

A NOTE ON TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION

All interviews used in this study were recorded in French. All extracts from them rely on my own translation, sometimes with advice from native French speakers, and take a generous approach to vernacular expression. One of oral history's great strengths is its ability to convey voice; what is lost in any translated oral history is not just voice but the quirks of dialect and personal intonation. I have tried, as far as my skills permit, to translate in the spirit of the mood of the interview and to convey the buoyancy or reticence of interviewees through a combination of vernacular English, punctuation, and, on occasion, authorial interjection. Translating oral history is a creative, intuitive process, and my intention was to stay true to what I understood the speaker's intention to be, and to convey their meaning as far as was possible. While my own vernacular comes from southeast England, and my original translations reflected this, some alterations to U.S. English have been made by the publisher. In transcribed extracts, the following points should be noted:

- I have used an ellipsis like this . . . to signify that speech has been cut from an extract.
- I have used square brackets to demonstrate any insertion of authorial comments or sense-making explanations, such as [she laughs sadly].
- If a speaker left a phrase dangling, I have used, at the end of a sentence,—. During the flow of speech, I have used—, to show an incomplete phrase or expression.
- I have used the interjection “eh” as a rough equivalent of *hein* in French. This is one of the most frequent interjections; it can be used in a

questioning, interrogatory way or as an emphatic point maker. It is very important in providing cadence and rhythm to French vernacular speech.

- I have translated *ben* in French as “well” (as in *ben, oui*: “well, yes”) or as “erm” or “um” when it functions as a marker of hesitancy (*ben—, je ne sais pas*: “erm—, I don’t know”).
- I have not translated the French interjection *oh là là*. It should be noted that this is not used archly (as in the English “ooh la la!” with a wink of an eye) but indicates surprise, dismay, exasperation, or shock, with a slow shake of the head or rolling of the eyes. It has something in common with “oh dear,” “oh my,” “my goodness,” “dear me,” or, in U.S. English, “oh boy.”

FEELING MEMORY



