

CASE #27

Oral Histories as Primary Sources in the Classroom: Examples from the Gordon W. Prange Collection, University of Maryland Libraries

AUTHOR

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES ENGAGED FROM [GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY SOURCE LITERACY](#) BY THIS CASE STUDY

- 1.A. Distinguish primary from secondary sources for a given research question. Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of primary and secondary sources for research.
- 1.B. Articulate what might serve as primary sources for a specific research project within the framework of an academic discipline or area of study.
- 1.C. Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions.
- 2.A. Identify the possible locations of primary sources.
- 3.B. Critically evaluate the perspective of the creator(s) of a primary source, including tone, subjectivity, and biases, and consider how these relate to the original purpose(s) and audience(s) of the source.

CASE STUDY LOCATION

University of Maryland Libraries
College Park, Maryland
<https://www.lib.umd.edu/> (Libraries' main website)
<https://www.lib.umd.edu/collections/special> (Special Collections' website)

<https://www.lib.umd.edu/collections/special/japan> (Postwar Japan/ Prange Collection webpage)

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Introduction and Institutional Context

The Gordon W. Prange Collection (Prange Collection) housed at the University of Maryland Libraries is the most comprehensive archive in the world of Japanese print publications issued during the first four years of the Occupation of Japan, 1945-1952. All publications published between 1945 to 1949 were subjected to censorship by the Civil Censorship Detachment (CCD), a censorship unit within the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers (SCAP). Dr. Gordon W. Prange, a chief historian for SCAP's Historical Division and a professor of history at the University of Maryland (UMD) before the Occupation, recognized the historical importance of the CCD materials. As the CCD came to a close in November 1949, Dr. Prange worked with both SCAP officers as well as the UMD's campus administrators to acquire these materials for the university. The collection was named after Dr. Prange in 1979, and it is now a part of Special Collections and University Archives in the Hornbake Library North at the UMD's College Park campus.¹

The collection consists of books (71,000 titles), magazines (14,000 titles), newspapers (18,000 titles), news agency photographs (10,000 titles), maps (640 titles), and posters and wall newspapers (280 titles) – all Japanese-language publications and ephemera that were submitted to the CCD for review. Over the years the Prange Collection has also expanded to incorporate various collections from personnel who stayed in Japan during the Occupation. These donated collections are equally rich documentation of the immediate postwar environment and illuminate the Occupier's perspective. Unlike the materials that were collected by the CCD, most of these donated collections are entrusted with copyright to the UMD Libraries by the donors. Therefore, some of them are available as digital images online, making them easily accessible by users. This paper focuses on one of the most-used bodies of resources donated as a complement to the Prange Collection: The Marlene J. Mayo Oral Histories.

The Marlene J. Mayo Oral Histories (Mayo Oral Histories) are a collection of over 100 interviews with individuals who served or were present in Occupied Japan. Dr. Marlene J. Mayo, Associate Professor Emerita of History at the University of Maryland, and her associate conducted the interviews mainly from the 1970s to 1990s, although some were conducted as recently as 2019. Originally recorded on cassette tapes, they have since been fully digitized, and about eighty percent of the interviews are transcribed and available as keyword-searchable PDFs. This searchability helps the author to select the interviews for teaching use. The transcripts are open to the public through the University of Maryland Libraries' website.²

Dr. Prange exchanged many letters with UMD President Harry Byrd when negotiating the shipment of the CCD materials from Japan to UMD in the late 1940s. In the letter to Byrd in November 1949, Dr. Prange emphasized the importance of these materials as a teaching and research resource, stating that "future generations of Maryland students and faculty members will use these materials

¹ For more about the Gordon W. Prange Collection, see: <https://www.lib.umd.edu/collections/special/japan>

² For more information about the Marlene J. Mayo Oral Histories, see: Kana Jenkins and Amy Wasserstrom, "Japanese Studies Spotlight: The Marlene J. Mayo Oral Histories with Americans Who Served in Allied Occupied Japan," *Japanese Studies Spotlight* (blog), *The North American Coordinating Council on Japanese Library Resources*, August 18, 2021. <https://guides.nccjapan.org/homepage/news/news/Japanese-Studies-Spotlight-Marlene-J-Mayo>.

