the tenets of oral history practice and theory lead us to mutually exclusive outcomes. Through the course of the project I used *Stories Matter* to build a contextual archive which better situates the interviews within my own research process, and leaves more evidence of the dialogue of authority which took place within the project. Through the use of a model tracing Voice and Tone in Chapter 4, I demonstrated the potential for the archive to fill gaps and preserve more of the interview as a multi-sensory, subjective experience, while Chapter's 5 and 6 showed the working digital archive in relation to the content and context of the stories recorded. Through building a model which illustrates the typical loss in the recording to transcript model of archive collection, this research was able to explore the true depth of the digital archive highlighting the ways in which the contextual archive can be used to highlight aspects of the interview's 'Tone' which is otherwise lost. The archive as a whole, as well as the project outcomes, serve Frisch's desire to share authority and my own concern for preserving that authority within the archive. The multiple outcomes describe in Chapter 7 show how *Greenhead Stories* can serve as a resource for anyone with an interest, from future community and academic researchers who wish to use the archive, to park-users who access the stories

within the park or from home. These multi-faceted outcomes extend shared authority to the future, allowing for more uses of the recorded materials and further dialogue surrounding place-making and memory.

Another significant parameter of my research was considering wider dialogues surrounding place and space. By reviewing literature of interdisciplinary conversations on space and place and the range of emerging work on place being tackled by oral historians, this research set out to explore how oral historians could contribute to this discourse. What is clear from the current situation is that while oral historians have begun to use place as a subject of interviewing, we have not yet fully explored the impact of recording dialogues of place as they relate to broader understandings and theories on space and place. *Greenhead Stories* explores memories of place and practice of place-making through recording stories within a place in flux. The work shows how narratives of public places are informed largely by what is evident in the built landscape, but that oral histories may disrupt and highlight stories, contradicting the history implied by the physicality of place. For some, the physical decline coincided with a decline in use and an increase in anti-social behaviour within the park, whilst for others the period of decline is filled with happy and relatively problem-free memories. *Greenhead Stories* reveals how when a built environment landscape is being restored to a physical ideal (in this case the park's Victorian heritage), oral histories can bring to life the stories that are erased by or hidden within the landscape.

Furthermore, the collaborative nature of this dialogue shows how oral historians can use dialogues of place to explore place-making and affect new

memories and meanings of place. Oral history can inform understandings of place not just as a recording tool, but also as one of dissemination. Oral history provides a means of exploring Lefebvre's theory of the social production of space, providing both a means of documenting spatial practice and representations of space, while also recording new stories which interrogate those practices by offering new spaces of representation. Lefebvre's spatial turn and Samuel's subjective turn provide an interesting point of intersection for oral historians to question spatial practice and alongside the historical narratives we believe inform that practice. Though numerous public and oral historians are working with place, there is still much room to explore the power that our work has to shape understandings of place and spatial practices so that we can advocate for our methods not just in the wider academic arena, but also in the many practical ways in which discussions of place can be used within restoration and regeneration projects. In essence, the dialogue of sharing authority recorded within the archive is the same dialogue which documents the process of place-making throughout the project. It was integral to the project that participants had a chance to have their say in how the history of the park was being told, by giving input into the project and having license to contextualise their own memories and situate themselves within the history of the park. But what is also significant to Michael Frisch's philosophy of shared authority, and what is also often left unacknowledged is the importance of engaging people in the exploration of history for the sake of history; the process of working with people to understand the meaning of memory itself. For Greenhead Stories the impacts were two-fold, firstly through conducting interviews and hosting events, I worked to engage people not just with their memories but also "the



remembered past that exists in the present” and secondly through using the recording to inform people about the history surrounding them and facilitate new understandings of place as it relates to a wider range of identities and communities.<sup>318</sup> By using the archive to highlight and contextualise expressions of place within the interview dynamic, this research initiates conversation about the potential theoretical and practical application of oral history methods in developing and understanding public places.

### Looking to the Future

Canadian oral historian Steven High writes of memory and place:

A sense of place would be impossible without memory. Place is more than a static category where things happen. It must be understood as a social and spatial process, undergoing constant change. Place is therefore contingent, fluid and multiple.<sup>319</sup>

In addition to making an oral history archive that is both accessible and meaningful to those who access it, it was also a goal of the project to build an archive which may not be finite: an archive which may grow, change and be reshaped into the future. Part of the aim of building something that had impact and sustainability, was to create resources which were accessible and inviting in the form of the audiowalk and exhibition, while also sharing oral history and exhibition development skills with the Friends of Greenhead Park group.

Although the Greenhead Stories project sought to record many memories, it is not by any means a complete history of the place and there are in-fact avenues of interviewing which could be explored further and stories which have not been

---

<sup>318</sup> Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: SUNY Press, 1990), 27.

<sup>319</sup> Steven High, “Placing the Displaced Worker: Narrating Place in Deindustrializing Sturgeon Falls, Ontario,” in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, eds. John C. Walsh and James William Opp (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010): 181.

included in the project. This is where the aim of sharing authority has an impact beyond the project, as the recorded dialogue grows and changes, all the while re-informing how people view the past and present of Greenhead Park.

Though there are many stories from the past that have yet to be recorded, there are also numerous stories to come. Despite the completion of the restoration, the park as a place will be ever changing. As park staff host new events and make the park more accessible, and as new communities begin their own place-making in the park, the triangle of place, memory and identity will continue to shape the public's sense of the park's past and present. Like all living narratives, narratives of place will change; the past will always been looked at through the lens of the present, and as time moves on individual and popular memory of Greenhead Park will continue to evolve. What this project has documented is a unique collection of viewpoints recorded at a time where past, present and future were being collapsed into a single experience; where individuals were perceiving the past through the lens of the present, while also looking to the future through the restoration of the park's physical heritage.

### **Final Thoughts**

After being plunged into the digital age by advances in technology and finding our way over some the most basic of practical hurdles imposed by the digital realm, oral historians no longer need to be fumbling in the dark when it comes to making the digital age work to their advantage. We are no longer tied to producing, editing and interpreting costly, time-consuming texts in order to be able to work with our oral sources, and we are not limited to plugging our data into qualitative analysis programs and physical archive spaces which sever our

sources from their auralty. The idea that turning interviews into texts will make our collections more accessible is no longer valid; we have the means to do this now through digital media and owe it to our interviews to do as much as possible to make them relevant and accessible those who might access them in the future. The Greenhead Stories project sought to navigate a way of using digital media to solve dilemmas within oral history beyond mere practicalities, and it makes a valuable step forward in contributing to the discourse around the future of oral history theory, method and practice.

