

ENDURING COMMUNITIES

Utah Curriculum Units*

* Download other *Enduring Community units* (accessed September 3, 2009).



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enduringcommunities



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Enduring Communities



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Enduring Communities is a partnership between the Japanese American National Museum, educators, community members, and five anchor institutions:

[Arizona State University's Asian Pacific American Studies Program](#)

[University of Colorado, Boulder](#)

[University of New Mexico](#)

[UTSA's Institute of Texan Cultures](#)

[Davis School District, Utah](#)



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* Download other *Enduring Community* units (accessed September 3, 2009).

Project Overview

Enduring Communities: The Japanese American Experience in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah is dedicated to reexamining an often-neglected chapter in U.S. history and connecting it with current issues.

The collaboration with educators, community members, students, and five partner anchor institutions—Arizona State University’s Asian Pacific American Studies Program; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of New Mexico; UTSA’s Institute of Texan Cultures; and Davis School District, Utah—resulted in the curricula created by educator teams from five states. Two other components of the project include a national conference, “Whose America? Who’s American? Diversity, Civil Liberties, and Social Justice,” hosted in Denver in July 2008, and a practical handbook about partnership projects for peer institutions.

During World War II about 65,000 Japanese Americans—nearly one half of the mainland Japanese American population—lived in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah, either in concentration camps created by the United States government, as long-standing community members, or as “resettlers” from the West Coast. The situation of Japanese American populations in these states during World War II affords the opportunity to explore the contradictions and racism inherent in how we have defined citizenship and dealt with diversity.

These stories have provided—and continue to provide—a compelling point from which to consider more broadly the experiences of other regional communities during World War II and beyond. In this way, the collaboration has generated materials and dialogue that reveal how the diverse realities of American communities have challenged and shaped this country’s definitions of citizenship, patriotism, and democracy.

Introduction to the Curricular Units

These curricular units were developed over the course of four years by phenomenal educators who thoughtfully and collaboratively tackled the challenge of teaching their students about a lesser-known part of United States history. Although everybody may not have been familiar with the Japanese American experience prior to joining this project, they are committed to being lifelong learners. Together they embarked upon a three-year quest to hear more first-person stories, seek out primary resources, read scholarly works, and engage in reflection and discussion about how to most effectively teach young people.

The intense process of developing and sharing units with colleagues and then receiving feedback from field testers resulted in two dynamic outcomes. The first is a five-state collection of standards-based elementary and secondary curricular units and accompanying media pieces. Although these materials have been edited for consistency, we hope that the distinctive style and spirit of each of the individuals, teams, and communities still remains.

The second, less tangible outcome has been the formation of interstate and intrastate educator com-

munities. Seeing these communities develop and be sustained via email, telephone calls, and face-to-face meetings has been one of the most rewarding aspects of this project. The camaraderie and mutual respect of these educators is at the heart of all of these materials.

Consequently, we hope that even more teachers will be able to use these materials in their classrooms. We hope that the essential questions might cause new groups of teachers and students to think about how the World War II Japanese American experience relates to contemporary events. We hope that these materials expand and rethink the notion of what it means to be American.

In this spirit, we hope that these materials are helpful, and we welcome your feedback. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Allyson Nakamoto
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Name of Unit

The World War II Japanese American Experience:
Political Cartoons and Artwork

Suggested Grade Level(s)

7, 8

Suggested Subject Area(s)

United States History and Utah Studies

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Hisako Hibi
A Stroll, 1944
Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee
Japanese American National Museum (96.601.25)



Unit Map

Authors

Jennifer Baker, Syracuse Junior High School,
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Name of Unit

The World War II Japanese American Experience:
Political Cartoons and Artwork

Suggested Grade Level(s)

7, 8

Suggested Subject Area(s)

United States History and Utah Studies

Number of Class Periods Required

8 to 9 class periods (45 minutes per period), plus additional time for the creation of museum exhibits

Enduring Understanding

- Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- What is the Topaz “Relocation Camp”?
- Is it more important to have safety or liberty?
- How does racism affect the American experience?
- How do communities endure?
- Who is the “We” in “We, the People”?
- What is the process of social justice?

Teacher Overview

This unit is designed to teach students about the World War II Japanese American experience by examining political cartoons and artwork from that period, thus providing additional insight into the complexities of the Japanese American World War II experience.

The final lesson in this unit encourages the class to partner with a community organization to create and display museum exhibits about the Japanese American experience.

Key Words

- Immigration
- Japanese Americans
- World War II
- Topaz
- Propaganda
- Artwork
- Primary sources
- Glossary
- Vocabulary
- Illustrate
- Research project
- Museum exhibit

Ties to Utah Core Curriculum

United States History I

- Standard 2, Objective 2: Analyze how contemporary concerns and events affect and are affected by history.
- Standard 6, Objective 4: Analyze the rights, liberties, and responsibilities of citizens.

Utah Studies

- Standard 5, Objective 1: Assess the cultural diversity of Utah.
- Standard 5, Objective 3: Assess the diverse cultural and recreational opportunities available in Utah.

Group Size

- Whole class
- Small group
- Individual
- Pairs

Life Skills

- Complex thinking
- Effective communication
- Collaboration
- Lifelong learning
- Responsible citizenship

Career Connections

- Social/Humanitarian
- Artistic
- Business information
- Management

LESSON 1

History of Japanese Americans Prior to and During World War II

Time

2 class periods (45 minutes per period)

Overview

Lesson 1 provides a brief overview of the complexities of the Japanese American World War II experience and encourages students to make connections between these historic events and contemporary issues.

Objectives

- Students will be able to discuss the history of Japanese Americans in the United States.
- Students will connect the World War II experiences of Japanese Americans to current events.
- Students will consider the trade-offs between safety and liberty.

Enduring Understanding

- Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- Is it more important to have safety or liberty?
- Who is the “We” in “We, the People”?

Materials

- *Handout 1-1: Bulleted List of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II*

Assessments

- *Handout 1-1 Bulleted List of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II*
- Value Line comparisons between the beginning and the end of the lesson

Background

Japanese Americans came to the United States beginning in the 1880s. Although they faced discrimination, they were still able to build successful lives in many professions. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor—which then led to the United States entering World War II—Japanese Americans were viewed even more suspiciously by many of their neighbors. Suspicion flared into concern that Japanese Americans would aid the Japanese in an attack on the U.S. West Coast. As a result, more than 100,000 American-born Japanese Americans and Japanese immigrants (who were ineligible for citizenship at the time) were removed from the West Coast and detained for the duration of the war.

Additional information is available in the “Notes” section of the PowerPoint presentation. Supplemental historical overviews, timelines, and maps about the Japanese American experience are found at the beginning of this unit.

Prior to this lesson, the teacher must prepare a lecture or PowerPoint presentation about the Japanese American experience. Information about the Japanese American experience accompanies this unit’s introductory materials and Appendix:

- Overviews and timelines about the Japanese American experience
- The article “Terminology and the Japanese American Experience”
- A Supplemental Bibliography

This lecture may be divided chronologically:

- Before World War II
- Executive Order 9066
- Tanforan Assembly Center
- Topaz Concentration Camp
- After Topaz

Instructional Strategies/Skills

Day 1:

- Have students create a Value Line. Ask the following question: *Is it more important to have safety or liberty?* Then have students move their desks into line, with “total safety” on the right and “total liberty” on the left. Students may also arrange themselves in the center.
- Discuss with various students why they placed themselves where they did.
- Give students a brief background about the experience of Japanese Americans during World War II using a lecture or a PowerPoint presentation.
- Ask students to complete *Handout 1-1: Bulleted List of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II*.

Day 2:

- Have the students, once again, move into the same Value Line as on the previous day, now taking into account any new insights and information.
- Discuss with students—especially those who have moved their positions a great deal—why their ideas have changed.
- Now have students “fold the line” by having those who voted for liberty (in various ranges) discuss their reasoning with those who voted for safety (in various ranges.)
- Discuss with students any contemporary events that might have similarities with the World War II Japanese American experience.

Extensions

- Have students write an essay responding to this Essential Question: *Is it more important to have safety or liberty?* Their essay should reference both the World War II Japanese American experience and contemporary events.
- Using the essays the students have written, conduct a Double-Circle Debate. Have students who think safety is more important sit in a circle of desks, then have

students who think liberty is more important sit in a circle surrounding those desks. Allow each group (anyone within the group) to give opinions for three minutes, then allow a one-minute rebuttal for each opinion; students from the different groups should then gather and discuss their opinions and ideas with each other.

References

- Japanese American National Museum. <http://www.janm.org/> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- Japanese American Relocation Digital Archive (JARDA). <http://www.jarda.cdlib.org/> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- National Archives and Records Administration. <http://www.archives.gov/> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- Niiva, Brian, ed. *Japanese American History: An A–Z Reference from 1868 to the Present*. Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 1993.

