All Ears: An Examination of the Documentality of Audiobooks, Podcasts, and Oral Histories with Extended Research into the London History Workshop Centre Oral History Collection in Collaboration with the Museum of London

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Abstract

Text-based documentation has long been considered the most viable way to transmit and receive information. The study of documentation, known as document theory, has undergone several changes that expanded the definition of what constitutes a document. The expansion broadened the definition of documents beyond the historical text-based forms. This dissertation examines the documentality of audiobooks, podcasts and oral histories in order to clearly define these as a separate type of document, the audio document.

Additionally, this dissertation was done in collaboration with the Museum of London (MOL) with the goal of initiating a risk assessment associated with the London History Workshop Centre (LHWC) oral history collection, held by the Museum. This dissertation aims to better understand the LHWC at both an organisational-level and in the case of the oral histories, an item-based level. By searching and analysing the bibliographic data contained in three subcollections, this dissertation initiates the risk assessment to better understand issues of copyright and data protection associated with the larger LHWC collection.
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This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, Cheryl Goitiandia, who sparked my love for listening to stories.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

In modern culture, listening to stored information has become an acceptable means of obtaining information. Listening for the purpose of acquiring knowledge is not a new phenomenon: for hundreds of years, cultures across the world have passed on information through oral storytelling tradition. The human voice has forever been an important method to share valuable information. As cultures have changed and technology has advanced, the tools and methods for capturing and projecting the human voice have grown in sophistication and importance and have emerged as commonplace in modern society. Audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories are some of the important tools used to capture and share the spoken voice. Now commonplace in libraries and other information institutions, such as museums, and archives, audiobooks and podcasts offer patrons a new medium to retrieve information. Similarly, oral histories serve to preserve not just stories of first-hand accounts of historical events, but also to lend the power of voice to view history. The inclusion of oral history collections within libraries and archives grew in popularity during the social history movement of the 1960s and 1970s, during which time history was viewed from the “bottom up” (Swain, 2003). Bornat (2001, p. 458) stated, “The search for anti-history was very much at the heart of oral history’s origins for the UK”. Historical events and primary sources of information are most often associated with the traditional idea of a document. This leads to the fundamental question: what is a document?

Buckland (1997) defined a document as an information storage and retrieval system that is concerned with text and text-like records (e.g. names, numbers, and alphanumeric codes). The study of documents and documentation first began in the 20th century, with the ideas of Paul Otlet. Otlet’s pioneering studies paved the way for document theory and was later advanced by Suzanne Briet, Michael Buckland and others. Document theory, defined by Buckland (2018), “is a field that examines both the concept of a document and how it can serve with other concepts to understand better the complex areas of communication, documentation, information, and knowledge”. The concept of what constitutes a document has been transformed by the creation of new technologies: this has forced the definition to be extended beyond simply text-based mediums. Audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories vary in format and information storage style but share the key feature of information distribution by means of speaking and listening rather than writing and reading. My own interest in this
area of research comes from a lifelong love of listening to stories from my grandparents that later transitioned into a passion for audiobooks and podcasts.

The impact of speaking and listening is central to the role that audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories play as documents. To tell the story of documents is to start with the transition from orality to literacy. Ong and Hartley (2012, p. 8) stated, “written texts all have to be related somehow, directly or indirectly, to the world of sound, the natural habitat of language, to yield their meanings”. Literacy, though based in spoken word, is associated with the privilege of education and formal language. Slim and Thompson (1993, p.1) stated, “The spoken world cuts across barriers of wealth, class and race. It is as much of the prerogative of ordinary people as of those in positions of power and authority. It requires neither formal education, or official language”. The power of everyday speech possessed by ordinary people is an essential element to oral history collection and highlights its roots. While traditional text-based documents were often penned by the educated elite, oral history is more closely associated with populist radical history. One such rise in radical history collection was during the 1960-70s in Great Britain (Thompson and Bornat, 2017). During this time, the History Workshop Movement (HWM) was born at Ruskin College of Oxford. The movement encouraged the collection of oral history that focused on people’s history. People’s history, also called social history, is a way of viewing history from below, where the history is learned from lower- or working-class people rather than from the educated elite. “People's history always represented some sort of attempt to broaden the basis of history, to enlarge its subject matter, make use of new raw materials and off new maps of knowledge” (Samuel, 1981, p. XVI). In 1982, a spin-off centre of HWM opened in London, called the London History Workshop Centre (LHWC). For years the LHWC collected people’s history through oral histories until the Centre’s closure in the early 1990s. Following this closure, the LHWC Sound Archive that contained these oral histories was donated to the Museum of London (MOL).

The spoken word is a powerful tool when it is combined with listening comprehension. Slim and Thompson (1993, p. 3) state, “speaking out is an act of power, and the act of listening demands respect for the speaker. But listening is also an art, based on certain fundamental principles which are also at the heart of any notion…”. In modern times, the accessibility and availability of both audiobooks and podcasts have enhanced the ways we are able to speak and listen. The information a listener receives from an audiobook or podcast
may be subjective but is nonetheless informational. The collection of oral history is also an information process of both speaking and listening as the interview and interviewee participate equally and in tandem, promoting information sharing that is based on memory.

The sharing of information through audio recordings can be as influential and consequential as information shared through written text. This dissertation will make the argument in favour of establishing the documentality of audio formats: audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories. In order to understand this notion of documentality, a review of the history of sound as well as the literature pertaining to document theory and changes to audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories will be observed. Additionally, this dissertation, in partnership with the MOL, will complete an intensive study looking at the LHWC and its oral history recordings that have been collected. Lastly, this dissertation will examine whether and how the information contained in the oral history collections can be shared with the general public.

1.1 Aims and Objectives

The research for this dissertation was divided into two parts and was driven by four primary aims. A number of minor objectives were additionally established to bolster the primary aims. The first part of this dissertation was inspired by a personal research interest to explore the world of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories. This research included a focus on the documentary nature of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories, as well as what this nature means for information institutions in the GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums) sector. The second part of this dissertation involved working with an oral history collection project in collaboration with the MOL. As this dissertation was divided into two parts, the subsequent aims and objectives were laid out in support of each part.

Part 1

The first part and first aim of this dissertation was to look closely at the information study field of document theory in order to define and highlight the importance of audio formats such as audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories as viable documents. To explain why and how each of these individual audio formats can be considered as viable documents to information institutions, I intended to explore the basis of document theory and how the definition of a document can be extended to include these audio formats. With a better
understanding of document theory, I will show not only the differences in style for these three audio formats but also highlight how their key shared quality of being listened to rather than read sets them apart from the traditional idea of a document. Looking at the information instantiated in oral histories, audiobooks, and podcasts, I will explain how oral information is as important as written information. The first objective was to take a closer look at the history of audio recordings. As this is a subject that has a broad history and because research time was limited, this was a brief overview looking at the transition from oral storytelling traditions through the history of audio recording up to the production of podcasts in the current era. By examining this history, I also hoped to gain a more meaningful understanding of the society’s transition from an oral-based society to that of a literary one. In understanding this transition, I hope to explain the circularity of how the power of the voice changed to the power of written text and the way in which that has shaped how we receive information that we listen to today.

Part 2

The second part of this dissertation was a hands-on project carried out in collaboration with the MOL that dealt with oral histories. Accessibility to information is a defining factor for information institutions in the GLAM sector, including the MOL. In the early 1990s, the museum received a large oral history donation from the LHWC following its closure. The MOL’s collection is made up of a variety of objects accumulated by the joining of two previous museums, Guildhall Museum and the London Museum (Museum of London, No Date). Most notably the MOL has focused on collecting the social history of London. During its lifetime, the LHWC had held a similar purpose, to collect oral histories and life stories from working-class Londoners.

Since the donation of the LHWC Sound Archive collection to the MOL, various steps have been taken in order to digitise and preserve the LHWC Sound Archive collection. This process has allowed the recordings to be more accessible to both the museum and researchers, who, by appointment, may listen to the recordings. This collection has not been shared publicly however, as the location of the paperwork containing the copyright and data protection rights associated with the collection is currently unknown. In order to support the MOL’s inquiry into whether the collection could be made available to the public, I investigated the history of the LHWC and three specific oral history subcollections.
This collaboration led to the second aim of this dissertation which was to determine if this collection could be made publicly available. My primary collaborators on the project were Foteini Aravani, the MOL’s Digital Curator, and Lisa Randisi, Project Assistant for the Listening to London Project. We divided this aim into two objectives. The first objective was to research the LHWC at an organisational-level: who were their leaders, what were the organisation's goals, and how they operated. The second objective was to look more closely onto the LHWC on an item-based level. The importance of assessing the oral histories on an item-based level was to observe the bibliographic data contained within each record. I examined the data to determine if the interviewers or interviewees were still contactable, alive, had passed away, or if they had any living descendants. By capturing the bibliographic data, the MOL could further assess the risk of publicly sharing the information from the oral histories. The LHWC collection at the MOL has “3,000 hours of taped interviews recorded by the London History Workshop Centre between 1982 and 1990” (Museum of London, 2022). Due to the collection’s large size in respect to the time constraints of this dissertation, Foteini Aravani and I set the realistic expectation of assessing 2-4 of the subcollections. I selected the subcollections based on topics of personal interest.

The third aim of this dissertation was to provide a complete understanding of the LHWC’s history to the MOL. This aim was directly linked with the first aim, an organisational-level study of the LHWC. At the time of writing this dissertation, the MOL’s knowledge of the organisation came from a finding aid created by the LHWC in 1990, an aid that accompanied the collection at the time of donation. The finding aid provided a brief overview of the LHWC as well as descriptive information about the subcollections of oral histories that make up the larger collection. However, it does not provide an in-depth understanding of the organisation itself. Little was known about those individuals who participated in the LHWC and the goal of their work. A better understanding of the organisation and of the key figures involved with the LHWC would provide the MOL with additional context to the collection. While the MOL is the keeper of the oral histories, the physical documentation about the LHWC organisation is housed at the Bishopsgate Institute Archive (BIA). I planned to complete the first objective (to research the LHWC at an organisational-level) and third aim (provide a complete understanding of the LHWC’s history to the MOL) of this dissertation by looking through the information housed at the BIA. By providing the MOL with information about the organisation and its history, the MOL will be
able to continue future research work with this collection that could go beyond this dissertation, as well as assisting future researchers who may require the use of this collection.

The fourth and final aim of this dissertation was to identify compelling stories that have the potential to be used by the MOL in future projects. As a part of their collection policy the MOL aims to document the social history of London, an ambition it shares with the LHWC (Board of Governors of the Museum of London, 2018). The LHWC collection contains an array of diverse subcollections that focus on specific London boroughs, time periods, and themes in the social history of London. By having the opportunity to look more closely at the subcollections and interviews, I was first able to discover some of the bibliographic data necessary to assess the risk of making the collection more publicly available. I was also able to identify stories of interest that the museum could use in an exhibit, blog posts, or even a podcast series.

1.2 Research Methods

Various qualitative research methods were used to complete this dissertation. Qualitative research has an advantage over quantitative as there is more flexibility afforded to the research process. Pickard (2013) wrote one of the benefits of the flexibility of qualitative research is it does not require as detailed a plan. As this dissertation was broken into two parts; the first, answering personal research aims and the second, a collaborative effort with the MOL; the flexibility of using qualitative research methods assisted in the successful completion of this project. The two methods of desk research used to search for the information necessary to complete the research aims, as set out by the original project proposal, were content analysis and historical (archival) research.

As much of the research for this dissertation was based on existing data and publications, the use of content analysis was central to the research process. Luo (2019) defined content analysis as, “a research method used to identify patterns in recorded communication”. Pickard (2013, p. 320) defined content analysis as, “a procedure for organising narrative, qualitative data. This is traditionally focused on quantifying the narrative to apply standardised measurements to metrically defined units. These are then used to compare and characterise documents." This research method was employed to help search, retrieve, and investigate the documentary nature of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories.
To locate and gather information surrounding audio recordings, I made extensive use of the Library, Information Science, and Technology Abstracts (LISTA) database through the City, University of London library website as well as other articles on Google Scholar. Additionally, I searched through various books on the topics available at both the City, University of London library and the Museum of London library. By using content analysis, I searched and organised the information that helped answer the research aims. The final manner in which content analysis was used throughout the research process was to locate the bibliographic information of the oral history participants of the LHWC. Content analysis was used to search the internet, and when combined with archival research, including reading transcripts, viewing accession records, and listening to oral histories, served to uncover information publicly available about both the interviewees and interviewers themselves.

