



March 2020

Staying at Home While Celebrating Women's History Month

From all of us at the Oral History Center, we are wishing you our best in these challenging times. We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe and healthy.

Director's Column, March 2020

Things have been challenging lately. We're all hoping for the best, and to stay healthy. This means staying at home and doing our best to fill our days with something that resembles normalcy.



One way to do this is by spending your time with some of our interviews, especially those of the remarkable women who make our collection so dynamic. And, some of those women include people who broke the glass ceiling in their workplaces or in the political realm.

This month, OHC Director Martin Meeker takes a moment to reflect on our current climate, as well as to highlight some of the oral histories we have with notable women.

Read Martin's column [here](#).

"They Got Woken Up": SLATE and Women's Activism at UC Berkeley

For students across the country, college is a time of political awakening. And perhaps no other university has earned its reputation for radical student politics quite like UC Berkeley. Mid-century political activism around civil rights, the



Vietnam War, and the Free Speech Movement has shaped how students, faculty, and administrators experience life at Berkeley today.

One important part of Berkeley's political history is the New Left student political party SLATE. SLATE — so named because the group backed a slate of candidates who ran on a common platform for ASUC (Associated Students of the University of California) elections — operated

between 1958 and 1966, and ignited a passion for politics in the face of looming McCarthyism and what many perceived as the University of California's encroachment on student rights to free speech.

An essential part of SLATE's story is the contributions of its women members. SLATE operated at a time before the women's movement, but its work became an important introduction to political organizing for a generation of women students at Berkeley. These women were dedicated members of the group, but often felt sidelined in SLATE leadership. And yet, their work helped to change political culture and campus life at Berkeley. Three of these groundbreaking Berkeley women are Cindy Lembcke Kamler, Susan Griffin, and Julianne Morris.

This month, Amanda Tewes explores the contributions of the female members of SLATE and their lasting impact on American politics.

Advanced Summer Institute Applications are Now Open!

Join us for our week-long oral history intensive from August 10-14, 2020. For our annual Advanced Summer Institute, we will focus on the methodology, theory, and practice of oral history.



The institute is designed for graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, university faculty, independent scholars, and museum and community-based historians who are engaged in oral history work. The goal of the institute is to strengthen the ability of its participants to conduct research-focused interviews and to consider special characteristics of interviews as historical evidence in a rigorous academic environment.

Apply Now

For more information, please **visit our website** or email Shanna Farrell at sfarrell@library.berkeley.edu.

**Class of '31 Nominations
Are Now Open**

Know someone who's made an impact at UC Berkeley? Nominate them for an Oral History!

Is there a Berkeley faculty, administrator, or staff person — past or present — who's made an impact on campus? This is your opportunity to nominate someone who has made an outstanding contribution to campus life or to the teaching, research, or public service mission of the university — and we'll interview the selected candidate for posterity.

This oral history honor has been made possible by a generous endowment from the class of '31.

Submit your nominations [here](#).



Nominate a UC Berkeley faculty or staff who has made an important contribution to campus for an oral history

Made possible by the Class of '31



In Memory of Dr. Roshan Bhappu, 1926 - 2019

On December 28, 2019, mining engineer, metallurgist, and entrepreneur Dr. Roshan Bhappu passed away at the age of 93.

Dr. Bhappu was the **very first narrator for the Global Mining and Materials**

Research Project, which was established in 2014. Paul Burnett interviewed him that year, and the two kept in touch.

Some words from Paul Burnett:

Dr. Bhappu was a real gentleman: courteous, humble, charming, and quietly devout. He was immensely proud of his family, with accomplished children working in a variety of fields, some related to mining, some not. In his oral history, he spoke about his then 65-year career in mining. He only sold his company, Mountain States Research, a couple of years ago! He shared with me a perception that mining is a much maligned endeavor, and worked hard to educate the public about the industry. Although he acknowledged the environmental costs of mining, he felt that the benefits far outweighed the costs. Moreover, he has spent his career trying to find ways to mitigate pollution from mining and to treat remaining pollutants with responsible and cost-effective methods. Dr. Bhappu was an inveterate optimist, which is why you will not read, for example about the twenty-two hours he spent on an operating table, shifts of surgeons rebuilding his back after three other specialists had told him he would never walk again. He only told me this in order to explain why he could not sit for long periods of time in the same position. Though fortunes can turn in an unstable world, what mattered to Dr. Bhappu was the story of surviving and thriving, of living to tell of the extraordinary people he met, learned

from, and influenced, and of the difference he made with his colleagues and family. His favorite saying was a Zoroastrian proverb: "Good thoughts, good words, good deeds." RIP Dr. Bhappu.

Watch a clip from their 2014 interview.



OHC on KQED's "Forum"

Martin Meeker was recently on KQED talking about interviewing Governor Jerry Brown!

[Listen Here.](#)

"Extraordinarily detailed, thoughtful, self-critical, broad, sweeping" is how director Martin Meeker describes the **40-hour Jerry Brown oral history**.

Access all resources, including the transcript, podcasts, and commentary from Meeker and former governor Gray Davis.

Season 5 of the Berkeley Remix Podcast

The 5th season of our podcast, *The Berkeley Remix*, is now live! It dives into the long history of the East Bay Regional Park District, which was founded in 1934. Over the course of three episodes, we explore its integral role in fighting the 1991 Oakland Hills Fire, being on the forefront of gender equality in the workplace, and how its efforts to preserve land benefited the local equestrian community.



- Episode 1: You Really Love Your Land, Don't You?
- Episode 2: There's No Crying in Carpentry
- Episode 3: (Once in a) Career Fire

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