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Public history and personal memories are debated on the streets of a newly independent Ukraine, Kiev, 1991.

# Master of Oral History and Historical Memory

New course at Monash University's School of Historical Studies from 2009

For further details about the Monash history graduate courses see website [www.arts.monash.edu.au/historical-studies/pgrad/coursework](http://www.arts.monash.edu.au/historical-studies/pgrad/coursework)

# Master of Oral History and Historical Memory

Oral history illuminates the lived experience of hidden histories and produces riveting historical documentary in books, radio and television, museum exhibitions and multi-media production. Historical memory is central to the contemporary cultural politics of witnessing, commemoration and reconciliation. This innovative course, taught by international leaders in the field, integrates the study of oral history and historical memory. Graduates will be fully prepared to undertake research degrees involving historical memory and may go on to work in the wide range of professions that make significant use of oral history and historical memory, including museums, television, radio and multi-media production, heritage and corporate history, community and family history.

This course is linked to three other innovative, applied Masters courses in: **Biography and Life Writing**, **Holocaust and Genocide Studies**, and **Public History**. Core units from each course are offered as electives on the other courses and thus facilitate interdisciplinary cross-fertilisation, for example between oral history and life writing, or oral history and public history. The linked courses offer students a wide range of choice and the opportunity to put together a program that meets their own interests. Joint research seminars introduce students to diverse and complementary research theory and method.

Most students will take 'placement' units with partner organisations that develop work experience in a range of applied history contexts, including museums, community history, heritage work, oral history, native title and the history media.

## Course structure

Students will complete a total of 72 points of study comprising 48 points at level 4 (two compulsory core units and two elective units), and 24 points at level 5 comprising either a major research project or a research project and Public History Placement (HYM5170). Taught units include:

- Recording oral history; theory and practice (HYM4660) – core unit
- History & memory: oral history, life stories & commemoration (HYM4200) – core unit
- Family history and genealogy (HYM4620/5620)
- Genocide and colonialism (HYM4470/5470)
- History, biography & autobiography (HYM4900/5900)
- History and heritage (HYM4095/5095)
- History and the museum (HYM4510)
- Holocaust memories (HYM4290/5290)
- Local & community history (HYM4820/5820)
- Public History Placement (HYM5170)
- Reading and writing Australian history (HYM4120/5120)
- Reading and writing biography and life stories (HYM4280/5820)
- Research methods in biography (HYM4270/5270)
- or another elective from the History graduate program.

Not all units are taught each year. The course duration is three semesters full-time. A fast-track option (in which a research project is completed over the summer period) reduces Master's study to one year full-time or two year part time. Student may enter mid-year.

Students can exit with a Graduate Certificate of Arts (with 24 points) or a Graduate Diploma in Oral History and Historical Memory (48 points).

## Further information

Course convener: Professor Alistair Thomson  
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## Teaching team

**Professor Alistair Thomson** (course convener) came to Monash in late 2007 from the University of Sussex where he established an international reputation for teaching and research in the fields of oral history and life history research, and was elected President of the International Oral History Association. Al's oral history books – *Anzac Memories* (Oxford University Press, 1994), *Ten Pound Poms* (Manchester University Press, 2005) and *The Oral History Reader* (Routledge, 1998 and 2006) have pioneered new approaches to memory and oral history.

**Professor Bain Attwood's** principal interests are Australian and New Zealand indigenous history, cross-cultural history, and history and memory. He is one of the leading scholars in the field of Australian Aboriginal history. Bain's publications about historical memory include *Telling Stories: Indigenous History and Memory in Australia and New Zealand*, (Allen & Unwin, 2001) and *Telling the Truth about Aboriginal History* (Allen & Unwin, 2005)

**Associate Professor Mark Baker** is the recently appointed Director of the Australian Centre for Jewish Civilisation. Mark is the author of the prize-winning book about Holocaust memory, *The Fiftieth Gate* (Harper Collins, 1995) and has taught widely in the area of genocide studies.

**Professor Barbara Caine** has published extensively in women's history, the history of feminism and biography including, most recently, *Bombay to Bloomsbury. A Biography of the Strachays* (Oxford University Press, 2005). She is writing a book on *History and Biography* for the Palgrave MacMillan series on History and Theory.

**Dr Seamus O'Hanlon** is an urban historian who has worked across several fields of public history. His publications include *Together Apart; boarding house, hostel and flat life in prewar Melbourne*, (ASP, 2002) and *Go!: Melbourne in the Sixties* (Circa, 2005).

## Entry requirements

The completion of a Bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline area (eg. History, Anthropology, Sociology, Social Psychology) with at least a 70% average in the final year, or a Bachelor's degree with demonstrable professional experience (three years in a relevant field or relevant publications), or with the permission of the course coordinator. Credit may be granted for prior learning. A limited number of Commonwealth Supported Places (HECs) are available for this course.

## Graduate culture in a new venue

From 2009 the four linked History graduate courses will be formally linked as part of a new History Graduate Course Centre at the Monash Caulfield campus. Graduate course staff and students will enjoy the social and intellectual experience of learning in a supportive and inter-disciplinary environment. History graduate course teaching will take place at Caulfield on Monday to Thursday late afternoon and evenings and students will be encouraged to study and socialise with students and staff from the different courses, and to develop a collective history graduate student identity.

History graduate courses recruit both full time and part time students, including many students who combine study with work and other commitments. For these students, the Caulfield campus, with its central position and excellent public transport links, is readily accessible, and advance timetabling within afternoon-evening teaching slots will help students to plan their study to fit in with busy lives.

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