Archival or historical research was another important research method used to complete this dissertation. Ventresca and Mohr (2017) described the archival research method as, “...those that involve the study of historical documents; that is, documents created at some point in the relatively distant past, providing us access that we might not otherwise have to the organisations, individuals, and events of that earlier time”. Pickard (2013, p. 167) solidified why this method can be defined as quantitative research and its importance, stating, “Historical research is essentially qualitative because of the interpretation that is inevitably involved; there are uses for quantifiable data in some investigation because this approach depends so much of interpretation by definition it becomes qualitative”. A significant portion of the research for this project would not have been possible without the use of historical/archival research. While the MOL holds the LHWC's oral history collection, the BIA holds the organisation's history as well as the Raphael Samuel Archive and History Workshop Archives. At the time of this research, it remains unclear why the information was donated to separate institutions. Searching through the archives at the BIA was necessary to answer questions about the LHWC’s founding, operation, and ultimate closure in the early 1990s. Beyond looking at the organisational-level information at BIA, historical research was used to listen to the oral history collection onsite at the MOL. This research method helped to generate the additional qualitative data needed to complete the research aims.
1.3 Ethical Considerations

As with any research, this dissertation needed to consider the ethical implications of its work. The ethical implications of this project were considered particularly low-risk as the information needed to complete this project was primarily accessed through desk research methods. As this research was done by examining records that had been deposited in archives as well as what had been shared on the internet, the project began as a low-risk endeavour. The main ethical concerns for this project were associated with the personal information shared in the oral histories. As there was no way to know what had been recorded within an oral history before listening to it, it was impossible to predict overhearing any overly personal information that participants may have shared. Another factor that helped establish this project as low-risk, was the knowledge that forms of consent are common practice in oral history recording. Before recording an oral history interview, interviewees sign a form of consent that states the interviewer or the institution where the information will be held has consent of copyright to the content of the interview unless specifically otherwise stated. Unfortunately, at the time of research, the location of such forms relating to the LHWC Sound Archive collection have not been found and therefore research into the bibliographic information of participants was necessary.

The basic bibliographic information to find included date and location of birth, date and location of death, occupation, contact information, and names of living descendants. In the interest of maintaining the privacy of the participants, this dissertation contains less personal information than what will be included in the presentation of results given to the MOL. In order to maintain the anonymity of the participants, when presenting my results, I will refer to individual interviews by their museum accession number. The final sharing of information that arises out of this dissertation will be at the discretion of the MOL, should they choose to make more information publicly available.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Orality to Literacy

In order to tell the history of how stories and sounds began to be recorded, it is necessary to understand oral storytelling tradition and the cultural transition from orality to literacy. National Geographic Society (2022) defined oral storytelling tradition as, “... telling a story through voice and gestures. The oral tradition can take many forms, including epic poems, chants, rhymes, songs, and more”. Up until the creation of writing and literacy, oral storytelling held a nearly exclusive role as the means of communication amongst humans. The importance of oral storytelling tradition, as National Geographic Society (2022) stated, is not the accuracy of the stories but the cultural cohesion they provide. The creation of writing had a profound effect on the cultural behaviour of humans. Jakobson (1972) wrote, “The earliest linguistic work we possess, a Sumerian grammar of nearly 4,000 years ago, was succeeded by continuous efforts in various countries to interpret the makeup of the locally privileged language and the verbal network in general, as well as by speculations on the mysterious gift and confusion of tongues”. The advent of writing into society transformed not only its means of communication but also its social hierarchies, stratifying classes between those privileged enough to understand written language and those that were not afforded the opportunity to learn it. Mendoza (2015) stated:

“The transition from oral to written culture overlapped, but is predominantly accounted for in ancient Greece, where the earliest inscriptions date from 770 to 750 B.C. Scholars suggest that "The Iliad" by Homer is the oldest surviving work in the Greek language that originated from oral tradition, according to History of Information. Unfortunately, not all populations were literate, so only the educated class was able to read and write stories. This era also brought about the use of plays to tell stories”.

Oral storytelling tradition did not cease after the creation of writing; however, the accreditation and privilege that literacy afforded would alter communication methods amongst humans and would not be seen again until the invention of mass printing.
Although one of humanity’s most powerful tools, writing did not come into being without the initial step of oral communication. Ong and Hartley (2012) argued that writing would not exist without the existence of orality. Ong and Hartley (2012, p. 8) stated, “written text all have to be related somehow, directly or indirectly, to the world of sound, the natural habitat of language, to yield their meaning. Reading a text means converting it to sound, aloud or in the imagination…Writing can never dispense with orality”. Bednar (2010) echoed this idea stating, “writing can be thought of as a secondary system modelled on the primary one of oral language. When words appear on a page, they are, in fact, coded symbols for real words (actual or imagined sound)”. Whilst both Ong and Bednar provided strong arguments for literacy’s foundation in orality, the undeniable transition to the use of writing and text-based documentation led to the decline in popularity of oral storytelling. Rubery (2016, p. 31) argued, “the preference for spoken word suggests a different way of thinking about the influential narrative according to which the printing press marked a decisive turn away from orality and towards stable, introspective, and formally complex forms of print”. While oral tradition still holds a strong position in numerous cultures around the world, the vast majority of modern societies favour written forms of communication and documentation. Growth and changes in technology have influenced written forms of communication and documentation to expand and include more information resources. Audio recordings are among these.

2.2 History of Recorded Sound

In order for interest in recording sound to grow, communication technology needed to advance. Just as the invention of writing marked a transition from orality to literacy amongst the world at large, the invention of printing was a follow-on milestone in the cultural development of human communication (Mendoza, 2015). Written documentation would remain the most effective way to send and receive information up until the 19th century, when technological advancements empowered new forms of human interaction. Thomas Edison’s invention of the Phonograph in 1887 is widely credited with igniting the global interest in capturing, reproducing, and experimenting with sound. However, the first instance of sound recording, distinct from the playback of a recorded sound, was realised by Eduard-Léon Scott de Martinville’s Phonautograph (British Library Learning, No Date). Fabry (2018) noted that de Martinville’s invention preceded Edison’s Phonograph by nearly two decades, having in the late 1850s recorded sound using a novel device, the Phonautograph. Fabry (2018) stated, “While Scott recorded the sound, he didn’t think people would ever hear
the recordings he made. Instead, he thought they would read the tracings. So the first sound to be recorded was not the same as the first recorded sound to be played back”. The distinction of having played the first recorded sound is Edison’s with the Phonograph in 1877, a recording of Edison himself singing ‘Mary had a little lamb’ (British Library, No Date). Following these inventions, another landmark in the history of recorded sound as well as an important precursor to oral history collection was the recording taken of the voice of Florence Nightingale in 1890 (British Library Learning, No Date). Nightingale, a nurse in the Crimean War and later the founder of modern nursing, produced the recording as a means to raise money for veterans of that war. In the recording, Nightingale states, “When I am no longer even a memory, just a name, I hope my voice may perpetuate the great work of my life. God bless my dear old comrades of Balaclava and bring them safely to shore. Florence Nightingale” (British Library Learning, No Date). Nightingale’s message of emphasising the value of memory through voice foreshadows the importance of recording memory and voice as part of oral history work.

Advancements in sound recording technology did not slow down as the twentieth century began. The Gramophone replaced the Phonograph as the premier sound technology, sound recording produced using tinfoil cylinders switched to wax cylinders. These were later succeeded by flat discs, first made of zinc then rubber and ultimately manufactured using shellac (British Library Learning, No Date). Furthermore, by the mid-1920s, the first electronic sound recordings were being captured through the microphone, a device that turned sounds into an electric current (British Library, No Date). Due to these advancements, the possibility to both transmit sound via radio as well as to enable recorded sound for the cinema became reality. Moreover, the accessibility of audio recordings that radio enabled marked the beginning of a consequential period in audio recording and, more specifically, in audiobook and podcast history. At its peak, radio was amongst the most affordable avenues for entertainment. Hinton (2021) wrote, “A one-time purchase of a radio opened up access to news, shows, comedy hours, children’s programming, and the like. Tickets to the movies, theatre, or the opera could be less affordable and were only for a one-time experience”. The radio revolutionised and expanded the spread and access to information through its audio technology and affordability. Beyond simply being a vehicle for information transfer, radio brought about a new type of oral storytelling. Prior to the radio, theatrical plays and readings were seen and heard almost exclusively in public spaces, while the introduction of radio shows allowed for the same performances to be enjoyed in private spaces such as the homes
of those individuals who owned radios. Hinton (2021) detailed that radios remained a popular device until the use of television surpassed it in popularity during the 1950s. According to the British Library (No Date), an additional landmark in audio recording history was the creation of the first reel-to-reel tapes in Germany in 1928. “Rather than etching on a hard material, sound waves and forms could be captured on a magnetically coated strip of plastic. This was yet another revolution because through splicing, recordings could be edited and remixed” (British Library, No Date).

The invention of magnetic recording through reel-to-reel opened the possibility of creating significantly longer recordings including those such as full-length books. Rubery (2016) argued that despite the fact that the concept of recording books was as old as the phonograph itself, the realisation of this concept remained unfulfilled until the 1930s when the first full-length audiobook was recorded. Prior to then, technology had not advanced sufficiently to allow for the efficient production of a full-length audiobook. Amongst the first groups targeted for the use of recorded audiobooks was the blind community. Blake (1990) stated, “In its first decade, the use of the cassette to record and distribute information was limited to the blind and physically handicapped, or to precisely defined audiences with precisely defined information needs”. In fact, the relationship between audiobooks and the blind have even deeper roots, dating back to the invention of the Phonograph. According to Rubery (2016, p. 109) the United States Library of Congress was the first institution to establish a talking book library for the benefit of those who had lost their sight. While the initial press response surrounding the inclusion of this audiobook collection was positive, Rubery (2016, p. 109) additionally stated that the Library of Congress’s selectivity concerning which books were to be recorded and included in the audiobook collection triggered an indignant response from some blind patrons. These aggrieved patrons accepted the Library's budget to record books but refused to agree to the selective authority the Library would have over what blind people should consume.

The books that were eventually recorded and made available to the blind patrons would only amount to a small portion of books in comparison to the access afforded to those patrons with sight. “Questions about the roles of pleasure, edification, and enrichment came up repeatedly during the 1930, 40s, and 50s as the Library of Congress struggled to formulate a book selection policy to meet the needs of a diverse, outspoken readership” (Rubery, 2016, p. 110). Although magnetic recording made audio recording easier, the persistently large
costs of production hindered the expansion of books on cassette, a problem eventually solved by the introduction of the audiocassette in the early 1960s (Blake, 1990). The transition to cassette tapes helped the Library of Congress in 1969 begin to further develop their talking book library. The Library of Congress began to offer a National Service Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (Blake, 1990).

The use and growth of audiobooks gained significant traction in the 1970s as pioneering companies such as Books On Tape and Recorded Books began to produce both unabridged and abridged books. According to Blake (1990), publishers pushed marketing campaigns focused on selling more books on cassette, which included releasing the audio version of a book simultaneously with the hardback copies. Another marketing scheme developed by the Books On Tape corporation was the idea of rental plans for audiobooks to encourage listening to books on the go (Rubery, 2016). The creation of portable cassette players enhanced the idea of listening to books on the go and further promoted the use of audiobooks with the public. The increase in books on cassette allowed for the rental schemes to extend beyond individuals to public libraries where the inclusion of audio collections had not been common practice. In England, recordings from lectures on local government began to be included in public library collections (Blake, 1990). In the United States public libraries slowly supplied audiobooks as an experiment and ultimately chose to include audiobooks in their collections (Blake, 1990). By the 1980s, Blake (1990) stated, “The book cassette had become a fixture in library collections”.

As the 20th century came to a close, advances in audio recording technology again began to see consequential changes and ensuing growth in audio recording popularity. In relatively quick succession, audio recording technology saw cassettes and cassette players replaced by CDs and CD players, which were in turn replaced by MP3 files and MP3 players. Rubery (2016, p. 243) stated that by this time audiobooks were no longer a novelty and instead an established product offered by publishers. As the use of the internet increased in popularity, so too did the popularity of audiobooks grow. Audible and Audio Highway became two of the largest competitors selling audiobooks through the internet, each using their own strategies for growing listenership. According to Rubery (2016, p. 248), “Audible focused on books, signing exclusive contracts with major publishers, Audio Highway featured audio of all sorts, from music to National Public Radio broadcasts”. Audio Highway also had some audiobooks in its catalogue but far fewer than Audible. Both companies
introduced their own portable devices for downloading and listening to audio recordings, signalling once again a new way to consume audio recordings on the go (Rubery, 2016).

