



# **2023 Training Syllabus**

As of: Aug. 23, 2023

## **Program Overview**

### Mission Statement

The Beauty Turner Academy strives to **diversify the workforce of historians, documentarians, and memory workers** by providing accessible oral and narrative history training to current and former **public housing residents**. We envision a world where **residents are empowered** to document, preserve, share, and celebrate narrative histories **from their perspectives**—the people who call public housing home.

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## BTA Training Learning Goals

**Training Graduates** will be able to:

1. Connect their lived experiences and collective geniuses to the practices and ethics of oral history.
  - a. Situate oral history practice within the legacy of public housing in Chicago.
  - b. Understand the role of relationships, identities, and power in oral/narrative history.
  - c. Consider who they are as oral historians, given their identities, lived experiences, and values.
2. Conduct their first oral history interview.
  - a. Demonstrate key oral history skills such as deep listening, follow-up questions, checking for continuous consent, and sharing authority with the narrator.
  - b. Comfortably and confidently use a Zoom H5 Audio Recorder.
3. Care for, preserve, and envision creative usage of oral history interviews.
  - a. Transfer, back up, and manage digital files.
  - b. Understand the versatility of oral history methods, ethics, and values for historical, creative, and organizing projects.

## Training Deliverable

Audio file for 1 full length (60+ min) oral history interview. No post-production.

## Supplementary Material for Intersession “Homework”

- 2023 Beauty Turner Academy [Handbook](#)
- [High Rise Stories: Voices from Chicago Public Housing](#), ed. Audrey Petty
- 2023 Beauty Turner Academy [Podcast Playlist](#)
- 2023 Beauty Turner Academy Jams Playlist ([this is a collaborative link](#)—feel free to add your favorite tunes related to your city and/or public housing!)
- The NPHM Oral History Archive ([access request form here](#))

## Training Mentors & Contact Info

- Liú Chen (they/them), Program Manager of the Oral History Archive and Corps ([lchen@nphm.org](mailto:lchen@nphm.org))
- Noor Alzamami (they/them), BTA Educational Coordinator ([noor.alzamami@gmail.com](mailto:noor.alzamami@gmail.com))
- jellystone robinson (he/they), Oral History Corps member and BTA ‘22 graduate ([jellystonerobinson@gmail.com](mailto:jellystonerobinson@gmail.com))
- Troy Gaston (he/him), Oral History Research Corps member ([troygaston67@gmail.com](mailto:troygaston67@gmail.com))
- Mark Jaeschke (he/they), NPHM Programs and Events Coordinator ([mjaeschke@nphm.org](mailto:mjaeschke@nphm.org))
- Tiff Beatty (she/her), NPHM Associate Director ([tbeatty@nphm.org](mailto:tbeatty@nphm.org))

## Weekly Training Curriculum

### Wk 1: Intro to Ms. Beauty, Chicago Public Housing, and BTA

Guests: Audrey Petty (she/her; [ap@audreypetty.com](mailto:ap@audreypetty.com)) and Dr. Lisa Yun Lee (she/her; [lisayunlee@gmail.com](mailto:lisayunlee@gmail.com))

#### **Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.a. – 1.c. and 3.b.**

##### *Enduring Understandings*

- I understand the basics of the historical and contemporary movements for housing justice in Chicago, with a particular focus on public housing.
- I understand who Ms. Beauty Turner is and how she relates to oral history and narrative history.
- I understand the basics of what oral history is, as an approach to community work, as a primary source, and as a tool/methodology.
- I understand that oral history can be used to support the mission of housing justice.
- I understand how to get onto Discord and how to use it to support my learning.

##### *Post-session Reflection Questions*

- What are ways that you and your community are already engaged in practices of oral history, narrative history, or storytelling? Are there different words that your communities use to describe the storytelling encounter? (Ex, kiki, chismeando, cafecito) What value does storytelling bring to your community?
- Reflect on your relationships to your ancestors, the past, memory, and listening. What are the different ways that you do or can “listen”?
  - If you plan on listening to the suggested podcast episode, advise doing that before answering this prompt.