Bulleted List

of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II

Handout 1-1

Name _____ Period _____

Complete this list with details related to the Japanese American experience.

Before World War II	Executive Order 9066	Tanforan	Topaz	After Topaz
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*
*	*	*	*	*

Use the space below to write two or three questions/interesting things/unusual things you have learned.

LESSON 2

Illustrated Vocabulary for the Japanese American Experience during World War II

11

Time

1 to 2 class periods (45 minutes per period)

Overview

This lesson provides students with an understanding of the terminology related to the Japanese American World War II experience.

Objectives

- Students will be able to analyze the definition of their assigned term and demonstrate their understanding by creating an illustration of their term.
- Students will then present their illustration along with the definition to the class.

Enduring Understanding

- Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- What is the Topaz “Relocation Camp”?
- How do communities endure?

Materials

- *Handout 2-1: Illustrated Vocabulary*
- Teacher Reference: Illustrated Vocabulary—Terms and Definitions
- Dictionary/text
- Large sheets of drawing paper
- Various art supplies

Assessments

- *Handout 2-1: Illustrated Vocabulary*

Background

Supplemental historical overviews, timelines, and maps about the Japanese American experience are found at the beginning of this unit, including an

article entitled “Terminology and the Japanese American Experience.”

Instructional Strategies/Skills

- Distribute the vocabulary worksheet and ask students to place a small check mark next to any terms that they are familiar with.
- Ask volunteers to explain one word from the list that they believe they can define.
- Ask students to raise their hands if they know all of the words on the list. Explain to students that in order to understand many of the concepts that will be discussed in this unit, they must have a working knowledge of these terms.
- Explain to students that they will be assigned one of the terms from the vocabulary list to illustrate and share with the class.
 - Determine whether students will work in pairs or on their own.
 - Determine whether there will be a specific format for the mini-poster or whether students will be allowed to create their own formats. Either way, each mini-poster should include the vocabulary term in bold, the definition/description, and an illustration of the concept.
- Distribute paper and art supplies. Allow for work time.
- When students are ready to present their mini-posters to the class, ask them to state the term and read their definitions. As students present, all other students should be listening and completing *Handout 2-1: Illustrated Vocabulary*. Try to get students to write the definitions in their own words. If they are having difficulty, use the illustration as a guide.

References

Niiya, Brian, ed. *Japanese American History: An A–Z Reference from 1868 to the Present*. Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 1993.

Illustrated Vocabulary

Handout 2-1

12

Name _____ Period _____

Directions: As you listen to your classmates review their illustrated vocabulary posters, define each of the terms below. Try to put the definitions in your own words.

Issei _____

Nisei _____

Sansei _____

Yonsei _____

Gosei _____

Nikkei _____

Kibei _____

Alien _____

Assembly centers _____

Concentration camp _____

Discrimination _____

Executive Order 9066 _____

Internment camp _____

Prejudice _____

Propaganda _____

Racism _____

Teacher Reference:

Illustrated Vocabulary

Terms and Definitions Handout 2-1

- Issei** First-generation Japanese immigrants who left Japan to move to the United States. Many people in this generation were born during the late 1800s through the early 1900s.
- Nisei** Second-generation, U.S.-born children of the Issei.
- Sansei** Third-generation Japanese Americans.
- Yonsei** Fourth-generation Japanese Americans.
- Gosei** Fifth-generation Japanese Americans.
- Nikkei** People of Japanese ancestry who live outside of Japan, including Japanese Americans, Japanese Peruvians, etc.
- Kibei** American-born Nisei who lived to Japan during their childhood or teenage years and then returned to the U.S.
- Alien** Foreign-born person; not a citizen.
- Assembly centers** Guarded, temporary detention centers where Japanese Americans were held during World War II until more permanent camps could be established.
- Concentration camp** Guarded compound for the imprisonment or detention of groups for political reasons. The concentration camps that confined Japanese Americans during World War II are sometimes euphemistically referred to as “internment camps” or “relocation centers.” When referring to the Holocaust, a “death camp” is sometimes euphemistically referred to as a “concentration camp.”
- Discrimination** Treatment or consideration of a person or group based on prejudice rather than merit.
- Executive Order 9066** Order issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, which gave authorities the power to exclude persons from designated areas; this ultimately resulted in the removal of persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast.
- Internment camp** Euphemism for “concentration camp.”
- Prejudice**. An unfavorable opinion or feeling formed beforehand or without reason, knowledge, or thought.
- Propaganda** Material that spreads ideas to intentionally help a cause or hurt an opposing cause.
- Racism**. Belief that one race is superior to another.

LESSON 3

Propaganda Against Japanese Americans Prior to and During World War II

14

Time

3 class periods (45 minutes per period)

Overview

Lesson 3 introduces students to two methods of analyzing the political cartoons created during World War II. These political cartoons underscore how influential propaganda was in promoting the wartime hysteria that greatly influenced the World War II Japanese American experience.

Objectives

- Students will analyze political cartoons.
- Students will recognize propaganda and talk about what the propaganda is trying to convince readers to think about and do.
- Students will discuss their thoughts and ideas with a partner.

Enduring Understanding

Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- How does racism affect the American experience?
- Is it more important to have safety or liberty?

Materials

- Three political cartoons must be downloaded and printed onto overhead transparencies:
 - “Honorable Fifth Column” can be downloaded from the Mandeville Special Collections Library at the University of California, San Diego <http://orpheus.ucsd.edu/speccoll/dspolitic/Frame.htm> (accessed August 3, 2009)
 - “This Is the Enemy” can be downloaded from the Spring Hill Unified School District <http://www.usd230.k12.ks.us/PICTT/publications/cartoons/1944/m.html> (accessed August 3, 2009)

- “All Packed Up” can be downloaded from the Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco <http://www.sfmuseum.org/hist8/editorial4.html> (accessed August 3, 2009)
- “Cartoon Analysis Worksheet” can be downloaded from the National Archives and Records Administration http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf (accessed August 3, 2009)
- *Overhead 3-1: Think, Pair, Share Instructions*, printed on overhead transparency
- *Handout 3-1: Questions for Dr. Seuss Political Cartoons*

Assessments

- Cartoon Analysis Worksheet
- *Handout 3-1: Questions for Dr. Seuss Political Cartoons*
- Essay Question and Double-Circle Debate

Background

Wartime hysteria contributed to negative media treatment of Japanese Americans prior to and following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. In fact, propaganda against Japanese Americans after the attack on Pearl Harbor was fairly common in the press nationwide; this negative portrayal is also evident in political cartoons generated by Dr. Seuss (whose real name was Theodor Seuss Geisel). Before he became a successful children’s book author, Dr. Seuss was a political cartoonist for the New York periodical *PM* from 1940 to 1943. Many of these cartoons have been collected in the book *Dr. Seuss Goes to War* by Richard Minear.

Instructional Strategies/Skills

Day 1:

- Show students the overhead transparency (downloaded from the Web) of the Dr. Seuss cartoon entitled “Honorable Fifth Column.”
- Download, print, and distribute copies of the Cartoon Analysis Worksheet. At first, have students complete

Level One only and then discuss answers as a class. Continue to Level Two only, then Level Three, with a discussion between each section.

Day 2:

- Explain that in addition to the Cartoon Analysis Worksheet, there are other ways to analyze political cartoons.
- Share *Overhead 3-1: Think, Pair, Share Instructions* and explain that students will use this method to analyze three cartoons.
- Distribute copies of *Handout 3-1: Questions for Political Cartoons* to each of the students.
- Show students three overhead transparencies (downloaded from the Web) of the political cartoons “Honorable Fifth Column,” “This Is the Enemy,” and “All Packed Up” and have them answer the corresponding questions using the “Think, Pair, Share” method.
 - Give students 3 to 4 minutes to individually analyze each cartoon they see on the overhead and answer questions for each cartoon on their own paper.
 - Then, one cartoon at a time, have students discuss their responses in pairs.
 - After a cartoon has been discussed in pairs, have the entire group discuss each cartoon. Write the group’s ideas on the board or a blank transparency.

Day 3:

- Have students respond to this essay prompt:
 - Do you think race had anything to do with the removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast during World War II? Why or why not? Show at least three examples from the cartoons.
- Conduct a Double-Circle Debate:
 - Have class divide into “yes” and “no” groups depending on how they answered the questions in their essays.
 - Create two circles of desks, an inner circle and an outer circle.
 - The inner circle group is given three minutes for

anyone to discuss their opinions.

- The outer circle then has three minutes.
- Next, anyone in the inner circle has two minutes for rebuttal.
- The outer circle is then given two minutes for rebuttal.
- Have groups freely discuss with each other for two to three minutes.