Firstly the emergence of the free open source Stories Matter, which is specifically designed for use within oral history, presents a step forward for the digital archive: oral historians no longer need to make-do by relying on tools built by others for other purposes. Secondly, by extending the remit of what is collected, the digital archive (in whatever form it takes) provides oral historians with an opportunity to collect more and to document the biography of their archive; in cases where shared authority is a philosophical stepping stone, oral historians can record more from their interviewees, and index and tag beyond just meaning or content. The increased capacity of digital storage means that summaries, photos, contextual recordings and other information are of little consequence to keep but may provide that potential researcher with that extra bit of information which makes the archive more attractive and solves the dilemma of Frisch's confessed 'deep dark secret'.

The Greenhead Stories project sought to do just that: to extend the authority of its participants by documenting the context of the project. Not just the stories, but also some of the interpretations of those stories, both subtly and

overtly, through making an archive that can be actively used and added to in the future. Only time will tell whether or not oral historians resolve to get over their reservations about accessing collections of recordings, and whether or not we can successfully make archives which are attractive and accessible enough to overcome this secret, but for now oral historians can look forward with more confidence if they are building archives which are least relevant to the interviewees whose stories they are preserving. Not just by building an archive through a thoughtful and reflexive process of documenting authority and context, but also using that archive actively within the park and embedding its future in the activities of its participants, the Greenhead Stories project has achieved a step forward in answering Michael Frisch's call for sharing authority. Now it is time to trust that by building a relevant and meaningful archive in the present, my project participants and myself have created a resource which will allow future historians of all levels of interest and all backgrounds to glimpse into both the memory and meaning of the past, accessing an oral history archive which does justice to our oral history interviews as the complex and insightful dialogues we know them to be.

## Appendix A - Installing and Accessing Stories Matter

Stories Matter is a free open-source software package which must be installed locally on a computer so that the Greenhead Stories archive may be accessed remotely.

To download the software visit [www.stories-matter.com](http://www.stories-matter.com) and click image which appears on the main page. This is a self-containing installer, which will install the software and platform (adobe air) on your computer. It will install the correct files depending on whether you use Windows, Linux or Mac based operating systems, so that users of all types of systems and computers may use the same link. It appears on the website like so:

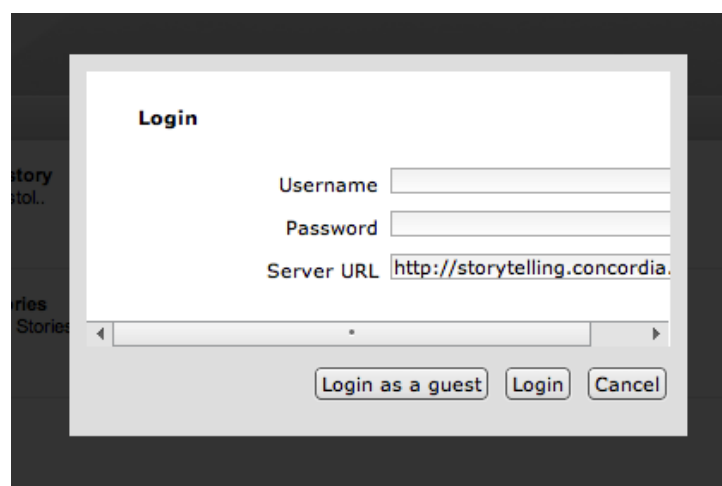


If you encounter any problems there a full user-manual which includes installation instructions and troubleshooting can be found here:  
<http://storytelling.concordia.ca/storiesmatter/stories-matter-instruction-manual-and-faqs>

### Accessing Stories Matter

Once the software is installed on your computer, access it by clicking on it and allowing it to load. Once the software is open you will need to log-in to the online archive to access Greenhead Stories. Once you are logged in the program will facilitate your interaction with the online archive.

In the top right-corner of Stories Matter it should read “You are working offline” Click the blue link below which reads “LOGIN” to be prompted to a log-in screen which looks like this.



To log-in to Stories Matter enter the following details exactly as they appear below:

Username: Greenhead Stories

Password: Guest

Server URL: <http://oralhistory.hud.ac.uk/database/>

Then be sure to select “log-in” (not “log-in as guest”, or “cancel”)

After a few moments, if your log-in is successful you should receive a message which says “Welcome guest user” which after accepting will give you user-level access to the archive, so that you can access all content, create your own playlists, etc but not actually alter or change archive content.

Please refer to Chapter #1 for a full breakdown of archive access and guidance for navigating through the archive structure.

## Appendix B - Posters and flyers used to publicise the project.

## Final Call - Greenhead Stories

'Greenhead Stories' is an oral history project that celebrates the rich social and cultural history of Greenhead Park.  
We are looking for people who have lived near the park, worked near the park, or visited the park to share their memories.



please call our memory bank to share your stories  
**01484 478 412**  
(you may leave a message of up to 20 minutes or leave your details and we will call you back to arrange a short interview)  
or visit [www.greenheadstories.co.uk](http://www.greenheadstories.co.uk)  
or email Chris at [c.webb@hud.ac.uk](mailto:c.webb@hud.ac.uk)

**Recording ends this summer, so please call now!**





# Greenhead Stories

website: [www.greenheadstories.co.uk](http://www.greenheadstories.co.uk)  
email: [c.webb@hud.ac.uk](mailto:c.webb@hud.ac.uk)  
phone the Memory Bank: 01484 478 412

13201.



'Greenhead Stories' is an oral history project that is collecting local memory of Greenhead Park. We are looking for your stories and memories, which will be archived and used in planning community heritage events and audio tours of the park.

## Greenhead Stories

'Greenhead Stories' is an oral history project that celebrates the rich cultural history of Greenhead Park. Please help us by sharing your stories about the park as well as memories of the Huddersfield Carnival and Asian Mela.