long after you and I have had our day.”³ As the curator of the Prange Collection, the author celebrates the foresight of Dr. Prange, and has been exploring diverse pedagogical avenues to utilize the collection materials, both the CCD materials and donated materials, not only in Japan-related subject classes but other courses and disciplines at the UMD. This case study is a prime example of how students in a non-Japanese Studies class were still able to use the collection’s primary source materials.

This case study discusses a library’s instruction session for a History course, HIST 408J: Telling War Stories: Using Oral History to Write Military History, a fifteen-week class taught in Spring 2020 (January – May) by Dr. Patrick Chung, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Maryland. This class was an upper-level research seminar primarily targeting History major undergraduate students and was capped at twelve students. By using various oral histories available to the public, such as the Library of Congress Veterans History Project,⁴ the class aims to help students understand the “human side of warfare” as opposed to the more general approach found in many history books that emphasize the straightforward documentation of wars. The final project in the course was to create a 15- to 20-page historical research paper on an original topic.

While the author and Dr. Chung first met in October 2019 for an initial discussion of the class session, the majority of the lesson plan was finalized in a second meeting in early February 2020. Dr. Chung shared the course syllabus with the author prior to their meeting to facilitate a better understanding of the class goals and how the library instruction session fit into the broader trajectory of the semester and students’ skill development.

In the February meeting, Dr. Chung expressed his interest in using the Mayo Oral Histories, as they are “ready-to-use” (already-digitized), supply sufficient biographical information for each interviewee, and have accessible interview transcripts. With these resources at their disposal, students faced fewer barriers to study the interviews carefully and obtain additional information as they critically engaged with the materials.

The goal of the proposed session was to provide an opportunity for the students to become familiar with the oral histories and to analyze the process of conducting oral interviews. Dr. Chung suggested dividing the instruction into two sessions, one in February at the start of the course, and then a follow-up session in March. The first session would introduce the Mayo Oral Histories as a research collection and help students understand their significance as primary source materials. The second session would delve more in depth into a selected interviewee and their personal story.

Narrative

First Session

³ Gordon W. Prange to Harry Byrd, November 28, 1949, Series 3, Box 1, Gordon W. Prange Papers, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Maryland Libraries. Accessed July 10, 2023.

⁴ For more about the Veterans History Project, see: <https://www.loc.gov/programs/veterans-history-project/about-this-program/>. Accessed February 22, 2024.

The first class session (90 minutes) was conducted on the fourth-floor lobby of the Hornbake Library North on February 20, 2020. First, the author gave a short presentation to introduce the Prange Collection's materials in primary, secondary, and tertiary sources categories. The students were already assigned several readings prior to the session on the definition of the primary, secondary, and tertiary sources, so the author's intention was to reinforce this knowledge with practical examples from library holdings, achieving Learning Objective 1.A.⁵ The students were also assigned to watch the Prange Collection's introductory video prior to the session. This ten-minute video provides an overview of the Prange Collection and the censorship program in Occupied Japan.⁶

For the introduction of primary sources, the author chose materials related to the book *Nagasaki no kane [Bells of Nagasaki]*, presenting images of the book held in the Prange Collection. Written by Dr. Takashi Nagai, a well-known physician in Nagasaki at the time, *Bells of Nagasaki* is a firsthand narrative of the Nagasaki atomic bombing and its aftermath. The CCD's approach to any publications related to the atomic bombs was complicated, as it depended on how they were described and in what context. Due to the detailed descriptions of Nagasaki's devastation, the censors first suggested entirely suppressing the publication of the book. Eventually, after consulting with General Charles Willoughby, Chief of Intelligence in SCAP, the book was allowed to be published under the condition that it add a story on the Japanese military's atrocities in Manila during the war as an appendix.⁷

As a complement, the author also presented internal correspondence within the CCD regarding the book's censorship. Communications among censors and SCAP officials are preserved at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and the Prange Collection maintains photocopies of these NARA resources as teaching and reference materials. Together, these materials enabled students to understand both the different formats that primary sources could take as well as how they are able to speak to one another.