Extensions

- Have students draw their own political cartoon about a current issue. Then ask partners to evaluate the cartoon to see if it meets the criteria of a political cartoon and if it shows the artist’s intent.
- Have students evaluate current event political cartoons in the same manner as the historic cartoons were analyzed.
- Read aloud to the class Dr. Seuss’s book *The Sneetches*, which was published in 1961, 20 years after the creation of the cartoons that were just analyzed. Discuss why Dr. Seuss’s opinions of Japanese Americans may have changed in that time.

References

- National Archives and Records Administration. “Cartoon Analysis Worksheet.” http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon_analysis_worksheet.pdf (accessed August 3, 2009).
- National Education Association. “Dr. Seuss’s Biography.” <http://www.nea.org/grants/20224.htm> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- Minear, Richard H. *Dr. Seuss Goes to War: The World War II Political Cartoons of Theodor Seuss Geisel*. New York: The New Press, 1999.

“Think, Pair, Share”

Overhead 3-1

16

For each cartoon, answer the questions on your own piece of paper. You will have four minutes.

When time is called, turn to your assigned partner and discuss your answers. You will have two minutes.

When time is called, we will discuss answers as a class.

Questions for Political Cartoons

Handout 3-1

Name _____ Period _____

Use the “Think, Pair, Share” method to answer these questions.

Questions for “Honorable Fifth Column”

1. What do you think the “Fifth Column” is? _____

2. How are Japanese Americans drawn in this cartoon? _____

3. What is the major message the artist is trying to send? _____

4. In what ways is this message conveyed? _____

Questions for “This Is the Enemy”

1. How is the “enemy” shown? _____

2. How does this compare to the previous cartoon? _____

3. Do you think most Americans would understand the differences between the Japanese “enemy” and Japanese Americans? What might cause the public to see them as the same? _____

Questions for “All Packed Up”

1. What is implied about Japanese Americans leaving California? _____

2. What is implied about Japanese Americans who are fighting the forced move? _____

Artwork of Topaz

Time

2 class periods (45 minutes per period)

Overview

Lesson 4 introduces students to a unique and instructive primary source: artwork created at the Topaz concentration camp. Students will analyze the artwork to gain additional insight into the emotions of the Topaz artists.

Objectives

- Students will reflect on what emotions the people at Topaz felt.
- Students will learn to analyze works of art for emotional impact.
- Students will discuss how artwork constitutes a primary source.

Enduring Understanding

- Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- What is the Topaz “Relocation Camp”?
- How does racism affect the American experience?
- How do communities endure?

Materials

- Class access to computer lab and the Japanese American National Museum’s Hisako Hibi collection: <http://www.janm.org/collections/people/hibi-hisako/> (accessed August 3, 2009)
- *Handout 4-1: Hisako Hibi Collection*
- Two to three copies of each of the following books (see “References” for bibliographic information):
 - *Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata’s Art of the Internment*, edited by Kimi Kodani Hill
 - *The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese-American Internment Camp* by Michael O. Tunnell and

George W. Chilcoat

- *Citizen 13660* by Miné Okubo.
- *Handout 4-2: Artists in Topaz*
- *Overhead 4-1: Quote from Yoshiko Uchida*
- Various art supplies

Assessments

- *Handout 4-1: Hisako Hibi Collection*
- *Handout 4-2: Artists in Topaz*
- Student Artwork

Background

Many accomplished Japanese American artists who lived in San Francisco prior to World War II were incarcerated at Topaz between 1942 and 1945. While in Topaz the artists continued to produce their own artwork and also taught art classes; many of their youth and adult students created excellent works of art. This artwork, which provides insight into the emotions felt by those who were forcibly removed from their homes, constitutes a unique collection of primary sources.

Four paintings by Ms. Hisako Hibi (1907–1991), a Topaz artist, will specifically be analyzed in Lesson 4. In total, 63 Hibi paintings and related bibliographic information are available on the Japanese American National Museum’s Web site at <http://www.janm.org/collections/people/hibi-hisako/> (accessed August 3, 2009).

Instructional Strategies/Skills

Day 1:

- In the computer lab, have students access and become familiar with the Japanese American National Museum’s Hisako Hibi collection: <http://www.janm.org/collections/people/hibi-hisako/> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- Distribute *Handout 4-1: Hisako Hibi Collection*. Have students look through the collection online and then respond to the questions.

Day 2:

- Divide students into groups of four to five.
- Give each group a copy of either *Topaz Moon*, *The Children of Topaz*, or *Citizen 13660*.
- Have the groups work together and independently to complete *Handout 4-2: Artists in Topaz*.
- Then arrange students into new groups so that every group has at least one student who used each print source. These new groups should share what they have learned from the print sources and discuss how the emotions in the books compare to Hibi's emotions, as seen in the paintings from the previous day.

Day 3:

- Display *Overhead 4-1: Quote from Yoshiko Uchida*.
- Reflecting on the quote, ask students to create their own artwork reflecting daily life in Topaz.
- Distribute art materials.
- At the end of the class, students may share their work with the entire class.

Extensions

- Reflection essay: *What do you think were some of the emotions felt by Japanese Americans while they were at Topaz? Give at least five specific examples from the artwork you have seen.*
- Conduct further research on Hisako Hibi, Chiura Obata, Miné Okubo, and/or Yoshiko Uchida.
- To learn more about daily life in camp, view the media clips available on the Japanese American National Museum's Web site: <http://www.janm.org/projects/ec/resources/curricula-media>

References

- Hill, Kimi Kodani, ed. *Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata's Art of the Internment*. Berkeley, Calif.: Heyday Books, 2000. Japanese American National Museum. <http://www.janm.org/> (accessed August 3, 2009).
- Okubo, Miné. *Citizen 13660*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983.
- Tunnell, Michael O., and George W. Chilcoat. *The Children of Topaz: The Story of a Japanese-American Internment Camp*. New York: Holiday House, 1996.
- Uchida, Yoshiko. *Desert Exile: The Uprooting of a Japanese-American Family*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982.



Hisako Hibi

Collection Handout 4-1

Name _____ Period _____

Access and become familiar with the Japanese American National Museum’s Hisako Hibi collection and biography: <http://www.janm.org/collections/people/hibi-hisako/>. (accessed August 3, 2009)
Then answer the following questions.

1.



Study for a Self-Portrait, ca. 1944
Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee
Japanese American National Museum (99.63.1)

A. How do you think conditions at Topaz may have affected Ms. Hibi’s physical appearance? Give three specific examples.

B. Check the “Biography” section to learn when Ms. Hibi was born. How old was she when this painting was done?

Do you think Ms. Hibi looks her real age? Why or why not?

2.



Barrack 9, Apt. 6, San Bruno, CA, 1942
Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee
Japanese American National Museum (96.601.3)

A. Where was the Hibi family living at this time?

B. Why do you think Ms. Hibi chose to use these colors? Give two specific examples.

C. How is the background of this painting different than the foreground? Why do you think that is the case?

All requests to publish or reproduce images in this collection must be submitted to the Hirasaki National Resource Center at the Japanese American National Museum. More information is available at <http://www.janm.org/nrc/>.

3.



Shopping to Delta, 1943
 Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee
 Japanese American National Museum (96.601.19)

- A. What do you think the colors of the landscape symbolize?
- B. Why do you think the people inside the truck do not have distinct facial features?
- C. What is the emotion you feel when viewing this painting?

4.



Prayer, 1944
 Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee
 Japanese American National Museum (96.601.26)

- A. How do the emotions depicted by the artist in this painting differ from those in the first three?
- B. What is visible in the background?
- C. What might the rabbit in the lower left corner mean?

Now choose one painting not listed above. Draw a quick sketch. Then write down its title, year, and ID number. Write about the emotions symbolized in the painting, using at least three specific examples.

5.

<p>Title and year _____ Gift of Ibuki Hibi Lee Japanese American National Museum (_____)</p>	
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Artists in Topaz

Handout 4-2

Name _____ Period _____

Your group has received one of the following books of artwork from Topaz: *Citizen 13660*, *Topaz Moon*, or *The Children of Topaz*. Work with your group to select four specific works of art and discuss the questions below, then write down the answers on your own worksheet. You will be responsible for telling others in different groups about your book.

Name of book _____

Title of artwork (if there is one) or description	Date created	Page number	What colors are used? Why do you think these colors were used?	What similarities exist between the PowerPoint presentation and/or the Hibi collection?	What is the emotion this artwork evokes? Why do you think this?

What is your favorite picture of the group? Why?

Daytime, with its debilitating heat and the stresses of camp life, was harsh and unkind, but early evening after supper was a peaceful time of day at Topaz. The sand retained the warmth of the sun, and the moon rose from behind dark mountains with the kind of clear brilliance seen only in a vast desert sky. We often took walks along the edge of camp, watching sunsets made spectacular by the dusty haze and waiting for the moon to rise in the darkening sky. It was one of the few things to look forward to in our life at Topaz.