The advancements in portable listening technology and the creation of spoken word recordings continued to evolve with the development of podcasting. A Guardian article by Ben Hammersley (2004) discussed the experimental, inexpensive and compact new medium, the MP3 format, that subsequently allowed anyone to produce and publish their work. In turn, this then permitted spoken word audio recordings to be downloaded and played back (Hammersley, 2004). The invention of podcasting again signalled a change for recorded audio, that could be created by anyone without a radio studio (Berry, 2006). Berry (2006) added, “Podcasting is not only a converged medium (bringing together audio, the web and portable media devices) but also a disruptive technology and one that has already forced some in the radio business to reconsider some established practices and preconceptions about audiences, consumption, production and distribution”. Podcasting increased in scope and quantity and has become one of the most popular ways to share audio recordings. A study done by Edison Research and Triton Digital (2019) showed that an estimated 70% of the US population above the age of 12 was familiar with podcasting. Today, with reliable streaming media, audiobooks and podcasts are not only accessible but a continually evolving audio type where their embedded information fully establishes them as a type of documentation.

2.3 Document Theory

The documentation movement began in the early part of the twentieth century and regained popularity in the 1990s (Buckland, 2014). The movement began with the work of Paul Otlet. Rayward et al. (2007) described Otlet’s work, stating, “Otlet coined the term ‘Documentation’ in 1903 and his ideas about this, set forth in a voluminous body of writing that culminated in 1934 in his magisterial Traité de Documentation, which might well be considered the first textbook on information science, were widely influential in Europe and not without impact in the US, at least in the period before the outbreak of World War II”. Rayward et al. (2007) continued outlining how Otlet defined documents to be the vessel of knowledge and information, which he believed could be further reduced to facts. Wright (2014, p. 101-102) expanded on Otlet’s ideas, stating, “Otlet proposed a far broader definition, suggesting that ‘document’ could refer to any object manifesting any kind of graphic symbols- letters, numbers, images- captured in any form of media in order to express
any form of human thought”. Otlet’s thoughts on documentation helped to provide a basis for
document theory that other theorists have expanded upon to include a wide range of possible
definitions as to what constitutes a document.

Suzanne Briet, known as “Madame Documentation”, built upon Otlet’s thoughts (Buckland, 1995). Briet sought to push the boundaries of documentation and Information
Science with her publication of Qu’est-ce que la documentation? (Buckland, 1995). Briet’s
expansion of document theory considered physical objects as holding information in addition
to the earlier text-based documents. Briet et al. (2006) argued that if a document represented
proof-of-fact and provided evidence of information then one could consider even animals, for
example, as a type of document. According to Briet et al. (2006) an antelope in the wild
could not be considered a document but, as soon as the antelope has been placed in a zoo and
catalogued, then it should be considered a document. For Briet et al. (2006), "A document is
evidence in support of a fact”. The knowledge extracted from the antelope as an object of
study within the zoo acts in support of fact and thus making the antelope a document. Briet’s
work in documentation supports the idea that physical objects and elements without words
can be considered as viable documents.

Beyond considerations of the physicality of a defining document, it is necessary to
examine the way in which information and knowledge contribute to documentality.
Document is the word applied to a vessel containing information but examining the makeup
of information can help to further define documentation. Buckland (1991) examined the
definitions of information-as-process, information-as-knowledge, and information-as-thing.
Information-as-process can be understood as the way in which information is told to an
information is told to an individual can change or inform that individual differently than that
of an original thought and as well it can be situational. “Whether any particular object,
document, data, or event is going to be informative depends on the circumstances, just as the
‘relevance’ of a document or a fact is situational depending on the inquiry and on the
expertise of the inquirer” (Buckland, 1991). Information-as-knowledge is the knowledge
communicated from particular facts, subjects, or events and is connected to information-as-
process (Buckland, 1991). Finally, information-as-thing is information that comes from
physical representation of knowledge, facts and belief (Latham, 2012). “People are informed
not only by intentional communications, but by a wide variety of objects and events”
(Buckland, 1991). Buckland (1991) provided such examples as data and documents and cautioned that this definition can be interpreted in many ways. This dissertation considers information-as-thing as a document.

Document theory is foundational to the understanding of information provided by resources. Additionally, document theory can be extended beyond the world of library and information science to fields such as museum studies. Latham (2012) applied Buckland’s (1991) ideas of documentation to the context of museum objects. Revisiting Buckland’s thoughts on information-as-thing, Latham (2012) reinforced the argument that information-as-a-thing means that information provided by a document is a representation of knowledge. “Receiving information is a central concept in information studies, and Buckland points out that not all information results from intentional communication” Latham (2012). The information communicated to a patron by an object or an artefact in a museum has a more physical nature than the text-based information found in a traditional library setting. In a museum information is translated to the patron by observation of a physical representation of information (artefact). The knowledge received by the patron through this observation is how that patron becomes informed on a subject, therefore applying information-as-thing. Latham emphasised that Buckland’s theories benefited both library and information science, and museum studies stating, “he helps to understand both the symbolic and constructed nature of the human-object relationship” (Latham, 2012). Classifying museum objects as a form of documentation supports this relationship as museums would have collected the objects with the distinct intent to communicate knowledge to the information user.

The definitions of documents and documentation have adapted over the years to be more inclusive of a wider range of information resources that extend beyond text-based information resources to include physical resources as well. These types of documents communicate through a single key sense, eyesight, but do not provide the complementary benefits of either aural or oral communication. If a document can be defined by the knowledge and information it provides then it can be reasonably inferred that a document is something that provides information. With this understanding, audio recordings would be considered as documents. The following sections of this literature review will focus on the documentality of three types of audio recordings: audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories.
2.4 Audiobooks

2.4.1 Audio Revolution

Even though audiobooks have been around for the past ninety years or so, it is only in the recent past that they have seen a significant increase in popularity. Have and Pedersen (2019) referred to this rapid increase in popularity as the “audiobook revolution” or “audiobook boom” and they note that, until recently, this revolution of sound has been relatively unacknowledged. With the rise in online streaming, the access to digital audiobooks has become easier and more convenient. Various subscription-based apps such as Audible, LibroFM, and Storytel make streaming and accessing audiobooks easy and convenient. Other apps such as Libby and Hoopla, allow access to audiobooks through library membership. These apps have also helped to redefine what an audiobook is. Traditionally audiobooks have been defined by Have and Pedersen (2019) as “…an audio recording of a (previously or simultaneously) published written book, performed by a narrator who could be the author, a professional actor or an amateur, or a synthetic voice”. However, newer definitions have grown to include the creation of born-digital audiobooks. Have and Pedersen (2019) questioned if born-digital audio recordings should be included under the definition of audiobook as they do not relate to a physical publication. On the one hand, as Have and Pedersen (2019) pointed out “we insist on the bookishness of the audiobook both because of the printed source and because it is included in the institutionalised literary context constituted by authors, publishers, bookstores, libraries and so on”. This idea of physical bookishness entices users to refer to having “read” an audiobook rather than stating “listened” to. The power given to the word “read” over “listened” in this case, lends more power to text and written documentation. It has also sparked debate in the literature whether listening to audiobooks can be considered reading. A counter argument made by Jockers (2013, p. 4) stated, “Though not ‘everything’ has been digitised, we have reached a tipping point, an event horizon where enough text and literature have been encoded to both allow and, indeed, force us to ask an entirely new set of questions about literature and the literary record”. Linkis and Pennlert (2020) built off of Jockers idea of literary record and applied it to digital audiobooks. For Linkis and Pennlert (2020) the literary record, “consists of literary texts (genre, linguistic traits, author, style, narration etc.) but also includes the digital traces that readers leave behind while consuming literary works
in audio- or e-book format”. Beyond this debate, the documentality of audiobooks can be observed as information-as-thing and information-as-process. It is the information that is provided to the listener, in the situation of listening that can help define and support the audiobook’s document status. To further support this idea, this dissertation will highlight two examples that establish audiobooks’ authenticity as a legitimate form of document in both the educational and the leisure sense.

2.4.2 Educational Listening

Reading has long been considered the primary way in which individuals learn and acquire information. Classic textual documentation such as books and other paper-based reading materials are both materially and symbolically the primary educational tools used in society. As the digital age has encouraged the world to shift towards the use of digital based tools, new opportunities for different instruments of study have been created. Heavy debate in the literature weighs whether listening to audiobooks is a viable way to receive information and if it should be considered as a form of reading. Moyer (2011, p. 254) stated that “listening is in fact ‘real’ reading and that listeners can engage with audiobooks in much the same way as they can engage with printed or electronic texts. Therefore, theories of engaged and motivated reading based on printed or digital texts can certainly be applied to audiobooks”. There is no defined answer as to whether listening to information is more effective than reading, as a study by Singh and Alexander (2022) concluded, but the potential and the use of audiobooks to help improve literacy is just one way in which audiobooks prove themselves a viable document. The information that is learned is a component of documentation, not the way in which the information was obtained.

As an educational tool, the use of audiobooks is not a new concept. As discussed earlier, audiobooks were used as educational tools for those who were blind since the first audiobooks were introduced (Rubery, 2016). While braille is another important form of receiving information, audiobooks provide a different experience for those without sight. Audiobooks may also offer others with learning disabilities the benefits of listening to information as a way to improve their understanding and comprehension of a subject. Larson (2015) noted the additional educational uses of audiobooks as a supplemental tool in classrooms including the pronunciation of words and improved reading stamina. The
information that can be received to increase the listeners knowledge helps to define audiobooks as documents of education.

2.4.3 Leisure Listening

Beyond their educational impact, audiobooks can be understood as documents of enjoyment as well. The term document conjures thoughts of serious information such as that associated with higher education. However, the term document finds its place amongst leisure activities as well as in academic or professional spaces. Document theory has dealt with the question of what a document is and how is information defined within a document, but it does not deal with the content of that information. Hartel et al. (2016) argued that “serious leisure is information-rich and merits special attention in information science”. This perspective of information science actively deals with information researched for the purpose of leisure. According to Hartel et al. (2016), “The serious leisure perspective identifies three main types of leisure: serious pursuits centred on learning; casual leisure that requires no training; and project-based leisure that is a somewhat complex, time-bound, creative undertaking”. Using this framework, audiobooks can be placed in all three categories and the type of audiobook sought out by the information searcher determines which part of the framework that the audiobook fits into at the time of listening. The use of audiobooks for leisure entertainment experienced significant growth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, audiobooks had already begun to experience a surge in popularity. With lockdowns and the ensuing isolation that began in early 2020, an increasing number of people turned to audiobooks for entertainment (Sweney, 2020). Libraries that had previously not invested many of their resources into audiobooks, began to increase their audiobook budget in order to provide more licences and access for users (Gross, 2021). This increasing demand for and production of listenable information supports the documentality of audiobooks. As leisure information, audiobooks provide a medium in which a user can enjoy information from a document while also simultaneously performing other tasks. This is a shared feature between audiobooks and podcasts.
2.5 Podcasts

More recent than either oral histories and audiobooks, podcasts have emerged in the age of streaming media to become amongst the most popular ways to receive information. Despite sharing many traits with audiobooks and oral histories, podcasts can claim distinct attributes that help categorise them as their own unique information resources. Story (2022) stated that the first podcast pioneers were born out of the creation of the RSS feed in the 1990s. “With that innovation, anyone with DIY inclinations could record audio material, and listeners could follow along by having that content automatically delivered whenever the newest release became available” (Story, 2022). Hammersley (2004) observed that, in an age where downloading MP3 files to portable audio devices was growing in popularity, podcasts were a new type of media and, in his opinion, an experimental form of amateur radio. In his Guardian article, Why Online Radio is Booming Hammersley (2004), coined this new media as ‘podcasting’, which since, through the creation and sharing of individual podcasts, has developed into a new kind of medium as part of the audio revolution. Spinelli (2019) stated, “Podcasting represents a tantalising opportunity for a new generation to draw a line under all of audio history in order to invent and reinvent, discover and rediscover, audio experiences and relationships on their own diverse terms and in their own diverse ways”. Podcasts have expanded to include a diversity of shows, including but not limited to: comedy, news, education, and more. Richter (2019), in an article about the growth of podcast use, presented evidence from Edison Research that in the last decade the majority of Americans now know what podcasts are and have engaged with them. Richter (2019) further stated, “the format’s rise in popularity clearly coincides with a general increase in digital media consumption, specifically on mobile devices, but it was also helped by the fact that the selection of quality podcasts is virtually limitless these days”. The diversity of content and broad accessibility of podcasts is what makes them their own unique audio documents, distinct from audiobooks and oral histories.

2.5.1 Education and Leisure Podcasts in Comparison to Audiobooks

Podcasts are nearly indistinguishable from the modern, streamable version of audiobooks, as both are accessed through apps and online services. While a few open access audiobook platforms exist, they do not have nearly the popularity as purchasable streaming platforms such as Audible. Podcasts began as a free medium for listening to information and
have remained so for the most part. One way in which podcasts have become monetised is
through websites such as Patreon. Additionally, in 2021, the music streaming giants of Apple
and Spotify both began offering paid subscription podcasting (Perez, 2021). Despite these
developments, the effect of this monetisation is unclear in the literature and could be an area
of further research.