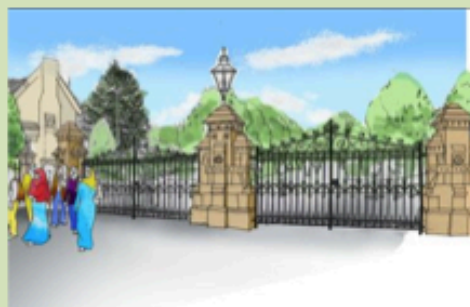


**call our memory bank to share your stories**

**01484 478 412**

or visit [www.greenheadstories.co.uk](http://www.greenheadstories.co.uk)

or email Chris at [c.webb@hud.ac.uk](mailto:c.webb@hud.ac.uk)





## Appendix C - Sample interview summary, State Library New South Wales

Interview with Dick Clough

Interviewer: Rosemary Block

MLOH 382/1-3

Tape No. 1 Side A

24.3.99

002	<p>Introduction: Mr. Richard Clough, born Wagga Wagga 28.5.1921. Nurse Daley's establishment. Elder of 2, sister Patricia, father</p> <p>Alexander Claude Clough, mother, Dorothy Bell Onche(?)</p> <p>Knew grandparents and one great grandparent</p> <p>Remembers the death of great grandfather. Great grandmother, Robinson, born Windsor 1830s - story told of a great flood.</p>	
041	<p>Family life: Visited Sydney once a year</p> <p>School: My father was the eldest in family – three younger girls. Went to Miss Day's school with them – 3 classrooms – then to South Wagga Public School – then to South Wagga High School</p> <p>Favourite subjects: English, history. Drawing lessons were held outside school. Aunt Bertha painted china, oil paintings. Miss Day copying still life. Art teacher – landscape, made us draw gum trees. Hans Heysen painting</p>	Hans Heysen
099	Father a stock dealer, lived in town	
104	<p>After school: won an exhibition to go to university – did well in Science at Leaving Certificate – changed to Architecture. Lived in Kirribilli 1939 - end of depression lived with aunt, friendly with other students from Wagga. 30 in the Faculty of Architecture with Professor Wilkinson, Professor Hook and part-time teachers. Oriental Architecture, Professor Sandler major influence on thinking, interest in oriental cultures</p>	<p>Professors Wilkinson,</p> <p>Hook &amp;</p> <p>Sandler</p>
166	<p>War: was in Wagga when war was declared. Father served in France in W.W.1. Joined the Sydney University Regiment – was camped at Ingleburn</p>	

	when Japan entered the war	
194	NSW Public Works Department working during vacations. Government: Compton Parkes. The office was divided into sections – small section called “Detailing” headed by Mr Brown. I worked in that section.	Mr.Brown
211	Building of the new building for the Public Library. Mr.Ifould kept close scrutiny of work. Mr. Brown sent me to Mr.Ifould when he was summoned. Choice of illustrations used – windows, Caxton window and Canterbury Tales – decorative panels on the outside of building. Mr.Ifould had definite ideas. Bronze doors, portraits of navigators and explorers picked out by Mr. Ifould and sent to sculptors. I probably did drawings of the way each was to look and size.	Mr.Ifould
342	Floor in Foyer: I did full size drawings of surrounds, cherubs, ships etc. – waves chosen by Mr.Ifould. Drawings given to Meloccos – I watched process at Meloccos, brass lines on drawings etc. , made on factory floor then brought in. After Japan entered the war, end of my connection, can’t remember when I saw the floor finished	Melocco Bros.
410	End of Side A, Tape 1	
	Side B, Tape 1	
002	Floor finished 1942. Floor in the crypt of St Mary’s followed, also designed by Melocco Bros. – [master stone mason, Ciurletti].	
022	Decorative panels - The Assyrian, Parthenon	
030	Ceiling of the Shakespeare Room: Mr.Ifould had great volumes – plaster work Jacobean period, long galleries. Mr Ifould was seconded by the War Office, never inhabited the building	
063	Butter box columns removed	
070	Young architect student not exposed to modern movement. Exposed to it (Gropius) at University after the war.	
083	Discussion with Phyllis Mander-Jones. Blakett drawings, I was employed to catalogue them.	Phyllis Mander-

	Original drawings on paper, posted to builder – sorting out drawings during university vacations. First architectural drawings acquired by the library	Jones
142	After the war I used the library, Dixon Gallery and paintings. Old Mitchell Reading Room interior had a scholarly atmosphere.	
180	3 years at university, then army until 1945. Completed degree in 1945/46. When Japan entered the war stayed in the army, posted to artillery – called for volunteers for Radio Directional Training Course at South Head – one of the first intensive RADAR courses. Artillery sent with equipment, gun laying, CSR – more equipment sent into country – moved about a lot. Anti-aircraft group, New Guinea. Milne Bay etc.	
262	Island discovered by Dampier. Harry Luke interested in botany, ecology. Anti-aircraft Unit, defence only. St. Mathias Island group – 1 <sup>st</sup> . illustration of Australian plants.	Harry Luke
313	Beginning 1945 – war coming to an end. People part way through university courses were instructed to return. Ship to Admiralty Islands, flew to Bougainville then ship to Australia. Stayed at Wesley College – was a teaching fellow during the last year of Professor Wilkinson was head of school. Taught first year students, colleague John Neville, son of Richard Neville, senior curator at Library.	Professor Wilkinson
370	Architectural Faculty was next door to Fisher Library – had stack pass.	
378	Professor Winston, Professor Prior, Dr. Towndrow, Uni of NSW. Ashworth followed Winston then went to the Uni of NSW	Profs. Prior, Winston, Ashworth & Dr. Towndrow
414	Worked university 1 year then 2 years Mansfield & McClerkin	Mansfield McClerkin
419	End of Side B Tape 1	

### Appendix D - Sample interview summary Greenhead Stories.

Interview with Ron Berry

Interviewer: Chris Webb

Wednesday 07/12/2010. University of Huddersfield

Recording 1

0:00	introductions	People, Places, Events	Themes
0:30	Start with the beginning – early childhood. Lived on a farm in Grand_ Valley in the early 50s. Greenhead Park was a special outing. Two special memories. First, coming with Mum with sister, going to paddling pool and playing by the lake. Special because of the Journey.	1950s	Special Occasion
1:44	Coming with Grandad, leader of Scapegoat Hill brass band. Went on the marches as a little boy, and was there with him and the band. Memories of the grandstand and watching them parade up through the park from the main road.	Brass Band, Bandstand, Scapegoat Hill Brass Band	Generational Tradition, Childhood
2:32	When you came into the park they would collect money, people would toss coins into a collection pot which was an inverted pyramid. Late 1950s		
3:22	The conservatory, was a wonderful and mysterious place. Huge plants and big goldfish.	Conservatory	
3:45	Trisha, my wife also remembers Greenhead park as a special place.	Trisha Berry	
4:00	Being a student, going to the University. Playing Tennis and Football in the park, during weekday evenings. Changerooms underneath the café were frosty and musty, you had to get the key from the guy in the shop.		Teenage Years