—Yoshiko Uchida, *Desert Exile*



Museum Exhibits about the Japanese American Experience

Time

Before beginning, teachers should carefully review and assess these instructions, the availability of class curriculum time, and interest on the part of the school community. In addition, prior to embarking upon this project the teacher must identify and secure the commitment of a community partner, such as a local museum or historical society. A specific timeline for the teacher is included.

Teachers may also consider entering these projects in the local History Fair and/or the National History Day competition. More information about and instructions for National History Day can be found at the Web site www.nationalhistoryday.org (accessed August 3, 2009).

Overview

In Lesson 5, students will work with a community partner to demonstrate their understanding of the Japanese American experience in Utah by researching, constructing, and presenting museum exhibits. The exhibits may be in the form of artwork, photography, oral histories, video, group performances, or literature.

Because the scope of this project may seem daunting, words of encouragement from one of the unit's authors and the community partner with whom she worked are included at the end of this unit. In addition, selected comments from the Syracuse Junior High School students who participated in this project in Winter 2007 are also included.

Objectives

- Students will work with each other and with a community partner to demonstrate their understanding of the unit's Enduring Understanding and Essential Questions by researching, constructing, and presenting a collection of museum exhibits.

Enduring Understanding

- Diversity in the United States helps democracy to function.

Essential Questions

- What is the Topaz "Relocation Camp"?
- Is it more important to have safety or liberty?
- How does racism affect the American experience?
- How do communities endure?
- Who is the "We" in "We, the People"?
- What is the process of social justice?

Materials

- Suggested Teacher Timeline
- *Handout 5-1: Student Assignment Sheet and Timeline*
- *Handout 5-2: Museum Exhibit Grading Rubric*
- *Handout 1-1 Bulleted List of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II (from Lesson 1)*
- *Handout 5-3: Ideas to Projects*
- *Handout 5-4: How to Create a Museum Exhibit*
- Copies of the Selected Bibliography found in the Appendix
- Materials with which to construct museum exhibits

Assessments

- A grading rubric is provided to assess the quality of the collaborative research, construction, and presentation of museum exhibits

Instructional Strategies/Skills

- Use the previous lessons in this unit to introduce students to the World War II Japanese American experience.
- Explain to students that they will be working with a community partner to create museum exhibits about the Japanese American experience in Utah.
 - Introduce the community partner.
 - Determine whether students will work individually

- or in groups to complete the activity.
- Distribute and review *Handout 5-1: Student Assignment Sheet and Timeline*.
- Distribute and review *Handout 5-2: Museum Exhibit Grading Rubric*.
- Ask students to begin thinking about their research topic.
 - They should refer back to *Handout 1-1: Bulleted List of the Overview of the Japanese American Experience Prior to and During World War II* from Lesson 1 of this unit.
 - Distribute and review *Handout 5-3: Ideas to Projects* to help students narrow down their topic.
 - Before proceeding to the next step, research topics must be approved by the teacher.
- Once the topics have been approved, students must follow the project timeline to research and construct their exhibits.
 - Distribute *Handout 5-4: How to Create a Museum Exhibit*.
 - Distribute copies of the Selected Bibliography found in the Appendix.
- In accordance with the timeline, mount and display exhibits with appropriate community participation and celebration.

Words of encouragement from Jennifer Baker, one of the authors of this unit

Working with a community partner to produce museum exhibits demonstrating students' understanding of the Japanese American experience in Utah is a very fun—if exhausting—and rewarding experience for students. There are several reasons why this project presents a high-quality learning opportunity for students.

First of all, students generally put a great deal of effort into their projects—much more so than they would a normal school project—because they know that the community at large, including family members, peers,

community leaders, and others, will be viewing their projects. My classroom saw a great deal of friendly competition about whose projects would be selected for display in the community museum.

The second benefit to students is that the amount of research and work involved in the project requires that the students become experts on their specific subject matter. If the topic being studied is of local interest, the students can become local resources; this is extremely satisfying for students as they teach friends, family, and others about their learning. Another fantastic benefit for students is the opportunity to meet community members who have experienced the event or who have personal knowledge about the subject. This ties students more closely to their communities.

For the community partners, the partnership brings increased attendance and interest to their institutions as students and their families and friends come to view the exhibits. This also may serve as an introduction to the institutions for some families, who will return to visit at other times.

Finally, this project is very touching for the local community members involved because their stories are told and recognized. As a result, the community members feel more connected as well. When the student exhibits were displayed in Winter 2007, many members of the Japanese American community attended, and they were very supportive and complimentary. It was gratifying to see how excited they were to have their stories told. The project gave parents and other adults the opportunity to connect to the school in a truly meaningful way, which is a tremendous benefit to all concerned.

However, to successfully complete this project, a great deal of planning, support, and work are required. The following pages include suggested timelines,

resources, and information that can assist in assembling this ultimately rewarding project.

Words of encouragement from Nancy Nakae, Director, Syracuse Museum and Cultural Center (the community partner)

[In 2006] I was searching for an theme for an upcoming exhibit scheduled for February 2007. Japanese American people have been very much a part of our community, especially during the 1920s and 1930s when they were busy working the farms in the area. Masaru and Kiyoko Yamada, my Japanese American neighbors, lived in Syracuse all their lives and farmed many acres. Mr. Yamada turned 80 years old in the summer of 2006. He and his wife have contributed much to our community, especially in the area of farming. They have also donated many items for the museum's permanent Japanese American display. As a result, I decided to focus on Syracuse's Japanese American community as our exhibit theme. The Yamadas and many of their friends were very supportive of this idea.

A few months later I received a phone call from Jennifer Baker, a history teacher at Syracuse Junior High School. She informed me that her classes were going to be studying the Japanese American World War II experience in Utah, Davis County, and Syracuse, and she wondered if I would allow the students to display their projects at the museum. I was very happy about this opportunity. I mentioned to her that our museum exhibit for the coming year was going to be about the Japanese Americans in Syracuse, and she was happy to hear that. She told me about her plans and how I might be able to help her, and the idea began to take shape. Her students were very excited about the project and jumped into it with lots of enthusiasm.

I went to her classroom and explained to the students how to develop museum exhibits; they also visited the museum to see what we already had on display. They did the research and came up with about 23 high-quality museum exhibits!

The open house for the exhibit took place on February 3, 2007, at the Syracuse Community Center. I arranged a special program of entertainment and refreshments. The bleachers were filled, and many people were standing on the side. Someone counted heads and said that there were about 250 people in attendance. Mr. Mas Matsumoto and his wife came all the way from California to see the exhibit.

After the open house, the student projects were on display for three more weeks. There were many positive comments, and people continued to comment for weeks afterwards. It was a wonderful experience to work with Jennifer and her students, and I hope that more of these types of projects will happen in the future.

Selected comments from the Syracuse Junior High School students who participated in the project in Winter 2007

In my opinion [the] most important thing I learned from this exhibition was [that] the power of prejudice is so strong that it can destroy the spirits of others. Prejudice has been present since the dawn of time, and it will never go away. The point is that we learn from the mistakes of others.

—Delaney

It was fun being a docent. It was cool telling people information they didn't know. It made me feel smart. You also got some time to look at the different posters. My friends think I'm smart because I answered a lot of questions.

—Michelle

The most important thing I probably learned about the Japanese Americans is that they went to Topaz for no real importance. I actually didn't know anything about this until I learned about it in class and while my group and I were working on the exhibit. I also learned that when the Japanese [Americans] were in Topaz, they tried to make it as normal as possible. And probably the saddest thing I learned is that the children thought it was a normal life, in barracks, eating in mess halls, and sharing bathrooms and almost everything.

—Keilee

The coolest, awesomeist, most interesting fact is that Topaz was in Utah. I had no idea before that this whole experience happened, so knowing that Utah had a part of it made me feel a little proud and a little disgusted.

—Daniel

Suggested Teacher Timeline

16 weeks before project due date: Clear the project and a museum field trip with school administrators. Reserve a large part of the school building, such as the library, for the exhibits to be displayed and shared with the school community.

16 weeks before project due date: Contact a local community partner such as a museum, library, or community center. Identify one representative from the partner organization who will make a commitment to shepherd the project from the other end. This may include such tasks as organizing publicity, reserving facilities, setting up tables, and securing supplemental funding.

16 weeks before project due date: Determine one or two appropriate venues to display the student exhibits and make reservations: a school and a community center might be two possibilities.

School: If possible, display the exhibits at your school before taking them to an off-site venue. This allows for other classes to view the exhibits and gives students the opportunity to teach their peers about what they have learned. A display at your own school also provides an opportunity to troubleshoot as needed.

