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## **Finding aid for the Sonia Sunoo papers 3023**

Sarah cassone

USC Libraries East Asian Library

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Doheny Memorial Library

3550 Trousdale Parkway

Los Angeles, California 90089-1825

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**Language of Material:** English

**Contributing Institution:** USC Libraries East Asian Library

**Title:** Sonia Sunoo papers

**creator:** Sunoo, Sonia Shinn

**Identifier/Call Number:** 3023

**Identifier/Call Number:** 1597

**Physical Description:** 1 Linear Feet1 bankers box

**Date (inclusive):** 1971-1998

**Abstract:** Sonia Shinn Sunoo was a Korean American teacher, researcher, and writer. This small collection consists primarily of Sunoo's oral history interview transcripts with early Korean immigrant picture brides (mail order brides). The collection also contains research materials regarding this topic in the form of correspondence, clippings, and notes.

#### **Arrangement**

Folders are arranged alphabetically.

#### **Scope and Contents**

The Sonia Sunoo papers, 1971-1998, consist primarily of oral history interview transcripts, as well as some research materials in the form of correspondence, clippings, and notes, created and collected by Sunoo and relating to Korean picture brides (mail order brides) who emigrated to the United States in the early 20th century. Shortly after 1910, there were more than 2,000 arranged marriages in the U.S. between older Korean men and younger brides.

This collection collects the interviews Sunoo conducted with these picture brides (all widowed and in their 80s), primarily between the years 1975-1977, as part of the UCLA funded Korean American Oral History Project. These interviews were published by the Korean American Oral History Project in the book "Korea Kaleidoscope: oral histories" in 1982, as well as in Sunoo's 2002 companion book entitled "Korean Picture Brides: 1903-1920: a collection of oral histories", which focuses specifically on the trials and experiences of the first generation of Korean immigrant women in America.

The collection also contains some research materials for Sunoo's Oregon Historical Quarterly published article entitled "Korean Women Pioneers of the Pacific Northwest", as well as general notes, clippings, and correspondence.

#### **Biographical Note**

Sonia Shinn Sunoo was a Korean American teacher, researcher, and writer. Her father left Korea for the United States in 1903, as part of the very first Koreans to emigrate. He worked on a sugar cane plantation in Hawaii for two years before moving to California. Her mother left Korea at the age of nineteen as a picture bride to marry Sonia's father. Sonia was born in San Francisco in 1915 and grew up in Chinatown. She went to San Francisco State College where she majored in English and Biology. She also earned a M.A. in Human Development and Early Childhood Education.

In 1943, Sonia married Harold Sunoo. They had two children. Sonia taught Korean language at the University of Washington from 1943 to 1949. In 1951, she received a summer scholarship to attend Stanford for graduate work, but had to leave prior to completing her dissertation due to her husband's inability to find a job upon returning from overseas. After Harold was still unable to find teaching work, Sonia ended up helping him with his grocery store business in between her own research in the 1970s of Korean picture brides and early Korean immigrants as part of the Korean American Oral History Project. Both Sunoo and her husband also wrote articles in the 1970s and 1980s regarding the first Korean women immigrants in the United States. Sunoo's first book oral histories book was published in 1982.

An interview from 2001 revealed it was Sunoo's greatest wish to have her book on Korean picture brides published. Sunoo felt these women were courageous pioneers who sought escape and freedom from the Confucian strictures of Korea and that they were often misrepresented in their portrayal simply because they were marrying a stranger in the United States. Sunoo strived to tell the stories of these women's desire for freedom and education and reveal the true feminist values they represented. "Korean Picture Brides: 1903-1920: a collection of oral histories" was published on May 1, 2002.

#### **Conditions Governing Access**

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE. Advance notice required for access.

#### **Conditions Governing Use**

All requests for permission to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted in writing to the Curator of the Korean Heritage Library. Permission for publication is given on behalf of the Korean Heritage Library as the owner of the physical items and is not intended to include or imply permission of the copyright holder, which must also be obtained.

#### **Preferred Citation**

[Box/Folder# or Item name]. Sonia Sunoo papers, Collection no. 3023, Korean Heritage Library, USC Libraries, University of Southern California.

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**Immediate Source of Acquisition**

Gift of Sonia Sunoo.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Immigrants -- Korea -- 20th century -- Archival resources

Korean American women -- California -- Interviews -- Archival resources

Korean American women authors -- California -- Los Angeles -- Archival resources

Mail order brides -- Korea -- 20th century -- Archival resources

Clippings

Correspondence

Oral histories (document genres)

Notes

Research (documents)