4:47	Jumps to being a parent. When I lived in Springwood Gardens, the park was a good resource while raising his children. Going to the paddling pool, picnics, the playground, playing hide and seek in the bushes and around the columns of the Monuments. Now that's fenced off and you can't do that.	Paddling Pool	Parent
5:35	Park as a meeting place for local parents and other kids.		
5:50	Steam train and train rides, and a theater in the park. Where you could go and see comedians, dance shows, natural amphitheatre for the family and kids.	Train	
6:20	The toilets were very iffy in the park, very smelly. You had the feeling there were perverts lurking down there, never letting kids go there on their own.	Toilets	
6:41	Playing more games like Tennis with kids as they grew up. Going to festivals, cultural festivals. The West Indian culture brought noise, dancing, and presentations. Annual firework event. Used to take a stepladder so that kids could look over the tops of people and see more of the carnival.	Sports, Festivals, Carnival	
7:45	The conservatory suddenly started being locked. Went from being freely accessible to only open at certain times.		Decline
8:10	Used the park for running, and still use it. Fun Runs, raising money for charity. 1.1 mile around the outside of the park, so its used for fun runs.		
8:48	Lawn Tennis and Squash club used to hire the courts and have a yearly festival.		

9:00	Getting to know people in the park, friendly, familiarity among park users.		
9:24	Move from Springwood Gardens to Grassmere road – the route into town was through the park. It's a lovely way to walk, coming and going, especially at night.		
9:56	Taking the dog for a walk, meeting a different set of people in the park.		
10:20	Period of decline – vandalism, dutch elm, lack of investment, poor maintenance, weeds.	Dutch Elm	Decline
10:55	Culminated in a public meeting chaired by John Harman. 15 years ago. Kirklees realised there was a great resource that needed restoring.	John Harman	
11:20	Enjoy the park for what it is – a 'great big green lawn on the edge of town'		
11:45	Putting the fence around the park, takes away transparency. Unhappy with the placement of shrubs. Personal criticisms.		
13:00	Grandsy Valley		
13:10	Making the journey to the park, walking with Mum and sister. Mile and a half journey. Living in the countryside we had green space.		
13:55	Grandfather's Brass Band. Played in the park a couple of times a year, and other places as well. I went everywhere		
13:55	Grandfather's Brass Band. Played in the park a couple of times a year, and other places as well. I went everywhere with them. I was the conductor's mascot, marching with them.		

14:42	People lining the avenue on both sides. Banners displayed, brass band playing as we marched. Not embarrassed, quite shy but proud to be a part of it.	Brass Band, Bandstand	
15:22	Money collection at gate of park. Main entrance on right hand side.		
15:54	Watching the band performances, sat out on deck chairs around the bandstand and lake.		
16:14	Lots and lots of people, it was a popular thing. People paid what they could and would sit for the afternoon and be entertained by the band. Typical brass band music.		
16:57	Age: earliest memories, age 6 up to 10/11 years old. In the 1950s.		
17:25	Conservatory: Plants, palm trees, big things that went right up to the roof of the conservatory. Humidity, pool with goldfish. Cuttings on display, growing for planting in the park.	Conservatory	
18:10	Hours changed, inconsistent opening hours. Vandalism began to occur.		
18:45	Tennis: playing with friends while at Uni, playing with children when they were younger, and playing at the tennis club.		
19:20	Football in the park: students playing having a kick about.		
20:00	Theatre: Childrens events, clowns, involving children and audience participation, balloon animals, talent contests, 1980s.		

21:00	Not as many people in the 1980s, but the theatre did attract a crowd. Fairly localised. Outdoor amphitheatre was once there with enclosure with benches and an embankment where you could sit out.		
22:30	Train was where the playground was, alongside the playground. Stream train with a whistle on an incline. Road up to the top and then shut it off and it naturally rolled back to the start. Must have been there 20 years.	Train	
23:15	Toilets: weren't a problem as a child, as a student they smelled, but in 80s there was a feeling that there were perverts in the toilet waiting to pounce. We were quite happy with them playing the bushes, but there was a worry over the toilets.	Toilets	
24:00	Changerooms were underneath where the café was. Male and female changerooms. They were basic and musty.	Changerooms	
24:47	West Indian carnival started in the 1980s. It was something new to the park. New culture, music, something new and exciting. Feeling the vibrations from the speakers.	Carnival	
25:48	Started more relaxed, but in the 1990s the events became a bit more hard edged, slight vandalism, eventually split into the west Indian festival and asian festivals.		Decline
26:44	10 years ago, started insisting that the music stopped at 8:00 pm.		
27:00	Firework displays	Fireworks	



28:10	Community in the park, changing over time. As Parents meeting people, chatting with friends, meeting other people with dogs, meeting people from church. Park as a gathering place where you meet people from different links of life. Thread that ties people together.		Changes in use
29:00	Decline, sadness that it was left to decline. As it became run down there was an increase of vandalism throughout the mid 1990s.		Decline
30:10	Lots of weeds, grass overgrown, footpath surfaces breaking down, absence of people upkeeping the park		
31:20	Public meeting made it quite clear that the public were concerned about the decline of the park.		
32:00	Positive things happening for the park now. Presence of activity and new developments.		
32:50	Looking forward to seeing currently blocked off areas reopened, and seeing the follow on and further development of bowling green and tennis courts not included in lottery grant.		Future Thoughts
33:40	Tennis courts: condition was better in the past		
34:20	Future of the park: more events, high quality events, cultural events, as well as more low key events; exhibitions, community events.		Future Thoughts
35:00	Well used by asian community, going out and using the park making use of the space.		
36:30	Ideas for Project:		Suggestions

36:30	<p>Ideas for Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Memorabilia relating to soldiers in the war.</li><li>- Monument, lone soldier stood at bottom entrance.</li><li>- Gatekeepers lodge – what’s going to happen to that?</li><li>- 70s-80s Dutch Elm disease, a sculptor came in and made sculpture using the tree trunk. One still by the war memorial</li></ul>		Suggestions
-------	--	--	-------------

## Appendix E - Alphabetical listing of tags in the archive.

Bananas	Kirklees
Bandstand	Lake
Bowling	Litter
Buggymovers	Meeting Place
Café	Mela
Carnival	Meta
Carnival Committee	Model Boats
Carvings	Model Engineers
Celebration	Motorboats
Childhood	Motorcycle
Circus	Ms. Personality
Coletta's	Multicultural Huddersfield
Conservatory	Paddling Pool
Courting	Parent
Cultural Expression	Park Office
Cultural Mixing	Park Warden
Dances	Polish Community
Decline	Polish Heritage
Disruption	Putting Green
Dutch Elm Disease	Ramsden Estate
Fireworks	Ravenscourt Park
Fishing	Rebecca at the Well
Flower Show	Restoration
Friends of Greenhead Park	Second World War
Future Hopes	Stage
Generational Change	Talent Show
Generational Tradition	Teenage Years
Greenhead Stories	Train
Holidays at Home	Ukranian Community
Holy Trinity Church	War Memorial
Huddersfield Corporation	Water Memorial
Interview Relationship	Working in the Park

## **Appendix F - Posters and flyers used to publicise the project.**

**The following General Guidelines for Research Ethics have been adopted from the University of Sheffield, and have informed the policy and procedures of the School of Music, Humanities and Media.**

### **THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**

#### **RESEARCH ETHICS: GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND STATEMENTS**

##### **1 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF RESEARCH ETHICS**

The founding motto of the University of Sheffield is 'To discover the causes of things'. The University's mission is to uphold the ideals of discovery, to encourage and support research into new ways of acquiring, investigating and developing knowledge for the good of society, and to ensure that all research is conducted in accordance with fundamental ethical principles.