Community center, etc: If an off-site venue is selected, it is ideal to have the exhibits on display for at least two weeks so that students may bring their families. Hosting an opening event at a community center is a great community builder and nice media event. Entertainment and/or food related to the exhibit theme could be provided.

16 weeks before project due date: If possible, schedule a field trip to a local museum so that students can observe examples of museum-quality work. This field trip is ideally scheduled about six weeks prior to the project due date.

12 weeks before project due date: Continue to stay in contact with the community partner. Discuss with them the appropriate look for the project, including such details as appropriate tables, lighting, backdrops, etc. If possible, ask the partner to come to class and provide students with tips about creating an effective exhibit.

12 weeks before project due date: Begin publicizing the project to parents and students. A slide show about the project and the venue will both inform and excite the students, parents, and the wider school community. Coordinate with the school's parent organization to arrange for chaperones for the museum field trip.

7 weeks before project due date: Distribute project parameters. To keep students organized with a project of this scale, you may want to put up a poster or other visual reminders of what should be done by certain benchmark dates. These can be either be graded or simply be suggestions, depending on your preference. Students can then make sure that they are on track to completing their projects on time.

6 weeks before project due date (1 to 2 days prior to the field trip): Have the community partner come to school to answer any questions. Review the field-trip logistics and be sure all questions are answered.

6 weeks before project due date: Go on a field trip to a museum with the purpose of learning more about what makes a good exhibit. Students should focus on exhibit construction, display of objects and photographs, text panels, and who they think the exhibit's audience is.

Day after museum field trip: Brainstorm with students about what they observed at the museum. After the discussion, have students write an essay about what makes a good museum exhibit.

1 to 2 days after museum field trip: Consult with your community partner to select primary sources for students to use to begin their research; these can be both Web-based and print resources. If the resources are Web based, link them to your class Web site so that they may be more easily accessible. Explain that students will have a week to determine the focus of their projects. Allow at least 2 to 3 class periods for students to review and become familiar with the resources.

5 weeks before project due date: Project proposal is due and must include a preliminary list of primary sources. As time permits, begin scheduling occasional work days or research days.

4 weeks before project due date: Begin checking the students' progress.

1 week before project due date: Check with students to see if they will need special equipment for their exhibits, such as electricity, a TV/DVD player, easels, etc.

Project due date: Display exhibits either at school or at an off-site venue and have students share their exhibits with the school community. A suggested grading rubric is attached.

Student Assignment Sheet and Timeline

Handout 5-1

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Name _____ Period _____

You will be putting together museum exhibits for a display on “The Japanese American Experience in Utah and Northern Davis County. At least three primary sources must be used as part of your project. These sources must be cited in MLA format. See www.citationmachine.net (accessed August 3, 2009) for instructions.

The exhibits can be done in many different ways, so if you have an idea not listed below, see the teacher to make appropriate arrangements.

Group Exhibit: The exhibit must be on display board and include at least one three-dimensional object placed in front of the board. Citations of the primary sources that inform the exhibit must be included. Each member of the group must be able to talk about the project and answer questions. Groups cannot be larger than four people.

Single Exhibit: See above.

Artwork: Any medium (paint, charcoal, sculpture, etc.) is acceptable. Two-dimensional artwork should be at least 8½ by 11 inches or consist of several smaller artworks that total that size. Citations of the primary sources that informed the artwork must be included. This may be done individually or in pairs. Each member of the group must be able to talk about the project and answer questions.

Photography: At least four photographs must be printed on quality paper and displayed. Citations of the primary sources that informed the photographs must be included. This must be done individually, with students able to talk and answer questions about the selection of composition and subject matter.

Oral History: Consult with the teacher for suggestions on who to interview. A transcript and a summary of the oral history must be included. This must be done in pairs, with each person able to talk about the oral history and answer questions.

Video: The video must be at least 15 minutes in length and include primary sources, such as interviews, photographs, and artifacts. This may be produced in pairs or individually, with each person able to talk about the project and answer questions.

Performance: This category includes original music or drama performances, about five minutes in length. A script or written music must be included, and costumes are highly encouraged. Citations of the primary sources that informed the performance must be included. This must be done individually or with up to four people. Each student must be able to talk about the project and answer questions.

Literature: Short stories (about three pages), descriptive essays (about three pages), or poetry (3 to 10 poems, depending on their length) are acceptable. The finished works should be neatly typed and displayed. Citations of the primary sources that informed the piece must be included. This must be done individually, with the student able to talk and answer questions about the piece.

Timeline (fill in dates)

_____ : Field trip to museum.

_____ : Exploration of primary resources and online databases.

_____ : Project proposal due, with possible primary sources and list of group members.

_____ : Work on project on your own time.

_____ : Class time given to work on project. This is NOT the time to start the project, but to put finishing touches on the project and get assistance on finishing.

_____ : Finish projects on your own time.

_____ : **PROJECTS DUE!!!!**

_____ : “School Museum” displays, with students as docents. A representative from the community partner will attend to select the exhibits that will be on display at the community partner’s site.

_____ : Opening event at community partner’s site, with selected exhibits displayed. Students whose exhibits are selected will have the (optional) opportunity to act as docents in their exhibits.

_____ : School or County History Fair. Exhibits may be entered in the Fair for MASSIVE extra credit!

Grading Rubric

Museum Exhibit

Handout 5-2

31

Name _____ Period _____

50 points possible

Sources (15 points possible)

_____ Three or more primary sources are present (7 points)

_____ Sources are correctly cited (8 points)

Exhibit (25 points possible)

_____ Exhibit fits theme of “The Japanese American Experience in Utah and Northern Davis County” (10 points)

_____ Exhibit meets appropriate length or size requirements (5 points)

_____ Students can talk comfortably about the project and sources (10 points)

Presentation (10 points possible)

_____ Project is neat and eye-catching (10 points)

Extra Credit

_____ Exceptional effort (up to 10 points)

_____ Selected for display at Museum (15 points)

_____ **TOTAL (out of 50 points)**

Ideas to Projects

Handout 5-3

By Howard Adams (2006)

Name _____ Period _____

Start with a general idea:

Brainstorm more specific topics from your general idea:

Choose one specific topic that interests you:

How to Create a Museum Exhibit

Handout 5-4

By Nancy Nakae, Director, Syracuse History Museum (2006)

33

Name _____ Period _____

Main types of people who will visit a museum:

1. Adults—Intelligent people who read and understand everyday language and concepts; they enjoy sense stimulation and creativity. Some will read all the information you provide; others will only read the large print. All will enjoy pictures and artifacts.
2. Teenagers—Intelligent people with less experience than adults; they are looking for more mental and sensory sense stimulation, as well as some entertainment. Most will only glance at the large print but will pay attention to the pictures and artifacts.
3. Older children, ages 8 to 12—Young people prefer hands-on experiences to help them learn; they will rarely read anything but will enjoy pictures and artifacts.
4. Younger children, ages 3 to 7— Parents are usually with them to explain things; they need visual stimulation, bright colors, and hands-on experiences. They will like pictures that are big and colorful.

At the very beginning, ask yourself:

1. Which type of person will visit my exhibit?
2. What main ideas do I want to present?
3. What main ideas do I want people to learn?
4. How do I want them to learn?
5. What do I want them to remember?

When writing the text, keep these ideas in mind:

1. Make main titles catchy and short.
2. Keep subtitles brief but informative, bringing out the main ideas.
3. Give the reader the main ideas quickly and easily.
4. Other information may be added for those who want to read more.

When selecting artifacts, keep two things in mind:

1. Artifacts need to be displayed with a backdrop and short, easy-to-read labels.
2. Backdrops can be easels with fabric, sheet metal, decorated cardboard displays, framed art, wooden “sets,” or other creative ideas.

When selecting lettering and fonts, keep these things in mind:

1. Use no more than three fonts for your exhibit.
2. Use typed lettering, vinyl letters, or other peel-and-stick letters.
3. Use rulers and make sure all letters are placed correctly. Make sure that all words are spelled correctly and that punctuation is accurate.
4. Keep colors to a minimum so you do not detract from the message of the exhibit.
5. Make sure the size of the lettering is large enough to read easily.

Terminology

and the Japanese American Experience

The present procedure of keeping loyal American citizens in concentration camps on the basis of race for longer than is absolutely necessary is dangerous and repugnant to the principles of our Government.

—Attorney General Francis Biddle, December 30, 1943

In this war we are seeing more euphemistic terms than in previous conflicts. Consequently, the concentration camp which the government is starting to build at Puyallup is termed an “assembly center.” But it is a concentration camp, even though temporary.

—Tacoma News-Tribune, March 31, 1942

They were concentration camps. They called it relocation but they put them in concentration camps, and I was against it. We were in a period of emergency but it was still the wrong thing to do.”