At the time of research, this dissertation identified the similarities by which
audiobooks and podcasts have provided information for both education and leisure purposes.
For teachers in classrooms, the inclusion of new mediums helps to supplement classic text-
based material and gives students with different learning styles a chance to break from
educational norms in beneficial ways. Goldman, (2018) highlighted how podcast creation in
classrooms can be beneficial to learning the most up-to-date digital technology. Another
similarity to audiobooks is the way in which podcasts are used for leisure information. Edison
Research and Triton Digital, (2019) showed that the majority of topics that podcast listeners
were tuned in to in 2019 dealt with information such as entertainment, sports, and music.
This study also demonstrated that listeners were listening to podcasts for learning,
entertainment, relaxation, inspiration, and escapism (Edison Research and Triton Digital,
2019). Podcasters engage with their listenership in broader ways and continue to expand the
creation and spread of knowledge. The community that develops from a listenership of a
podcast that would be classified as leisure information is distinct from the leisure information
listenership of an audiobook. Podcasts deliver information in an unscripted style as opposed
to audiobooks that follow a narrative. There are of course exceptions, but for the most part
the leisure information that is sought out from podcasts is delivered in a narration style that is
different from an audiobook. Leisure information, again, is subjective to the listener but the
style of information delivery typically found in podcasts sets podcasts apart from the format
delivered in audiobooks. The comparison of podcast and audiobook listenership is still
relatively new in the literature and could be an area for future research.

2.5.2 Podcasts and Oral Histories

A commonality between podcasts and oral histories is their shared interest in
interview content. Interview podcasts are amongst the most popular genres of podcasts. For
many listeners, the easy, interviewing style is enjoyable and informative. The major
difference between oral histories and podcasts is that an oral history provides a full testimony
on past events prompting the interviewee with questions to draw out more information (Davidson College Library, 2021). Podcasts can cover any topic and can run any length and are produced in a more episodic nature (Davidson College Library, 2021). Podcast interviews are done with less formal prompting and often less preparation. Hewitt (2020) stated, “With significantly less time and schedule constraints than other media formats, podcasting allowed its hosts and their guests two very important things: the ability to record interviews in a relaxed atmosphere, as well as the ability to edit and release the interviews at a pace more preferable to the 21st century’s appetite for content”. The aspect of informality in podcast interviews are distinct from oral histories that are more formal and structured in order to effectively cover an interviewee’s specific life events or life story. Nonetheless, there is a composite version of podcasts and oral histories in which an informational podcast includes oral history interviews to provide context to its subject. The stylistic comparison of oral history and interview podcasts could be an area for further research in the literature.

2.6 Oral Histories

While oral history and oral history theory are relatively new fields to the world of recorded information, the practice of passing down stories through oral tradition is the oldest form of information sharing (Thompson and Bornat, 2017). Buckland (2015) gave a concise history of documents as divided into four parts: writing, printing and telecommunication, and document copying. Buckland’s history of documentation, briefly discussed a time before writing, stating that prehistoric humans would use objects, gestures, and language to communicate information (Buckland, 2015). While Buckland (2015) pointed out that recorded speech in written form helps the performative ephemeral nature to endure, he neglected to include how the oral storytelling tradition can also be passed down as information as knowledge through the communication of one person to the next, informing new audiences who then continue the transfer of knowledge.

The first use of oral testimony as a source for information and history is credited to Thucydides when he was collecting accounts of the Peloponnesian War (Yow, 2005, p. 35). Per Buckland (2015), the nineteenth century’s rise in telecommunication was an important time period for mass communication. It is during this time period that the recording and transmitting of sound as a way to share information gained popularity. Yow (2005, p. 35) noted that during the twentieth century new technology to record testimony became less
expensive and required less technical knowledge. Recordings were initially produced using wax cylinders, later changing its means and methods of recording until, ultimately, following World War II, were produced using portable taping machines that made recording testimonies markedly easier (Yow, 2005). “So, although the use of data from individual memory is at least as old as the fifth century BC, the mechanical recording of the in-depth interview is not so old…” (Yow, 2005, p. 2-3). Despite mechanical recordings of oral histories being less than a hundred years-old, its corresponding theories and links to social history have received its fair share of scrutiny from the academic community.

2.6.1 Comparison to Classical Academia

Within academic communities, written documentation is often seen as the most credible way to interpret the past. However, as Darien (2008) wrote, “Oral history's great gift is its capacity to locate voices, flesh out the historical record, offer a more representative telling of past events, and provide texture and substance to social experience”. Oral history is built around people (Thompson and Bornat, 2017). By recording lived experiences through oral histories, recorded history is given a more humanising experience. In this way, oral history helps to break the traditional framework of academic documentation as the histories that are recorded are outside of a higher level of education and often tell the stories of common people and their experiences.

Oral histories have been a point of contention when considering viable information about historical events. Lummis (1987, p. 11) stated, “...critics of oral history so frequently contrast it to the assumed greater reliability of contemporary documentary evidence it is worth reminding ourselves that such sources also have their biases and distortions which, while acknowledged in books on methodology, are rarely allied for practice”. As with any information, the issue of provenance over information is often what can cause doubt and scepticism. Thompson and Bornat (2017) presented various examples in support of oral history’s ability to function as verifiable evidence in contrast to classical forms of documentation. Thompson and Bornat (2017, p. 189) highlighted written autobiographies as a one-way form of communication, in contrast to oral history interviews where an interviewee could be cross-examined, therefore contributing to a fuller account of the information. Building from this, Perks and Thomson (2006) added how oral history interview allows for the interviewee to assert their individual interpretation of the past and thus
contributing to a more comprehensive historical record. Due to the fact that oral evidence is often the first step in gathering information before it is written lends credit to oral history recordings’ warranted acceptance as a viable form of gathering information and documentation.

Text-based documents rooted in academia have historically been given more credibility than oral testimony. Lummis (1987, p. 12) took a strong stance opposing the link between documentation and higher education and stating how oral evidence should be viewed with respective value just as much as written forms of documentation, stating, “...documents are often produced by institutions (villainous and otherwise) for their own purposes and historical study is rarely one of them…it is sufficient to note here that the various parliamentary inquiries into industrial conditions and social problems are often among the most useful documentary sources for social history.” Here, Lummis (1987) specifically discussed higher education and the sharing of the historical record through text-based documents. The association of publication and higher education is one way in which oral history theory changed documentation of the historical record as the method became more commonly used. The use of oral history stepped away from viewing history through the lens of the elite and shifted the focus towards the general public creating ties to social and local history.

2.6.2 Oral, Social, and Local History

The use of oral histories to gather social history was one of the main ways in which oral histories developed throughout the 20th century in both Britain and the United States. The collection of verbatim information about events and the lives of those who lived during specific time periods helped to contribute not only to the historical record but to also further the importance of this medium in providing evidence. Additionally, by looking more closely at social and local histories, the voices of the working classes in society are amplified and therefore provide a different perspective to history. Bornat (1993, p. 75) wrote "Oral history makes uncomfortable reading for historians trained in documentary traditions, whose understanding of the past is dominated by events in the public domain. Academic oral history's challenging role, its championing of the histories of members of the underclasses, the sidelined in history, and its commitment to the contribution of the individual voice, have kept it on the margins of the discipline of history generally". By including more layers of
society to the contribution of history has allowed for the scope of history to widen (Thompson and Bornat, 2017). “The development of local oral history has led to a radical question of the fundamental relationship between historians and the community” (Thompson and Bornat 2017, p. 15). Thompson and Bornat (2017) further support the community involvement in contributing to their historical record rather than done solely by professional historians.

2.6.3 Oral History and Memory

A key component of the process of oral history recordings is the access the oral histories provide to the memories of the participants providing them. Yet historians are wary of memory as a resource for history, an objection that continually contributes to the debate surrounding oral history work (Perks and Thomson, 2006). Perks and Thomson (2006, p. 211) stated, “...to use oral testimony and interpret the experience and meaning of past events, researchers need to understand this active process through which the narrator creates meaningful stories about the past”. As the participants of oral history collection are often older people, the oral historian encourages the participant to review and reflect on their life in order to extract reminiscences (Bornat, 2001, p. 459). It is important to understand that “memory is thus the subject as well as source of oral history” (Perks and Thomson, 2006, p. 211). The interpretation of memory helps to contribute to the historical record and output of knowledge through different viewpoints making memory a crucial part of oral history.

2.6.4 Oral Histories in GLAM and the Digital Age

Blatti (1990) wrote, “Much of the contention about oral history's value as evidence arises from its dialogic and participatory nature as a research technique, and its location in an interpretive terrain that must be negotiated by narrator, interviewer, and ultimately user. At the same time, oral history has gained seemingly easy acceptance as a routine component of public programming projects that present scholarly interpretations to general audiences”. The inclusion of oral history projects in GLAM has created new opportunities within information institutions to better understand local groups within communities, and specific points in individual lives. Oral histories also encourage community participation in the documentation of local history. “Local history is a powerful tool that contributes to place making and the construction of identity” (Willis, 2016). On this Blatti (1990) stated, “... oral history is
playing a central role in both documentation and presentation of multi-layered and multi-voiced perspectives in the museum world”, providing the example of the inclusion of oral tradition-based cultures such as Native Americans in North America. Through oral histories various groups can recount their individual stories that relate to a specific period of time or event, layering and providing more about a subject.

In the digital age, accessibility to information has become one of the most important factors in learning information. Institutions in GLAM have striven to make information accessible to the larger public. Having digital access through GLAM websites allows the information searcher to attempt locating information outside of normal hours of operation. Additionally, the inclusion of extensive metadata, including details relating to history and culture through oral history allows researchers from diverse disciples to connect and experience such collections (Turin, Wheeler and Wilkinson, 2014).
Chapter 3: Discussion

3.1 The Audio Document

This chapter intends to complete the first research aim of establishing audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories as viable forms of documentation. As seen through a review of the literature; audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories can be considered viable forms of documentation. Two of the most important ways in which they may be considered as documents is by the physical container of the audio recording and the information relayed to the individual listening to the audio recording. While each is different in format and often in purpose, audio recordings share a similar historical timeline in technological advances that help to contribute to the mediums by which the audio documents are shared. Different from text-based documents, the spoken information is what contributes to an audio recording’s documentality. Briet’s et al. (2006) idea that a document is evidence in support of fact can be applied to the physical container of an audio recording. In the modern age, recordings are files stored in databases rather than physical mediums. Further support for this idea is presented by Larson (2016) who provided a thorough overview of oral history theory in comparison with Marshall McLuhan's 1964 discussion of “The Medium Is the Message”. Larson looked closely at the early history of oral histories as well as reflecting on the relationship between oral histories and, “the way in which information is shaped, transformed, and translated (accurately or not) by the nature of its container or medium” (Larson, 2016). Modern recordings are contained in digital file format and therefore the medium that contains the message is less physical than previous information storage systems for audio recordings. This format contributes to the audio recording documentality because of what is contained in the stored file. These digital file containers of the information holding the audio documents could be compared to Buckland (1991) idea of information-as-thing.

The second factor that contributes to the idea of the audio document is the way in which the information is delivered. Information in the case of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories is the spoken voice recording that is played through a physical medium. The information passed through audio recordings could be considered as information-as-process as this information is situational, meaning the user’s interaction with the information was chosen intentionally or overheard unintentionally (Buckland, 1991). Additionally, Buckland
(1991) described information-as-knowledge as a part of information-as-process. Information-as-knowledge is the facts and subjects obtained through the process of gaining information (Buckland, 1991). In this way the information that is gained by way of listening contributes to the documentary of audio recordings.

This transaction of information is an important exchange when considering how audio documents are important to informational institutions. The transaction of information between an individual and document (person-document transaction) can help to establish documentation. Latham (2013) discusses the person-document transaction, stating “It is that moment in time when these things meet, which results in a unique experience that can only happen between that person at that moment in that place with that object (document)”.

The transition of information through sound helps establish this connection and contributes to the documentality of audio recording.

