

ORAL HISTORY

Reminiscence, life history, memories; making sense of life's experiences is an integral feature of the ageing process. Gerontologists and those interested and concerned to understand and improve the situation of older people are aware of the importance of biography and its part in the development and transmission of self perceptions in later life.

For the oral historian the substance and meaning of reminiscence provides a rich source of evidence about the past – springing as it does from a living memory. But the past revealed through oral history differs from the past which is to be discovered in documents and the official record. Oral history allows us to hear the voices of those who escaped the formal records and to see the past through new perspectives, those of women, children, the oppressed, the migrant and the dispossessed and of course the more powerful in society.

The Oral History Society, the most active central group co-ordinating and communicating with the many people now interested in oral history, welcomes new members from amongst the readers of *Ageing and Society*. We feel that we have much common ground and many mutually interesting avenues to explore. Membership of the Oral History Society brings the twice-yearly journal *Oral History* and news of the two national meetings organised each year. The editors welcome contributions, correspondence and news and would be interested to include articles from gerontologists working in a variety of settings.

Membership of the Oral History Society is:

£5.00 a year (U.K. members) £8.00 (Overseas \$16.50 U.S.A.). Further information including membership forms can be obtained from the Treasurer, Ms B. Westover, Oral History Society, Department of Sociology, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, CO4 3SQ.

Articles, correspondence or news items for *Oral History* should be sent to the editors, Paul Thompson and Joanna Bornat at the above address

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2. Walker, A. The social creation of poverty and dependency in old age. *Journal of Social Policy*, 9, 1980, 49–75.

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