The paramount principle governing all University of Sheffield research involving human participants, personal data and human tissue is respect for the participants' welfare, dignity and rights.

##### **1.1 Participants' rights**

Participants have a right to:

- consent to participate, withdraw from, or refuse to take part in research projects;
- confidentiality: personal information or identifiable data should not be disclosed without participants' consent;
- security: data and samples collected should be kept secure and anonymised where appropriate; and
- safety: participants should not be exposed to unnecessary or disproportionate levels of risk.

##### **1.2 Researchers' obligations**

Researchers have an obligation to ensure that their research is conducted with:

- honesty;
- integrity;
- minimal possible risk to participants and to themselves; and
- cultural sensitivity.

Guidance on the interpretation and application of these principles, including circumstances where a departure from these principles may be ethically justified, is detailed in this Policy document.

These fundamental principles of research ethics are recognised in international and regional treaties, as well as national laws. Breach of these principles may, in some instances, be a civil or criminal offence. The principles and requirements outlined in this Policy reflect the fundamental principles but do not displace a researcher's legal obligations. For further discussion of the particular issues raised by research that deals with illegal activities, see Research Ethics Policy Note no. 12.

Ethical research conduct does not require the avoidance of potentially high-risk research. An ethical approach to research involves, rather, proper recognition of, and preparation for, risks, and their responsible management. Ethical research is therefore a matter of being risk aware, not risk averse.

Finally, if research ethics are to be more than merely formulaic and procedural they must be meaningful and relevant to - and accepted by - researchers. Mere compliance with central policy is not sufficient. To this end, this Policy specifies an ethics approval procedure that is devolved to academic departments in the first instance, and which depends on ethically aware, self-reflective researchers taking responsibility for operationalising the principles and requirements embodied in the Policy.

## 2 INTRODUCING RESEARCH ETHICS

'Research', broadly defined, includes all investigation undertaken in order to acquire knowledge and understanding, across the full range of academic disciplines, from the arts and humanities to the natural sciences (whether funded or not), and also encompassing administrative research undertaken within, or on behalf of, professional services departments. This definition includes:

- work of educational value designed to improve understanding of the research process;
- work of relevance to commerce and industry;
- work of relevance to the public and voluntary sectors;
- scholarship supporting the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines (such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues, and contributions to research databases);
- the invention, design and generation of ideas, images, performances and artefacts, where these lead to new or substantially improved understanding; and
- the experimental use of existing knowledge to develop, design and construct new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes.

This definition of research excludes:

- the routine testing and analysis of materials, components and processes - e.g. as part of the observance of national standards - as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques;
- routine audit and evaluation, within the established management procedures of organisations; and
- the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research

The word 'ethics' derives from the Greek, 'ethos', meaning custom, mores or character. It refers to systems of moral principles or values, principles of right or good behaviour in relating to others, and the rules and standards of conduct binding together members of a profession.

'Research ethics' refers to the principles of appropriate conduct that govern research, as defined above. The principles of research ethics apply to all types of research. Research ethics may also inform decisions about what types of research an organisation will support; these decisions concern organisational ethics. <sup>3</sup> The University of Sheffield's Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue: Version 2

The University of Sheffield's Research Ethics Policy, however, applies only to research involving human participants, personal data and human tissue. What is understood by these terms is discussed in Research Ethics Policy Note no. 1.

### **3 RESEARCH ETHICS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD**

The University's Research Ethics Policy recognises that the responsibility for maintaining ethical conduct lies, in the first instance, with researchers themselves. If researchers do not take responsibility for the ethical conduct of their own research, defensible research ethics will be an unrealisable goal. To this end, responsibility for operating the University's Ethics Review Procedure, informed by the Research Ethics Policy, is devolved to academic departments and funding units.

Within this devolved framework, the University recognises that diversity enriches and strengthens its research culture and performance. Diversity means that research activities involving human participants, personal data and human tissue may differ widely from one department or funding unit to another. Thus the ethical issues relating to human participation in research may also differ considerably from one academic department or funding unit to another.

This means that the formal ethical review of research proposals involving human participants, personal data or human tissue is best carried out within departments, within the broad parameters provided by the Research Ethics Policy and the Ethics Review Procedure.

The key principle underlying the Ethics Review Procedure is that researchers should reflect on the ethical issues that are raised by their research and be able to justify, in ethical terms, the practices and procedures that they intend to adopt during their research.

### **4 RESEARCH GOVERNANCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Heads of departments and funding units are responsible for the conduct of the research that is undertaken in their departments. They are therefore responsible for ensuring that departmental researchers have access to appropriate ethics review procedures for research activities that involve human participants, personal data or human tissue, in line with the University's Research Ethics Policy. They are also responsible for ensuring that all research-active staff and students are familiar with the content of the Research Ethics Policy. As in all other matters, individual researchers are expected to follow the leadership of their Head of Department.

In everyday research practice, however, the first responsibility for considering, respecting and safeguarding the welfare, dignity and rights of human participants

involved in research lies with the lead researcher (e.g. the principal investigator or supervisor). However, this practical principle does not absolve more junior, or more senior, staff, or students, from personal responsibility in this respect, or from their responsibility to disclose any failure to meet the principles of conduct required by the Research Ethics Policy.

All researchers at the University of Sheffield, whether staff members or students, are responsible to a range of stakeholders for their conduct during, and delivery of, their research activities involving human participants. These are:

- the human participants involved (as broadly defined by this Policy);
- society in general;
- the University of Sheffield;
- fellow researchers, whether colleagues or students;
- their department or funding unit;
- the research funder; and
- their academic profession or discipline.