As examples of secondary sources, the author introduced several academic monographs and films that incorporate information from *Bells of Nagasaki* into their analyses.⁸ For tertiary sources, the author presented an entry for "Censorship – the postwar period (from 1945)" in the *Encyclopedia of Japan* accessed via *JapanKnowledge*, a widely-used Japanese reference database.⁹

⁵ Learning Objective 1.A., "Distinguish primary from secondary sources for a given research question. Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelatedness of primary and secondary sources for research." *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

⁶ The Prange Collection's introductory video is available in: <https://www.lib.umd.edu/collections/special/japan>

⁷ For more about the CCD correspondences about *Nagasaki no kane*, see Chapter 8, *The Atomic Bomb suppressed: American Censorship in Japan, 1945-1949*. Sweden: Liber International, 1986.

⁸ The author used the images of: Paul Glynn, *A Song for Nagasaki* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009).; Susan Southard, *Nagasaki: Life After Nuclear War* (New York: Viking, 2015).; Yūko Shibata, *Producing Hiroshima and Nagasaki: Literature, Film, and Transnational Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2018).; Masao Wakahara, et al, *Nagasaki no Kane* (Japan: Shōchiku Kabushiki Kaisha, 2014).

⁹ *Encyclopedia of Japan*, s.v. "censorship [検閲]." Accessed July 3, 2023, <https://japanknowledge.com/lib/en/display/?lid=10800LW100009>

Next, the class was divided into three groups of about four students to listen to different interview excerpts (5-8 minutes each) from the Mayo Oral Histories. The author selected and prepared the interview audio files ahead of time, making them available on an iPad assigned to each group. To facilitate an effective listening experience, two groups stayed in the lobby area in opposite corners and one group used study tables in the Prange Collection office area.

The author selected the interviewees—John Aiso, Donald Keene, and Yayoi Cooke—based on their diverse identities and backgrounds. They were different in gender, race, wartime experience, Japanese language proficiency, and post-war experience.¹⁰ For most of the interviewees, Dr. Mayo started off the interview by asking where they were born and about their childhoods. Thus, the interviews are not just a selected narrative of what they did during the Occupation of Japan but illustrate each interviewee's larger life story. These interviews provide "compelling, direct evidence of human activity,"¹¹ aligning with Dr. Chung's class goals by exposing students to the more personal, human elements of people whose lives have been, by virtue of their inclusion in the Prange Collection, associated with a history of war.

The author created a worksheet for each interviewee that provided the interviewee's biography, a few examples of research topics that could be developed into research questions, and a blank section where the students could write down what sources could be useful for answering their research questions and where to find them, covering the Learning Objective 1.C. and 2.A..¹² For example, the worksheet for John Aiso lists "immigration" and "lives of Japanese-Americans during the war" as possible research topics (See Appendix). Aiso was a Japanese American who was born and raised in California and became Director of the Military Intelligence Japanese Language School during the war. In the interview excerpt, Aiso talks about how one American officer said, "your country needs you" to him, and how it was the first time that anyone in an official position had characterized the United States as "his country." The students were given twenty-five minutes in total to listen to the excerpt as well as to discuss the worksheet within their group.

Each group was then assigned to do a short 5-7 minute presentation on their assigned interview. The author got an idea of having the students do a presentation to the whole class from the article "Archivists as Educators: Integrating Primary Source into the Curriculum" written by Peter Carini. Carini points out that having each student or a small group of students analyze and present it back to the whole class can help creating a meaningful exercise for a shorter class period and help students to be engaged in the session.¹³ In addition, the creation of a presentation after reviewing a

¹⁰ Their information can be found at: Marlene J. Mayo oral histories, 0015-GWP. Special Collections and University Archives. <http://hdl.handle.net/1903.1/42478>. Accessed July 3, 2023.