—Harry S. Truman in Merle Miller, *Plain Speaking: An Oral Biography of Harry S. Truman* (New York: Berkeley Publishing Corp., 1974)

The words and phrases used to describe this history vary considerably amongst scholars, government officials, and even those directly affected by Executive Order 9066: “relocation,” “evacuation,” “incarceration,” “internment,” “concentration camp.” There is no general agreement about what is most accurate or fair.

Officially, the camps were called “relocation centers.” Many now acknowledge that “relocation center” and

“evacuation” are euphemisms used purposefully by the government to downplay the significance of its actions.

America’s concentration camps are clearly distinguishable from Nazi Germany’s torture and death camps. It is difficult to accept the term “concentration camp” because of the term’s associations with the Holocaust. This educational material uses “concentration camp” not in an effort to bear comparisons to the atrocities of the Holocaust, but to express the veritable magnitude of what was done to Japanese Americans.

It is an unequivocal fact that the government itself, including the President, used the term “concentration camp” during World War II in speeches and written documents. It is also crucial to note that a “concentration camp” is defined broadly as a place where people are imprisoned not because they are guilty of any crimes, but simply because of who they are. Many groups have been singled out for such persecution throughout history, with the term “concentration camp” first used at the turn of the twentieth century in the Spanish-American and Boer wars.

Despite some differences, all concentration camps have one thing in common: People in power remove a minority group from the general population, and the rest of society lets it happen.

Adapted from the Japanese American National Museum’s exhibition *Haunting Questions: Understanding the Japanese American Incarceration*



Japanese American Confinement Sites in the United States During World War II*

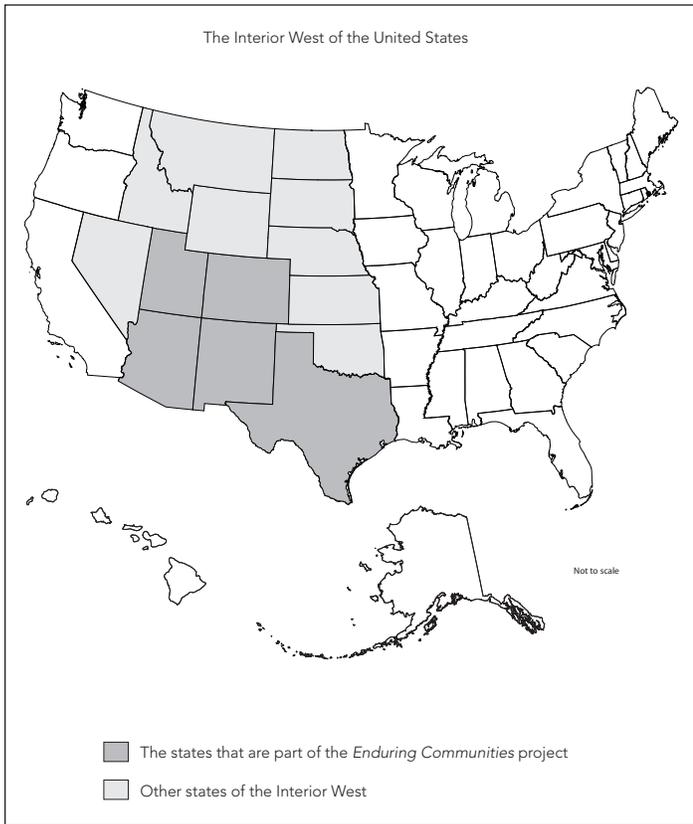


Not to scale

- WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY (WRA) sites**—
 Concentration or so-called relocation camps established to confine Americans of Japanese ancestry, two-thirds of whom were American-born citizens.
 - ASSEMBLY CENTER sites**—
 Initial temporary detention sites used to assemble persons of Japanese ancestry, citizens and non-citizens alike, for transit to more long-term incarceration sites predominantly outside of an "exclusion zone."
 - DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (DOJ) sites**—
 Internment sites that primarily Issei, or alien residents of the United States of Japanese descent excluded from seeking citizenship through naturalization, were detained and/or confined. **
- ** Crystal City among DOJ sites is notable for having operated similarly to a WRA concentration camp. German and Italian enemy aliens who were treated separately and Latin American Japanese, primarily from Peru who had been involuntarily deported to the United States, also were confined at Crystal City. Other DOJ sites detained and/or confined mixed populations of enemy aliens, as did many of the U.S. Army centers.

- DEPARTMENT OF WAR sites**—
 Primarily U.S. Army centers where predominantly non-citizens of Japanese descent were detained and/or confined en route to long-term internment or incarceration sites.
 - PENITENTIARIES**—
 Federal penitentiaries and facilities where Japanese American citizens who were convicted of "unlawfully" challenging federal government orders such as draft dodging or the constitutionality of the government orders restricting persons of Japanese ancestry, were imprisoned.
- * To see a map of the confinement sites for all enemy aliens, please refer to the Web site www.enemyalienfiles.org.

Japanese Americans in the Interior West



Japanese Americans in the Interior West: A Regional Perspective on the Enduring Nikkei Historical Experience in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah (and Beyond)

Arthur A. Hansen

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, which allowed U.S. military commanders to designate military areas as “exclusion zones” from which “any or all persons may be excluded.” This action came two and a half months after Japan’s December 7, 1941, attack upon Pearl Harbor—the U.S. naval station in the Territory of Hawaii then home to the main part of the American fleet—which precipitated the United States’s entry into World War II.

Although it did not specifically mention Japanese Americans, E.O. 9066 led to the decision by Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt, the Western Defense Command head, to exclude people of Japanese ancestry—both Issei (Japan-born aliens ineligible for American naturalization) and native-born Nisei, who were U.S. citizens—from California, the western

halves of Washington and Oregon, and southern Arizona. Of the roughly 127,000 pre-World War II U.S. Nikkei (Japanese Americans), two-thirds were U.S. citizens and the overwhelming majority lived in the three excluded states bordering the Pacific Ocean. Approximately 94,000 Nikkei resided in California.

Initially, General DeWitt opted for “voluntary” resettlement: this allowed the “excluded” Nikkei to move—at their own expense—to any unrestricted area in the country.¹ As a result, 1,963 people moved to Colorado, 1,519 to Utah, 305 to Idaho, 208 to eastern Washington, 115 to eastern Oregon, 105 to northern Arizona, 83 to Wyoming, 72 to Illinois, 69 to Nebraska, and 366 to other states (including New Mexico and Texas). There were many other potential refugees, however, who were thwarted in their attempts to move inland by the unwillingness of some states to accept them, difficulties in obtaining lodging and automobile fuel en route to their destinations, and upon their arrival, hostile “No Japs Wanted” “reception” committees, both public and private.

Consider the case of Clarence Iwao Nishizu, a 31-year-old Orange County (California) Nisei farmer. Having decided in early March 1942 that he preferred to have his family voluntarily move out of California and resettle inland, he drove his recently purchased 1941 Chevrolet to Colorado to check out possibilities there; he was accom-

¹ See Janis Takamoto, “The Effects of World War II and Wartime Sentiment on Japanese and Japanese American ‘Voluntary’ Evacuees” (master’s thesis, California State University, Long Beach, 1991).

panied by a younger brother, John, and a longtime Nisei friend, Jack Tsuchiura. They were well aware that Colorado—thanks to the courageous civil libertarian commitments of its governor, Ralph Carr—and Utah (to a lesser extent) were the only western states willing to have excluded Japanese American citizens become residents.²

As restricted citizens under curfew on the Pacific Coast, the Orange County Nisei trio was required to carry travel permits, and they were not allowed to be out any later than eight o'clock in the evening. Before their early morning departure from southern California, they had heard rumors that no gas would be sold to Japanese travelers. After passing through Las Vegas on their first evening on the road, they were obliged to test the veracity of these rumors in the gateway southwestern Utah city of St. George. There, practically out of fuel, they stopped at the first filling station they encountered. It was closed, but when they saw someone sleeping inside the station they knocked on the door, and were greeted by a tough, burly man toting a shotgun, who growled: "What do you want?" To which Jack Tsuchiura replied, "We're out of gas, can you sell us some?" Surprisingly, the man responded in the affirmative. Relieved, and now with a full tank of gas, the pilgrims drove to Salt Lake City, via Vernal, Utah, where they bought alcohol for the car's radiator to prevent it from freezing.

It was after midnight when the Nisei travelers crossed the state line into Colorado, after which they drove past Steamboat Springs up to the 12,000-foot summit of the Rockies. There it was snowing, a cold wind was blowing, and the temperature was 35 degrees below zero—and the water in the car's radiator had completely boiled out. While the men initially contemplated filling the radiator with tea, they ultimately rejected this plan due to the tea's high tannic acid content. Instead, they used a roadside cedar post to make a fire and so were able to melt snow for radiator water. With that problem solved, they continued their Colorado journey to Loveland and then on to Denver. There they succumbed in the early morning to their desperate need for sleep, only to be awakened by a policeman who inquired what they were doing sleeping in their car in the daytime. They replied, "Getting some rest after driving all night from California."

