

ARCHIVE ZONES

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
FOCAL INTERNATIONAL

AUTUMN 2017

ISSUE NO. 103



‘Goodbye’ to two world-class researchers

Birth of an archive App – death of a newspaper

30 years of the British Entertainment History project

Singapore remembers: Oral History thrives 75 years after the Fall

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ARCHIVE ZONES (ONLINE) ISSN 2398-1814

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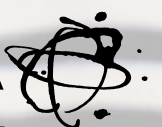
The Queen of Tinseltown – Elizabeth Taylor

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Editorial

Two 'titans' who set new standards

The role of researcher can cover a multitude of skills. At the highest level it effectively mirrors all the responsibilities of the producer. You name it; they do it. Researching storylines, archive sources, interviewees, locations. They find the 'unfindable'; negotiate access, rights fees and budgets and then, finally, make sense of a myriad of sources in the edit. You're talking, mind you, about the level of researchers who win their producers, their productions – and themselves – major awards.

The archive world is currently lamenting the loss of two such titans of the researchers' world.

Christine Whittaker is actually credited in the obituary on Page 11 with having "created her profession". She was given a FOCAL Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006 and you get an illuminating snapshot of her career in the interview she did for the British Entertainment History Project back in 2009 (See Page 12)

Liz Fay operated for 25 years as an archive researcher, peaking a decade ago with her pivotal role in the Oscar-



Michael Archer

winning *Man on Wire* – the amazing story of Phillipe Petit's tightrope walk between the New York Twin Towers. Her director on that film, James Marsh, summed up Liz's contribution to its 'almost preposterous success' as having come from 'the complete all-rounder', who he described as "really, really, really good at what she did".

Christine and Liz – two incredible talents and two delightful people. FOCAL and all their friends around the archive world lament their passing.

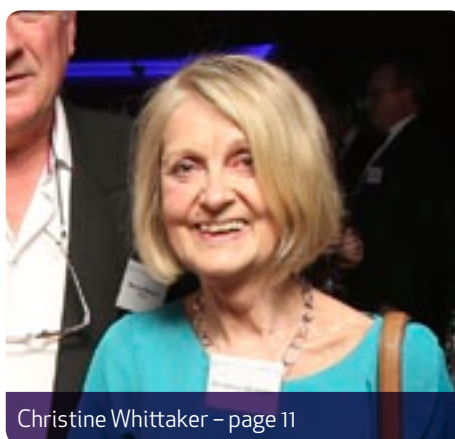
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Digital publication	PageSuite Group

Archive Zones is the journal of FOCAL International Ltd, the Federation of Commercial AudioVisual Libraries and is produced quarterly.

All opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the writers concerned and do not necessarily reflect the views of FOCAL International or its Executive. The editors reserve the right to edit contributions.

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Christine Whittaker – page 11

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Archive Zones shares with its readers the following news story from *The Cambodia Daily*

Birth of an App... Death of a newspaper...

NEWS

First Khmer Rouge History Mobile App Released on Android by George Wright

The first mobile app offering a comprehensive and interactive history of the Khmer Rouge, created in the hopes of ending a "collective denial" about some of the atrocities committed by the Pol Pot regime, went live on Tuesday.

Developed by the Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center in Phnom Penh, the app traces the communists' roots in the 1950s up to the ongoing cases against the regime's surviving leaders at the Khmer Rouge tribunal.

Khmer Rouge History App.

The easy-to-use app weaves archival photographs, videos, propaganda music and paintings, with historical text compiled by researchers, over eight chapters and 39 subchapters.

Free to download, it was available on Android by searching for "Khmer Rouge History" and was expected to be released shortly on iOS. The app will also be used as a teaching aid for history lessons on the period in high schools and universities.

Seventy percent of the Cambodian population is under the age of 30 and teaching about the Pol Pot regime in the country's public schools has long been very limited.

"Young generations do not know much about what occurred under the Khmer Rouge regime. A state of collective denial of the past atrocities is even observed amongst youth," a news release stated. "Encouraging youth to face Khmer Rouge history, accompanying them with relevant and attractive tools in their search for the truth, is crucial for a social transformation in Cambodia."

Sopheap Chea, an audiovisual archivist at Bophana, spoke of his pride that the app had been developed by Cambodians.

"There is a lot of pride for...Cambodian technicians because before we all know Khmer history has been written by non-Cambodians, but now it's kind of a new development that Cambodian people have developed," he said at the launch.

Keo Duong, a researcher who co-authored the app's text, said the development team

did its own research. "We conducted interviews with the cadres of the Khmer Rouge, so all those are the sources that we used to be able to analyze and write into text," he said.

As to whether the app deals with contentious issues, such as international complicity in the rise and support of the Khmer Rouge, Rithy Panh, the renowned Cambodian director and co-founder of Bophana, said that it could not cover every aspect of the regime, but could act as a catalyst for greater understanding.

"For us, the most important thing is to give some pieces," Mr. Panh said. "It's a tool, it's a unique thing and we can debate...and step by step we understand more."

Bophana, in collaboration with the Education Ministry, will offer a program about the app in five provinces starting in October with the aim of reaching 30,000 to 40,000 students at 80 high schools and 20 universities.

It hopes the app can tally 200,000 downloads internationally.

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wright@cambodiadaily.com

Archive Zones duly wrote seeking permission to re-print this news feature and received the following response:

"The Cambodia Daily had closed and is no longer monitoring this account.

– The Editors".

The Cambodia Daily – <http://www.cambodiadaily.com>

On The Cambodia Daily website was the following announcement...

Tuesday, October 24, 2017

NEWS

Cambodia Daily Announces Immediate Closure Amid Threats

By The Cambodia Daily

Facing imminent threats of closure and legal action over a disputed \$6.3 million tax bill, The Cambodia Daily will cease operations as of today, bringing to a close more than 24 years of independent journalism.

Lessons from a past threat to The Cambodia Daily

By Barton Biggs

Amidst a recent wave of Cambodia Daily-related social media reminiscing, a video was posted showing the Daily staff holding an emergency meeting to discuss government threats to shut the paper down. That video was not shot in the last few weeks, however; it was shot in 1995.

Automating key areas to improve efficiency...

Big tech showcase

IBC ran this year 13-18 September at the great conference centre RAI in Amsterdam. Along with NAB, which runs in April in Las Vegas, IBC 'bookends' the year for the media technology sector. It provides a setting for media tech companies to meet customers old and new, showcase products and check out the competition. Filling 15 halls with 1,700 exhibitors and over 50,000 people for six days (with a five-day conference thrown in), the scale, pace and intensity of IBC will bring even the toughest media execs to their knees.



What caught my eye...

The major themes of the conference were:

Cloud, Over the Top distribution (OTT), end-to-end delivery, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning.

Cloud has been a big theme for some years now, and the interesting thing here is that it hasn't gone away. It continues to dominate service and product offers as the sector moves to a service led approach. Perhaps the evolution this year could be seen where Cloud services are diversifying. Having reached a level of maturity, they are looking to increase their market presence by offering new services to their clients.

End-to-end integration services is one example where cloud providers are offering to be the glue between applications that may all be based around the same Cloud services.

Managed Service companies were also promoting the benefits of an end-of-end approach. Their offer is to navigate you through this complicated world and provide a guaranteed service. Workflows are complex with multiple integrated products; an end-to-end service provider will take away the pain of managing all the component parts, and in particular any issues that arise between them. This is relevant to archives as well as to broadcasters.

Whether you are producing content for another company, or getting your own content to air, managing the range of services needed to package and present your content can quickly erode your margin if it starts running into problems.

Over The Top has been exciting the industry for a few years now and this year was touted by a wide array of companies – whether they be pureplay companies or those providing OTT services as part of their product and service offering. The OTT market is growing fast and will be big – estimated to be \$64.78 billion globally in 2021 up from \$29.41 billion in 2015 (iHS Markit).

Everyone wants their share and there are lots of different approaches. Google's presence in Hall 15 – Content Everywhere – was viewed in equal fascination and horror by just about anyone who had a foot in the OTT space. It signified that this was a market worth entering, but also demonstrated the competition that OTT companies face.

The offers ranged from managed services, through to Platform as a Service (PaaS), Software as a Service (SaaS), content aggregation through companies, to those providing integrated OTT services as part of their media technology portfolio.

Machine learning was the buzz word this year and like the other themes, ran across a variety of market segments. It plays an important part in helping develop automatic speech recognition to assist captioning, as well as helping deliver enhanced metadata for content discovery and innovative revenue streams.

The technology is developing quickly, though isn't good enough yet to deliver entirely human-free captioning of a sufficient quality for most audiences, broadcasters and regulators. It is certainly in abundance in the creation of editorial and enhanced metadata. More niche applications of AI can be found in content recommendations, and also in content monetization.

AI took on VR as last year's big buzz. This year the headsets weren't quite so visible, and the rise of 360 video in this space was interesting. Stock footage was in evidence on a variety of screens, walk-throughs and demonstration spaces with crowds of people enjoying the spectacular video and audio on display.

So what is the 'take-out' for the Commercial Archive sector?

In my view, it is:

- The industrialisation and commoditisation of the content prep sector.
- The ubiquity of the cloud and the rise of service approaches to processing and distribution.
- The increasing role of automation in captioning processes and metadata enrichment. The automated end-to-end workflows.

All these technologies seek to automate key areas around content preparation and distribution in a bid to improve efficiency for content owners. It's an exciting time, and the clock keeps ticking.



Claire Harvey

Ericsson Business Manager **Claire Harvey** offers her thoughts on IBC

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The fifteenth FOCAL International Awards are underway with the opening of our new submissions entry site, powered by BAFTA Nucleus.

