RETHINKING THE ORAL HISTORY METHOD:
REFLECTIONS ON ACADEMIC AUTHORITY

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Abstract:

Drawing from contemporary feminist and postcolonial writings, this paper endeavours to provide a critique of some underlying assumptions of the oral history method. As it is encapsulated in current accounting literatures, the very methodology of the oral history method re-enforces the hegemonic Western ideologies about race/ethnicity, gender and class, perpetuated through the connection between the cultural identity of the speaker and the notion of authenticity as a ground for academic authority. If other histories ought to be heard, this bias and viewpoint needs to be challenged, not in a threatening way but in an enlightening way, so that the “Other” voices can tell their stories in a truly “liberated” way.