

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Ethical Encounters

9th Emerging Scholars Symposium on Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice

Thursday, March 17th, 2022

The Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling at Concordia University invites proposals for our ninth Emerging Scholars Symposium on Oral History, Digital Storytelling, and Creative Practice. The hybrid one-day event will offer emergent scholars an opportunity to present their work, to exchange ideas, and to connect with other researchers and creators.

This year's symposium is held in collaboration with Concordia's 4TH Space (ground floor, Webster Library building) where oral history research-creation projects will be included in a showcase on the day of the symposium.

Ethical Encounters is the title and main theme of the symposium. Ethics is at the heart of oral history theory and practice. As a transdisciplinary field at the intersections of ethnography, psychology, and history, oral history benefits greatly from a sustained reflection on ethics and favours new avenues, or new forms of critical reflection. Complementary to (or beyond) its normative and institutional definition, we encourage you to think about ethical research in the different and interconnected spheres of personal stance, local networks and community level.

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

Community Voices – Oral history encourages us to rethink dominant academic research practice from a mode of knowing *about* to knowing *with*. Are there ways in which researchers can balance their role and responsibilities towards their institutions with the needs and wishes of the communities they work with? Who is your project for? And how do you define a community?

Shared authority – Based on the notion of shared authority, oral history distanced itself from several traditional approaches by questioning the relationship between the subject and the object of research. However, this cannot be enough to solve all the ethical issues surrounding this relationship. What does “shared authority” mean in the context of emancipatory social movements and anti-colonial struggles? And how could ethics and shared authority be adapted to the online context that is now an integral part of oral history practices?

Representation – The issue of representation raises many ethical questions concerning oral history. How do you explore them in your work taking into account the histories of exclusion and the present contexts of marginalization of different communities and Indigenous peoples for example? How do oral history approaches address the “other” and social justice within practices?

Risk – what is an acceptable level of risk for both interviewees and interviewers in the oral history process? How do you handle trust in your work? How do you renew consent throughout the process? How do you ensure that possible harm implied by participation in the research is no greater than the one encountered by participants in highly politicised and controversial contexts?

Archival Practices – Archivists have frequently served as gatekeepers of knowledge, not only determining access but also deciding what material is worthy of inclusion in an archival setting. To what degree should political, emancipatory and decolonial aims inform the purpose of the archive? Which voices should be part of articulating these aims?

Access and Accountability – How do you account for accessibility in your work? How do you explore the relationship between access and accountability when working with oral histories? How has digital media caused a

re-examination of our ethical practices? And how do the diverse ways of circulating and sharing research influence ethical questions and the various scales of access?

Sustainability – What happens when a project ends? And how do we foster sustainable relationships with others? Can we avoid the extractive nature of research? What would a commitment to a decolonized practice look like on a daily basis? What are the challenges encountered? And what are some of the ethical questions that are raised when reusing archived oral histories?

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

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

How to apply

Participants may present their work in a variety of formats, including presentations, websites, research-creation projects, films, artworks, mobile apps, or performances. To be able to showcase a broad range of projects, each participant will be limited to **no more than 15 minutes**, followed by time for questions and discussions. We particularly encourage creative forms of expression other than papers (e.g., poetry, fiction, video/audio submissions, artwork, etc.). The symposium is bilingual; presentations may be in either French or English.

To submit your **presentation proposal**, please email us at cohds.chorn.symposium@gmail.com with the subject line **“Ethical Encounters – Presentation application”** with the following:

- Title and a short abstract of how your research engages the conference themes (300 words).
- Your CV and a brief bio (70 words): We do not require you to have published your work before, and especially encourage works from emerging scholars/artists!
- Names and bios of any co-presenters, panelists, etc.
- Technical specifications: Please tell us if you need to play audio or video as part of your presentation.

In addition to the conference, we also have access to gallery space at Concordia's 4th Space on the day of the symposium. We will showcase **research-creation projects** that speak to the symposium's theme. To submit your research creation proposal, please email us with the subject line **“Ethical Encounters – Research Creation application”** with the following:

- Title and a short statement of how your work speaks to the conference themes
- CV and a brief bio (70 words): We do not require you to have shown your work before, and especially encourage works from emerging scholars/artists!
- Images of your work or a description of the artwork
- Technical specifications: Please tell us how many pieces you have to display, the sizes, and any technical needs! The facilities include an octophonic studio and a state-of-the-art performance venue, but please note that you will be responsible for installing your own artwork prior to the showcase.

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

The deadline for submissions is Sunday, January 16th, 2021.