Archives are the Future –

Lord David Puttnam, FOCAL Patron

Footage is essential. From user-generated content to historic film, it documents our past and current worlds. As the only awards competition of its kind, the FOCAL International awards, with its varied categories, pay tribute to the understanding, entertainment and often overlooked histories that footage brings to our screens.

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SUBMISSIONS ARE OPEN

Nominate the work of a brilliant Archive Producer or enter a project into one of our eleven production categories, the FOCAL International Awards highlight the powerful and effective use of archive and footage in the creative industries. Find out more information on our new awards entry site. Submissions are open until 22 January 2018.

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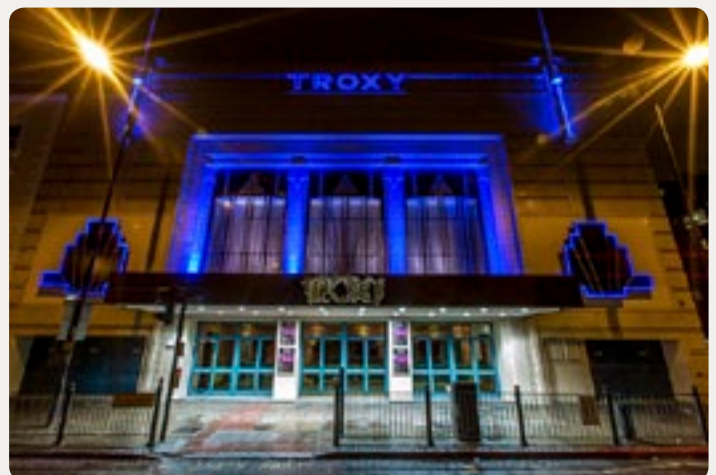
Some of our 2017 Award winners (Clockwise L-R: Terence Donovan: *Speed of Light*, *Letters from Baghdad*, *Eat That Question*; Frank Zappa in his own *Words*, *Napoleon*, *Zoo Quest* in Colour)

THE CEREMONY

14 JUNE 2018

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Voices That Remain...

Mark Wong recounts how the oral history of the Japanese Occupation takes on added poignancy, with the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore.

On 15 February, 1942, the British surrender to the invading Japanese forces heralded the start of three-and-a-half years of occupation when Singapore was known as Syonan-to ("Light of the South"). As we mark the 75th anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, we are fast approaching a turning point in our history.

Anyone with a passing memory of the occupation years would be well into their 80s today, and the day will come when we will no longer be able to obtain first-hand accounts from people who survived the atrocities of this period. This situation raises some fundamental questions about our national history. How do we know what we know about the past if no one alive has actually experienced it?

Fortunately, the National Archives of Singapore (NAS), as the official custodian of Singapore's collective memory, has been collecting primary historical records of the war and occupation years. These take the form of government and personal documents, photographs, audiovisual recordings, maps and other formats. The shift from living memory to official archives gives us occasion to re-evaluate the significance of the NAS's Japanese Occupation of Singapore Oral History Collection.

In 1981, the Oral History Unit (OHU – now renamed as the Oral History Centre – launched a major project to record memories of the Japanese Occupation of Singapore. Although it was the impending and inevitable loss of Singapore's wartime generation that prompted this effort, the idea of collecting interviews about the war and occupation had been conceived when the OHU was first established in 1979. That year, the OHU announced plans to embark on two key projects – *Pioneers of Singapore* and *Political Development of Singapore, 1945–1965*. The third project on the Japanese Occupation would be on hold until "more experience has been obtained by the Unit".

The first two projects were narrower in their scope and selection of interviewees. The Pioneers initiative (at one time also referred to as the Millionaires project) recorded the recollections of business and social leaders from the early to mid-1900s, while the Political Development project focused on political leaders familiar with the rise of politics in the period after World War II up to Independence.

Both projects were attempts to understand history through the 'movers and shakers of society'. The Japanese Occupation project, however, aimed to record history from a variety of perspectives – and would cut across socio-economic lines.

The first phase of the Japanese Occupation project took four-and-a-half years to record and document – from June 1981 to December 1985. Potential interviewees were identified through "media publicity, organisations like the National Museum, Sentosa Museum, Senior Citizens' clubs, community centres, individual recommendations and handbills distributed at pictorial exhibitions organised by the National Archives of Singapore." At the close of the project, 175 persons had been interviewed, totalling some 655 recorded hours.

First major showcase

Subject to conditions placed by the interviewees, the recordings were made available to government officials, researchers and members of the public. The first major showcase of the interviews took place in February 1985 on the 43rd anniversary of the Fall of Singapore. The Archives and Oral History Department (OHD) – the entity formed by the merger of the National Archives and Records Centre, and the OHU, in early 1981 – organised a month-long exhibition on the Japanese Occupation at its former premises at Hill Street Building (today's Old Hill Street Police Station).

This first-ever exhibition on the occupation years used information that had been gathered from oral history interviews as well as a selection of pictures, maps, charts and documents. Many of the artefacts displayed were either donated or borrowed from the interviewees.

A year later, to mark the end of the first phase of the project, the OHD published a catalogue of interviews containing information such as date, duration and synopses. Recognising that there are more stories to be told, the project continues to this day whenever suitable interviewees are found.

Today, the Oral History Centre (OHC), as it was finally renamed in 1993, is a unit under the NAS. Altogether, it has amassed over 360 interviews and 1,100 hours of recordings pertaining to the Japanese Occupation. These interviews have become a key collection of the OHC for a number of reasons.

Most importantly, the interviews have helped to fill an enormous gap in our knowledge of the war and occupation. The chaos of war and the regime change posed many challenges for recordkeeping, made worse in the final days leading up to the Japanese surrender on 15 August, 1945 when the administration systematically destroyed records of its work in Singapore. Copies of the heavily censored *Syonan Shimbun* and other newspapers that survived, while providing a valuable record of daily life in war-torn Singapore, mostly presented positive, if not glowing, views of the Japanese administration.

The Japanese Occupation interviews have helped to shed light on the harsh realities of life in Syonan-to, the large number of interviewees often proving to be effective in corroborating (or disqualifying) competing claims. Interviewees were selected based on their first-hand familiarity with the subject matter. Structured outlines were used to ensure some measure of consistency and uniformity in the topics covered, while interviewers were trained to pick up on unique experiences for follow-up.

Weighing on the significance of the Japanese Occupation collection, James H. Morrison writes:

“In a virtual lacuna of documentation contemporaneous with the event, remembrances either spoken or written are, of course, prime documentation. The Singapore Oral History Department’s collection of materials on the Japanese Occupation during the Second World War is meticulously collected, scrupulously organized, and immediately accessible to users. They provide one of the more comprehensive collections of one former colony’s view (or views) of the war.”

Key themes included

As the project was intent on collecting data that would enable the reconstruction of the lives of those affected by the Japanese Occupation – both civilians as well as military personnel – a broad approach was taken to include several key themes. These include the pre-war anti-Japanese movement; the British defence of Singapore; social and living conditions under occupation; the Sook Ching massacres; the Japanese defence of Syonan-to against the Allied Forces; the resistance forces; and the Japanese surrender and its aftermath.

The intention was to record a plurality of voices so that they could serve as a counterbalance to the predominantly Western-centric memoirs of British and Australian soldiers and politicians that had begun appearing after the war and the types of histories that were subsequently written. The Fall of Singapore has been framed as Britain’s worst military disaster – but what did occupation really mean for people in Singapore?

To this end, the interviews systematically record experiences from a broad spectrum of individuals, spanning gender, nationality, ethnicity, religion and socio-economic background. There are accounts by volunteer forces, prisoners-of-war, civilian internees, resistance fighters, government servants, businessmen, British, Australians, Chinese, Malays, Indians, Japanese and more. Speaking in different voices and languages, they relate their lived experiences and communicate the complexities of deep emotions and scarred memories, giving a multifaceted view of this significant period of Singapore history.

The interviews cover themes beyond the shores of Singapore, including experiences in Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, Thailand, China and Japan – underscoring the regional significance of the occupation of Singapore. There are accounts of resettlements to Endau and Bahau in Malaya and movements of prisoners-of-war to different parts of occupied Southeast Asia and even Japan.

There are also stories of the Nanqiao Jigong (南桥机工), a group of volunteer mechanics and drivers of mostly Chinese ethnicity from all over Southeast Asia who aided the war effort against the Japanese in China by bringing supplies through the 1,146 km Yunnan-Burma Road, as well as mass movements of British covert forces and anti-Japanese guerrilla groups in Malaya. Former British and Australian internees also speak of their traumatic post-war years adjusting back to life in their homelands.

With access to such a broad range of interviews, one realises that there is no singularly defining experience of the war and occupation, but multiple ones. Listening to so many different individuals provides new insights that can help clear up preconceptions or myths of the occupation.

The Japanese Occupation scholar Clay Keller Eaton expresses it succinctly:

“I use a lot of memoirs in my work, but with a few notable exceptions the people whose memoirs get published in both Japan and Singapore tend to have held positions of power during the occupation. One of the greatest strengths of ‘Japanese Occupation of Singapore’ Oral History Project is that it covers a wide cross section of Singaporean society... some of the interviews I’ve found most valuable were of poorer or marginalized Singaporeans whose experiences don’t fit easily into the dominant narratives of the occupation.

I came into the oral history interviews with this idea that the Japanese administration was omnipresent in wartime life because of organizations like the Overseas Chinese Association, Eurasian Welfare Association, and the auxiliary police force. However, through the interviews of the city’s poorer residents like Mabel [de Souza], I found that the Japanese Occupation state was actually less present the further down you were on the socioeconomic ladder...