Given the responsibilities outlined immediately above and the overarching ethical principles outlined at the beginning of the Policy, it follows that no University of Sheffield member of staff or student should be compelled to participate in a research activity that conflicts with their ethical and moral principles, or compel others to participate in a research activity that conflicts with their ethical and moral principles. The University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) is responsible to the University's Senate for:

- periodically reviewing the Research Ethics Policy and reporting its findings to the University's Senate;
- offering guidance within the University on the interpretation of the Research Ethics Policy;
- resolving disputed or uncertain ethics approval decisions;
- periodically monitoring the effectiveness of research ethics review procedures within departments and funding units;
- actively promoting awareness and knowledge of the Research Ethics Policy, and research ethics more generally, within the University; and
- providing advice on any ethical matters relating to research that are referred to it from within the University.

## **5 SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY**

The University's Ethics Policy applies to:

- all University staff and registered students who conduct, or contribute to, research activities involving human participants, personal data or human tissue, whether these take place within or outside University premises and facilities; and
- all individuals who, although they are not members of the University, conduct, or contribute to, research activities involving human participants, personal data or human tissue that take place within University premises and facilities.

Research funding bodies may have their own research ethics policies and/or requirements, in which case observance of these policies and requirements will, as a condition for receiving research funding, necessarily take precedence over the University's Research Ethics Policy. However, this does not obviate the need for observance of the University's Policy and its associated procedures; in such cases, the external policies and requirements are an *extra* layer of research ethics governance, not an alternative to the Research Ethics Policy.

The final external stakeholders to be considered are professional bodies and learned societies, which may also have their own research ethics policies, guidelines and requirements. While learned societies' research ethics guidelines are useful resources that may offer supplementary guidance, the University's Research Ethics Policy must, in the first instance, take precedence for University staff members and with respect to research conducted on University premises. External bodies that have professional licensing or registration responsibilities are, however, a different matter and their external principles have a different weight. Although it is unlikely that professional ethical codes will conflict with the University's Research Ethics Policy, in the event of a perceived conflict of this kind, the member of staff concerned should contact the Secretary of the University Research Ethics Committee for guidance.

## 6 THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH ETHICS POLICY

The Research Ethics Policy is intended to:

- protect the dignity, rights, safety and well being of human participants;
- codify the University's position on research ethics for research involving human participants, personal data and human tissue;
- demonstrate a commitment to high quality, transparent and accountable research ethics throughout the University, from senior management policy-making to the practicalities of individual staff and student research projects;
- warrant and inform the operation of the University's Ethics Review Procedure within departments and funding units;
- provide guidance on research ethics for all staff and students;
- encourage an organisational research culture based upon defensible standards of research practice;
- reduce risks to the University, departments and funding units, and individual researchers;
- strengthen the eligibility and quality of University research funding applications; and, not least,
- enhance the University's reputation with the general public and wider society, within the academic professions, and with funding bodies and external auditors.

## 7 GOOD RESEARCH PRACTICE

Observing recognised research ethics is basic to good research practice in general. The University's Research Ethics Policy should, therefore, be read alongside:

- the University's Good Research Practice Standards;



- the University's Policy on Investigating and Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct; and
- the University's statement on Research Ethics and Integrity.

Upholding ethical standards in the conduct of research means accepting and respecting principles of integrity, honesty and openness. Conducting research with integrity means embracing intellectual honesty and accepting personal responsibility for one's own actions.

Prior to, during, and following the completion of research activities, researchers are expected to consider the ethical implications of their research and, depending on its nature, the cultural, economic, psychological, physiological, political, religious, spiritual and social consequences of it for the human participants involved.

Researchers should always consider their research from the perspective(s) of the participants and any other people who may possibly be affected by it.

## **8 SAFETY AND WELL-BEING**

Finally, issues of safety and well-being are at the heart of research ethics. Researchers have a responsibility to protect all participants, as well as they can, from avoidable harm arising from their research. Researchers also have a responsibility to consider their own safety and that of any co-researchers or collaborators.

As a general rule, people participating in research should not be exposed to risks that are greater than, or additional to, those they encounter in their normal lifestyles. If it is expected that harm, unusual discomfort or other negative consequences might occur in prospective participants' future lives as a result of participation in a research project, the researcher should highlight this during the ethics approval process, and discuss the matter fully with participants during negotiations about informed consent. Further detailed discussion of informed consent, and safety and well-being, can be found in Research Ethics Policy Notes nos. 2 and 3.

## Appendix G – Student Consent Form

### Music, Humanities and Media STUDENT CONSENT FORM

The University of Huddersfield has a responsibility for ensuring that teaching and research follow good ethical practice. This is done through the University Ethics Committee and School Ethics Committees. Those involved in teaching and research have the responsibility to determine whether a project raises ethical concerns and to which body any ethical concerns should be referred.

Further details are at

<http://www2.hud.ac.uk/research/gradcentre/regulations/ethicsguide.php>

Students undertaking research involving interviews should complete the relevant sections of this form, discuss its implications with the subject of the research (i.e. the interviewee), allowing them to decide on the uses of their contribution.

Please provide a copy of the form for the interviewee.

The form should then be given to the appropriate member of academic staff – normally your supervisor on the project.

Name of Student seeking consent

Christopher Webb

Name of Project being worked on at the University of Huddersfield

Oral History of Greenhead Park  
Centre for Oral History Research

I wish to use material from: *[please tick as appropriate]*

☐ An interview

☐ Other *[Please give further details in the box below]*

The interview will: [please tick as appropriate]

- ☐ Form part of the final archive which will be placed in the university library for research purposes. It may be used for this and future projects.
- ☐ Be used in publications (books or pamphlets), exhibitions, on our website, possibly on radio.
- ☐ Other *[please give details]*

- used in park podcasts/audio tours relating to Greenhead Park

- digital copies will be provided to the Friends of Greenhead Park for future use/storage

Your participation is entirely voluntary, you are free to refuse to answer any question, and you are free to withdraw at any time. Your name, and any information you provide, will not be used without your permission.

The purpose of this form is to show whether you consent to this material being retained and used by the University of Huddersfield.

I hereby consent/do not consent to my work/contribution/interview being used by the University of Huddersfield.

I assign copyright to the University of Huddersfield. The purpose of the assignment is to enable routine consultation of interviews to take place as agreed with you and to enable parts of recorded interviews or extracts from transcriptions to be used in publications, broadcasts, exhibitions or on the internet (subject to any restrictions you have specified in this form).

Name of participant:

Address:

Telephone:

Email:

Signature:

---

Thank you.