The documentary role of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories are important inclusions in GLAM as they help to provide new means of obtaining information. Information institutions strive for inclusivity and the promotion of audio mediums assist this mission. For libraries, audio recording inclusion has helped diversify collections, providing information both educationally and leisurely. In museums, the inclusion of audio in exhibitions as well as through hand-held audio tours has enhanced the user experience, especially for those who have difficulties with sight (Hutchinson and Eardley, 2021). Audio documents reimagine orality and contribute to new ways in which recorded sound can be used to share information. Looking to the future as these mediums further evolve their use and inclusion as viable forms of documentation will help promote the sharing of information aurally.
Chapter 4: London History Workshop Centre

Prior to this dissertation, the MOL knew little about the LHWC, its organisation, the key figures involved, and their work. Additionally, little was known about the circumstances surrounding the donation of this large collection to the MOL, nor about the conditions associated with the deposition. What information was known came from a finding aid that was compiled in 1990, before the Centre closed and the Sound Archive was donated. The historical information compiled by this dissertation is to provide an overview of the organisation, the key players and creators, and to support the analysis of the oral history collection. While the MOL has had the oral history recordings for some time, the location of the information related to the copyright and permissions for the recordings have not been located. The information researched by this dissertation was an important step to further assess the risk associated with copyright and data protection issues that currently exist for the LHWC collection.

4.1 Copyright and Data Protection of Oral Histories

Copyright and data protection are important factors for the interviewer and interviewee at the time of an oral history interview and, later, important for the information repository where the interview is deposited. The acknowledgement of copyright over an oral history is necessary for the possible publication or use of information derived from the oral history. The Oral History Society (2020a) defines copyright as, “the right to control certain uses of ‘works’. The owner can decide whether to allow the use at all and can charge a fee for any permission granted”. Acknowledgement of copyright is important for oral histories and information institutions as it defines what information is and isn’t allowed to be shared. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a regulation designed to strengthen and combine the existing data protection for all individuals and applies to any organisation, individual, or group which collects personal data within the EU (Oral History Society, 2020b). This regulation is still in effect in the UK following its departure from the EU (Oral History Society, 2020b). GDPR/UK GDPR data regulations only apply to living individuals, whereas copyright continues for a number of years past death (in the UK). Based on these regulations; libraries, museums, and archives all must comply with data protection regulation. This dissertation's search for bibliographical information associated with the LHWC...
collection will assist the MOL to better assess the information contained in the collection for future use.

4.2 LHWC Origins: Raphael Samuel and History Workshop Movement

In 1982 the LHWC was founded as a spin-off of the (National) History Workshop Centre at Ruskin College of Oxford. The Centre was created both as an archive of oral history recordings as well as an educational centre for London history. The oral histories recorded by the LHWC were made using the workshop style of recording in use at the HWM during the 1960s. The HWM was perceived as a new way to view history. Rather than looking at history from a strictly academic and, traditionally, elite perspective, History Workshop's pioneering method was to observe ‘history from below’ (Administrator of History Workshop, 2012, Samuel, 1981). The movement’s principal initiator was social historian, Raphael Samuel. Samuel started teaching for Ruskin College in 1962 (Ruskin College Oxford, No Date). It was during his time at Ruskin College that Samuel became the driving force in the creation of the HWM (Administrator of History Workshop, 2012). Maslen (2010) wrote about Samuel’s pioneering contributions to social history in The Personal Politics of Raphael Samuel. According to Maslen (2010, p. 210), “The organisational vessel for this approach, the History Workshop, had been founded in 1966 at the College against the will of its authorities, and by extension, the cultural authorities of British life”. The HWM was influenced by Samuel’s left-wing leaning opinions that he felt could be applied to historical research and interpretation. Samuel strongly believed in the idea of people’s history, which he talked about in his book People’s History and Socialist Theory, stating people’s history is, “a whole series of cultural initiatives which are to be found mainly, though not exclusively, outside the institutions higher education, or on their extra mural fringes” (Samuel 1981, p. XV). Samuel (1981, p. XV) stated how ‘people’s history’ has been known under other names at other points in history, some of the terms include; industrial history, natural history, cultural history. Samuel strove to develop a method for history recording that would encourage the collective participation of a group rather than just one individual. Scott-Brown (2017, p. 110) wrote, “he wanted to do this in a manner that showed respect for their innate intelligence and made them into active participants in the learning process; giving them the confidence to become producers of history.”
The History Workshop approach to collecting oral histories involved a style of group participation. The workshops would be centred around various topics and the testimonies of individuals present for said events would be recorded. These workshops began conversations and debates regarding history, providing a new perspective for people to consider. The earliest workshops were based at Ruskin College and were led by the workshop participants (Administrator of History Workshop, 2012). The HWM was developed at an interesting time in Britain's history with the country experiencing the beginning of the student movement, the formation of the New Left, the emergence of Trade Union militancy, and the rise of the Women’s Liberation Movement (Administrator of History Workshop, 2012). The formation of these groups as well as others led to the desire for a new history. The efforts of the HWM both uncovered hidden histories and expanded the capacity of historical documentation and observation. When the information was successfully generated from the initial workshops, the idea arose to create a journal around the movement. This became the History Workshop Journal, which was formed in 1976 and remains an active online publication, providing an outlet for radical history (Oxford Academic, 2022). The HWM’s peak was during the 1970s and by this time the movement had spread throughout Britain and beyond, forming sister organisations internationally in Germany, France, Italy, South Africa and America (Administrator of History Workshop, 2012).

4.3 London’s own Centre

Based on various articles found in the BIA the idea for a London-specific History Workshop Centre had been discussed amongst members of both History Workshop and History Workshop Journal. The formation of the LHWC came at a time of change as the national history workshops were beginning to decrease in number as many operations ceased. The reason for HWM’s end is stated by the Administrator of History Workshop (2012), “It is impossible to answer this question briefly, but certain factors were obviously important. The rise of Thatcherism; the decline of organised labour; the collapse of a popular Left; the intellectual challenges posed by European Marxism: by the 1980s all these were undermining the left-wing populism which had been at the heart of the History Workshop”. Despite the slowing of the national history workshop, a proposal for the LHWC was put forth by the following: author Mary Chamberlain, historian Anna Davin, feminist academic and campaigner Mary Kennedy, author Rodney Mace, historian and author Jerry White, and historian Raphael Samuel (London History Workshop Centre, No Date).
The proposal for the formation of the LHWC declared that the Centre, first and foremost, was meant to be a sound archive, housing the various oral history projects that each of the founding members set out to accomplish. Additionally, the Centre aimed to be a location for advanced learning for all Londoners (London History Workshop Centre, No Date). The hope was to make any recordings of oral histories available to the public. The Centre sought funding through grant applications and support from various organisations in London. The initial funding plan for the Centre was to be provided by grants with the intention of progressing towards charging membership fees in order to sustainably fund the Centre after the initial years. The Centre also proposed its first project for the inaugural year of 1982, which was to run a summer school in partnership with the London District of the Workers Educational Association (London History Workshop Centre, No Date). The program was named ‘Time on the Thames’ and was described by the London History Workshop Centre (No Date) to include, “...as many Londoners as possible”, so that they “will be encouraged to attend the courses, seminars, events and entertainments on a wide variety of themes and focuses related to the history of London's river”. In addition to this first educational plan several oral history projects were also proposed, these included: The Re-making of London 1919-70, Popular Movements 1900-1980, From Employment to Unemployment: The Restructuring of Jobs in London 1945-80, London's People, or: We Are All Immigrants Here, Manuscripts and Diaries (London History Workshop Centre, No Date).

With sufficient funds and approval, the LHWC opened by appointment for members of the public in 1982 at the Mary Ward Centre in Queen Square. Various letters of correspondence found in the History Workshop collection at the BIA showed evidence that the first few years of projects were successful. The Sound Archive worked on projects of their own initiative as well as collected and deposited duplicate tapes from oral history projects conducted at other institutions. Additional oral history research projects were completed and promoted publicly as set out by the original aims of the organisation. By 1984, the Centre opened its doors fully to the public, allowing researchers and visitors to view exhibitions and use the archive and library. The founding members and others who had involvement in the UK’s oral history community helped to operate the Centre and generate exhibitions and programs. One of the largest projects the Centre helped gain information for was the TV special called ‘Making of Modern London’, produced by London Weekend
Television and aired in 1986 (BFI, No Date). The Centre expanded over the years to include a separate section apart from the sound archive that included video interviews.

4.3.1 Key Figures

As previously noted, some of the key figures throughout the formative years (1982-1990) of the LHWC were Mary Chamberlain, Anna Davin, Jerry White, and Rodney Mace. Based on correspondence and letters of support at BIA, author Mary Chamberlain was the Centre’s first director and later became its secretary. Chamberlain, a well-known author of both fiction and non-fiction, was involved with the LHWC throughout the majority of its lifetime as an organisation. Another key figure in the Centre’s creation and upkeep was known historian Jerry White. In early letters of support for the creation of the Centre found at BIA, White’s name appears several times asking for support. In the council of management meeting minutes, White appears to have attended many meetings and remained involved with many of the oral history projects and exhibitions. White was the last of the founding members to leave the organisation. Rodney Mace, author of several non-fiction works, was another founding member who was involved for many years, even acting as director for the Centre at one point. Historian Anna Davin and oral historian Joanna Bornat were two other notable oral historians involved with the Centre.

Raphael Samuel was also involved in the formation of the LHWC. Based on evidence in the History Workshop Archive at BIA, Samuel lent his name in support of the LHWC’s formation. Despite this early support, once the centre opened, Samuel’s involvement lessened, with his name absent from those present at council of management meetings along with various notes explicitly stating that he would not be in attendance at Centre events. Samuel did continue to help the Centre by collecting oral histories that would be part of the Sound Archive. Another historian who became involved with the Centre was Doc Rowe, a well-known documenter of English folklore, song, dance, and cultural traditions (Adams and Herron, No Date). Previous to his work with the Centre, Rowe, who was active in collecting oral histories, worked with Anna Davin and Raphael Samuel on an acclaimed project called the People’s Autobiography of Hackney (Doc Rowe Archive and Collection, 2012). Although not a council of management member, in 1985, Rowe was hired as the director for the Centre and would remain in that position until the Centre’s closure.
4.3.2 Closure

Based on numerous letters of correspondence in the LHWC Archive at the BIA, towards the end of 1988, the Centre began to fall on hard times. While the main goal of continuing to collect and archive projects proceeded, the Centre was running out of storage space for the recorded tapes. The Centre began a search for an affordable, new off-site location for its storage, which it eventually found. Despite this success, the Centre faced a growing number of problems, one of which was that an increasing number of the founding members began to miss meetings, resign from their positions at the Centre and even, in some cases, cease involvement with no warning. Financially, the Centre was in an equally poor position and, based on evidence in the BIA, concerns over funding began to mount as membership fees dwindled. According to letters found in the BIA, a major source of the Centre's funding was the Greater London Grant Scheme who, devastatingly for the Centre, cut a large portion of its funding to the Centre in 1988. A portion of the funding was granted after Jerry White appealed to the Greater London Grant Scheme. Issues with funding continued and by December of 1990 an emergency meeting was held to decide what should happen with the Centre and Sound Archive. Ultimately, the LHWC’s doors shuttered in 1991 due to the financial woes that prevented it from maintaining the upkeep and storage of its collected materials.

Although the records of the LHWC at the BIA hold a large number of materials - particularly of the founding and first few years of the organisation’s creation - not surprisingly little is detailed about the closure of the Centre. At the time of research, there was no documentation found to indicate why the sound archive was donated to the MOL nor was there any correspondence and other informational documentation donated to the BIA. A representative for the MOL does appear as in attendance in some of the later meeting minutes and one letter, concerning the takeover, stated that they were to be present with Director Doc Rowe and Centre librarian Rosemary Dixon for the transferral of materials. In 1992, The MOL officially acquired the LHWC Sound Archive.

4.4 Museum of London Oral History Work

After researching the history of the LHWC, the next step in my research involved taking a closer look and listening to various individual subcollections of the LHWC
collection. This initial process was done in order to determine if the oral histories could be used by the MOL in any manner. The most effective way to begin this process was to investigate the bibliographic information associated with those oral histories. To assist, I was provided an Excel sheet containing the exported record shells from the Mimsy, the MOL’s collection management software. These records contained both the names of individual participants as well as the accession number associated with their audio recordings. Using this information, I searched to find out if the individuals were living. If they were living, I looked for their current contact information and, if they had passed away, I looked for the contact information of their living relatives. Due to the time constraints of the research period, only three subcollections of my choice were analysed. These subcollections were named: Exploring Living Memory, Communism and Feminism, and Who Needs Women Drivers. In strict accordance with the ethical guidelines, no contact was made with any of the individuals uncovered during the research. Additionally, in order to maintain confidentiality for the majority of the individuals, I will not refer to them by their names in this paper but rather refer to them by the accession number for their corresponding record. Those individuals that are named are those who are considered in the public domain, such as notable historians and those who have published using the information from the oral history records.
Chapter 5: Results

5.1 Exploring Living Memory

5.1.1 Subcollection Information

The Exploring Living Memory Workshop (ELM) was a showcase and festival that revolved around reminiscence work, taking place on occasion throughout the 1980s. Reminiscence work as defined by Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland (No Date) is, “...a person-centred method of working which can improve a person’s emotional well-being by facilitating personal growth and reducing psychological distress”. Oral history work and reminiscence work go hand-in-hand as they are both used to share and preserve important life stories. This specific subcollection of the LHWC recordings was taken in the fall of 1987 during the ELM festival, which was held at County Hall in London (London History Workshop Centre, 1990). The festival centred around various life history projects and reminiscence work based in London. A variety of recordings were done on reminiscence work, recording oral histories publishing, songs, family history and reminiscence drama. According to the London History Workshop Centre (1990) all sessions were recorded by the Centre and submitted to Greater London Arts.

