

THE UK DYSLEXIA ARCHIVE

HELLO! A PROJECT UPDATE...

We've added several more interviews to the archive. Thank you to Robin and Jennifer Salter, who came to Oxford to speak to us in December. Robin was heavily involved in the early years of the BDA and helped to create the European Dyslexia Association. It was great to broaden the project a little, and talk about the international dimensions of dyslexia. Jennifer is a dyslexia therapist, and was able to tell us much about teaching and remediation for children and adults with the condition.



Talking of the BDA, we were also fortunate enough to interview Kate Saunders, the BDA's former chief executive. Kate, who is dyslexic herself, was able to provide us with some great perspectives on the work of the organisation in recent decades. Kate also studied at Aston University under Margaret Newton, one of the pioneers of research on the condition.

Last but not least, Kieran interviewed John Stein in January, who is Emeritus Professor of Physiology at Oxford. John's research has looked at the visual aspects of dyslexia. John has also worked with the [Dyslexia Research Trust](#), the mission of which is 'to help people with reading difficulties, especially young children, to achieve their full potential in life.'



ARTICLE IN *HISTORY TODAY*...

In January, we published a short article in the popular history magazine, [History Today](#). It provides an overview of the history of dyslexia – from the earliest references to the condition as 'word blindness' during the Victorian period, through to the present day.

It was a great opportunity for us to highlight the work of those who have contributed to the archive, and to feature some of their interviews. We've also had some useful feedback from members of the public, who have shared their reflections on the article and the history of dyslexia. These observations are really useful to the project.

The screenshot shows the article 'The History of Dyslexia' by Philip Kirby, published in History Today Volume 98 Issue 2 February 2018. The article title is 'The History of Dyslexia' and the sub-headline is 'Word blindness' was a recognised condition more than a century ago. But it was not until the 1970s that it began to be accepted by the medical establishment. The article text begins: 'Tucked away in the pages of the British Medical Journal of 7 November 1896 lies a curious little article. Sandwiched between an account of 'Dermatitis Caused by Roentgen X Rays' and the announcement of a Belgian Climatological Congress is a short entry by William Pringle Morgan of Seaford, Sussex: 'A Case of Congenital Word Blindness'. Like Roentgen's x-rays, congenital word blindness would become a household concept, but not under that name. Today, it is more commonly known as 'dyslexia' and is estimated to affect around seven to ten per cent of the population. Those with dyslexia struggle to break words down into their smallest constituent'.

COMING UP...

There's plenty going on with the project in the next few months. There'll be a further short article appearing in the *Psychologist*, the magazine of the British Psychological Society, next month. We're also preparing a piece for the website, the *Conversation*, which will highlight the especial role of women in the dyslexia movement.

Images: [Study with Dyslexia](#); University of Oxford; History Today