Fortified with a letter of introduction from a produce shipper back home in southern California, the three Nisei went to see the head of a seed company in Littleton, a town south of Denver, and he kindly offered to let them stay at his home. After looking around Littleton, however, they realized that there was little hope of their families establishing a footing in that community. They then traveled to San Luis, Colorado's oldest city, in search of suitable agricultural property to farm, but there they found nothing but alkaline soil, so they drove on to La Jara, a town near the Colorado/New Mexico border, to meet with one of the oldest pioneer Issei farmers in the state. Already reluctant to accommodate Nikkei "outsiders," this patriarch apparently used the pretext of an earthy utterance by Clarence Nishizu, made in earshot of several of his ten daughters, to refrain from even inviting the three travelers into his home to discuss resettlement prospects.

After a visit to the alien internment center in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to visit Issei relatives and family friends detained there, the three Nisei drove south to Las Cruces. There they met an Issei who was farming chilies—the crop their own families grew in the world's chili capital, Orange County, California. Known as the "chili king" of Las Cruces, this Issei obviously feared potential competition and so offered his Nisei visitors no encouragement whatsoever to resettle in his area. Before leaving New Mexico, the threesome traveled west to Deming, a town they left in a hurry after an incident in a bar: an edgy local drinker inquired as to whether they were Chinese or Japanese, explaining, ominously, that "I can't tell the difference between a [good] Chinese and a bad Jap." Going next to El Paso, Texas, they met with yet another unfriendly reception, this time from the staff of the Chinese restaurant where they stopped to

2 For a full assessment of Governor Ralph Carr's actions in relation to Japanese Americans during World War II, consult the biographical study by Adam Schrager, *The Principled Politician: The Ralph Carr Story* (Golden, Colo.: Fulcrum, 2008).

eat. Following a meal punctuated by shouts from the restaurant's noticeably agitated personnel, the Nisei returned to their car, only to be menaced by the sight of a knife placed under a tire in order to puncture it.

Clearly it was time to return to California, but even as they attempted to get home the group met with further degradation. Driving through Chandler, Arizona, they were stopped by a state highway patrolman. After informing the Nikkei travelers that they were in a restricted zone, the lawman reminded them that there was a curfew in effect and asked if they possessed an authorized travel permit. When Jack Tsuhara flashed the obligatory document for inspection, the patrolman then patronizingly announced that they were headed in the wrong direction and smugly corrected their mistake.

In May of 1942, Clarence Nishizu's family was detained first at the Pomona Assembly Center on the site of the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds; in August 1942 they were moved to the Heart Mountain Relocation Center in northwestern Wyoming. At the time, almost all of the nearly 2,000 Nikkei in Orange County had been evicted from their homes and were incarcerated at the large concentration camp called Poston Relocation Center, located on Colorado River Indian tribal land in southwestern Arizona. After being declared ineligible for military service, in 1944 Clarence resettled with his wife, Helen, and their two young daughters in Caldwell, Idaho (near Boise), where he worked hauling potatoes. Around the same time, his parents and his two brothers, John and Henry, resettled in Ordway, Colorado, where they attempted to farm, unsuccessfully, on leased land. During the winter of 1945, with the West Coast now reopened to Japanese Americans, the entire Nishizu clan returned to southern California.³

The Nishizu family's story of "relocation" and "resettlement" is only one among thousands of parallel versions involving other Japanese American mainlanders—truly a "people in motion"—during the World War II era. It is of particular value, however, because it spotlights and invites strategic exploration of a largely neglected aspect of Japanese American history, society, and culture: the prewar, wartime, and postwar circumstances of Nikkei communities within what historians Eric Walz and Andrew Russell have styled the Interior West of Japanese America.⁴ This essay will examine this topic in some depth, placing special emphasis upon the enduring historical experience of Japanese Americans living in the states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah.⁵ By exploring these lesser-known stories, we achieve a broader and more multidimensional understanding of the Japanese American experience as a whole and give a voice to those communities that have always existed but have often been pushed to the margins in accounts of the more mainstream West Coast Japanese American communities.

In addition to touching upon the five states mentioned above, the Nishizu narrative mentions three other western interior states: Idaho, Nevada, and Wyoming. These eight states—as well as Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North

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- 3 See Clarence Iwao Nishizu, interview by Arthur A. Hansen, June 14, 1982, interview 5b, Japanese American Oral History Project, Oral History Program [Center for Oral and Public History], California State University, Fullerton. This interview was published as a bound volume (edited, illustrated, and indexed) in 1991 by the CSUF Oral History Program. For the resettlement narrative featured here, see pp. 142-44.
- 4 See, in particular, the following studies: Eric Walz, "Japanese Immigration and Community Building in the Interior West, 1812-1945" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 1998); "From Kumamoto to Idaho: The Influence of Japanese Immigrants on the Agricultural Development of the Interior West," *Agricultural History* 74 (Spring 2000): 404-18; "Japanese Settlement in the Intermountain West, 1882-1946," in Mike Mackey, ed., *Guilty by Association: Essays on Japanese Settlement, Internment, and Relocation in the Rocky Mountain West* (Powell, Wyo.: Western History Publications, 2001), pp. 1-24; and Andrew Benjamin Russell, "American Dreams Derailed: Japanese Railroad and Mine Communities of the Interior West" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2003). In the second of the three citations above, Walz offers a precise definition of the Interior West: "that part of the United States east of Washington, Oregon, and California and west of the Missouri River" (p. 404). In addition to these writings by Walz and Russell, see a relevant new study by Kara Allison Schubert Carroll, "Coming to Grips with America: The Japanese American Experience in the Southwest" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2009).
- 5 My intention here is to avoid, as much as possible, replicating information about these five states that the *Enduring Communities* project state scholars—Karen Leong and Dan Killoren (Arizona); Daryl J. Maeda (Colorado); Andrew B. Russell (New Mexico); Thomas Walls (Texas); and Nancy J. Taniguchi (Utah)—have provided in their respective essays, included in this curriculum and written from a multicultural perspective.

Dakota, Oklahoma, and South Dakota—can be perceived in the present context as constituting the Interior West region. (This categorization is useful despite the fact that these states range over a number of variably designated geographical subregions: Pacific Northwest, Southwest, Intermountain, Great Plains, and Midwest.)

One notable commonality between these fourteen states is their relatively large geographical size. This point is dramatized by their rankings in total area among the 50 U.S. states.⁶ These states also are alike in that they have comparatively small total populations.⁷ Another common denominator for the 14 Interior West states is their comparatively small Asian American population relative to the national average of 3.6 percent (according to the 2000 U.S. census).⁸ In terms of the racial-ethnic population (Asian/Black/American Indian/Hispanic) of the Interior West, however, it is apparent that a noticeable disparity in this regard exists between the five principal states and the nine subsidiary states when the percentages for the two units are compared to the national average percentage of 29.3.⁹

When Clarence Nishizu and his party explored resettlement possibilities in the Interior West in early 1942, the demographic profile for the area's 14 states (based on 1940 census information and arrayed in alphabetical order) reveals the following total and racial-ethnic population figures: **Arizona (499,261 - 174,371)**; **Colorado (1,123,296 - 109,343)**; Idaho (524,873 - 8,300); Kansas (1,801,028 - 79,571); Montana (559,456 - 21,228); Nebraska (1,315,834 - 23,705); Nevada (110,247 - 9,263); **New Mexico (531,818 - 261,387)**; North Dakota (641,935 - 10,791); Oklahoma (2,336,434 - 232,629); South Dakota (642,961 - 24,206); **Texas (6,414,824 - 1,663,712)**; **Utah (550,310 - 9,962)**; Wyoming (250,742 - 10,273).¹⁰ As for the Interior West Nikkei population at the point of the U.S. entry into World War II, it was distributed as follows: **Arizona (632)**; **Colorado (2,734)**; Idaho (1,200); Kansas (19); Montana (508), Nebraska (480); Nevada (470); **New Mexico (186)**; North Dakota (83); Oklahoma (57); South Dakota (19); **Texas (458)**; **Utah (2,210)**; and Wyoming (643). Even in 1940, all fourteen Interior West states could claim enduring com-

6 Rankings in terms of area: Texas (2); Montana (4); New Mexico (5); Arizona (6); Nevada (7); Colorado (8); Wyoming (10); Utah (13); Idaho (14); Kansas (15); Nebraska (16); South Dakota (17); North Dakota (19); Oklahoma (20).

