

Oral history and the inference of different layers of identities

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The paper is mainly based on the results of an inquiry into adults' narratives about their memories from childhood, which reveal the strong relation of subjects' sense of identity to collective memory and relevant temporal, spatial, cultural and societal parameters. Among other observations, oral history proves to be an important tool for better understanding both the strategies by which subjects construct their selves in relation to the others, and the flexibility of their identities in relation to changes occurring through time and, especially, within the current living memory, especially in a world "on the move". On this basis, it is suggested that oral history can also be conceived as a promising educational tool that potentially can help both students and history educators understand the formation of identities within the context of people-focused history, because it forms a structure for the appreciation of the complexities of identities and for a sensitive understanding of the diversity within societies in terms of the historicity of past and present situations.