I did start to get a sense that the Japanese were far more interested in co-opting and controlling the elites of Singapore, and that marginalized peoples (whether by race or socioeconomic status or gender) had a peculiar sort of anonymity in the occupied city. Some might not consider these people to be ‘significant,’ but their experiences provide an important corrective to standard narratives of the war.”

An Emotional Connection

Over time, one can become easily disconnected from a past that may seem so far removed from our present. Oral history accounts can help us find an emotional connection to narrators, who engage us through nuances in voice, pitch, tone, pace, mood, expression and more. We may not always comprehend their circumstances, but we can recognise their emotions of joy, anger and fear, and ultimately understand history through a rich tapestry of highly personal and subjective perspectives.

This is why oral history has been a lynchpin of the NAS’s efforts to document the war and occupation. In a book review of *The Price of Peace: True Accounts of the Japanese Occupation*, the critic writes: “The most compelling stories here are the first-hand accounts of wartime resistance activities, culled from the Oral History Centre’s collection of interviews with survivors.” There is something riveting about listening to a spoken first-person account of an event that third-person narratives can never hope to capture.

Oral history has continued to engage the public imagination ever since that first exhibition on the Japanese Occupation in 1985. The interpretive centre, *Memories at Old Ford Factory*, opened at the Former Ford Factory – the site of the British surrender – on Upper Bukit Timah Road on 16 February, 2006. The exhibition was a stark reminder of the horrors of the war and occupation. Eleven years

later, on 15 February, 2017, a new exhibition, *Surviving the Japanese Occupation: War and its Legacies* took its place.

Singapore's wartime survivors will not be around forever, but the Japanese Occupation of Singapore Oral History Collection will continue to preserve many of their voices, so that we and the generations who come after us can continue to listen – and learn – from their experiences. These are just a few poignant examples:

Voices from the Occupation

“When the Japanese came in, during the first fortnight, they beheaded eight people and their heads were put into iron cages and hung up at eight different places and notices were put out beside the heads that ‘These eight people were beheaded because they disobey the law of the Imperial Japanese Army’... The notice spelled out that if anyone caught in the act would be given the same treatment.”

– **Neoh Teik Hong**

“My father and two uncles were required to report to some registration centre – I don’t know whether a police station or what, I’m not so sure. Three of them went and only two came back.”

– **Foong Fook Kay**

“They start 10 firing squad on the top of us. The order came and then they just shoot, bang... then the second time they shoot, bang... up to round about three times like that. So those who died will fall down. So I was hit on my knee. I remembered that I am still alive. So when the first man dropped dead, I followed him.”

– **Chan Cheng Yeau**

“The rice ration we get from our shop was hardly sufficient for our requirement... We chopped the tapioca into small pieces, combined it with the rice and used it as rice... No rice, we all were thin, skinny, sickly... Very hard life. I tell you honestly, not worth living during Japanese time. Better to die than to live. Another year...if the Japanese were here, I think a lot of people would have died from malnutrition.”

– **Ismail bin Zain**

“We didn’t really link Japanese victory with our victory. Our idea was that we’d form an army, go to India, penetrate Indian borders and then create a revolution in India. We could only hope to succeed if we created a revolution in India. Without that we had no hope of throwing the British out.”

– **Colonel P K Sahgal**

“Every term about two or three songs will be sent out to the schools and it was our job to ensure that the schools were learning these songs... They were mostly military war songs, marching songs, Japanese patriotic songs... Of course, many of us did not know the meanings of those words at that time... The policy was partly to propagate Japanese culture and propaganda through the use of songs.”

– **Paul Abisheganaden**

“Unlike the... the Westerners, like the Americans or the British, who would conceal any knowledge that they felt should not be imparted to others, other than their own people... the Japanese did not mind teaching us, so that the people of this land could learn how to maintain a plane, how to maintain a ship, how to do certain things...”

– **Mahmud Awang**

Mark Wong is an Oral History Specialist at the Oral History Centre, National Archives of Singapore, where he conducts oral history interviews in areas such as education, the performing arts, the public service and the Japanese Occupation. He co-curated the exhibition, *Law of the Land: Highlights of Singapore’s Constitutional Documents*,

now on at the National Gallery Singapore. He sits on the Council of the International Oral History Association as Regional Representative (Asia).

This article is an edited version of the original first published in *BiblioAsia* (Vol 13, Issue 01, Apr-Jun 2017), a quarterly journal of the National Library Board, Singapore.

Liz Fay

The complete 'all rounder' who was "really, really, really good at what she did"

Liz Fay, who sadly died last month, had 25 years' experience in television production and film research. She offered a complete film and video research service searching archive, feature film and stockshots sourced worldwide. Copyright negotiations and artists clearances were no challenge to her.

Her credits included pop music, news and royalty, numerous music videos, television commercials and corporate promotions; *Scandals – History of the British Tabloid Press* (Teleproductions International); *The Queen and six Presidents* (Entente Cordiale for TF1); *The Shot that Shook the World* (50th anniversary of ITN News); *The Roots of Rock* (Landseer for Channel 5); *Lord Snowdon and Princess Margaret – Inside a Royal Marriage* (Wildcard); *Never Mind the Buzzcocks* (Talk Talkback Tv for BBC2); *Avenging Terror* (Brook Lapping for Channel 4); *RIP 2002* (Lion TV for Channel 4); *The Pop Years* (ITVI) a ten-part documentary series on pop music of the 1980s and '90s; *Princess Anne* (Granada TV for A&E) and *Body Talk* (ITN Factual for Channel 4) – a FOCAL International Award winner

She worked as footage researcher on numerous productions for Wall to Wall, including *The Salvage Squad* (for Channel 4); *Who Do You Think You Are?* (for BBC); *Empire's Children*.



Steve Bergson and Liz Fay

When I started working in television in the late '80s, the industry and particularly the old BBC boasted many such characters, one-offs, eccentrics, people who were probably unemployable in any other profession. And they were utterly brilliant at their jobs, but the media had got dull and boring and bureaucratic by the 90s and most of these lovely people were shown the door at the BBC. So Liz was already a throwback and a serious survivor from a more interesting and truly creative time in television. She had survived and continued to thrive because she was really, really really good at what she did.

And like everyone involved in the *Petit* film, she was a true believer in what *Petit* also did – that it was a brilliant and subversive work of art, not a stunt, and she recognised him as a misfit and outsider, too. It was still early days on the project and she was tasked with finding every piece of archive that existed on the twin towers and *Petit* himself.

Petit, as a diligent narcissist, had made a careful record of all his media appearances over the years – and it is a tribute to Liz's dogged, inspired research that she not only found them all but turned up pieces of archive that *Petit* himself had overlooked or forgotten. The resulting film, *Man On Wire*, was largely archive based and we were all delighted when it went on to have a year of growing and almost preposterous success, winning practically every award available, culminating in an Oscar. She owned a huge part of that success (and drank quite a few toasts to it too!). I shall always think of her in connection with a film that touched many people and which also had a big and positive impact on my career. The world is a far poorer, less interesting place without her".



Liz Fay and Declan Smith.

Man on Wire

But *Man on Wire* was her highest profile prize winner. As James Marsh (Director of the film) wrote:

"I first met Liz in 2007 as I began work on a film about Phillipe Petit's tightrope walk between the twin towers in 1974. Liz had been recommended by one of our producers and I remember our first encounter vividly. Liz was dressed in a rather fabulous floral dress and wearing a wide brimmed hat. She was a ball of energy and really quite eccentric – but in a way that I found immediately reassuring.

Christine Whittaker

22 December 1942 - 16 August 2017

Her research transformed documentaries and created a profession

Christine Whittaker, who has died aged 74 after complications from Parkinson's disease and cancer, was the first acknowledged archive film researcher for the BBC. In the 1970s, she sought out film that could add depth and credibility to historical television documentaries, bringing dusty archives to life. By the late 1980s, there was a recognition that the expertise she had helped to pioneer had led to the creation of a profession.

Before her arrival on the scene, television documentary presentation was flat, with perhaps a clip of archive film to illustrate the views of the expert presenter. But this was beginning to change.

The producer and writer Peter Pagnamenta, with whom Christine worked on many series, said: "Some of us were trying to let archive film breathe and speak for itself, with its original voice if possible. We were moving away from the first generation of history series, in which a perambulating historian spouted to the camera, or smothered sometimes striking footage with over-written commentary. It was Christine's ability to find and offer up the most evocative film extracts that could pithily convey a historical attitude or moment, that gave a special distinction to so many of the programmes she worked on."

Her great strengths were her sensitivity to what a producer needed, her sense of humour and her editorial sharpness. She built up an incomparable knowledge of possible sources in an era that predated digitisation and website catalogues of archive content.

In 1972 she researched the first Richard Dimbleby Lecture, by Lord (Noel) Annan on universities. Then, working on films about naval warfare presented by Ludovic Kennedy, she stumbled on her true vocation – the finding and assessing of rare archive material, often misdescribed, misplaced or lost. As the producer Edward Mirzoeff recounted: "It wasn't long before the head of the Naval Historical Branch admitted that the young woman from the BBC knew more about some archive footage than they did."

Born in Corbridge, Northumberland, she was the daughter of Margaret (nee Lawlan) and Gerald Smith. An academic high flyer at Sunderland Church high school, she went on to study French and German at Leeds University. Her hope after graduating was to work for the Foreign Office as a translator, but when it turned her down she went to the BBC. Her first job was with the World Service, in a unit broadcasting in French to Canada.

From there she transferred to television, becoming a factual researcher in documentaries, and inevitably was asked to look for bits of footage. She moved to the current affairs team based at Lime Grove, where she worked on the magazine programme *24 Hours*, but it was when she transferred to the feature/documentary unit at Kensington House that Christine found her forte.