5.1.2 What was analysed

Upon deciding to look at this collection, I had no prior knowledge of what reminiscence work was. The objective of reminiscence work is to unlock various memories from an individual's life in order to recall events, an activity that can often be used as a healing tool. While oral history work is similarly used to record life stories, oral histories are often collected through a more prepared method than reminiscence work. Oral history participants will have prior knowledge of what questions they will be asked during the interview with the intention of having these participants consider the questions beforehand. Alternatively, reminiscence work employs various triggers such as activities and conversation in order to help the individual recall memory, and this is a key difference between oral history work and reminiscence work (Reminiscence Network Northern Ireland, No Date).
choosing this collection, I hoped the recordings would contain interesting stories using reminiscence work techniques.

Finding bibliographic information for this collection proved to be challenging. As the ELM collection was the first collection analysed, I did not have an established process for searching for information. I began by using what participant information was provided in the Excel sheet from the MOL and searched, using Google, for the individuals based on their names and the search term: ‘Exploring Living Memory 1987’. This preliminary search method was moderately successful, resulting in the discovery of some information such as the participants’ occupations. This information, in turn, helped me to expand my search further; however, once this approach ceased to be as useful, I turned to listening to the oral history recordings themselves.

By listening to the recordings I hoped to gain more information about the individual, allowing me to expand my search terms and eventually learn more about the individual participants listed in the MOL’s Excel sheet. The group of recordings, however, proved to be unhelpful in this regard. The recordings, rather than being individual life stories or group stories, turned out to be recordings of the various informational sessions at the ELM exhibition in 1987. Those listed as participants were in fact the speakers and leaders of events rather than individual participants providing their life stories.

5.1.3 Findings and Recommendations for the subcollection

Based on my findings, through both listening to the oral history recordings and searching for the bibliographic information about those involved with the creating the recordings, I would classify this subcollection as needing more research. For the 11 records contained in this subcollection, only one full record of information, including date and place of birth, date and place of death, occupation, and information on possible descendants was located. In the remainder of the collection, I was able to uncover some contact or additional information notes for 3 out 11 individuals. This information could help a future researcher or museum employee locate the more information on participants. Additionally, I located 4 out of 11 participants' occupation information. While some bibliographic data was located, based on the limited information collected, I would recommend that further research into these individuals be performed in order to obtain a better understanding of this subcollection.
As the majority of recordings consisted mainly of recorded conference lectures, the information surrounding such topics could be considered out of date as there have been changes in the literature with the introduction of new methods and practices. However, use of these recordings to compare past and present practices in reminiscence techniques could in fact be an area for future research. One recording that was particularly interesting in this collection was 2010.48/1192 as it was research in practice. In this specific recording the researcher used songs to invoke memories for the elderly participants, beginning by briefly discussing a topic such as growing up in poverty which would then lead to a song related to poverty in the early 20th century. The participants, anonymous in the study, would join in singing if they knew the song, following this, individual experiences were shared in relation to the song or theme. This method for memory triggering was captivating and showed the connection between music and generation. New research possibilities for both the MOL and researchers could be found through this recording. This recording in particular could be useful in future research relating to memory and music. Additionally, the stories of the participants could be of interest to researchers interested in songs of the 20th century.

5.2 Communism and Feminism

5.2.1 Subcollection Information

The Communism and Feminism subcollection of recordings were collected between 1975 and 1980. These recordings were not directly collected by the LHWC, but by a single researcher, Sue Bruley. This research was done as part of the fulfilment of Bruley’s doctoral thesis and later published (Bruley, 1986). The recordings are specifically about the experiences of women who were involved in the Communist Party of Great Britain between WWI and WWII. The research had two goals according to the London History Workshop Centre (1990): the first was to understand the daily lives of the women involved in the Communist Party of Great Britain and the second was to look closely at the Communist Party’s beliefs regarding feminist issues. These issues included but were not limited to: equal pay, birth control, peace, trade union struggles, health, and the anti-fascist movement (London History Workshop Centre, 1990). This subcollection is intriguing as it recounts a part of British history that has been traditionally and predominantly male-focused. Although some men were interviewed in this subcollection, it also contains additional important
interviews with notable suffragettes as well as women in the Labour party contemporaneous to them.

I chose to analyse this subcollection after reading its description in the London History Workshop Centre (1990) and based on the possibility of hearing distinct stories about the lives of women and some men involved in the Communist Party during the interwar years. In addition, as this collection had been donated to the LHWC, I was hopeful that more biographical information would be available to contribute to the bibliographic data needed to better investigate the copyright and data protection risks associated with this subcollection.

5.2.2 What was analysed

I took a different approach to the one used with ELM to analyse this subcollection. Rather than initially Google searching for the bibliographic information, I began by looking at the transcripts for the subcollection. As this subcollection was much larger than ELM and research time for listening to the oral histories was limited, a primary search of the transcripts seemed necessary. Many of the subcollections contained in the LHWC overall collection do not have transcriptions in either digital or hard copy. As this subcollection was originally produced in the 1980s and donated to the LHWC, the transcripts for the majority of the recordings had already been transcribed and were presumably donated with the sound recordings at the time of donation. While this dissertation champions the use of listening to oral histories, audiobooks, and podcasts, a preliminary search of the transcripts proved to be helpful in locating the bibliographic data needed. Important information such as the birthdates and birthplaces of the participant were listed at the top of more than half of the transcripts. Some of the transcripts also had the date of death included. Finding this information immediately was extremely helpful in compiling the bibliographic data needed and to provide more information surrounding participants of this project. Following my preliminary search of the transcripts, I began to search online for the participants using their name and birthdate as well a key words such as ‘communist’, ‘Communist Party Great Britain’, and ‘feminism’, in an attempt to locate more information about the individuals.

Having more information to start with made finding more information on the lives of the individuals more accessible. As not all transcripts were available to search through, I then turned to listening to the oral histories. Starting with those that I had not read through, I again
was able to capture basic bibliographic data such as birthdate, birth place, and occupation. Once more, using the basic information helped me to again search for further information on the individuals.

5.2.3 Findings

This subcollection was particularly interesting to search as I was able to uncover more information, not just bibliographically but of interesting life stories as well. There were 48 participant records analysed through the mix of reading transcripts and listening to the oral histories in this subcollection. In terms of the bibliographic data, I was able to uncover some of the more important information that could help the MOL to ultimately determine the copyright and data protection status over the records.

One factor for determining these statuses is knowing if the individual participant is still living. For the 48 records, I was able to determine 22 of the records as confirmed deceased and 22 of them as likely deceased. For the remaining 4 interviews, I was unable to gather any bibliographic data as the participant’s full name was either not given or the transcript or recording could not be located. Those who were determined as likely deceased were given this status based on the information of their birthdates. I was able to locate the birthdates of 44 out of the 48 participants, the exception again being the 4 records with no information at all. This collection was created in the late 1970s when the majority of the participants were already elderly, with birth dates from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. 22 out of the 48 participants were listed as likely deceased, likely assumed based on their birthdate information. 36 out of the 48 participants in this collection were people who identified as female. The remaining 12 participants were those who identified as male and, in most cases, were included in the interviews as spouses who were also members of the Communist Party. Further research pertaining to the occupation data of these participants could be carried out. Due to the time constraints for this project, I was unable to listen to all oral history recordings fully. The discovery of bibliographic information was prioritised alongside listening for interesting stories pertaining to interwar feminism and the Communist Party of Great Britain.

There were many stories of interest in this subcollection but only a few to be highlighted by this dissertation. The childhood of 2010.48/176 is a detailed account of what it
was like to grow up with two communist parents from Russia, who had immigrated to the UK. Growing up on the Eastside of London, they experienced a more industrial childhood as did many of the participants in this collection. Raised as a young communist this person was present for the founding of their local branch of the Youth Communist League in 1924.

Another story of interest was 2010.48/196. While this story did not take place in London, this oral history still fulfils the MOL’s interest in social history and could be used as a guiding resource for other researchers in the future. This oral history was interesting as it described what it was like to be a woman working for the Communist Party in Wales. Having grown up in a rural but still industrial mining area, this person's story of joining the Communist Party and working actively for their branch is both interesting and insightful to what a woman’s experience in the Communist Party of Wales was like.

The final story of note was 2010.48/167. This oral history was provided by one of two notable interwar feminist activists. This woman spoke about her involvement with the League of Nations Union. She was one of Britain’s Women’s righteous pioneers and was even present at a peace conference after WWII. As this is a first-hand account of this woman’s life and experience this oral history is unique and could be used by the Museum in future exhibitions or for further research.

5.2.4 Recommendations for the subcollection

Based on the information that was discovered in these oral histories as well as online, more research is needed in order to better understand the issues of copyright and data protection surrounding this subcollection. For this subcollection, the significant amount of bibliographic data that was uncovered through my research will better assist the next researcher or museum employee dealing with these recordings to assess the issues associated with the subcollection. Additionally, as I was unable to trace any living relatives of the participants from this subcollection, consequently more research into this will be necessary in order to allow the Museum to effectively use this subcollection in the future. In order to clearly understand the circumstances of copyright and data protection surrounding this collection I would recommend that the MOL contact the original researcher. A record for Bruley was not included in the Excel sheet provided to me by the MOL, but I was able to determine that she is contactable. Both contacting her as well as including a record for her in
the Museum records could be beneficial to future research as well as future developments with this subcollection.

Though only a few oral histories of note were listed, this collection is extremely special as it provides an in-depth look into the lives of women and some men and their involvement in the Communist Party during the turbulent interwar years. The emphasis on interwar feminism and the Communist Party is a specific, niche topic with many possibilities for further research. Beyond the further research, the information from the personal experiences in this collection may also be found useful as a possible aid in museum exhibitions, blog posts, or maybe even a podcast. Overall, I am hopeful that more could be done with this subcollection but further steps to gain a better understanding of it will first be needed.

5.3 Who Needs Women Drivers?

5.3.1 Subcollection Information

The final subcollection analysed was “Who Needs Women Drivers?”. The interviews in this subcollection takes a closer look at the lives of the women who contributed to the transportation industry in London. These interviews were conducted by London Television Workshop. Information on who London Television Workshop (LTW) were has been difficult to locate but based on various documents at the BIA, LTW was based out of the same location at the LHWC and may have been a part of the LHWC collecting video oral histories. The subcollection description in the London History Workshop Centre (1990) states that ten interviews were conducted both on video as well as by tape recorder and were used for a Channel Four program that was broadcast in 1986. At the time of research, the location of the video recordings of these interviews is unknown, but oral history sound tapes remain a part of the LHWC collection. This subcollection was chosen out of curiosity of the hybrid oral history collection method. As the original production was specifically designed for video rather than a direct oral history, I was interested to see if the information in the audio recordings would be understandable without the accompanying video.
5.3.2 What was analysed

Given the success of looking for the bibliographic data in the transcripts of the Communism and Feminism subcollection and as this subcollection had some transcripts available, the now-familiar method of first searching for bibliographic information in the transcripts was again used. The transcripts for this collection differed from the traditional oral history transcript. As these transcripts were more of a film script that coincided with the video recording, important participant information was missing from the documentation. After the search for bibliographic information in the transcripts was complete, I began a new search for further bibliographic information by listening to the recordings. Following this, I made Google searches in order to find more information on the participants. Participant names and any other information that was uncovered through reading and listening paired with search terms such as ‘London Transport’, ‘bus’, ‘London Underground’, and ‘British Rail’ aided in uncovering more information on the individuals.

5.3.3 Findings

The results for this section were different from the previous two subcollections that were analysed. There were 17 records in the Excel sheet provided by the MOL’s collection management software. I added in an 18th record for this collection because one interview, 2010.48.1320, was listed as one person but in fact was two people. The person who is already listed in the museum software spoke less than the second person who was not listed. This second person gave the majority of the biographical information I was searching for and therefore I chose to include this person in my final results with their own record. A note of this was made in the Excel sheet so when updated later by the MOL staff, this information can be added to the individual record. Looking for the biographical information for this collection was again more difficult to find. The majority of the interviews began with the participants speaking mid-sentence, cutting out the customary background questions that are normally asked at the beginning of interviews. The basic information that was located included: 5 out of 18 places of birth and 6 out of 18 dates of birth. The search for information related to possible death dates and places was less successful. However, this result is not surprising. Many of the participants in this subcollection were either younger at the time of interview or single women and therefore could have changed their names upon marrying. In
total only 2 out of 18 dates of death were located and 1 of these records relates to the participant information that was added to the Excel sheet.