##### *Suggested Exercises*

- Listen to *Finding our Way* Season 1, Episode 7: “Remembering with Alexis Pauline Gumbs” [Oct. 19, 2020]

### Wk 2: Intro to Justice-Centered Oral History

Educator: Dr. Cynthia Tobar (she/her; [latona28@gmail.com](mailto:latona28@gmail.com))

#### **Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 2.a.**

##### *Enduring Understandings*

- I understand that project design and implementation starts with my drive and purpose (my “why”).
- I understand the basics of project planning, outreach, and preparation.
- I understand how oral history differs from other interview-based methods.
- I understand what justice-centered oral history practices are, and why it is important to consider justice and power within oral history practices.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- What can community-based oral histories offer that other media (ex, news, television, films, published writing) cannot?
- What are your core values about community and relationships that you would like to center in your oral history practice?

*Suggested Exercises*

- Be on the look-out for your two packages of gear from NPHM. Once they have arrived, start playing around with the gear!
- Reach out to your BTA mentor (pairings shared during class).

Wk 3: Intro to Recording Tech!

Educator: Erisa J. Apantaku (she/her; [erisa.apantaku@invisibleinstitute.com](mailto:erisa.apantaku@invisibleinstitute.com))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goal: 2.b.**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand the fundamentals of turning on, configuring, and using a Zoom H5 Handy Recorder.
- I understand the difference between levels and volume.
- I understand what equipment came in my gearbox from NPHM and how to use each piece for my practice.

*Post-session Reflection Question*

- What are some noises or sounds around my neighborhood that capture its identity? Go record them!

*Suggested Exercises*

- It doesn't have to be perfect, but get your hands dirty and record everything and anything you think of with your new gear. You can even try practicing interviews!
- If you get stuck, research solutions on your own — we'll revisit tech next week to troubleshoot together. Bring questions with you for the next session!

Wk 4: Digging Deeper: Recording Tech and File Management

Educator: Erisa J. Apantaku (she/her; [erisa.apantaku@invisibleinstitute.com](mailto:erisa.apantaku@invisibleinstitute.com))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 2.b. and 3.a.**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand why file redundancy (i.e., storing the same file in multiple places) is important for oral history.
- I understand how to store audio files securely (i.e., I understand how to transfer digital files from my SD card to my computer, and from my computer to an external hard drive).

- I understand how to name and organize files in a way that best suits my work.
- I understand how to use industry-standard equipment, such as the Zoom H5 Handy Recorder.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- As you think about conducting a full oral history interview, what are you most excited about? What are you most nervous or unsure about?

*Suggested Exercises*

- Begin looking for your narrator for your deliverable interview if you haven't already! Pair up with another person in the cohort OR find someone in your community to interview
- Listen to 1 podcast episode from the "BTA Pods" playlist
- Read, sign, and return the NPHM oral history archive agreements form

Wk 5: Digging Deeper: Justice-Centered Oral History

Educator: Dr. Cynthia Tobar (she/her; [latona28@gmail.com](mailto:latona28@gmail.com))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 2.a.**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand how to approach the fundamentals of oral history, including writing an interview guide, deep listening, practicing ongoing and iterative consent, and centering the dialogue on the participant's perspectives and experiences.
- I understand release forms and why they are important.
- I understand that informed and ongoing consent is not and should not be limited to the narrator signing a release form at the start of an interview.
- I understand the potential of oral history to subvert and challenge oppressive power structures.
- I understand how to practice collaborative power with my narrator, before, during, and after the interview.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- As you think about conducting a full oral history interview, what are you most excited about? What are you most nervous or unsure about? Is there anything you need from us?
- As you listen to at least one full length oral history interview in the NPHM oral history archive, Make note of any questions, techniques, or behaviors from the oral historian that you might want to borrow for your deliverable practice interview.

*Suggested Exercises*

- Find your narrator for the deliverable interview. Begin talking to them about oral history and determine whether they are willing to be your practice narrator. (Note: this interview will not be archived)

- Listen to at least one full length oral history interview in the NPHM oral history archive.

