

Using Wuhan COVID-19 Lockdown Oral Histories In The Classroom



Robert Browning, School Of Information Sciences, az7363@wayne.edu

Why This Project?

- COVID began in Wuhan
- Existing oral history projects focused primarily on the US
- Asian-American discrimination in recent years in the US
- Interviewees create meaning out of events

Who Was Interviewed?

- 14 Chinese and 2 foreigners
- 8 men and 8 women
- 11 Wuhan native residents
- 3 Long term Chinese residents in Wuhan
- 4 individuals trapped outside of Wuhan during lockdown
- 5 follow up interviews



Oral History & Trauma

- Trauma separates and isolates individuals from normal life
- Oral history provides some possible agency for interviewees (Fleming-Cook & Kennelly)
- Varying degrees of trauma can be seen in interviews



Barricade blocks entrance to apartment complex in Qingshan, Wuhan: CX, interviewee

Scarlett, Interviewee, 2021

“The traffic lights were working but, literally, there was no one on the streets. I was the only car at that moment. It was rush hour. It was 6 p.m. All the lights are on. Even the lights [were on] in empty buildings and also we have some lights, like slogans, like *Jiayou Wuhan*. It was in bloody red. So I felt, Oh my god. The city is bleeding.”

Discussing With Students

Use trauma informed strategies:

1. Use caution and be flexible
2. Make them aware of choices
3. Listen first
4. Emphasize non-judgment
5. Don't romanticize subject matter
6. Ensure learning is the goal (Zingarelli-Sweet)

Objectives In Classroom

Students should be able to:

- See range of experiences
- Realize people had different interpretations of events
- Understand people had conflicting feelings about their own experience
- Understand interviewees may still be building meaning (Leydesdorff)

References

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