

CAROL BAXTER

Title

Help! Which information is correct? Tried-and-true strategies for determining historical truth

Summary

How do we determine “truth” when two pieces of historical information contradict each other? During decades of research, Carol Baxter had to develop strategies for determining historical truth that produced results so reliable they would withstand strident criticism. In this seminar, she teaches the strategies she uses to separate fact from myth, truth from mistruth.

Abstract

So you’ve come across two pieces of information about your ancestor that contradict each other. How do you determine which is accurate, particularly if there are no original sources available that you can draw upon?

For the first time in human history we have boundless “knowledge” at our fingertips, largely because we can step onto the information highway with just the click of a button. Unfortunately, this is an unpatrolled highway. There are no policemen stationed along the route saying “turn here if you want the facts”. There are no maps declaring “there be dragons”. But there are strategies you can learn that will help you separate fact from fantasy.

As a history detective, Carol Baxter had to determine these strategies for herself. Indeed, it was critical for her own credibility that the results of her research, as communicated through her non-fiction books, were capable of withstanding strident criticism both nationally and now internationally. And the criticism did come with the publication of her third book, *Captain Thunderbolt and his Lady* (2011), as merciless as if the Furies themselves had been unleashed. The “critics” soon learnt that the fortress erected by reliable research is extremely difficult to breach.

In this seminar, Carol will teach you the strategies she has developed to determine historical truth. She will teach you not only what to do but what not to do, using examples from history. These strategies will help you determine which information in secondary source records is likely to be correct, and also guide you along the correct path when information in primary source records is “wrong”.

Additionally, “history” is everything that happened a second or more ago so these strategies don’t just apply to historical research; they can be used in everyday life.

Audience

Beginner