### Wk 6: Trauma Informed Care in Oral History

*Educators: Ammie Kae Brooks (she/her; ammiekaeb@gmail.com) and Noor Alzamami*

#### **Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 2.a.**

##### *Enduring Understandings*

- I understand how to pursue trauma informed care practices so I can improve my narrator’s experience with oral history, should conflict, trauma, trauma-responses, or similar occur.
  - I understand what trauma, PTSD, and trauma-informed care are.
  - I understand how to create a space where people feel safe, how to address trauma responses, and how to mitigate conflict and harm when they occur.
- I understand how an oral historian’s approach is similar to and different from the approaches of other information-gathering professions.

##### *Post-session Reflection Questions*

This week’s reflections are taken from the “Proactive Reflections” Workbook Exercise.

- How would I react if someone were to start crying during an interview? Snap at me? Yell?
- What would I do if I notice I'm starting to react to the topic or narrator's answers?
- When might I know it’s time to stop the interview? (Temporarily or permanently – Pausing is okay!)
- What tools do YOU use to “hold space” for your narrators and other community members?

##### *Suggested Exercise*

- Look over the checklist on BTA workbook p. 20. Add notes OR create your own list of skills and techniques you can use for your Trauma Informed approach to oral history.
- Be in touch with your mentor and Liú about whether you’ve secured a narrator for your deliverable practice interview. We will match cohort members without a narrator by the end of the week.

### Wk 7: Check in, Practice Interviews and Feedback

*No additional educator, mentors only*

#### **Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 2.a.**

##### *Enduring Understandings*

- I understand the role and experiences of vulnerability in the oral history interview from the perspectives of the narrator and the oral historian.

- I understand how to give and use supportive, constructive feedback.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- What is something that stood out to you as a narrator during tonight's exercise?
  - How might that impact your approach or behavior as an oral historian?

*Suggested Exercises*

- Listen to Ep. 9 "Prison to Prison Pipeline: Isis tha Savior" from *Louder than a Riot*.
- Listen to any other episodes of *Louder than a Riot* that interest you.

Wk 8: Creativity of/and Oral History

Educator: C.C. Paschal (she/they; [chiquita@sparkysparkspark.com](mailto:chiquita@sparkysparkspark.com))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 3.b.**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand the difference between oral histories and audio documentaries.
- I understand how process, approach, and ethics impact the final product I am creating.
- I understand how I can apply oral history interviews, techniques, and values in creative projects that may or may not be considered oral history.
- I understand that with great power (applying creativity to storytelling) comes great responsibility (approaching the project with justice-centered, power-aware ethics).

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- As you listen to any of the episodes in the "[BTA Pods](#)" playlist, what creative elements (sound effects, commentary, editing style, etc) do you hear?
  - How do those impact your listening experience?
  - Make note of which creative elements excite you the most.

*Suggested Exercises*

- Engage with at least one of the creative oral history-related storytelling projects shared by CC:
  - Nyssa Chow: <https://still-life-project.com/>
  - Tamara Santibañez: <https://a-brick.world/>
  - BA Parker: <https://www.npr.org/2019/11/20/781160467/love-and-lapses>
  - Shivani Dave: <https://www.thelogbooks.org/listen>
  - Normal Gossip: <https://www.radiotopia.fm/podcasts/normal-gossip>

Wk 9: Action Module: Documentary Playwriting

Educator: Dr. Nikki Yeboah (she/her; [nyeboa@uw.edu](mailto:nyeboa@uw.edu))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goals: 1.b. – 1.c. and 3.b.**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand how oral histories can be used in creative projects and in movement building.
- I understand what Documentary Creative Writing is, its power, and its potential hazards.
- I understand what the “Well-made Play Structure” is, and how it can be subverted to spur my audiences to action.
- [3rd hour bonus] I understand how beauty can be used to seduce justice.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- What are you taking away from the last 2 sessions about combining creativity and oral history?
- What are you proud of about your learning in the Beauty Turner Academy?