For *All Our Working Lives* (1984), an 11-part history of Britain at work in the 20th century, she sought out fresh and previously unseen film, whether from families, institutions or businesses. She



worked on *Out of the Doll's House* (1988), the path-breaking history of women's experience in the 20th century, of which she was especially proud. For *Nippon* (1990), an eight-part history of post-1945 Japan, she spent months ploughing through libraries, helped by local researchers, with a dogged thoroughness that surprised the Japanese.

She researched the innovative and original documentary series *Pandora's Box* (1992) for Adam Curtis. Then came *People's Century* (1995-97), the 26-part Emmy award-winning series on which she was credited as the archive producer – marking a giant leap forward for the film research community as a whole. Other credits include *Days That Shook the World*, *Now the War Is Over*, *An Ocean Apart*, *40 Minutes*, *Timewatch* and *The Vera Lynn Story*.

Christine worked tirelessly to spread the word about the value of archive footage and its proper use, lecturing at seminars and conferences around the world, and was greatly admired by those with whom she worked. She gave generously of her time to voluntary work with organisations that promote this specialist area of work, including Focal International (the Federation of Commercial Audio/Visual Libraries). She served on its board for many years, and in 2006 received its Lifetime Achievement Award. She was also president of the International Association of Media Historians (1996-2004), and in 2009 was interviewed about her career for the British Entertainment History Project.

In 1972 she married Graham Whittaker, a cameraman whom she met when working on the BBC series of helicopter travelogues *Bird's Eye View* (1969-71). She is survived by him, by their children, Georgina and Jack, and by two grandchildren.



Christine Whittaker –

from *24 Hours*, *World at War* and Scharnhorst's 'Channel Dash' to exclusive Astor family home movies... via firemen guarding the nitrate film

As a rare insight into the wonderfully diverse career Christine Whittaker carved out for herself in the world of archive – and beyond – we re-visit an interview she gave to the British Entertainment History Project eight years ago in Puglia, Italy. Her 'inquisitors' were **Sue Malden** and **Jerry Kuehl**, the cameraman was **Graham Whittaker** and the lengthy transcription (which AZ is spreading over two editions) is courtesy of **Sandra D. Ward**.



Christine began by re-capping how her life in archive began:

"Around 1966, I joined the BBC quite by chance because I did languages at University and I wanted to be an interpreter. I couldn't get a job, no-one did straight out of university. So I did a bilingual secretarial course for six months and then it was a toss-up between the BBC and the Foreign Office and my shorthand and typing weren't good enough for the Foreign Office, so I went to the BBC to work in Bush House, which was World Service etc. and amongst other programmes, I worked on programmes to French Canada. So, I used my French a bit. I had a brilliant time at Bush House. It was the most interesting place that you could imagine in those days. After a year I moved to television as a trainee PA, which was all very exciting.

I started off on *24 Hours* which was great fun. I met all sorts of interesting people, obviously a different programme every night. My guests that I had to meet at reception in Lime Grove included Charles Aznavour

– very thrilling – Richard Burton. The culture was very different during those days because the hospitality cabinet used to come out at about seven o'clock. I remember one time, during the seaman's strike, unfortunately the seamen went into the hospitality room before the programme went out! It wasn't a very good interview but anyway, we had a lot of fun!. After about six months I moved on to a department called "General Features"...

I went to work eventually with Eddy Mertzov, who, you know, was a really distinguished documentary maker. I worked for him as a PA for about a year then I was very lucky and I became a researcher. And I worked on a series called *Birds Eye View* with him which was a wonderful series, all shot from a helicopter.

SUE MALDEN: What did the research work entail?

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: In *Birds Eye View* it was ideas, it was locations. I was lucky enough to work with John Betjeman, suggesting poems that he might include which was quite funny because, you know, obviously my

choice was a little banal compared to his knowledge but I had a terrific time and went all over the place on *Birds Eye View*. It took about three years to make and we worked with some very interesting people.

I worked on various things with Eddy and eventually, in the early '70s we started to work on history programmes. I think at that time it was obviously known that Thames Television was making *World at War* and we knew it was going to be a fantastic series... I am not a historian, as I said, I was a linguist, but I was working on these history programmes, finding people. I worked on the Scharnhorst one. At that time I was finding people, going to see people, in Germany and in Britain, finding participants and I also started to do the film research and I remember my first visit to the Imperial War Museum and being absolutely fascinated by this film that was running... I hadn't a clue how to load a machine. I

It was my first sight of a Steenbeck and I was taught by the people at the War Museum and elsewhere, how to load the film – 35mm 'sep mag' – onto the Steinbeck and I was absolutely fascinated by the material.

There was not really the role of a film researcher, so I took the film research as seriously as I took the people. It wasn't a minor thing for me to go and find film. I was looking for exciting material all the time. I absolutely loved it. I was fascinated by it and I was also lucky enough to go to Germany to look at the Bundesarchiv.

I don't know if you know the story of the Scharnhorst? It was called "*The Life and Death of the Scharnhorst*". And one of the things that happened was... I can't even remember the year but the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau did a dash down the Channel to escape from Brest, I think it was. They dashed down the English Channel and they managed to escape and so the 'Channel Dash' of the Scharnhorst was one of the big things to look for and I remember being in the Bundesarchiv in Berlin and I the guy that was helping me, advising me and getting the film out said, "I think we have got the rushes here".

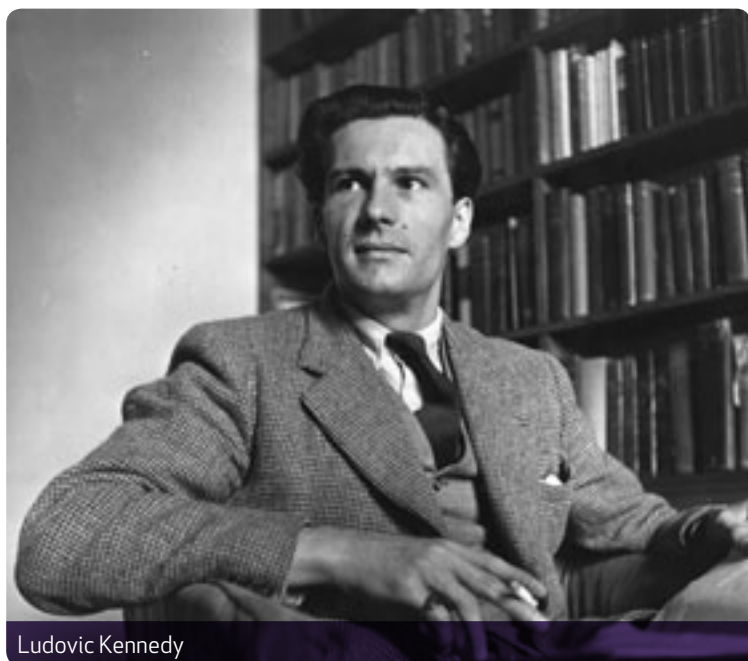
He had actually found the rushes of the German coverage of the Channel Dash. Well, if that had happened now, obviously you would order the whole thing, but because I was so scared of spending the BBC's money, I selected sections. Because, of course, in those days, everything was on film and you had to order dupe negs and prints and it was all pretty expensive stuff. So you papered up the film as you went. You know, you put a bit of paper at the shot at the beginning and a bit of paper at the end or a piece of string. I think it was a piece of thread, it was, in Germany. So you definitely have to choose your sections. You had to have initiative. You couldn't just order VHS's because there weren't VHS's of anything...



Christine with Kate Adie

You did the detective work and you were relying very much on the help and skill of the librarians that you were with and you would have a very good relationship. You know, and you'd be talking to them about the material. It wasn't catalogued at all, the German material. Not then. I mean. There were a few files but nothing was shot listed. So, you know, you might find something that said, you know, Scharnhorst or whatever, but there was no shot list as such. And the same, actually, in the Imperial War Museum. You just went through files.

People had done film research before because, of course, there had been *The Great War* series and they travelled all over the place looking at material. So, it was just that, there wasn't a job as a film researcher as we know it now. I mean, it was researcher. So, the researcher did the film and the people. And, the kind of working out the technology of the film and how things were shot listed or if they were shot listed. Well, this didn't apply at all. And, of course, as we know now, shot lists list kind of what you see on the screen and the kind of shots and who's in the picture. There was nothing like that at all so you had



Ludovic Kennedy

to actually get to recognise, you know, who Goering is or Durnst and I just did.

What was actually very interesting, when we were doing the filming for the Scharnhorst programme, Ludovic Kennedy was the presenter and interviewer and when we were doing the filming in Hamburg, one of the people we filmed was the Captain of the Scharnhorst. And Ludovic Kennedy's father was killed, on a ship called the Ramillies, which was one of the first ships to go down in the Second World War. And it was sunk by the Scharnhorst. And I met Karl Doentiz, who was Captain of the ship, the Scharnhorst, who was a wonderful man, highly respected, really came and apologised to Ludo.

It was so moving and Ludo did not blame him obviously at all. It was a very interesting programme to work on. And that was the first of several programmes I made and worked on with Eddy Mertzov about the Second World War. So, I suppose I became a bit of a kind of an obsessive. I mean, I am an obsessive person and you have to be obsessive to be a successful film researcher or any researcher because, I would never settle for "No". I would always be looking, looking, looking for the better material. But as I say, it was a bit daunting to know that you were responsible for the money. So, if it was on film – which it always was –

the material would go to the labs and you would have to pay per foot.

Christine also had to learn about rights and the differing attitudes of licence managers in different archives. In particular, she ran across a real 'stickler' at the National Film Archives in London called Dawley Minnick...