One aspect of bibliographical information successfully uncovered in these interviews was that of occupation. Since this collection dealt specifically with information surrounding occupation, 17 out of 18 descriptions of occupation were discovered. The occupational data contained in this subcollection was interesting as it showed the diversity of job positions for women working for London Transport at various times in the last 100 years. Jobs ranged from advertising marketers to canteen workers, to bus and Underground drivers, to digital information assistants.

As this subcollection covered such a specific group of women, there were again many interesting stories. The first of note was 2010.48/1326. This participant gave a fascinating account of what it was like to work for the London buses during WWI. This participant was an early conductress and spoke of what it was like to be a woman in this role during this time period. From learning how to calculate ticket prices quickly to dealing with difficult customers, this interview provided a first-hand account of the experience of the early days of women working in the transportation industry. Another interesting interview along similar lines was 2010.48/1323. In this interview the participant gave a detailed account of what it was like to work for the bus service during both World Wars. She described how attitudes towards women working on the buses changed between the two wars, as well as what it was like to be one of the first women to join a transportation union. The final interesting story that stood out was 2010.48/1316. This oral history was given by a young woman working as a digital information assistant for the London Underground rail system. This meant that she was helping communicate information to the controllers of the Underground as they assisted drivers to navigate and avoid disruptions with other lines. What stood out most in this interview was hearing about how this position was a newer job with the London Underground and how the technology for navigation was just then changing.

5.3.4 Recommendations for the subcollection

The various life stories that can be found in this subcollection are extremely interesting and unique as they were recorded with a wide range of experiences and jobs included. However, based on the absence of information pertaining to the bibliographic data of participating individuals, this collection could be a higher risk regarding copyright and
data protection. The collection would benefit from further study not only for the participant information but also for information about the interviewers as well. The names of the interviewer, original researcher as well as the film director were stored with one of the transcripts for this subcollection. As time was limited, further research into these individuals was not undertaken. In the interest of confidentiality the names of these individuals will be excluded from this dissertation but have been provided to the MOL. It is the recommendation of this dissertation that further research for the contact information of the original interviewer, researcher, and other film crew members may be beneficial in locating more information pertaining to this subcollection.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

Listening to information can be just as powerful as reading information. Prior to the invention of written language, the use of orality and oral storytelling was the primary way humans communicated. The invention of written communication changed significantly how humans communicate. Rather than sharing information through the medium of the voice, text-based documents and documentation became the most established form of information storage and retrieval. Literacy however, as Ong and Hartley (2012) stated, cannot exist without orality. The term document has frequently been associated with the written word, but through the evolution of document theory, this definition has expanded the scope of what can be considered a document. The informational content contained within a physical medium extends the definition of what constitutes a document to include audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories. Each type of audio recording delivers information in its own way, whether it be for education or solely for enjoyment. Buckland (2014) stated, “In addition to considering possible documentary properties of objects not ordinarily considered documents, we also need to consider how our ideas about documents may need to evolve to accommodate technologies”. In this era, our ever-evolving technology has and will continue to redefine documentation to include more audio-based recordings.

Oral histories are a unique form of documentation. Though originally contested by traditional historians, oral history theory has become acknowledged as a viable form of information collection. The rise of oral history collection in Britain happened at a time of technological, political, and social change. The HWM at Ruskin College of Oxford emerged during this time, collecting history in a new kind of way. Raphael Samuel, principle founder of the HWM, championed the collection of people’s history or ‘history from below’. This method put a great emphasis on collecting oral histories from ordinary people. The LHWC, open from 1982 until 1990, held this value in the oral histories they collected and deposited throughout their existence. Based on evidence in the BIA, the loss of funding and member interest caused the closure of the LHWC.

This dissertation looked closely at three of the subcollections contained within the larger LHWC collection at the MOL in order to begin a risk assessment of the collection. This assessment was necessary as much of the legal paperwork and information relating to this collection, at the time of research, had not been located in the archive files of the MOL.
The three subcollections analysed were different in subject, length, and era. Based on my examination of these subcollections, the LHWC collection will need to be further analysed before any information is made publicly available. This recommendation comes following a thorough search for bibliographic data in relation to the three subcollections. Further research could be undertaken by contacting old members and researchers for the LHWC, contacting other archives that also hold the LHWC information, and continuing the search for the interview consent forms, as well as any further information that could lead to more information surrounding the copyright and data protection clearance needed to share these unique stories with the wider public.
Chapter 7: Reflection

Working on this dissertation over the last few months has been extremely satisfying to complete and I am very proud of the work that I have accomplished. As with any such research undertaking there were highs and lows throughout the process but ultimately, I am happy with where the research ended. Comparing the final dissertation to my original project proposal, I was able to largely complete all of the research aims that I had proposed. My first research aim was to look at the documentality of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories which was an extremely large undertaking as I knew it would be. This resulted in a broad literature review which highlighted the potential for further research into the three audio document types.

My second aim, in short, was determining if the LHWC collection should be made publicly available. This aim was more difficult to complete, and the ultimate answer is that more information is needed. As each of the subcollections, even those beyond what was studied in this dissertation, are unique, more time and energy will need to be spent researching not only the bibliographic information about the participants but also further information on the collection’s transfer to the MOL. The third aim of my original project proposal, researching to gain a comprehensive understanding of the LHWC, was what I thought would be the most attainable aim. While more research into the finer details of the organisation’s operations is possible, the overview provided by this dissertation was sufficient for contributing a better understanding of what the LHWC was and to shine a light on some of the projects they were involved in. I also felt that I was able to complete my fourth aim, that of discovering stories within the oral history subcollections. Looking back at my research methods for searching for the individual information on the interviewees, I would have allocated more than one month for listening to the oral histories themselves. Though I was able to identify many interesting stories, there were many more in the subcollection that I regret not hearing in full.

The dissemination of information is an important part of any research project since it also saves future researchers from undertaking the same research twice. As this project was carried out in collaboration with the MOL, I intend not only to share the information internally with the Museum, but hopefully to publish a portion in a post on the MOL’s blog.
Finally, I hope to share this dissertation in the #CityLIS Humanities Commons repository, where future students and users can read and learn from this research.
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Bibliography


Appendix 1: Original Project Proposal

Kaili Smith
INM367

Dissertation Proposal

Working title (subject to change):
All Ears: An examination of the important information contained in audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories with extended research into the London History Workshop Center oral history collection in collaboration with the Museum of London.

Introduction
In modern culture, receiving listening recommendations is commonplace. Podcasts and audiobooks have become popular pastimes that allow the user to enjoy and obtain information by listening. Listening to receive information is not a new phenomenon, cultures have been passing on stories continually for hundreds of years through oral storytelling tradition. In modern times, capturing voice in order to share information is a valuable part of modern communication. Beyond audiobooks and podcasts, the recording of oral histories is a powerful tool used to document and share firsthand accounts of events and preserve an understanding of traditions. Consuming information through devices gives weight to the argument that listening is as valuable as reading. My interest in audiobooks (and more recently podcasts) started during my childhood and has continued to grow since working in libraries. Through both my love of listening to stories and my experiences working with them in museums over the last few years, I have become curious about oral histories and storytelling tradition. For this reason, I wish to complete my dissertation requirement by taking a closer look at the importance of these three information sources: audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories. The full scope of my dissertation will have four primary aims.

The first aim will be to examine audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories using document theory. From this, I hope to highlight the information that sound recordings provide and their importance not only in library and information science but other information institutions such as galleries, archives, and museums (GLAM) as well. The last three aims of this dissertation will focus on the London History Workshop oral history archive at the Museum of London. After reaching out to the Museum of London and expressing my interest in completing a dissertation project dealing with oral histories, I was put in touch with Museum of London digital curator, Foetini Aravani. Together we discussed a project that would be both beneficial to the museum and of interest to my dissertation requirement. The second aim of this project is to determine whether or not the London History Workshop Collection should be made available to the public via the Museum of London website. The third aim of this project will be to study the London History Workshop at an organizational level in order to provide the Museum of London with a more comprehensive understanding of this part of their oral history archive. Lastly, the fourth aim of this project will be to listen and examine a select number of oral histories in this collection, both extracting valuable data from the recordings and identifying potential stories of interest for use in future exhibitions at the Museum of London. The main methods of research that will be used to complete this dissertation will be both extended desk and archival research.

There are a number of facets to the project that excite me. The first is the opportunity to take an in-depth look at audio recordings and their place in the world of information. The
second is the opportunity to work with the Museum of London to explore this relatively unexamined collection and assist them to open up the possibilities for future research.

Aims and Objectives

As previously mentioned, this project consists of four primary aims that are supported by the completion of an assortment of minor objectives. The first aim will be to look at the documentality of audio devices such as audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories. The first step, in order to understand the informational value that these recordings provide, will be to examine the idea of what defines a document and how these audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories should be considered as documents. Following this, I plan to examine the history of audio recordings, from oral story-telling traditions to the modern advent of podcasting. By considering both the way in which audio recordings are a type of document and understanding their broader history, I plan to highlight the value and function of this type of communication for both library and information science, and information communication in connected galleries, archives, and museums (GLAM). Though large in scope, my first aim to observe document theory and the history of audio recordings will assist in the completion of the remainder of the dissertation project’s aims.

Beyond document theory, the second aim of this dissertation will be to aid the Museum of London (MOL) in determining if the London History Workshop (LHW) oral history archive should be made available online to the general public. While access to these recordings may be requested, the collections have not been made available online for use by the general public. I plan to accomplish this second aim by breaking the project down into two attainable objectives: gaining an in-depth understanding of the London History Workshop Centre’s history at an organizational level and looking more closely at the various oral histories in the collection at an item level.

When the LHW donated its extensive oral history collection to the Museum of London, little information about the organization itself was given to the museum. To uncover the history of the LHW, I will go to the archives at the Bishopsgate Institute where this group’s information is housed. Looking through their records, I will plan to learn more about the LHW goals as an organization, how they operated, and some of the main figures involved with the group. Using the information housed in the archive, I plan to gain sufficient enough knowledge about the LHW that will help determine if the collection should be made publicly available. This will complete the third aim of this project of providing a comprehensive understanding of LHW’s history to the Museum of London.

The second objective will be to look more closely at the various oral histories in the collection at an item level. The LHW collection at the Museum of London has “3,000 hours of taped interviews recorded by the London History Workshop Centre between 1982 and 1990” (Museum of London, 2022). Since there will not be enough time to look at all the oral histories, I plan to choose from 2-4 topics and listen to the recordings for those selected topics. This will contribute to the second aim as it will provide me with an understanding about whether the information should be shared to the public. During this process, I will record informational data from the sound recording and input it into a template that was shared with me by the Museum of London. This item level extraction of information will help to create a more searchable list of people, places, and events; possibly leading to further research as to whether this information could be made publicly available. Furthermore, extracting informational data at an item level and the subsequent understanding of what is contained in the individual oral histories will aid in answering questions of copyright and data protection. The item level study will also contribute to accomplishing my fourth aim of identifying interesting stories that could have the potential to be used by the Museum of London in future exhibits. The inclusion of sound and audio into an exhibition will enhance
the user’s experience. Due to time constraints, I will only be able to listen to a select few oral histories, potentially identifying certain individual stories that would be worth repeating to the public in an exhibit.

**Scope and definition**

The scope of this dissertation, while seemingly a larger task on paper, will be fully attainable through thoughtful time management, and diligent research. Alongside checking in with my dissertation supervisor, Foetini Aravani has agreed to be a point person of contact from the MOL for this project. We intend to meet once a month to discuss updates and new developments as they occur. If she is unavailable during the summer, as she will take annual leave, I will be able to contact another member at MOL.

The important terms to define for this dissertation are the various types of audio recordings. Audiobooks as defined by “Audiobook” (2022) are, “a recording of a book or magazine being read aloud”. Podcasts are defined as, “a program (as of music or talk) made available in digital format for automatic download over the Internet” ("Podcast", 2022 ). The key difference between these two documents is that audiobooks are based on a print based source while podcasts are more flexible as to the content and information that is recorded. Oral histories are defined by the Oral History Association (2019) as, “a field of study and a method of gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities, and participants in past events”.