*Suggested Exercises*

- Think of and bring in something that reflects/represents your learning or growth over the last 10 weeks, such as an after-class reflection, an assignment you did in between sessions, an excerpt from a practice interview, or something you created using oral history.

Wk 10: Closing

Guest: *Brandon Black*, *Drawnversation* (he/him; [drawnversation@gmail.com](mailto:drawnversation@gmail.com))

**Corresponding Program Learning Goals: All**

*Enduring Understandings*

- I understand the breadth and depth of what I have learned in the Beauty Turner Academy of Oral History Training.
- I understand how the different weeks of BTA fit together to teach the overarching learning goals.

*Post-session Reflection Questions*

- What words or images describe your hopes for your future as an oral historian (or someone who uses oral history methods/values)?
- What do you want to do next with your oral history training? Do you want to continue with the Beauty Turner Academy of Oral History with the Fall Apprenticeship?

*Suggested Exercises*

- Revisit the exercises in the Beauty Turner Academy Workbook that you completed earlier this summer, and engage with the ones that you haven't. How have you grown since first looking at this workbook over 2 months ago?
- Continue practicing oral history methods, techniques, and ethics.
- Email Liú about whether you would like to do a Fall Apprenticeship. ;-)



## After the Training...

The National Public Housing Museum offers a Fall Apprenticeship to all graduates of the Beauty Turner Academy Training. All graduated Apprentices may then apply to the 2-4 person Senior Apprenticeship in early 2024. The Apprenticeship and Senior Apprenticeship will build upon and further develop the skills learned in the Training.

**Graduated Interview Apprentices** will be able to:

1. Conduct outreach with potential narrators to secure and follow up on an oral history interview.
2. Confidently conduct an oral history interview to include in the NPHM Archive.
3. Conduct oral history post-production tasks, such as transcribing the interview, writing a finding aid entry, and making basic audio edits.
  - a. Descript and Otter software systems will be taught for audio editing and transcribing respectively.
4. Develop their understanding of who they are as an oral historian.

**Graduated Archive & Activate Apprentices** will be able to:

1. Confidently and consistently conduct oral history outreach, interviews, and post-production.
2. Design and begin executing an oral history project.
3. Utilize their oral history training to create a podcast, creative writing project, visual arts project, action research plan, or other creative output.
4. Understand the technical, ethical, and creative considerations that go into creating a community-based archive.
5. Understand and practice the technical, ethical, and creative aspects of curating full-length oral history interviews into clips for programming and exhibitions.
6. Deepen and further develop their understanding of who they are as an oral historian and memory worker.

### Interview Apprenticeship Details

#### *Time Commitment & Compensation*

- Oct 2—Nov 10 (6 weeks)
- **5-6 hours/week** of work
  - 1.5-2 hour group meetings with the other apprentices each week
  - 30 min 1:1 with designated mentor: can be weekly or semi-weekly, as decided collaboratively with mentor
- **\$500 stipend**

*The Work*

- Deliverables: **1 archivable completed interview with a current or former resident of publicly-funded housing. Full deliverables for an archivable interview includes:**
  - .wav audio file, post-interview field notes, finding aid, and transcript
  - signed narrator release form and signed interviewer release form

Archive & Activate Apprenticeship Details

2-4 graduates of the Interview Apprenticeship will be invited to a second, Archive & Activate (AA) Apprenticeship. The AA apprenticeship lasts 10 weeks, is compensated at \$30/hr, and focuses on archives, creative curation, and more nuanced post-production skills.

After all that...!

After the Interview Apprenticeship OR Archive & Activate Apprenticeship, those who have demonstrated growth and proficiency in the corresponding skills may be offered regular contracted hours as an NPHM Oral History Collective member and/or Archive Working Group Member. Collective Members conduct oral history-related work such as interviewing, post production (transcription and finding aids), developing the Public-facing Oral History Archive, and contributing to oral history-related programming at NPHM. The Archive Working Group is the central decision making and task delegation body for all of the oral history archive's "infrastructure," such as its policies, best practices, online website, tools, and more.