She'd been there a long time. And, I think that she was Hungarian or Austrian. I can't remember where she was from originally, but she was very terrifying when you first met her. And she was very, very stern and I remember being terrified because she said to me, "Single perf or double perf for your film?" I said "Sorry?" – I should have said that most of the film that I was looking at was 35mm. We were working on 16mm so you had to get 16mm reduction negs and prints made. Well, I didn't know if I wanted single perf or double perf or whatever. So, it was terrifying. But actually, she was a very kind woman and she was terrified of lots of people and she was disliked by lots of people but actually she was a very gentle, nice woman really with this manner which put people off. She was very kind and interested in talking to me about my family and so on.

JERRY KUEHL: She wouldn't accept an indemnity. That was the problem.

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: No, she wouldn't. She was absolutely strict about rights and also she wouldn't, at the BFI, The National Film Archive, they were very



Karl Doentiz

ullstein bild Dtl / Contributor / Getty

strict about donors' rights. If a donor had given the film, the donor would have the right to say, yes, we were allowed this to be duped or not and obviously, not all donors had said anything. So, if there was nothing in writing, she wouldn't allow you to have the film. So, all the rights issues have always been there and, you know, been difficult. And it was very difficult to understand that at the beginning actually, for me. It still is in a way but particularly the BFI's. They were very, very strict about it.

SUE MALDEN: So, presumably when a donor donated stuff they didn't automatically give the rights to use.

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: No, because it was meant to preserve and to look after the film and also, that was the aim originally, to preserve, and still is in a way. So, you weren't automatically given the right to use the material. So it is a bit of a dilemma.

SUE MALDEN: Was it difficult to trace donors?

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: Yes, a lot of them were dead!

After the birth of two children in the 1970s, Christine left the BBC and became a freelance with jobs at London Weekend Television and then back at the BBC.

What happened was that I was asked back for various programmes because, you know, most of my contacts were in the BBC. One of the things that I worked on was a programme about Lady Astor, Nancy Astor, she wasn't actually the first female British MP but she was always named as the first. Absolutely fascinating story...

Married to Lord Astor. She was an American woman and they lived at Cliveden. And I had this wonderful find because I put an advert in the Daily Telegraph. Had anyone ever done any filming at Cliveden? Did anyone have any general home movies or whatever? Anyway, I got a call from a guy who said that he had been the electrician at Cliveden and when the items went up for sale he bid for a camera and he got some rolls of film. Because they had a little camera and they had a screening room. And when we looked at these films they were all the Astor home movies going back to the 1920s!

All people like MacMillan at Cliveden... the children, I mean, David Astor who became the editor of the Observer; Bill Astor whom there was a bit of a scandal about at Cliveden. I think Jake Astor. Anyway, they were all there as children. And Lady Astor there with all these people... important people like George Bernard Shaw. There was even film of Kennedy's sister and Kennedy visiting. So, it was absolutely extraordinary. So, we had David Astor, I think it was, around to look at the films, which of course he had not seen since they were children. It was a fantastic find which really helped the programme as you can imagine.

Unfortunately, what happened then was that it was given to the BFI and no-one saw it for about another 30 years. No-one was allowed to see it because the BFI sort of said, "Oh no, no, no!" You know, it was not catalogued, it was... anyway, I think it is released now. But it was colour footage, you know, it was extraordinary footage. So, that was one of the best finds ever, I think. And that was just by luck because I had put this advert in the paper.

SUE MALDEN: And presumably anybody wanting to look at them or find out what was in it would have to come to you?

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: Well yes. I mean we had the Astor family looking at it to tell us who people were but I mean some of them, obviously, George Bernard Shaw was someone we recognised and so was Harold MacMillan visiting Cliveden. And also, as far as I remember, there was film of, what was the name of the



Steve Bergson, Christine and Jerry Kuehl

German Ambassador just before the War? The German Ambassador to London? Yes you would know.

JERRY KUEHL: Ribbentrop

One of the series Christine made with Peter Pagnamenta at BBC was All our Working Lives

All Our Working Lives was the first programme I worked on where we actually transferred the material onto one inch tape. Before, everything had been done onto film as I said. This was on to one inch tape which was a new format that had really just started. So we used to borrow the films and get the films to Lime Grove and we used to copy the films, you know from a telecine machine. A lot of the films were on nitrate and there was just one machine in the BBC that was allowed to run nitrate...

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: Most 35 mm was on nitrate stock, which is really inflammable material, which still, if it is kept well, looks brilliant but it can blow up, it can self-combust. So we had to have a fireman sitting with us at TK2 all the time we were running it and I used to run up and down stairs. You were only allowed to bring six cans of nitrate down from the vault at a time and the fireman would sit beside you as you were transferring this material onto tape. And, of course, we didn't choose bits, we copied the whole reel... And it was very carefully kept in this one vault at the top of Lime Grove and you had the fireman with you. However, what was very odd was that it used to just get sent back by taxi to wherever we had picked it up. So it went through London in a normal car. It doesn't any more of course, but... so that was it.

Christine's career took her, literally, worldwide. This included Japan, where the BBC paid for her to have language lessons:

I worked on an amazing programme, again with Peter Pagnamenta, called *Nippon* which was the history of post-war Japan and then I had the amazing experience of going to Japan and doing research in Japan which was extraordinary. I actually tried to learn Japanese. The BBC paid for me for two weeks to learn Japanese, but unfortunately, when in Japan, you know, they have three alphabets in Japan and when you are at university in Japan, you are still learning the alphabet! So there was no way

that I could learn to read the cards in Japanese in two weeks. But anyway, it was good fun. So I spent quite a lot of time in Japan. I had various trips to Japan looking. We had an office in NHK and I can remember the first day I arrived because the rest of the team were there. I arrived and I had got there by the subway, the underground station to Shinjuku, which was near where our office was and I walked out of the station... There are no street names in Japan at all. Of course, I couldn't read where I was. I've got no sense of direction. Unless there was a sign of a Kentucky Fried Chicken or something I recognised, there was no way that I would find my way to the office. I went to Japan three times for a month each time.



Christine with Roy Harrison

After working on a series called Out of the Dolls House, which was about the history of women and work, Christine worked on a series called An Ocean Apart – about the relationship between Britain and America – and she had her first experience of transatlantic archives

It was an amazing experience to have and which of course, I kept on doing more in my career. And I worked with a researcher. Somebody suggested David Thaxton in Washington as a colleague and he didn't do the research without me. A lot of the material obviously was in the National Archives and it was extraordinary experience.

SUE MALDEN: Did he work in the National Archive?

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: No, he was a freelance researcher. He worked at the American Film Institute. He had also worked at West Point and taught film there actually. So that was when I got to know the American Archives. That was really when I started travelling. I was so lucky. I mean I've been all over the world really. So I did that. I used to go to America, a lot, to Washington and to New York.

SUE MALDEN: So did you use the Library of Congress as well?

CHRISTINE WHITTAKER: I did but the Library of Congress was of course, mostly for early film and feature films. I did use both but most of the material that I was

talking about for the post-war period was in the National Archives. And, of course, that's when I got to know about public domain material because, as you know, there is no such thing as public domain material in this country, at least in Britain. A lot of people think there is. There is not. It is not official. It is only America that has this law that material shot for and by the Government, is counted as in the public domain. It's just the same way as written archives are. So, I suppose it is a Hollywood thing really. You know, that the film industry has played a part in them taking film more seriously.

... I made a lot of trips to America. I went to New York a lot as well and went to the Sherman Grinberg Library who have the Pathé and Paramount material and to CBS and NBC etc. etc. So, it was all terrific.

If you would like to hear Christine being interviewed for the History Project, please use the following link:

<https://historyproject.org.uk/content/0592>

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HOW TO VERIFY
AN ORPHAN
WORK



UK's self-generating showbiz archive – celebrating 30 years and looking to the future



It seems inevitable that, upon reaching a certain age, we begin to look back over our lives and those of our forebears. Today, modern technology tools, such as mobile phones, emails and Facebook, are quickly replacing our personal diaries, written letters and paper records. Suddenly we realise that so much could be lost and forgotten unless we act now to preserve our memories and our experiences. One particular group of people realised this fact some time ago and has been collecting their industry's oral history for posterity.

For 30 years now, the members of the British Entertainment History Project have been quietly and painstakingly recording interviews with working men and women from the UK film, television, radio and theatre industries to ensure that their lives and experiences are preserved for future generations. The interviews tell us about the challenges they had to overcome, the skills they employed, the enduring human relationships they forged as Britain developed into one of the world's major centres of the entertainment industries.

The Project began in 1987 when a small group of workers in the British film and television industry in London, under the guidance of producer/director, Roy Fowler, set about collecting and archiving the oral testimonies of their co-workers. They called themselves the ACTT (Association of Cinema and Television Technicians) History Project. Fearing that the story of early British filmmaking would disappear forever with the passing of the industry's pioneers, the volunteers set about the task with urgency before they lost the chance to speak with an ageing generation who still had memories of the early 20th century. Over the years, it has grown into an archive of international importance which is now proudly celebrating its 30th anniversary.

The first History Project interview took place on the 6th March 1987 with cameraman Eric Cross who was born in 1902. His working life started during the silent era in the 1920 at Twickenham Studios, and by the 1930s he was making a name for himself as a Director of Photography. Over the next three decades he was cameraman on many movies including *The Kidnappers* (1953), *Private's Progress* (1956) and *Tiger Bay* (1959). The interview with Eric gives a valuable insight into the key formative period in the British film industry.

