

who have in common the fact of dedicating themselves to the collective and shared production of oral sources, the Forum was a meeting to reinforce and consolidate cooperation networks for oral history in Brazil. We look forward to the next edition of the conference with enthusiasm!

● Further information: websites www.historiaoral.org.br/, <https://eventos.fgv.br/en/22nd-ioha-international-conference>

NORTH AMERICA

■ USA

Observing Change in Alaska's National Parks: an update

'Everybody talks about – I mean, there's the little glacier.

Our little glacier.

Every day, we see it and we're like, it's tiny, it's disappearing.'

– Elaine Furbish, Skagway, Alaska resident, 2018

Leslie McCartney, curator of oral history at the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), and Karen Brewster, research associate in the oral history programme at UAF, provide an update on the online project 'Observing Change in Alaska's National Parks Project Jukebox'.

'In the International Work section of the Spring 2021 edition of this journal, we reported on the project website which features interviews with residents of Skagway about their observations of environmental change in and around the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park located in the south-eastern portion of Alaska. It also features interviews with residents, subsistence hunter/fishers, scientists and National Park Service employees about their observations of environmental change around the Bering Land Bridge National Preserve located on the northern side of the Seward Peninsula in Alaska.

'Recent updates to the website include three further interviews and an abundance of new educationally focussed content,

which brings interview extracts together with images under themes. The themes covered include: weather, seasonal change, ice conditions, permafrost, vegetation, wildlife, life in coastal Alaska, climate change and Alaska's National Parks, and climate change and you. The following extract relates to the impacts of thawing permafrost: "It's one thing to say, yeah, we can head out earlier, a week earlier next year hunting, but sometimes you're not always thinking of that. You're thinking, I have a giant puddle under my house and my house might get swallowed by a sinkhole, which is very real here in Nome. There are houses that need fill year after year. So it's very real, because sooner or later things are going to change, and they're going to change so fast people can't adapt" (Jacob Martin, Nome, 2019).

'The "Research Change Over Time in Local Communities" portion of the website is created in such a way to encourage middle-school students (ages eight to twelve years of age) to record their own oral history interviews, as well as engaging with existing materials. The lesson plans, created by the National Park Service, include a number of classes covering learning about oral history interview research methods, practising interviews, analysing interviews, introduction to sources and creating a presentation.'

● Further information: Observing Change in Alaska's National Parks Project Jukebox: <https://jukebox.uaf.edu/akparkchange> National Park Service Web Article Series 'Conversations About Change': <https://home.nps.gov/articles/000/akchangeprjjuke.htm> Bering Land Bridge National Preserve Climate Change: www.nps.gov/bela/learn/nature/climate-change.htm Researching Change Over Time in Local Communities Lesson Plan: www.nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/changevertime.htm

OCEANIA

■ AUSTRALIA Telling histories of travelling Asian care workers

Victoria Haskins, a historian at the University of Newcastle in Australia, reflects upon the use of recorded oral histories in the project 'Ayahs and Amahs: Trans-colonial Servants in Australia and Britain 1780-1945'. This project, funded by the Australian Research Council, explores the historical experiences and cultural memories of these early global domestic workers in order to illuminate a broader trans-colonial history of domestic work.

'Indian, Chinese, and other Asian nursemaids accompanied colonial families along the circuits of the empire between Australia, Asia and the UK for over two centuries. In the course of our research, we have encountered many recollections of those who were formerly cared for by *ayahs* and *amahs*. The *ayah* and the *amah* occupy a cherished place in the colonial childhood imagination, and we are grateful to those who are eager to share their memories with us. These fond memories tell us much about the symbolic and real significance of the ayahs and amahs for the families that employed them and for the larger colonial society.

'Much less easily found, however, are recollections of the



Chinese *amahs* of Shunde origin. Photographer unknown, circa 1930s. Photo © Ayahs and Amahs (ARC DP200100375).