¹¹ *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

¹² Learning Objective 1C., "Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions" and 2A., "Identify the possible locations of primary sources." *Ibid.*

¹³ Peter Carini, "Archivists as Educators: Integrating Primary Source into the Curriculum," *Journal of Archival Organization* 7 (2009): 46. Accessed July 3, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332740902892619>.

primary source fosters students' ability to synthesize and communicate key elements of their research materials relates to the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* Learning Objective 3.B.¹⁴

In their work on the importance of collaboration between faculty members and Special Collections librarians, Mazella and Grob emphasize that a library session can act as a “multiplier,” contributing to the increased quality of and opportunities for student feedback.¹⁵ For each presentation, both Dr. Chung and the author provided additional information on where relevant primary sources could be found as well as other types of resources where the students could identify more relevant information for their research questions, such as newspaper obituaries with detailed biographic information (Covered the Learning Objective 1.B.).¹⁶

PLANNED SECOND SESSION

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UMD campus was shut down in March of 2020, resulting in that our second session could not take place. Many UMD faculty members started to voluntarily cancel their classes in the week of March 9, and Dr. Chung's second session was scheduled on Thursday, March 12. The UMD campus officially decided to cancel all campus activity on the evening of March 12. The author and Dr. Chung did not have enough time to pivot the session to online nor to reschedule for later in the semester. However, the class had already been planned at length prior to its cancellation, so the lesson plan for this session is provided in this case study. The author's hope is that she can host this class again in the future and execute the plan for the second session then.

Immediately after the first session, Dr. Chung and the author had a follow-up meeting to discuss the second session, and the author created a lesson plan based on that conversation. While the goal of the first session was to have students understand the oral histories as historical sources and become familiar with the content, the second session would emphasize selecting targeted sources for analysis and historical research. The organizing questions provided in the syllabus were “How do I approach sources and choose the ones to include in my paper? Why does it matter?”

With these objectives in mind, Dr. Chung and the author decided that the second session would focus on a freer and deeper discussion of the research process among the students. The author agreed to do an overview presentation on the Mayo Oral Histories itself, for example, including how Dr. Mayo identified and located interviewees; how the interviews were taken; how the interviews

¹⁴ Learning Objective 3B., “Identify and communicate information found in primary sources, including summarizing the content of the source and identifying and reporting key components such as how it was created, by whom, when, and what it is.” *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

¹⁵ David Mazella and Julie Grob, “Collaborations between Faculty and Special Collections Librarians in Inquiry-Driven Classes,” *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 11, no. 1 (2011): 480. Accessed July 3, 2023. <https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/article/409888>.

¹⁶ Learning Objective 1B., “Articulate what might serve as a primary source for a specific research project within the framework of an academic discipline or area of study.” *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

have been used for existing research; and the importance of the interviews as an archival material in the Prange Collection. One of the core ideas listed in the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* is that users need to understand how sources were produced and delivered,¹⁷ so the author intended to address these questions through a discussion of one particular interviewee in the Mayo Oral Histories: Key Kobayashi.¹⁸ A newspaper article published on Key Kobayashi's life in the *Washington Post* in 2019 entitled "What is democracy? During WWII, a Japanese American soldier struggled to answer" was to be shared with the students in order to provide detailed background information for Kobayashi's life experience.¹⁹ As another core idea, the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* states that the "interpretation of sources occurs on a continuum from the creation of the source to its utilization by the current user, and indicates mediation by librarians, archivists, and database creators or designers."²⁰ The author deemed it beneficial to focus on Key Kobayashi in order to explain how the Prange Collection acquired the interviews, how the Prange Collection staff members have processed the interviews and made the information available to users, and how it has already been utilized in several research endeavors.

