

Scottish Oral History Centre



Seminar Series
Monday 12 November
5:00pm



*"We expected dogs with pretzels on their tails":
Biographical interviews with EU migrants and their
experiences of life and homelessness in Scotland.'*

Jennifer Galbraith, University of Stirling

Within the UK the position of migrants is becoming increasingly precarious. On top of potential challenges such as language barriers and insecure employment, changes to immigration policy in recent years and the UK's decision to leave the EU have made it even harder to make migration a 'success'. However, it is not just the situation within the UK that can influence the experiences a migrant can have.

Crossing a border does not mean all aspects of the previous life are left behind, having no influence on a migrant's life after migration. Yet this is largely not focused on immigrant homelessness research. To remedy this, this paper argues that a qualitative biographical approach is particularly appropriate when researching the lives of migrants who are homeless. Utilising this approach can help generate insights in to what can lead to and influence migrants' experiences of homelessness without confining it to just their experiences in the host country or their life at the time of the interview.

Drawing on research in progress that used semi-structured biographical interviewing to explore Central and Eastern European homelessness in Scotland, this paper will discuss why such an approach is merited, the challenges in utilising such an approach with this group along with the benefits and insights that it can bring.

This paper will explore the benefits and challenges of combining archival research and oral history testimonies. It will draw upon examples from my PhD thesis to illustrate how this methodological approach has illuminated previously invisible moments in the union's history.

The event takes place at the Scottish Oral History Centre, 222 Graham Hills, 40 George St, University of Strathclyde (Maps: <http://www.strath.ac.uk/maps/>).

The talk begins at 5.30pm, and you are welcome to join us from 5pm onwards, with snacks and light refreshments provided.

For more information or to be added to our mailing list, please contact James Ferns (james.ferns@strath.ac.uk) or Rory Stride (rory.stride@strath.ac.uk). You can find out more about the Scottish Oral History Centre via our website: <https://www.strath.ac.uk/humanities/schoolofhumanities/history/scottishoralhistorycentre/>