Indian and Chinese nursemaids themselves. Sociologists who study global domestic work in the present can interview workers themselves, but our subjects have in most cases long since passed away. They were mostly not interviewed in their own lifetimes, and we have struggled to find descendants who are keen to share their memories of their ancestors' work caring for the families of others.

'There is however a rare and special exception in the National Archives of Singapore (NAS). The NAS collections include a series of oral history interviews with Chinese women who worked as *amahs* in Singapore between the 1930s and the 1980s, in the Chinese Dialect groups collection. They include the recollections of Lee Lin Oi and three other Chinese *amahs* of their experiences as travelling workers and their relationships with their employers. Their interviews, recorded in Cantonese at different times during the 1980s, provide us with a unique opportunity to hear the women speak in their own voices.

'With the permission of the Oral History Centre at NAS, we arranged for the translation and transcription into English of the interviews, which had been previously transcribed in Cantonese by NAS. We engaged and paid accredited translation services (Ethnolink). We provided the full English translated transcripts to NAS, and made a set of short extracts with links to the spoken sections of the recordings available on our project website in a Resources section aimed at researchers (see <https://ayahsandamahs.com/transcripts>).

'We also developed a special segment for our award-winning digital history exhibition "Ayahs and Amahs: Trans-colonial Journeys" (this ran between September 2022 and December 2023). Featuring photographs and images, viewers could listen to a voiceover of extracts from two of the interviews, with Leong Ah Hoe and Lee Lin Oi, and read a

transcription of their translated words scrolling underneath. In this segment the two women talked about their decision to choose their occupation. The segment struck a chord with many visitors to the site. Indeed, the interviews emphasise a key message of both our exhibition and the larger research project: that the *ayahs* and *amahs* were distinct and extraordinary individuals who worked hard and made many sacrifices as they made their way in the very challenging worlds of empire.

'To build and maintain a positive reciprocal relationship with NAS, we included the link to the original NAS records on both our website and the exhibition site. We are so fortunate that someone had the foresight to carry out the original oral history interviews back in the 1980s, and that NAS preserves the collection and allows us to use them.'

● Further information: website www ayahsandamahs.com

GLOBAL

A life history project with prominent female musicians in six countries

Research into the lives of women undertaking multiple professional musical roles in several countries is limited. The Institute of Education (IOE) at University College London (UCL) has initiated a life-history research project with prominent female musicians (composers/producers/conductors) based in the United Kingdom, France, the United States, Canada, Singapore and China. Luna Xinlu Zheng, a PhD student at UCL-IOE, introduces this project, which she took the lead on.

'I was born on the "Island of Music" in China and learned classical, folk, and contemporary music from early childhood to adulthood. I studied international economics at Zhejiang University where I also led the university chorus. I came to the United Kingdom in 2015 for

postgraduate study at UCL-IOE.

'During the Covid-19 pandemic when travel restrictions and social distancing were in place, I conducted online life history interviews with eight prominent female musicians whose lives span from the post-Second World War period (the 1960s) to the Covid-19 pandemic (the 2020s) and across three generations. Purposeful sampling methods were used to contact female musicians who had achieved financial independence and a level of reputation in each musical role. The project successfully invited a cohort of female musicians who are not only established but also prominent in their respective musical roles (with distinctive chart records, international awards, and wide platform and media collaborations) as research participants.

'One important finding of the research was that, contrary to how these prominent female musicians were portrayed in the media as "exceptional", "talented" and "prodigious", their life histories revealed the detailed processes of how they established their professional identities since early childhood through everyday learning and practice, and how they experienced multidimensional and intersectional inequalities embedded in the music education systems, industry infrastructures and wider societies, which added barriers or challenges in their educational and professional development.