**Research context/literature review**

As this dissertation is a collaboration with the Museum of London, the research context will help the museum to better understand the LHW Collection and if the collection should be made available for public use. The literature review will reflect on the subjects of document theory, the brief history of audio recordings, and information about the London History Workshop organization.

**Methodology**

This project will consist of both extended desk and archival research to accomplish its aims. The first research method will be a type of desk research known as content analysis. Luo (2019) defines content analysis as, “a research method used to identify patterns in recorded communication”. This type of desk research will allow me to investigate the documentary nature of audiobooks, podcasts, and oral histories as it will allow me to look through what has been published and support my research. Additionally, this method will be instrumental in learning the history of oral storytelling tradition and audio recordings.

The second type of research this dissertation will use will be archival research. Ventresca and Mohr (2017) describe the archival research method as, “...those that involve the study of historical documents; that is, documents created at some point in the relatively distant past, providing us access that we might not otherwise have to the organizations, individuals, and events of that earlier time”. To learn about the LHW at an organizational level, the use of archival research is necessary. As the majority of the known history for the organization is housed at the Bishopsgate Institute, I will need to access these records to accomplish the task of learning more about the LHW organization. I am hoping that the information contained in this archive will give a clear and thorough explanation of the organization, the key members, and main goals of the organization. I will also use archival research to examine the LHW oral history collection owned by the Museum of London. The act of going through the oral histories at an item level in order to extract information will
require archival research as the collection itself is archived. These research methods will be used to accomplish the aims of this dissertation.

Data management is an important aspect to any research project to ensure continued use. As most of my research files will be my own notes, with the possible addition of requested copies of print information from various archives, I plan to store the information in an organized directory on my google drive. By keeping the information in the cloud, I will have access to the information whenever I need to add to or make changes. Additionally, I plan to purchase and keep a downloaded backup of the files on a usb thumb drive. At the conclusion of my project, as the majority of the information I am seeking will be passed on to the Museum of London, I will share downloaded copies of the data collected on a thumb drive with the museum staff members who I will be directly working with.

**Dissemination**

To share the work done on this dissertation, I plan to deposit a copy of my work in the CityLIS area of the Humanities Commons website. Another possibility to share my work will be to write a blog post for the Museum of London websites. Further sharing of this project will be discussed as the project progresses.

**Resources**

As this project will be based in desk and archival research, the first resource that I will require will be City University's library to help with information to support my literature review. The second resource I will need is to gain access to the LHW archive at Bishopsgate Institute. It is possible that access to other libraries and archives may be needed to complete my research; however, at the time of writing this proposal the City University Library and Bishopsgate Institute archive are the two main resources I plan to use. Additional resources needed will be the use of Microsoft offices suite or Google docs in order to access and edit the template for information input that MOL will share with me. In terms of travel expenses, I plan to use my own bicycle for transportation. Should there be any unforeseen issues with this I set aside £25 to use on traveling.

**Work plan**

The dates provided in this work plan may be subject to change depending on MOL staff annual leave. The research for this dissertation will take place in two main parts. For the first half of the summer from the start of June to the start of July, I plan to split my time equally researching both observing document theory and studying the history of audio recordings as well as visiting the Bishopsgate Institute’s archive and other locations if need be to research LHW at an organizational level. I feel that in working full time I will be able to complete enough research and carry out a sufficient literature review.

The second portion of the research, going through the Museum of London LHW oral history collection at an item level will take place from the start of July to the end of August. This will allow me enough time to listen and look closely at various oral histories as well as extract some of the important information contained within each recording. As Foetini Aravani, curator for the Museum of London will be my point of contact with the museum we have discussed meeting at least once a month to check in and catch up on how the research is progressing. I will use the month of September to solidify my writing and polish the dissertation in order to submit by October 3, 2022.
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<th>Task</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dissertation project</td>
<td>30/05/2022</td>
<td>03/10/2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting with Foteini Aravani at the MOL</td>
<td>Week of May 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studying Document Theory and History of audio recordings</td>
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<td>Organizational level study of LHW</td>
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<td>Monthly meeting with MOL</td>
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<td>Item level study of LHW oral histories</td>
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<td>Monthly meeting with MOL</td>
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<td>Monthly meeting with MOL</td>
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<td>Complete writing, polishing, and submitting the dissertation</td>
<td>01/09/2022</td>
<td>03/10/2022</td>
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<td>Monthly meeting with MOL</td>
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**Ethics and Confidentiality**

As with all research, there are always ethical implications to consider. Ultimately this project is of low risk. The ethical concerns surrounding this project deal with the information shared in some of the oral histories. When listening to various oral histories I am not sure what kinds of personal information may have been shared. Some stories could be deeply personal, and as I will be recording basic information such as birth, death, and name there are ethical considerations surrounding the recording of these names if these individuals are still living. However, it is common when providing an oral history to sign a consent form stating that the institution acquiring the oral history has licence over the contents. As this project aims to identify if these stories can be shared on a wider level it will be possible to note any possible recordings of concern. Also as the data with personal information that I intended to extract is already in possession of the Museum of London and I will not be sharing any of this personal data in the dissertation to keep the confidentiality of those individuals until public access to the information has been determined.
References


**Research Ethics Review Form: CityLIS dissertation projects**

CityLIS students undertaking their dissertation project are required to consider the ethics of their project work and to ensure that it complies with research ethics guidelines. Usually approval will be given by the supervisor, but in some cases a project will need approval from an ethics committee before it can proceed.

In order to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to ethical issues, all students must complete this form and attach it to their dissertation proposal. There are two parts:

**PART A: Ethics Checklist.** All students must complete this part.

The checklist identifies whether the project requires ethical approval and, if so, where to apply for approval.

**PART B: Ethics Proportionate Review Form.** Students who have answered “no” to all questions in A1, A2 and A3 and “yes” to question 4 in A4 in the ethics checklist must complete this part. The project supervisor has delegated authority to provide approval in such cases that are considered to involve minimal risk.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>A.1 If you answer YES to any of the questions in this block, approval will be needed from an appropriate external ethics committee for approval. Consult your supervisor if you think this may be the case.</th>
<th>Delete as appropriate</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Does your research require approval from the National Research Ethics Service (NRES)? e.g. because you are recruiting current NHS patients or staff? If you are unsure try - <a href="https://www.hra.nhs.uk/approvals-amendments/what-approvals-do-i-need/">https://www.hra.nhs.uk/approvals-amendments/what-approvals-do-i-need/</a></td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>1.2 Will you recruit participants who fall under the auspices of the Mental Capacity Act? Such research needs to be approved by an external ethics committee such as NRES or the Social Care Research Ethics Committee - <a href="http://www.scie.org.uk/research/ethics-committee/">http://www.scie.org.uk/research/ethics-committee/</a></td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>1.3 Will you recruit any participants who are currently under the auspices of the Criminal Justice System, for example, but not limited to, people on remand, prisoners and those on probation? Such research needs to be authorised by the ethics approval system of the National Offender Management Service.</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<th>A.2 If you answer YES to any of the questions in this block, approval will be needed from the Senate Research Ethics Committee. Consult your supervisor if you think this may be the case.</th>
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<td>2.1 Does your research involve participants who are unable to give informed consent? For example, but not limited to, people who may have a degree of learning disability or mental health problem, that means they are unable to make an informed decision on their own behalf.</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>2.2 Is there a risk that your research might lead to disclosures from participants concerning their involvement in illegal activities?</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>2.3 Is there a risk that obscene and or illegal material may need to be accessed for your research study (including online content and other material)?</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>2.4 Does your project involve participants disclosing information about special category or sensitive subjects? For example, but not limited to: racial or ethnic origin; political opinions; religious beliefs; trade union membership; physical or mental health; sexual life; criminal offences and proceedings</td>
<td>NO</td>
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<td>2.5 Does your research involve you traveling to another country outside of the UK, where the Foreign &amp; Commonwealth Office has issued a travel warning that affects the area in which you will study? Please check the latest guidance from the FCO - <a href="http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/">http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/</a></td>
<td>NO</td>
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|2.6| Does your research involve invasive or intrusive procedures?  
These may include, but are not limited to, electrical stimulation, heat, cold or bruising. | NO |
|2.7| Does your research involve animals? | NO |
|2.8| Does your research involve the administration of drugs, placebos or other substances to study participants? | NO |
|A.3| If you answer YES to any of the questions in this block, then approval will be needed from the Computer Science /Library and Information Science Research Ethics Committee (CSREC). Consult your supervisor if you think this may be the case. | Delete as appropriate |
|3.1| Does your research involve participants who are under the age of 18? | NO |
|3.2| Does your research involve adults who are vulnerable because of their social, psychological or medical circumstances (vulnerable adults)?  
This includes adults with cognitive and / or learning disabilities, adults with physical disabilities and older people. | NO |
|3.3| Are participants recruited because they are staff or students of City, University of London?  
For example, students studying on a particular course or module.  
If yes, then approval is also required from the Head of Department or Programme Director. | NO |
|3.4| Does your research involve intentional deception of participants? | NO |
|3.5| Does your research involve participants taking part without their informed consent? | NO |
|3.5| Is the risk posed to participants greater than that in normal working life? | NO |
|3.7| Is the risk posed to you, the researcher(s), greater than that in normal working life? | NO |
|A.4| If you answer YES to the following question and your answers to all other questions in sections A1, A2 and A3 are NO, then your project is of minimal risk.  
If this is the case, then you can apply for approval through your supervisor under PROPORTIONATE REVIEW. You do so by completing PART B of this form.  
If you have answered NO to all questions in the checklist, including question 4, then your project does not require ethical approval. You should still include the form in your dissertation proposal. | Delete as appropriate |
|4| Does your project involve human participants or their identifiable personal data?  
For example, as interviewees, respondents to a survey, or participants in testing. | NO |

**PART B: Ethics Proportionate Review Form**

If you answered YES to question 4 and NO to all other questions in sections A1, A2 and A3 in PART A (checklist) of this form, then you should complete PART B of this form to submit an application for a proportionate ethics review of your project. Your supervisor has delegated authority to review and approve this application under proportionate review. Your proposal, including this ethics application, must be approved by your supervisor before beginning the planned research.

If you cannot provide all the required attachments (see B.3) with your project proposal (e.g. because you have not yet written the consent forms, interview schedules etc), you must submit the missing items to your supervisor for approval prior to commencing these parts of your project.

Your supervisor may ask you to submit a full ethics application through Research Ethics Online, if they are unable to give approval.

**B.1 The following questions must be answered fully.**  
Delete as appropriate
1.1 Will you ensure that participants taking part in your project are fully informed about the purpose of the research? **YES / NO**

1.2 Will you ensure that participants taking part in your project are fully informed about the procedures affecting them or affecting any information collected about them, including information about how the data will be used, to whom it will be disclosed, and how long it will be kept? **YES / NO**

1.3 When people agree to participate in your project, will it be made clear to them that they may withdraw (i.e. not participate) at any time without any penalty? **YES / NO**

1.4 Will consent be obtained from the participants in your project? Consent from participants will be necessary if you plan to involve them in your project or if you plan to use identifiable personal data from existing records. “Identifiable personal data” means data relating to a living person who might be identifiable if the record includes their name, username, student id, DNA, fingerprint, address, etc.  

If YES, you must attach drafts of the participant information sheet(s) and consent form(s) that you will use in section B.3 or, in the case of an existing dataset, provide details of how consent has been obtained.  

You must also retain the completed forms for subsequent inspection. Failure to provide the completed consent request forms will result in withdrawal of any earlier ethical approval of your project. **YES / NO**

1.5 Have you made arrangements to ensure that material and/or private information obtained from or about the participating individuals will remain confidential? **YES / NO**

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<th>B.2 If the answer to the following question (B2) is YES, you must provide details</th>
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<td>2 Will the research be conducted in the participant’s home or other non-University location? If YES, you must provide details of how your safety will be ensured.</td>
<td><strong>YES / NO</strong></td>
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| B.3 Attachments |
| All of the following documents must be provided to supervisors if applicable. If they are not available when the proposal is submitted, they must be approved by the supervisor later. |

| Details on how safety will be assured in any non-University location, including risk assessment if required (see B2) |
|---|---|

| Details of arrangements to ensure that material and/or private information obtained from or about the participating individuals will remain confidential (see B1.5) |
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| Any personal data must be acquired, stored and made accessible in ways that are GDPR compliant. |

| Full protocol for any workshops or interviews** |
|---|---|

| Participant information sheet(s)** |
|---|---|

<p>| Consent form(s)** |</p>
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<th>Questionnaire(s)**</th>
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<td>sharing a Qualtrics survey with your supervisor is recommended.</td>
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<td>Topic guide(s) for interviews and focus groups**</td>
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<td>Permission from external organisations or Head of Department**</td>
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<td>e.g. for recruitment of participants</td>
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