Dr. Chung also indicated the need to talk a bit more about the history of Occupation of Japan to help students better envision the many possibilities for their research topics, so the author planned to cover that in relation to Kobayashi's role in the Occupation Force. The second session was to be conducted as such:

- The author's presentation on the history of Occupation on Japan and Key Kobayashi's overall background (20 mins)
- Listening to a long excerpt of the interview (15 mins)
- Class discussion on how Kobayashi's experience fits and supplements the history of Occupation of Japan in general (40 mins)

Results and Lessons Learned

After the first meeting, the author distributed a Google form to assess whether the library session achieved its desired learning outcomes. The form was a short survey that consisted of the following three open-ended questions with no word limit for their responses:

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Key Kobayashi Oral History, Marlene J. Mayo Oral Histories, Gordon W. Prange Collection, University of Maryland Libraries. Accessed July 3, 2023,

https://archives.lib.umd.edu/repositories/2/archival_objects/551912.

¹⁹ Kathryn Tolbert, "'What is democracy?' During WWII, a Japanese American soldier struggled to answer," *Washington Post*, April 4, 2019. Accessed July 3, 2023,

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2019/04/04/what-is-democracy-during-wwii-japanese-american-soldier-struggled-answer/>.

²⁰ *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018),

<https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

1. Please summarize what you've learned in the session.
2. What was your favorite part in the session?
3. What was your least favorite part in the session? How would you like it differently?

Nine students out of twelve students responded. For the first question, five students wrote that they gained knowledge on the censorship on Japanese media, and/or a history of the Occupation of Japan. Three students responded that they learned how oral history interviews can serve as primary sources and can be a guide to the formulation of research questions.

For the second question, four students wrote that they enjoyed listening to the interviews, while five students wrote that seeing physical materials was their favorite part of the session. For the third question, two students opted to list nothing, and there was a significant divergence of the remaining students' opinions. Personal preferences may have played a substantial role in shaping these opinions; yet it is important to note that three students expressed a preference to listen to longer interviews, as they found the excerpts were insufficient to understand the contexts and lives of interviewees. Two students noted that they would have liked to view more of the original archival materials. On the whole, these divergent responses reflect the importance of pairing oral histories with other more conventional archival materials.

The author acknowledges that the students did not have enough time to fully grasp the interviewees' lives by just listening to less than 10-minute excerpts. While interviewee biographies were available as a worksheet, the volume of information could be overwhelming for students, especially because the majority were not familiar with the history of Occupation and/or Japan in general. The censorship aspect of the materials in the Prange Collection might have also diverted the students' attention.

A short instruction time was also not enough to lead students to refine their research questions, hence the author did not cover Learning Objective 1.D. in the session.²¹ The author realized during the session that some students were first-year students or sophomores and did not have much experience in conducting historical research. Hoyer, Holt, and Pelaez discuss the importance of approaching learning objectives with different and diverse types of students in mind.²² The author was under an assumption that the students shared the same level of understanding and experience. In retrospect, it would have been helpful to consult on the nature of the student body with Dr.

²¹ Learning Objective 1D., "Understand that research is an iterative process and that as primary sources are found and analyzed the research question(s) may change." *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries' Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

²² Jen Hoyer, Kaitlin Holt and Julia Pelaez, "Crafting a Research Question: Differentiated Teaching for Instruction With Primary Sources Across Diverse Learning Levels," *Case Studies on Teaching with Primary Sources* (2018): 7. Accessed July 3, 2023. <https://www2.archivists.org/publications/epubs/Case-Studies-Teaching-With-Primary-Sources>.

Chung prior to the first session and more closely assist some students as necessary on how research questions can be shaped.

In addition to addressing student learning during the library session, dealing with audio files may also bring unique challenges that do not occur for other instructors at archives. For example, Petersen and Edmunson-Morton reflect on the repeated minor technical glitches with recording equipment when their students were conducting oral history interviews.²³ Being aware of these possible technical difficulties, the author double-checked that the audio files on the iPads were set correctly right before the session. As the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* states, the formats of primary sources can be “unique and unfamiliar” to students.²⁴ The students may be only familiar with paper-based primary sources, such as newspaper articles, but may not have enough experience in considering and handling oral histories interviews as primary sources. Despite these potential challenges, the author strongly believes in the pedagogical usefulness of oral histories in library sessions at archives.