Sunoo, Sonia Shinn -- Archives

Ahn, Philip, 1905-1978

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Box 1, Folder 1	<b>Ahn, Young-ho (Joan Ahn - matchmaker, comical story) 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 2	<b>Ahn, Seung-wha (Korean American oral history project) 1975-12-03</b>
Box 1, Folder 3	<b>Ahn, Philip [clipping] 1975-12-03</b>
Box 1, Folder 4	<b>Cha, Kyong-soo (Park Kyong-sein's sister) 1977-02-18</b>
Box 1, Folder 5	<b>Cha, Song-dal (died in LA 1989) 1975-12-03</b>
Box 1, Folder 6	<b>Chang, Lee Wook, Dr (Korean woman pioneers) 1981-1982</b>
Box 1, Folder 7	<b>Char, Edward (Yong-Chun) Ada (died March 1982) 1975-12-18</b>
Box 1, Folder 8	<b>Charr, Emsen 1975-1982</b>
Box 1, Folder 9	<b>Charr, Evelyn (née Young-sun Kim) 1975-1998</b>
Box 1, Folder 10	<b>Choy, Joseph undated</b>
Box 1, Folder 11	<b>Choy, Nung Yik 1976-07-28</b>
Box 1, Folder 12	<b>Chu, Kuang-Myong 1976-11</b>
Box 1, Folder 13	<b>Chu, Young-Han 1976-01</b>
Box 1, Folder 14	<b>Chun, Ho-taik (1904) 1976-01-31</b>
Box 1, Folder 15	<b>DeYoung, Henry, Dr. 1979</b>
Box 1, Folder 16	<b>DeYoung, Zona (Mrs. Henry de Young) 1979-1985</b>
Box 1, Folder 17	<b>Har, Sang-ok, Mr. and Mrs. Myong-Won (née Sook-ja Woo) 1980-1988</b>
Box 1, Folder 18	<b>Hyun, Chul 1976-01-20</b>
Box 1, Folder 19	<b>Kang, Young-sun, Dr. 1975-1994</b>
Box 1, Folder 20	<b>Kim, Choon-ha (Mrs) 1976-1994</b>
Box 1, Folder 21	<b>Kim, Choon-ha 1976-1983</b>
Box 1, Folder 22	<b>Kim, Dong-woo 1976, 1985</b>
Box 1, Folder 23	<b>Kim, Hei-won, Mrs. 1975-12-08</b>
Box 1, Folder 24	<b>Kim, H. Young-soon, Mrs. 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 25	<b>Kim, James (wife Sarah refused interview) 1976-1977</b>
Box 1, Folder 26	<b>Kim, Kyeng-bo 1975-12-05</b>
Box 1, Folder 27	<b>Kim, Pil-kwon 1973-06-22</b>
Box 1, Folder 28	<b>Kim, Sarah, Rev. 1976-01-09</b>
Box 1, Folder 29	<b>Kim, Herbert 1976-01-07</b>
Box 1, Folder 30	<b>Kim, Hyong-soon 1977-01-25</b>
Box 1, Folder 31	<b>Kim, Sae-sun 1978</b>
Box 1, Folder 32	<b>Kim, Sam (Kyong-sam) 1971, 1977</b>
Box 1, Folder 33	<b>Kim, Sung-nak, Rev. 1975-1982</b>
Box 1, Folder 34	<b>Kim, Warren 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 35	<b>Kim, Young-chul 1976-07-16</b>
Box 1, Folder 36	<b>Kown, Yong-ho 1976-01-09</b>
Box 1, Folder 37	<b>Kor Sch-role of Ch-Kmeth [church articles and clippings] 1977-1996</b>
Box 1, Folder 38	<b>Lee, Anna undated</b>

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Box 1, Folder 39	<b>Lee, Bom-young 1976-01-02</b>
Box 1, Folder 40	<b>Lee, Chang-hei 1979</b>
Box 1, Folder 41	<b>Lee, Dai Wi, Rev. 1981</b>
Box 1, Folder 42	<b>Lee, Ke-man, Mrs. undated</b>
Box 1, Folder 43	<b>Lee, Mary Kwang-son Paik 1977</b>
Box 1, Folder 44	<b>Lee, Sundo 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 45	<b>Lee, Thos sang-gi 1975</b>
Box 1, Folder 46	<b>Lee, Wha-mok (Mrs. Sun-do) 1975-12-19</b>
Box 1, Folder 47	<b>Lim, Mable 1975-12-09</b>
Box 1, Folder 48	<b>Lim, Doo Wha (Blanche) 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 49	<b>Park, Maria (Mrs. Kwanboo, née Lim) undated</b>
Box 1, Folder 50	<b>Namkung, Hyok, Rev 1982-04-27</b>
Box 1, Folder 51	<b>Paik, Myeung-son 1976-1983</b>
Box 1, Folder 52	<b>Park, Ne-qun 1975-1979</b>
Box 1, Folder 53	<b>Park, Julian Rev. and Mrs. Mildred 1977-2002</b>
Box 1, Folder 54	<b>Rhee, Byong-uk 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 55	<b>Shin, Tong-gi and (Mrs) Han So-je, M.D. 1976-01-12</b>
Box 1, Folder 56	<b>Song, Leo 1975, 1986</b>
Box 1, Folder 57	<b>Sunoo, Rosa 1975-11-28</b>
Box 1, Folder 58	<b>Whang, S., Mrs. 1971, 1977</b>
Box 1, Folder 59	<b>Whang, Sa-sun 1971, 1977</b>
Box 1, Folder 60	<b>Yang, Choo-Eun 1976</b>
Box 1, Folder 61	<b>Yoon, Do-Yun 1975</b>