If you have any questions regarding the project, you can contact me at:

Name: ~~Christopher Webb~~\_\_\_\_\_

Dept of: History, School of Music, Humanities and Media

University of Huddersfield, HD1 3DH

Email: c.webb@hud.ac.uk

Phone: mobile: 07506 702455

Alternatively you may contact my supervisor:

Paul Ward, p.j.ward@hud.ac.u.k 01484 478413

## Appendix H – Images of Exhibition and Celebration Event.

Exhibition panels and examples of where oral histories were used.



Examples of Greenhead Stories interviews within the exhibition including participant Linda Milloy posing where her interview is featured.







Visitors reading the exhibition panels in the conservatory.



## Bibliography

- Abrams, Lynn. *Oral History Theory*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2010.
- Ali, Nafhesa. *Asian Voices: First Generation Migrants*. Huddersfield: University of Huddersfield, 2010.
- Allison, Fred. "Remembering a Vietnam War Firefight: Changing Perspectives Over Time." *Oral History Review* 31, no. 2 (2004): 69-83.
- Ashton, Paul and Paula Hamilton, "Connecting With History: Australians and Their Pasts." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- Atkinson, Robert. *The Life Story Interview*. London: Sage, 1998.
- Benmayor, Rina. "Contested Memories of Place: Representations of Salinas' Chinatown." *Oral History Review* 37, no. 2 (2010): 225-234.
- Blackburn, Kevin. "History from Above: The Use of Oral History in Shaping Collective Memory in Singapore." In *Oral History and Public Memories*, eds. Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.
- Borland, Katherine. "'That's not what I said' Interpretive conflict in oral narrative research." In *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Bornat, Joanna. "Remembering and Reworking Emotions: The Reanalysis of Emotion in and Interview." *Oral History* 38, no. 2 (2010): 43:53.
- Bornat, Joanna. "Second Take: Revisiting Interviews with a Different Purpose." *Oral History* 31, no. 1 (2003): 47-53.
- Bornat, Joanna. "Two Oral Histories: Valuing our Differences." *Oral History Review* 21, no. 1 (1993): 73-95.
- Bourke, Joanna. *Working Class Cultures in Britain, 1890-1960: Gender, Class, and Ethnicity*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Bradley, Simon. "History to go: oral history, audiowalks and mobile media." *Oral History* 40, no. 1 (2012): 99-110.
- Burton, Susan. "Issues in Cross-Cultural Interviewing: Japanese Women in England." *Oral History* 31, no. 1 (2003): 38-46.
- Butler, Toby. "The Historical Hearing Aid: Located Oral History from the Listener's Perspective." In *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.



- Butler, Toby. "‘Memoryscape’: Integrating Oral History, Memory and Landscape on the River Thames." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- Caftanzoglou, Roxane. "The Sacred Rock and the Profane Settlement: Place, Memory and Identity Under the Acropolis." *Oral History* 28, no. 1 (2000): 43-51.
- Casson, Fiona. "Voices of the Community? Reflections on Accessing, Working with and Representing Communities." *Oral History* 38, no. 2 (2010) 95-101.
- Charlton, Thomas Lee, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples. *The Handbook of Oral History*. Oxford: Altamira, 2006.
- Daley, Caroline. "‘He would know, but I just have a feeling’: gender and oral history." *Women’s History Review* 7, no. 3 (1998): 343-358.
- Dearborn, Lynne M. and John C. Stallmeyer. *Inconvenient Heritage*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2010.
- Frisch, Michael. *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*. New York: SUNY Press, 1990.
- Frisch, Michael. "Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003) 111-113.
- Frisch, Michael. "Three Dimensions and More: Oral History Beyond the Paradoxes of Method." In *Handbook of Emergent Methods*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and P. Leavy. London: Guildford Press, 2008.
- Frisch, Michael. "Towards a Post-Documentary Sensibility: Theoretical and Political Implications of New Information Technologies in Oral History." (Paper presented to the XIIIth International Oral History Conference, Rome, June 2004.)
- Futrell, Allan and Charles Willard. "Intersubjectivity in Interviewing." In *Interactive Oral History Interviewing*, eds. Eva McMahan and Kim Lacy Rogers. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- Gough, Paul. "‘Garden of Gratitude’: The National Memorial Arboretum and Strategic Remembering." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- Goulbourne, Harry. *Caribbean Transnational Experience*. London: Pluto Press, 2002.
- Grele, Ronald J. "Oral History as Evidence." In *The Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Charlton, Thomas Lee, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples. Oxford: Altamira, 2006.
- Grele, Ronald J. "Reflections on the Practice of Oral History." *Suomen Anthropology: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* 32, no. 4 (2007): 11-23.
- Griffiths, David. *Secured for the Town: The Story of Huddersfield’s Greenhead Park*. Huddersfield: Friends of Greenhead Park, 2011.

- Haigh, Hilary. Introduction to *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh. Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992.
- Hamilton, Paula and Linda Shopes. *Oral History and Public Memories*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.
- Harzig, Christiane, and Dirk Hoerder. *What is Migration History?* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.
- High, Steven. "Placing the Displaced Worker: Narrating Place in Deindustrializing Sturgeon Falls, Ontario." In *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, eds. John C. Walsh and James William Opp. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010.
- High, Steven. "Shared Authority: An Introduction." *Journal of Canadian Studies* 43, no. 1 (2009): 12-34.
- Holmes, Andrew. "The Ouse Project: A Cast Study of Applied Oral History." In *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Hubbard, Phil and Rob Kitchin. "Introduction: Why Key Thinkers?" In *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, eds. Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin. London: Sage, 2011.
- Hutching, Megan. "The Distance Between Voice and Transcript." in *Remembering: Writing Oral History*, eds. Anna Green and Megan Hutching. Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2004.
- Jenkins, David T. "Textiles and other Industries, 1851-1914." In *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh. Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992.
- Kerr, Daniel. "Countering Corporate Narratives from the Streets: The Cleveland Homeless Oral History Project." In *Oral History and Public Memories*, eds. Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.
- Kerr, Daniel. "'We Know What the Problem Is': Using Oral History To Develop a Collaborative Analysis of Homelessness from the Bottom Up." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 27-45.
- King Dunaway, David. "Field Recording in Oral History." *Oral History* 15 (1987): 21-42.
- Klaebe, Helen. "Sharing Stories: Problems and potentials of oral history and digital storytelling and the writer/producer's role in constructing a public place." PhD diss., Queensland University of Technology, 2006.
- Larson, Mary A. "Potential, Potential, Potential: The Marriage of Oral History and the World Wide Web." *Journal of American History* 88, no. 2 (2001): 596-603.
- Larson, Mary A. "Research Design and Strategies." In *The Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Charlton, Thomas Lee, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples. Oxford: Altamira, 2006.