Conclusion

As Dr. Prange had envisioned in 1949, the author’s next plan is to further promote the pedagogical use of the Marlene Mayo Oral Histories and other materials in the Prange Collection in the UMD classrooms, including those outside of History and Japanese Studies classes. For example, interviews of Japanese-Americans in the collection could be of interest to the Asian American Studies classes, while many broader themes are of interest to fields like Political Science, Gender Studies, Anthropology, and more.²⁵ The Society of American Archivists’ *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* are intended to be “flexible rather than prescriptive” to meet the needs of any disciplines; it is up to educators to be creative guides open to and well-versed in the many possibilities an archive has to offer.²⁶ The learning objectives that the author set for this class can easily be adapted to other UMD classes.

The use of both traditional and innovative methods to “reconnect” archivists and departmental faculty members is an essential part of fostering more collaborative teaching in and with archives. As Smith and McGillan have suggested, increasing the visibility of archivists and the work they do,

²³ Chris Petersen and Tiah Edmunson-Morton, “Fostering Historical Empathy in Unusual Times: A Case Study of the Course ‘OSU, Women and Oral History: An Exploration of 150 Years,’” *Case Studies on Teaching With Primary Sources* (2018): 10. Accessed July 3, 2023. <https://www2.archivists.org/publications/epubs/Case-Studies-Teaching-With-Primary-Sources>.

²⁴ *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries’ Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018), <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

²⁵ The author co-presented a presentation entitled “*Japanese-Americans: Marginalized, then called upon to serve “their” country*” in an annual conference (virtual) of Oral History Association in 2020. The presentation focused on three Japanese-American interviewees in the Marlene Mayo Oral Histories.

²⁶ *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* (Society of American Archivists and Association of College and Research Libraries’ Rare Books and Manuscripts Section, 2018): 2. <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/GuidelinesForPrimarySourceLiteracy-June2018.pdf>.

particularly among faculty, is critical.²⁷ The author plans to partner with Dr. Chung in his future classes as well as proactively reach out to faculty members in other departments and disciplines to develop customized teaching plans for their courses. These efforts will not only help raise awareness of the institutional and educational value of the Prange Collection but also enhance the diversity of pedagogical offerings at the University of Maryland.

²⁷ Jessica Perkins Smith and Jennifer McGillan, "Towards a More Collaborative Experience: Connecting Library and Departmental Faculty to Improve and Expand Archival Instruction," *Journal of Map & Geography Libraries* 15, no. 2-3 (2019): 184. Accessed July 3, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15420353.2020.1719269>.

Appendix: Worksheet

John Aiso (December 14, 1909 - December 29, 1987)

John Fujio Aiso was born in Burbank, California. He attended Brown University, from which he graduated in 1931 as their first Asian American graduate. He then attended Harvard Law School, receiving his degree in 1934. He was drafted in 1941. Originally stationed at Fort MacArthur, he was transferred to the Military Intelligence Service Language School (now known as the Defense Language Institute), where he became Director of Academic Training from 1941-1946. In 1946, Aiso was granted a direct commission as Major to work as an executive assistant to General C. A. Willoughby in the Civil Information Section. He served as Superior Court Commissioner until he was promoted to a Los Angeles Municipal Court judge in 1952, becoming the first Japanese American to hold a judicial position in the contiguous United States.

In the excerpt of the interview, (40:19-46:31), Aiso recalls the time when he was called in to work at the Japanese Language School.

POSSIBLE RESEARCH TOPICS

- Immigration
- Lives of Japanese-Americans during the war

Brief Bio and the interview:	
Research Question:	
Primary (WHAT)	Primary (WHERE)
Secondary (WHAT)	Secondary (WHERE)
Tertiary (WHAT)	Tertiary (WHERE)