Audio was the chosen medium for being unobtrusive, inexpensive, and portable. The value of this new oral history initiative was quickly recognized by the British Film Institute which undertook to act as its repository. Original recordings go to the BFI's National Film & Television Archive for permanent preservation in controlled conditions. In the last 15 years or so, with the advent of lightweight digital video cameras the History Project volunteers now have the opportunity to collect rich, well-documented in-vision histories and narratives for far less expense than in previous decades.

Famous voices

The Project has now grown into a unique collection of more than 700 interviews. Among the famous voices in the collection are film directors Lindsay Anderson, Richard Attenborough and Karel Reisz, producer Lord David Puttnam, Sir David Attenborough and actress. Sheila Hancock.

In addition, there are also interviews with hundreds of other men and women from all walks of life who have worked in our industry over the last 100 years, film editors, hair and make-up artists, actors, projectionists, archivists, writers, electricians, Directors of Photography, dubbing mixers, costume designers – every craft is represented; It is a vast audiovisual archive of knowledge and experience.

The archive's earliest memory features an interview with Adolph Simon born in 1895, an early newsreel cameraman, who recalled filming in 1914 for Pathe News. The archive of recordings is particularly rich from the 1930s and '40s – before the days of television. Recently digitised interviews include 90-year-old radio and television DJ, actor and presenter Pete Murray; TV director Michael Darlowe, film editor Anne V. Coates, former BBC Head of Comedy Jimmy Gilbert, film historian Kevin Brownlow, archivist David Francis OBE and Christine Whittaker – the “doyenne” of British film researchers (whose recent death is featured in this edition of *Archive Zones*). Their interviews and many more beside can be viewed on our website at www.historyproject.co.uk.

The Project is organised and operated by volunteers who select interviewees and undertake the interviews, and provide the camera equipment for recording the interviews. Each interview is uploaded to the Project's new website for use by students, researchers and anyone who wishes to know more about those who have worked in front of, or behind the camera.

The History Project, through these rare interviews, has tapped into a rich vein of anecdotal and historical evidence of working practices and experiences that could otherwise be lost over time. The Project encourages suggestions for interviewees who have a story to tell and from individuals interested in assisting the Project to continue this fascinating work.

Non-profit company

Formerly known as the BECTU History Project, we are now in the process of changing the way we work. Until now the History Project has had no separate legal status, but has simply operated as an informal voluntary initiative. Now we are establishing ourselves as an independent non-profit company – The British Entertainment History Project. This will enable us to pursue our own fund-raising in ways which were not previously open to us.

Over the last few months Project members Alison Bancroft and Ian Noah have put an enormous amount of work into creating a new website to act as an access-point for the interview collection. Under the guidance of Project Chair Mike Dick, members have begun retrieving the audio and videotapes from the archive where they have remained relatively untouched for the last 30 years. They have started the huge task of transferring, digitising and uploading the 700 + existing interviews to the website (with many more interviews waiting to be recorded). Now the current generation of volunteers can really begin to fulfil the vision of the original History Project pioneers – to make these valuable recordings accessible to future generations.

Mike Dick
BEHP Chair

Anyone who would like to help ensure the continued success of the History Project and get involved should email our **Project Secretary Sue Malden** at sue.malden@btinternet.com

Find out more about the British Entertainment History Project and how you can support our work, log on to our website at <http://historyproject.org.uk/>



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THE JANE MERCER MEMORIAL LECTURE 2017 this year marked UNESCO World Audio-visual Archive day

Professor Vanessa's Performing Wonders of Entertainment and Film 1895-1920

FOCAL members who couldn't attend this year's Jane Mercer Memorial Lecture at the Cinema Museum in Lambeth missed a multi-layered treat. First there was the location itself. Stepping over its threshold is an invitation into cinema-going's past; not only of the equipment that was used to project the films, but of everything else that went to make up the experience – programmes, stills, uniforms, architecture and furniture. The Museum currently faces a battle for survival as the building that houses its collections is threatened with being put up for sale on the open market making it unaffordable to the Museum. Those wishing to help prevent this can sign a petition at <http://www.cinemamuseum.org.uk/2017/petition-to-save-the-cinema-museum/>

It's a place very much worth a visit in its own right and it provided a particularly appropriate home for the stimulating and entertaining lecture given by Professor Vanessa Toulmin.

Professor Vanessa Toulmin is both Chair in Early Film and Popular Entertainment at the University of Sheffield, and Founder and Research Professor at the National Fairground and Circus Archive. This made her the ideal guide around the world of 'illegitimate entertainment' captured in the early films she presented. It was a period when films were as likely to be shown in fairgrounds and Music Hall variety show venues as in purpose-built cinemas, and Vanessa explained how the wide range of speciality acts found in such places, not only made it onto the record through film but also made the journey from the fairground, burlesque, and the agricultural show, to Cine-variety and from there to being accepted as recognised forms of popular entertainment.

Cine-variety captured a wide range of these speciality acts and Professor Vanessa, ably assisted by the wonderful Stephen Horne, providing a superbly appropriate musical accompaniment on the piano, introduced us to a wide range of them. Film extracts were, of course, all shown with the permission of the Film Archives supplying them.

First came the dance acts. This sounds straightforward, but the films themselves gave this assumption the lie. Some were provocative hoochie-coochie acts like those performed by Eugenie, but others proved more unexpected, like that of Princess Rajah in 1904, who certainly shimmied enticingly, but then proceeded to pick up a chair in her teeth, swing it around her head and hold it there while she continued her dance routine! This was topped only by the Dancing Pig, where a man dressed in a grotesque pig costume dances with a seductive woman in a parody of the whole convention, ending with close-ups of more than slightly salacious satisfied expressions on the Pig's face!

An exploration of some of the Solo Acts followed; the extraordinary Little Titch and his clever and highly skilled comic Boot Dance, alongside another famous British performer – Will Evans, Stage Musician and Tumbler. These two provided an entrée for a host of group acts featuring troupes of acrobats and tumblers performing complex and complicated routines indescribable in mere words. Perhaps sufficient to say that



Professor Vanessa Toulmin

among the many skilled troupes was one group one of whose members irresistibly reminded Vanessa (and the audience) of John Cleese and the Ministry of Funny Walks.

Difficult to watch!

Contortionists also figured among the Speciality Acts shown. This was a talent where women as well as men excelled. Indeed, Vanessa pointed out that women acrobats and contortionists in the early 1900s found a safe area in the Fairgrounds and Cine-variety shows where their athleticism and acrobatic skills could be demonstrated without fear of prosecution, women being barred from participation in normal athletic competition or sport at the time. Among the most impressive of the women contortionists was Latina, whose prowess amounted to a demonstration of dislocation rather than mere suppleness!



© Prof. Vanessa Toulmin Family Archive.



© National Fairground and Circus Archive/University of Sheffield.



Martin Humphries, Professor Vanessa Toulmin and Ronald Grant

© Amanda Dantas



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Latina faces the camera and interlaces her fingers with her arms held out in front of her, palms towards the camera and elbows pointed out. In that position, she raises her arms over and behind her head and then down her back, dislocating her shoulders in order to achieve that motion. She then turns her back to the camera, with her hands still locked behind her, and slowly brings her locked arms up and over her head; one can clearly see her shoulder joints dislocate in the process. Extraordinary and quite difficult to look at.

Animal acts also flourished in the Fairgrounds and Vanessa showed a number of these, from dogs performing tricks to Boxing Kangaroos and Dancing Monkeys, but perhaps strangest of all was the only Mitchell and Kenyon item shown which featured the little-known art of barrel jumping at the Leeds Athletic and Cycling Club Carnival at Headingley in 1902. Those wishing that particular mystery solved will have to see the film another time!

Professor Vanessa ended the evening with a grand finale, which stepped outside the period of the lecture to demonstrate the survival of the speciality act well into the middle of the 20th century and beyond. This was an amazing film clip from the feature film *BROADWAY RHYTHM* (1944), featuring the extraordinary multi-talented Ross Sisters singing, dancing, and performing a controlled and skilled gymnastic routine completely seamlessly. The Speciality Act had made it to Hollywood.

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Lessons to be learned from one of the greatest eye-witness and archive-based documentaries

True South – Henry Hampton and *Eyes on the Prize*, the Landmark Television Series That Reframed the Civil Rights Movement

John Else

Viking. Hardcover

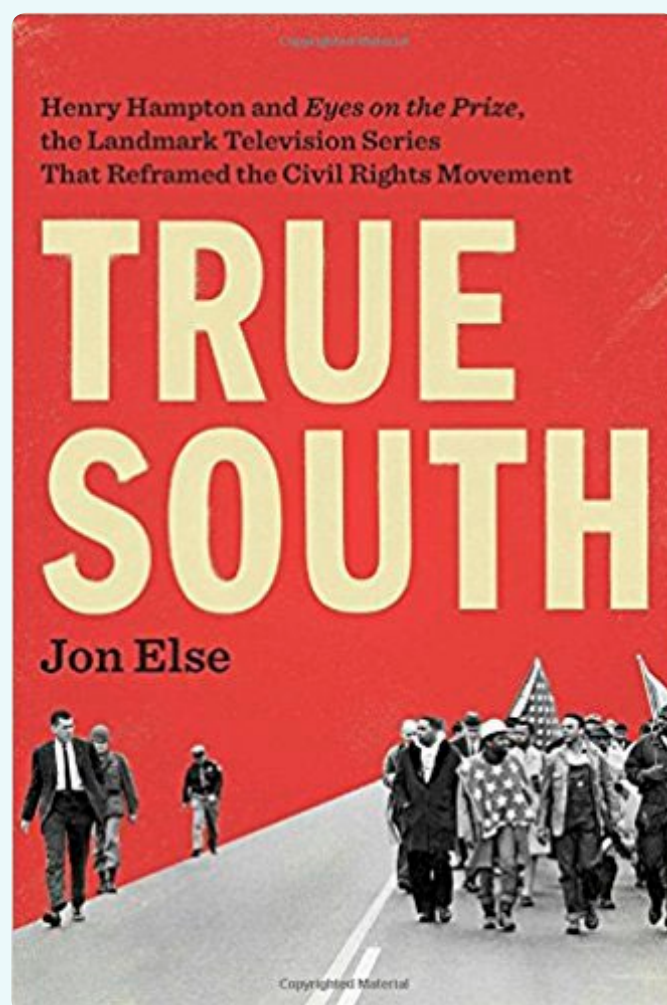
\$18.58

A 400-page hardback on a 30-year-old television series, even one that really does deserve to be called Landmark, isn't an enticing prospect. Good reading for PhD students and industry professionals with some rare time on their hands, maybe. But to my mind this one is different, more readable but also more relevant than most of the television histories that line the shelves of the BFI and countless university libraries. Crucially, the story's told by a fellow who not only took part in the civil rights movement, but also was series producer and cinematographer on the first six *Eyes* episodes and consultant on the subsequent eight.