'Alongside their public performances and music publications that have inspired many, these female musicians have been working as education or executive leaders in renowned music education institutes and music companies, and are active in supporting musicians at early career stages and from diverse backgrounds. One participant commented that, "If you are concerned about leaving the world a better place than it was, then you do that with no matter what career

you choose and be conscious about what you put into the world, whether it is your thoughts, words, deeds or your music” (Tinecia [pseudonym], composer, producer, and music institute leader in the United States).

‘The study has identified issues, causes and consequences of the social inequalities in these female musicians’ lives, which the team (including research participants and colleagues at UCL-IOE) hope to publish and contribute to the musical, educational and social development of children, young people, women and minorities in domestic and international communities.’

● Further information: email Luna.xinlu.zheng@ucl.ac.uk

Stories of Girls’ Resistance

Jody Myrum, co-founder of Our Collective Practice and one of the co-creators and many collaborators on ‘Stories of Girls’ Resistance’ introduces the largest ever collection of oral and narrative history of adolescent girls’ activism.

‘Since time immemorial, girls have been pushing back – in their homes, their families, their countries and across the globe. They have pushed back against the everyday oppressions that are so often synonymous with girlhood, and against the forces that define and form the nature of that oppression. Girls resist marriage, violence, they fight to stay in school, they push back against how others name them, and shame them, and seek to separate them from the platforms and resources that are their right. They fight to take up space, to access space and to reshape space. Girls resist because to resist is to live, to breathe and to be in the world as a girl.

‘And yet through history their stories have been erased, co-opted and ignored. Too often girls are positioned as passive victims in need of saving or as heroines standing up against all odds in a



Malala Yousafzai with the *Stories of Girls Resistance* book at the Women Deliver conference, Kigali, Rwanda, July 2023. Photo: Hickmatu Leigh, © Stories of Girls’ Resistance, 2023.

single act of defiance – and these narratives are embedded into our cultures and drive how girls are treated and how decisions are made about them. “Stories of Girls’ Resistance” was created by a

group of feminist activists, scholars and practitioners, all committed to replacing these narratives with one that is grounded in girls’ lived experiences, their power and the resistance strategies they use daily to navigate the world around them.

‘The co-curated collection of over 150 individual stories are from more than ninety countries across the world and it captures the stories of girls, non-binary people and women ranging in age from eleven to seventy. This project is grounded in global South-rooted feminist epistemologies and committed to counter-storytelling. It uses oral history to gather and uplift stories from those who have been most often marginalised or whose voices are silenced or ignored in traditional knowledge production. The individual stories were curated by twelve regional story curators in partnership with local story collectors, each deeply embedded in feminist movements in their local contexts. Each regional story curator identified whose stories they wanted to



Front cover. Artwork by Vidushi Yadav, © Stories of Girls’ Resistance, 2023.

include, drawing on their personal relationships and activist networks woven over time. In 2023, we launched a website and an accompanying book that weaves together the collective narrative analysis on why girls resist, what sparks and sustains their resistance, the strategies and tactics they bring to their resistance, and the expansive ways girls are contributing to the world's most powerful movements for change. In 2024, we will publish a second book honouring each individual story.

'Through "Stories of Girls' Resistance", you discover the

multiple ways girls are resisting, and transforming their homes, communities and the world, from the smallest, most invisible acts of defiance in the home to the role of girls in shaping some of the most powerful revolutions and social justice movements of the last century. Our hope is that these stories will transform narratives and reshape how girls are seen, how they see themselves and how decisions affecting girls are made. Now that "Stories of Girls' Resistance" is out in the world, we will continue to document, amplify and harness the stories, knowledge and strategies of girls and young

feminists. We are also now actively working to translate this narrative and knowledge into tools and strategies for funders, policy makers and programmers, and use it to advocate for change across movements and sectors.'

● Further information: websites <https://girlsresistance.org>, <https://girlsresistance.org/about/books/>

International Work is edited by Siobhan Warrington who welcomes all contributions by email to siobhan.warrington@newcastle.ac.uk

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