

**Two sessions of the SCAR History Expert Group
XXXII SCAR OSC
Portland, Oregon, USA, 17 July 2012**

The SCAR History Expert Group organised two sessions at the XXXII Open Science Conference. Session 37, titled *Historical views on Gateways to Antarctica*, focused on the significance of port cities – the so-called “gateways” – in the history of the Antarctic continent and that of the rest of the world. The session explored Antarctic logistics, science, and rescue expeditions, and asked questions about the role of “gatekeepers” in these histories. It also paid particular attention to the history of exchanges between Antarctic expeditions and local communities.

The keynote lecture, on the Third German Antarctic Expedition (1938/39), was given by Cornelia Lüdecke (Germany) and Colin Summerhayes (United Kingdom) and described the meteorological, oceanographic and geographical results which guided later expeditions to Dronning Maud Land. Adrian Howkins (USA) explained how the classroom could be used as a “Gateway to Antarctica” in the past and present, especially in interdisciplinary education focusing on the environment. Jason Kendall Moore (Chile) used Antarctic theatre in the classroom to describe the political relations between Chile, Great Britain and the USA by comparing his own play “Tierra de San Martín” to Peter Greenaway’s film “The Cook, the Thief, his Wife and her Lover”. Aant Elzinga (Sweden) examined Punta Arenas in Chile and Ushuaia in Argentina through the eyes of some early polar explorers, and showed how these two settlements in southern Patagonia changed from colonial outposts to important harbour cities. Additionally Rudolf Greku (Russian Federation) displayed a poster about three generations of his family and their work in Antarctica (1955-2012).



Figure 1: From left to right: Adrian Howkins, Jason Kendall Moore, Cornelia Lüdecke, Aant Elzinga, and Colin Summerhayes

Session 36, also sponsored by the History Expert Group, was titled *Voicing Silences in Antarctic History* and addressed historical “silences” as opportunities to ask new questions in addition to simply adding new facts. The aim was to showcase the increasingly diverse – and sophisticated – nature of

historical scholarship on the Antarctic region. These included new methodological approaches like material culture, labour history, and environmental history in addition to new contributions in fields such as the history of science, Cold War geopolitics, and the history of European imperialism. Papers addressed various time periods and national contexts or employed perspectives from cognate disciplines such as archaeology or science studies.

The session began with the inaugural Lewander Lecture, an annual event in memory of Lisbeth Lewander (Sweden), a founding member of the Expert Group who passed away early this year. The lecture aims to showcase the value of dealing with polar history from diverse points of view, as well as the importance of sharing ideas and experiences with the next generation of scholars in order to widen involvement in the field, qualities that Lisbeth embodied in both her scholarship and her mentoring of younger colleagues. The lecture was presented by Heidi Prozesky and Lize-Marié van der Watt (both South Africa) and was titled “The triple burden of masculinity: A gender analysis of South African Antarctic and sub-Antarctic science, c. 1961-2011”, and drew on bibliometric analysis as well as more traditional historical methods to examine the continued gender imbalance in Antarctic science.

Following the Lewander Lecture, Andrés Zarankin (Brazil) gave a keynote presentation on the “incorporation” of the landscape as a phenomenological approach to the archaeology of the South Shetland Islands, and the power of material culture to reveal the unwritten past. Joanna Rae and Ellen Bazeley-White (United Kingdom) introduced the British Antarctic Oral History Project (BAOHP), run by the British Antarctic Survey, a new collection of interviews and recollections that promise to augment existing records. Peder Roberts (France) considered the question of who discovered Antarctica within the context of personal and international rivalries during the early twentieth century, while arguing that the question itself has little chance of being incontrovertibly answered. Lize-Marié van der Watt (South Africa) concluded the session by considering the “White Continent” within the context of the racialization of Antarctica in South Africa (c. 1955 – 2005).



Figure 2: From left to right: Heidi Prozesky, Lize-Marié van der Watt, Peder Roberts, Joanna Rae, and Andrés Zarankin.

During the following poster session, Berry Lyons and Adrian Howkins (both USA) displayed Griffith Taylor’s “missing lake” as an example of how history can aid science in the McMurdo Dry Valleys. Ximena Senatore (Argentina) explored how archaeology can give voices to the sealers and whalers who worked in the Antarctic during the early nineteenth century and who are otherwise under-represented in documentary records. Finally, Dora Scott (South Africa) presented the Antarctic Legacy Project, a digital platform for South African Antarctic history.

The second part of the session began with a presentation from David Walton (United Kingdom) on the history of SCAR and its influence on the Antarctic Treaty during the past half-century. Brandon Luedtke (USA) discussed changing perceptions of Antarctic wildlife, showing how penguins were pliable symbols of more than the mythical pristine Antarctic landscape and indicator of global change. Consuelo León Wöppke (Chile) revealed the history of the personnel of the first Chilean Antarctic expeditions to the Base O'Higgins in 1948, "unsung heroes" brought to light from army archives that included accounts of individuals without scientific education. Finally, Alessandro Antonello (Australia) discussed the scientific and environmental diplomacy of Antarctica's marine living resources and ecosystem in the period 1968-1980, using the negotiations of CCAMLR as case study of the relationship of scientific ideas with international environmental protection and management.



Figure 3: From left to right: David Walton, Consuelo León Wöppke, Alessandro Antonello and Brandon Luedtke

The history sessions of the SCAR OSC 2012 were the best-attended in the Group's history, with audiences of up to 70 people. 19 scholars from: Argentina (1), Australia (1), Brazil (1), Chile (2), Germany (1), France (1), United Kingdom (4), Russian Federation (1), Sweden (1), South Africa (3) and USA (3) presented twelve talks and four posters.

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