Towards the end of 1963 Jon Else, along with later political notables, including John Kerry, Barney Frank and Joe Lieberman, was among a group of students from the elite Yale University who were enlisted by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to go to Mississippi and draw fire and publicity to the fight for African Americans' right to vote. He was there, in Mississippi and Alabama, in the thick of the civil rights struggle that is the subject of the first series, and subsequently a key player in the production team at Blackside Productions in Boston, led by Henry Hampton.

Else tells us enough about his own role in the dramas to verify his credentials as a reliable witness, but the autobiographical stuff is kept well in the background. I was especially amused by his telling accounts of skedaddling back to his home in California to film big-budget adverts for Cheerios breakfast cereal (247) and Chlorox washing powder (265), when his patience with editorial shenanigans and unpaid wages at Blackside was wearing thin.

The star of the show is, of course, Henry Hampton, the charismatic, visionary, enigmatic, disorganised chancer, who created Blackside Productions Inc and the landmark-of-all Landmark series *Eyes of the Prize*. Son of an African-American doctor in segregated St. Louis, Missouri, a



survivor of polio, from which he suffered lifelong disability, Henry Hampton Jr dropped out of medical school and blagged his way into working, at the age of 24, as director of information at the Unitarian Church in Boston. Wearing that professional hat he marched with Martin Luther King at Selma, Alabama in 1965.

After a brief stint at the estimable public television station WGBH, Hampton set up Blackside in 1968, in a ramshackle building in a rough part of town, and built up an impressive portfolio of corporate and government films, but with his sights set on making definitive films on recent African American history for a substantial television audience. *Eyes on the Prize* was finally shown in 1986, to massive acclaim.

The Blackside method

Hampton is the dominant character in this story of how the series was made and what made it special, but due prominence is given to other players in the multi-racial creative and production team. Else's account of the Blackside Method is detailed and generally not too self-indulgent. He describes it as "the most excruciatingly well-prepared television I've ever worked on", and the rules were very exacting. Two producer-directors, one black and one not, on each episode; interviews only with people who were really there at the key events; rigorous fact-checking of narration; music from the period; and, here's the rub, a stipulation that "every film archive image and sound would be what it purported to be, certified genuine, with all sources meticulously recorded".

It's a deeply admirable aspiration, but it does make one shudder a little bit to think of the hours and the effort involved. Especially considering that Kenn Rabin and the archive research team were pioneers, patiently digging deep down into film archives where their predecessors had only scratched the surface, or never touched at all.

Acquiring archive footage

Henry Hampton must have been one hell of a persuasive executive producer to raise funds, from WGBH and myriad foundations and funders, to finance such high quality research – though you do also get hints that Blackside was a bit tardy in paying bills and salaries. I shuddered a lot to read Kenn Rabin's 1985 memo about acquiring archive footage on film, laying out the workflow as follows:

"Each archive clip has 16mm full coat, A-Wind optical liquid gate low contrast fine grain positive master, B-Wind slop picture, all edge coded together... fine grain 'in's' printed onto new color internegative stock..."

Next time you feel defeated by all that guff about HD file formats, remember what those guys had to go through! Downright heroic. The above is a quote from a chapter called "Hunter Gatherers", which is a truly superb account of the process of making great eye-witness and archive-based historical documentaries.

The book by that stage has slipped into the form of alternate chapters describing events in the civil rights struggle in the '50s and '60s, and description of the challenge of reframing those events for *Eyes on the Prize I* in the '80s. It works well, but at a certain stage I felt the need to do as Else advised in the introduction and watch some of the series, which is available at some cost from PBS Distribution.

Compared to present-day history docs, it's spartan, rather slow in places, of course, but exact and authoritative, and profoundly moving – helped to a large extent by the inclusion of protest songs from the period. The last episode of the first six, entitled *Bridge to Freedom* and telling the story of Selma, is as good as it gets in historical documentaries, with exceptionally powerful use of archive footage. The corresponding chapters in Else's book are equally central to the story he tells.

But just in case you think it's all too celebratory, there are good sections on the way in which this landmark dropped out of sight after the initial ten-year archive licenses expired – temporarily, thank Heaven – and an intriguing tale of the restrictions placed by the King Estate on quotations from his iconic speeches.

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A 'bumpy ride' through the Camp liberation stories, littered with factual errors

Filming the End of the Holocaust – Allied Documentaries. Nuremberg and the Liberation of the Concentration Camps

John J. Michalczyk

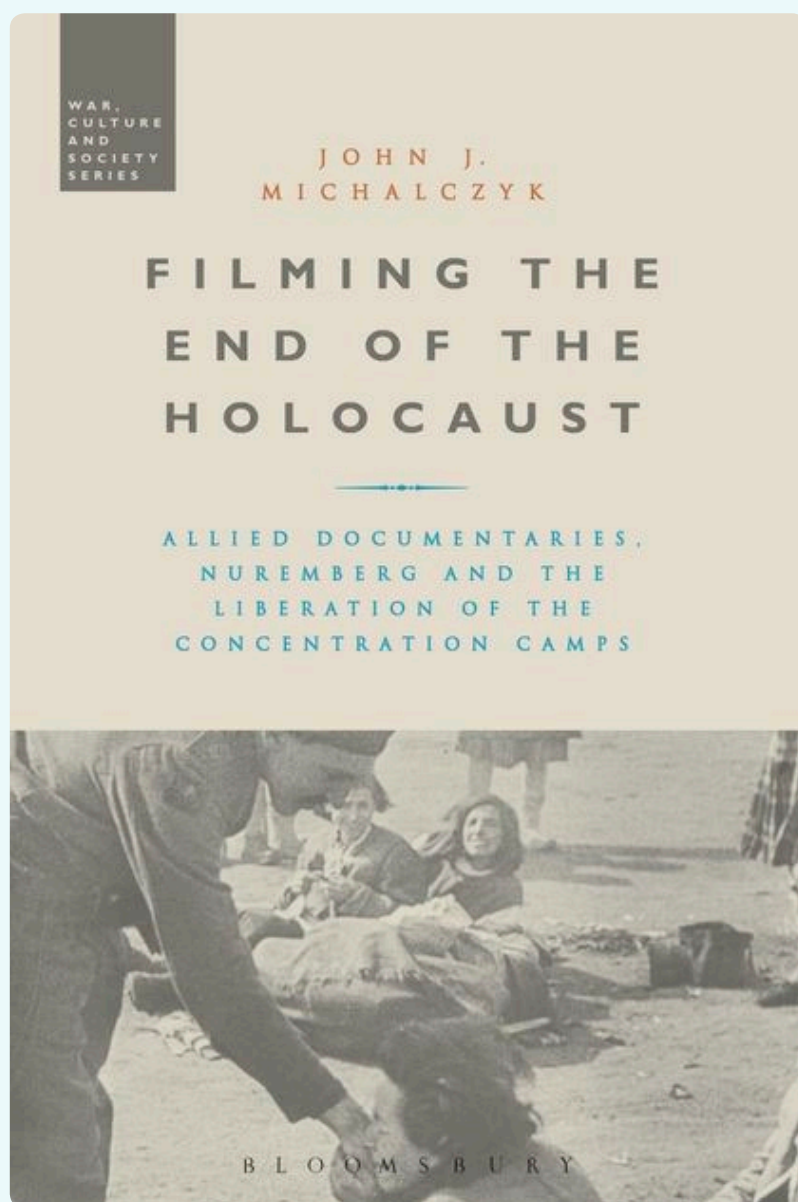
Bloomsbury Academic, 2014 and 2016

ISBN978-1-4725-1428-9

Price varies from £27.90 (Addall) to £303.49 (Amazon)

Professor John J. Michalczyk is Assistant Chairperson for Film Studies, or perhaps Chair of the Fine Arts Department at Boston College, a Jesuit institution in the United States, who has written extensively about the Nazi period. He gets off to rather a bumpy start when he proves unable to distinguish between a Concentration Camp and a Death Camp, in the book's very own title. The point of Concentration Camps was to imprison Homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Socialists, Communists, Musicians, and others whose enthusiasm for the Third Reich was defective, while the sole purpose of Death, or Extermination, Camps was to kill people. Since Auschwitz-Birkenau was a Death Camp, and figures in Professor Michalczyk's book, the rest of what he says does not inspire much confidence. This applies as well to Majdanek, which he incorrectly describes in his index as an Extermination Camp. It was both a Death Camp and a Concentration Camp. He points this out (page 55) where he says of Aleksander Ford's Majdanek: Cemetery of Europe 'the documentary offers the first visual account of life in a concentration camp...'