- Lawless, Elaine. *Holy Women, Wholly Women; Sharing Ministries of Wholeness Through Life Stories and Reciprocal Ethnography*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993.
- Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.
- Liu, Jieyu. "Researching Chinese Women's Lives: 'Insider' Research and Life History Interviewing." *Oral History* 34, no. 1 (2006): 43-52.
- Low, Setha. *On the Plaza*. Austin: University of Texas, 2003.
- Low, Setha, and Denise Lawrence-Zuniga, *The Anthropology of Space and Place Locating Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003.
- Low, Setha, Dana Taplin, and Suzanna Scheld. *Rethinking Urban Parks: Public Space and Cultural Diversity*. Austin: University of Texas, 2005.
- McIntyre, Darryl. "Creating New Pasts in Museums: Planning the Museum of London's Modern London Galleries." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- McKibbin, Ross. *The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain 1880-1950*. Oxford: Oxford University, 2002.
- Mackay, Nancy. *Curating Oral Histories*. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2007.
- Marshall, John. "The Sense of Place, Past Society and the Oral Historian." *Oral History* 3, no. 1 (1975): 19-25.
- Moshenska, Gabriel. "Oral History in Historical Archaeology: Excavating Sites of Memory." *Oral History* 35, no. 1 (2007): 91-97.
- O'Brien Backhouse, Meaghan. "Re-enacting the Wars of the Roses: History and Identity." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- Portelli, Alessandro. *The Battle of Valle Giulia*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.
- Portelli, Alessandro. *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories*. New York: SUNY Press, 1991.
- Portelli, Alessandro. "What Makes Oral History Different." In *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Rickard, Wendy. "Collaborating With Sex Workers in Oral History." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 47-59.
- Rickard, Wendy et al., "What Are Sex Workers Stories Good For? User Engagement with Archived Data." *Oral History* 39, no. 1 (2011): 91-113.
- Redmonds, George. "Settlement in Huddersfield before 1800." In *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh. Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992.

- Romaine, Gemma. *Connecting Histories A Comparative Exploration of African-Caribbean and Jewish History and Memory in Modern Britain*. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Rouverol, Alicia. "Collaborative Oral History in a Correctional Setting: Promise and Pitfalls." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 61-85.
- Royle, Edward. "Religion in Huddersfield since the mid-Eighteenth Century," In *Huddersfield a Most Handsome Town*, ed. Hilary Haigh. Huddersfield: Kirklees Cultural Services, 1992.
- Samuel, Raphael. "Local History and Oral History." *History Workshop Journal* (1976): 191-208.
- Samuel, Raphael. *Theatres of Memory*. London: Verso, 1994.
- Savage, Mike. "Histories, belongings, communities." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11, no. 2 (2008): 151
- Schmid, Christian. "Lefebvre's Theory of the Production of Space". In *Space, Difference, Everyday Life Reading Henri Lefebvre*, eds. Kanishka Goonewardena, Stefan Kipfer, Richard Milgrom and Christian Schmid. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Shields, Rob. "Henri Lefebvre." In *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, ed. Phil Hubbard and Rob Kitchin. London: Sage, 2011.
- Shopes, Linda. "Oral History and the Study of Communities." In *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Shopes, Linda. "Sharing Authority." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 103-110.
- Shopes, Linda. "Legal and Ethical Issues in Oral History." In *The Handbook of Oral History*, eds. Charlton, Thomas Lee, Lois E. Myers, and M. Rebecca Sharples. Oxford: Altamira, 2006.
- Siblon, John. "'Monument Mania'? Public Space and the Black and Asian Presence in the London Landscape." In *Public History and Heritage Today: People and Their Pasts*, eds. Paul Ashton and Hilda Kean. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2012.
- Sitzia, Lorraine. "A Shared Authority: An Impossible Goal?" *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 87-101.
- Slim, Hugo, Paul Thompson, Olivia Bennet, and Nigel Cross. "Ways of Listening." In *The Oral History Reader*, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2006.
- Stewart, Mary. "Unveiling the 'biography' of the Oral History Archive." Paper presented at the International Oral History Association Conference, Prague, July 7-11, 2009.
- Teasdale, Vivien. *Huddersfield Mill Memories*. Barnsley: Wharnccliffe Books, 2006.
- Thomson, Alistair. "Four Paradigm Transformations in Oral History." *Oral History Review* 34, no. 1 (2007): 49-70.

- Thomson, Alistair. *Moving Stoires: An Intimate History of Four Women Across Two Countries*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011.
- Thomson, Alistair. "Moving Stories, Women's Lives: Sharing Authority in Oral History." *Oral History* 39, no. 2 (2011): 73-82.
- Thomson, Alistair. "Sharing Authority: Oral History and the Collaborative Process." *Oral History Review* 30, no. 1 (2003): 23-26.
- Thompson, Paul. *The Voice of the Past: Oral History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Thrift, Nigel. "Space: the fundamental stuff of geography", in *Key Concepts in Geography*, eds. Sarah L. Holloway, Stephen Rice and Gill Valentine. London: Sage, 2003.
- Trower, Shelley. "Regional Writing and Oral History, from China Clay to Eden." In *Place, Writing and Voice in Oral History*, ed. Shelley Trower. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Villarreal, Mary Ann. "Finding Our Place: Reconstructing Community in Oral History." *Oral History Review* 33, no. 2 (2008): 45-64
- Walsh, John C. and James William Opp. *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010.
- Williams, Rhonda. "'I'm a Keeper of Information': History-Telling and Voice." *Oral History Review* 28, no. 1 (2001): 41-63.
- Yow, Valerie. *Recording Oral History*, 2nd. ed. Oxford: Altamira Press, 2005.
- Zembrzycki, Stacey. "Bringing Stories to Life: Using New Media to Disseminate and Critically Engage with Oral History Interviews." *Oral History* 41, no. 1 (2013): 98-107.

## Copyright Statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/or schedules to this thesis) owns any copyright in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Huddersfield the right to use such Copyright for any administrative, promotional, educational and/or teaching purposes.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts, may be made only in accordance with the regulations of the University Library. Details of these regulations may be obtained from the Librarian. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of any patents, designs, trademarks and any and all other intellectual property rights except for the Copyright (the “Intellectual Property Rights”) and any reproductions of copyright works, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third parties. Such Intellectual Property Rights and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without the prior written permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property Rights and/or Reproductions.