His account becomes bumpier still when he calmly announces on page one of his introduction that the book isn't at all about 'Filming the End of the Holocaust', rather 'this text primarily focuses on the use of film as visual testimony at the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg. In other words, the experiences of the allied cameramen – 8 Soviet, 7 British, and 28 American – who filmed the actual arrival of troops which freed the prisoners – is neglected to make room for lengthy accounts of the origins of the IMT; an account of Raphael Lemkin, who first coined the term 'Genocide'; Robert Jackson, Chief American prosecutor at the IMT, and verbal descriptions of some films introduced as evidence in the Tribunal itself.



Some of these films, including those never intended to be shown as evidence are in fact available for viewing on YouTube, Vimeo and The Internet Archive. So perhaps those interested can check for themselves how his descriptions match what they can see. He also mis-describes the British Army Film and Photographic Unit, (page 36), as the British Army Film Unit. I hope the still photographer – or his estate who provided the photograph of Lt. Martyn Wilson whose hand is kissed by a freed inmate of Bergen-Belsen – which is on the front cover of both editions of Professor Michalczyk's book (where the Army Film and Photographic Unit is correctly described) – is in a forgiving mood.

I hope historians of the United States Air Force will forgive him too, since he mis-describes its origins as well. Speaking of Henri Cartier-Bresson's *Le Retour*, a 1945 documentary, he speaks of the United States Air Force. The United States Air Force only came into being in 1947. In 1945 that branch of the armed forces was the United States Army Air Force.

For someone who has written so extensively (at least five books) about the Nazi period, Professor Michalczyk seems to have a shaky grasp of some key events in the fall of the Third Reich. Early on (page 14) he suggests 'in late 1942 and early 1943, there may have been only a minimum of public interest in the midst of a war with no apparent end in sight'. This despite the fact that the Soviet offensive which destroyed the German armies at Stalingrad, and came to an end only with the fall of Berlin, had been remorselessly under way since November 19, 1942.

Those with eyes to see and ears to hear were perfectly aware that an ultimate allied victory was in sight. He tells us (page 68) 'In the first days of May, as the Soviets entered Berlin...' The Red Army had reached Berlin's Teltow Canal on April 24, 1945 and attacked the Reichstag, in the very centre of the city, on April 30. He announces (page 3) that Berlin in 1945 marked the 'final resting place of Fascism' Do the names of Viktor Orbán, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Beata Szydło or Donald Trump, mean anything?

He admires Budd Schulberg, who wrote the script for *Let Justice Be Done*, (commissioned by Robert Jackson and available on YouTube), an attempt to explain to American cinemagoers why the Nuremberg trials were necessary. This was the same Budd Schulberg who was a co-operative witness at hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee and who in 1954 wrote the script for *On the Waterfront*, a paean of praise to the strike breakers of New York's docks.

The most serious caveat is this: An edition of the work was published in 2014, and this is the 2016 version. I do not know when it went to press, but in the meantime

Toby Haggith and his team at the Imperial War Museum, restored and reconstructed a 75 minute documentary, *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*, from what Professor Michalczyk calls in his index 'F3080'. This film was never intended to be shown as part of the prosecution's case at Nuremberg but was intended to educate German, American, and other audiences. Toby Haggith wrote in detail about the *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* in the 2015 Autumn and Winter editions of *Archive Zones*, the house journal of FOCAL, the Federation of Commercial Audiovisual Libraries. www.focalint.org

In the articles he points out the title *Memory of the Camps* was given to the work by Kay Gladstone of the IWM and this was the unrestored version, shown at the Berlin Film festival in 1984, and by the American PBS network in 1985. Kay Gladstone has also written a comprehensive account of these events in *Holocaust and the Moving Image: Representations in Film and Television since 1933* edited by Toby Haggith and Joanna Newman, published in 2005. This is cited in Professor Michalczyk's bibliography, though Joanna Newman's name is not mentioned. Was Professor Michalczyk aware of these developments? If so, why were they not mentioned? If he was unaware, his efforts have been seriously overtaken by events, since his account has been superseded by people who actually did the restoration of the *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*.

It is not the job of any reviewer to write the book which ought to have been written about this tangled web of bureaucratic intrigue, muddle, and confusion, to which the American Office of War Information, the War Department, the State Department, and the British Ministry of Information, the Foreign Office and the Control Commission Germany (known to sceptics as 'Complete Chaos Guaranteed') all contributed. A serious work about the *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*, *Memory of the Camps*, André Singer's *Night Will Fall* (which included elements of the *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*), and even *Death Mills – Die Todesmühlen* and *KZ – Konzentrationslager* overseen by Billy Wilder and shown as newsreels to the German public in June 1945, is yet to be produced although Dr Haggith is working on just such an account.

What is obvious is that Professor Michalczyk has singularly failed to write a clear and comprehensive account of events surrounding the filming of – *The End of the Holocaust*.

Jerry Kuehl

In quest of the highly subjective 'Archive Effect' –

The Archive Effect: Found footage and the audiovisual experience of history.

Jamie Baron

Routledge

ISBN 978-0-415-60072-3

£27.99 (paperback)

£95.00 (hardback).

"Little to inform, educate or entertain here", says Jerry Kuehl

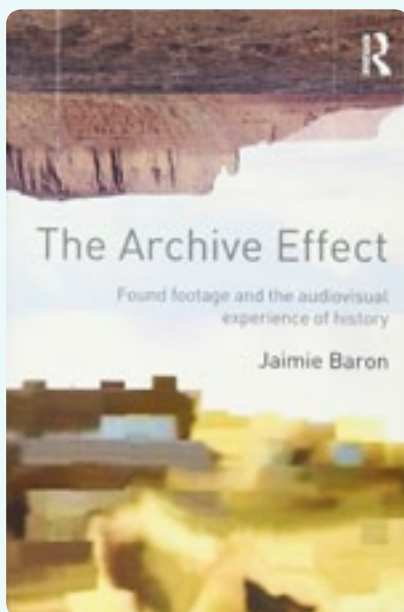
Jamie Baron, a Media Studies Professor at the University of Alberta, sets enormous store on what she calls 'the archive effect', yet cheerfully announces (p11) that it 'may occur for some viewers of a given text while other viewers watching the same text at the same time may not experience the archive effect at all – or experience it differently'.

And what is this 'archive effect'? Her account (p11) is disarmingly obvious – a sense that certain sounds and/or images within these films come from another time and served another function'. I hope that's perfectly clear and worth elucidating in 177 pages. A word of warning: Those unfamiliar with the notion of indexing and indexicals, are likely to find all this very heavy going. Jamie Baron has had an earlier go at describing 'the archive effect'. She explains the expression (p7) was coined by Roger Hallas in 2007 and that it means 'an experience of reception, rather than an indication of official sanction or storage location'.

Make of that what you will. There is more than a whiff of Alan Sokal's *Transgressing the Boundaries: Towards a Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity* about this introduction to Professor Baron's work. It's reinforced by her question (p18) 'when and where the line of significant difference between past and present may be drawn. At what point does the past become history?' She has already said 'The experience of the temporal disparity within a given film gives rise to the recognition of the archival document as such, or, in other words, to the archive effect.' One of the first films she discusses is Alain Resnais' *Nuit et Brouillard* (*Night and Fog*) Professor Baron makes a common mistake by referring to Auschwitz as a concentration camp (p17) 'filmed during and just after the Third Reich'. Auschwitz was a camp with multiple purposes, and one of these was as a Death Camp. Concentration camps existed to punish enemies of the state. The sole purpose of Death Camps was to kill people. Auschwitz-Birkenau was such a camp.

Misleading

There are no known films of Death Camps in operation, and it is, to say the least, misleading for Professor Baron to suggest that films taken by Red Army cameramen of prisoners freed in January 1945 were filmed 'during the Third Reich' – the implication being they were filmed by German cameramen. That is the obvious reading of



her remark (p18) 'The contrast between the "then" of the operational death camps and the "now" of Resnais' own footage of the empty camps produces the black-and-white images as archival documents.'

There are further indications that the spirit of Alan Sokal broods heavily over this work. Professor Baron has a habit of enclosing terms in inverted commas. For example P81 opens with the following: 'Despite a climate in which we know that the found document can be simulated, manipulated, and "misused"... viewers continue to seek "authenticity" through found documents, and one site regarded as particularly "authentic" is that of home movies. These seemingly "innocent" images often of family life, hold out the promise of an "uncorrupted" view of the past. Indeed home movies, home videos, and snapshots have generally been aligned with the "private" and the "found" rather than with the "public" and the "archived"'

It is not easy to see what, apart from the systematic deployment of Media Studies jargon, is accomplished by this tic.

Professor Baron returns to the notion of the 'archive effect' again when she says 'when we are told – directly or through implication – that certain documents were found or discovered rather than newly produced for an appropriation film, we may be tricked into experiencing the archive effect. Thus the sense of the found may be described as a "lure"'. She invokes the name of Jacques Lacan, a fashionable French psychoanalyst and psychotherapist (p49) 'Jacques Lacan uses the French word *leurre* to discuss the relationship between the desiring subject and the subject's desired object, a relationship constituted through the look and the seen image. He goes on to say 'from the outset we see in the dialectic of the eye and the gaze that there is no coincidence, but on the contrary a lure. The terms "lure" and "allure" connote both deception and desire, both appropriate to our specular relationship to the found document.'

Archive Zones is an online Journal intended for researchers, directors, producers, editors, distributors and others interested in using archive material to make films and television programmes which inform, educate and entertain. They will not, I fear, find much here.

Jerry Kuehl