7 Rankings in terms of population size: Wyoming (50); North Dakota (47); South Dakota (46); Montana (44); Idaho (39); Nebraska (38); New Mexico (36); Nevada (35); Utah (34); Kansas (33); Oklahoma (27); Colorado (24); Arizona (20); Texas (2). The last three of these states (Colorado, Arizona, and Texas), observably, are exceptional in that their present-day population ranking falls within the upper half of the nation's fifty states. However, viewed historically, only Texas claimed such a ranking in the six national censuses extending from 1910 to 1960: 1910 (5); 1920 (5); 1930 (5); 1940 (6); 1950 (6); 1960 (6). As for Arizona, its population rankings differed markedly, with a population loss from the early part of the twentieth century until 1960: 1910 (45); 1920 (45); 1930 (43); 1940 (43); 1950 (37); 1960 (35). Colorado's ranking during this time period changed very little: 1910 (32); 1920 (32); 1930 (33); 1940 (33); 1950 (34); 1960 (33). When looked at another way, it can be appreciated that Colorado's population increased by a robust 30.6 percent between 1990 and 2000, while Arizona's grew by a whopping 40 percent.

8 This is certainly true of the five principal states: Arizona (1.8 percent); Colorado (2.2 percent); New Mexico (1.1 percent); Texas (2.7 percent); and Utah (1.7 percent). But this point applies (with one obvious exception) even more powerfully to the nine other states: North Dakota (0.6 percent); South Dakota (0.6 percent); Nebraska (1.3 percent); Nevada (4.5 percent); Kansas (1.7 percent); Oklahoma (1.4 percent); Wyoming (0.6 percent); Montana (0.5 percent); and Idaho (0.9 percent).

9 On the one hand, all but Nevada (32.3) of the latter states fall beneath this percentage (and most substantially so): North Dakota (6.3 percent); South Dakota (10.9 percent); Nebraska (11.7 percent); Kansas (15.3 percent); Oklahoma (20.1 percent); Wyoming (10.1 percent); Montana (9.0 percent); Idaho (10.6 percent). On the other hand, three of the five former states exceed (two quite strikingly) the national average percentage: Arizona (35.2 percent); Colorado (24.1 percent); New Mexico (54.6 percent); Texas (46.0 percent); Utah (12.8 percent).

10 Because the primary focus in this essay is on the five states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah, the statistics for these states are rendered in bold type.

munities, however modest, of Nikkei living and working within their boundaries.¹¹ In 1900 there were a total of 5,278 Japanese Americans living in the 14 Interior West states, with 767 of them residing in the primary five states and 4,509 in the supplementary nine states. By 1940, the total number of Nikkei in the Interior West had grown to 9,624—however, their distribution in the primary and supplementary states had almost reversed itself: the five primary states now counted 6,220 as opposed to the nine states’ 3,404 Nikkei. What accounts for this transformed situation?

The work of the late Nisei historian Masakazu Iwata—in particular, his book *Planted in Good Soil: A History of the Issei in United States Agriculture*—is especially helpful in explaining the population numbers above.¹² Because Iwata’s focus is on Japanese immigrants who came to the U.S. mainland after 1884 when Japan began allowing general emigration of laborers to foreign countries, he only alludes to the 61,111 Japanese who were living in the Hawaiian Islands by 1900, by and large toiling on the many sugar plantations there. For Iwata, what is notable is that between 1902 and 1907 37,000 Japanese migrated to the continental U.S., where they joined the 80,000 who had arrived directly on the mainland between 1893 and 1910; these numbers were augmented by thousands of their fellow countrymen who indirectly entered the U.S., legally and illegally, from Canada and Mexico.¹³

Whether journeying directly to the U.S. mainland or via Hawai‘i, most Japanese immigrants landed at the West Coast ports of Seattle and San Francisco. While some people settled proximate to these cities, many more fanned out to other parts of the West. “In contrast to the westward migration across the American continent of immigrants from Europe after their landing in Atlantic coast ports,” observes Iwata, “those from Japan pushed eastward from the Pacific Coast, their progress generally coming to a halt roughly at the Missouri River in the Nebraska sector, [while] in the south the farthest advance eastward was into the Rio Grande Valley of Texas.”¹⁴

These overwhelmingly unmarried male Issei were drawn to the U.S. primarily for economic reasons. Most came from agrarian backgrounds in southern Japan and—despite the fact that they were preponderantly common laborers—most were relatively well-educated. As compared to those in this immigrant wave with a sojourner mentality (i.e., who determined to stay abroad only long enough to earn sufficient money to alleviate their Japanese families’ dire financial straits and/or to build lives for themselves in Japan), there was only a very small number who intended to settle permanently in America.

Fortuitously, the Issei arrived in the U.S. as the Interior West region was experiencing what historian Eric Walz has described as “an economic boom fueled by railroad construction, coal and hard-rock¹⁵ mining, and agricultural

11 For example, in 1900, at the twentieth century’s outset, the five primary states had these Japanese American populations: **Arizona (281); Colorado (48); New Mexico (8); Texas (13); Utah (417)**. In the three decennial censuses between 1900 and 1940, the almost universally escalating number of Nikkei in these states is captured statistically: **Arizona (371 - 550 - 879); Colorado (2,300 - 2,464 - 3,213); New Mexico (258 - 251 - 249); Texas (340 - 449 - 519); Utah (2,100 - 2,936 - 3,269)**. As for the subsidiary nine states, their Nikkei decade-by-decade populations—recorded in the four U.S. censuses for those decades—from 1900 through 1930 were characterized by a generally fluctuating growth pattern: Idaho (1,291 - 1,263 - 1,569 - 1,421); Kansas (4 - 107 - 52 - 37); Montana (2,441 - 1,585 - 1,074 - 753); Nebraska (3 - 590 - 804 - 674); Nevada (228 - 864 - 754 - 608); North Dakota (148 - 59 - 72 - 91); Oklahoma (0 - 48 - 67 - 104); South Dakota (1 - 42 - 38 - 19); Wyoming (393 - 1,596 - 1,194 - 1,026).

12 Masakazu Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil: A History of the Issei in United States Agriculture*, 2 vols. (New York: Peter Lang, 1992). The two volumes of this work are consecutively numbered.

On Japanese immigration into the western U.S. mainland, see also the following two studies: Azusa Tsuneyoshi, “Meiji Pioneers: The Early Japanese Immigrants to the American Far West and Southwest, 1880–1930” (PhD diss., Northern Arizona University, 1989) and Andrea A. E. Geiger, “Cross-Pacific Dimensions of Race, Caste and Class: Meiji-era Japanese Immigrants in the North American West, 1885–1928” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2006).

13 Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 112.

14 Ibid.

15 Gold, copper, zinc, nickel, lead, etc.

development.”¹⁶ Recruited by labor contractors, the Issei were a mobile workforce. As both individuals and gang laborers, they moved not only between different work opportunities on the Pacific Coast and the western interior sections of the U.S., but also between America and Japan and many other parts of the world in which Japanese workers filled a variety of employment needs. Concurrently, their emigration patterns relieved population pressure on their native Japan, and through remittances, increased its wealth.¹⁷

Many Issei who came to America first found employment with the steam railroad companies in two of the five primary Interior West states, Colorado and Utah, but many more also worked for the railroad industry in such secondary states as Montana, Idaho,¹⁸ Wyoming,¹⁹ and Nevada.²⁰ This largely accounts for why the 1900 census counted so many more Nikkei in the secondary states rather than the primary states. However, as Iwata notes, even though they achieved remarkable success—supplanting Chinese railroad workers; gaining wage parity with (and then employer preference over) other immigrant laborers from such countries as Italy, Greece, and Austria; improving their status within the industry by becoming section workers (occasionally even foremen) and office secretaries and interpreters; and accumulating some surplus capital—the majority of Issei “began to look about for work other than that in the railroads.”²¹ Nonetheless, as Masakazu Iwata is quick to remind us, in spite of this exodus of Issei workers from the railroads during the first decade of the twentieth century, “even as late as 1930 there were over 2,000 Japanese still working in the railroad industry.”²² Moreover, as historian Andrew Russell has more recently indicated, “while their numbers shrank steadily in the prewar [World War II years], the Nikkei of the railroads and mines continued to account for a sizable percentage of the Japanese-American population of most interior states right up to the start of the war.”²³

Russell recounts that sometime after going into railroad work, Issei entered into mining operations (albeit to a far lesser extent). While there were outcroppings of Japanese mining settlements in Rock Springs and other

16 See Eric Walz, “From Kumamoto to Idaho,” p. 405.

17 Remittances were money sent by overseas Japanese laborers to Japan for investment or for family support. Although the largest Issei remittance payments came from Hawaii and California, those sent home by Interior West laborers were also fairly substantial. For example, a 1908 survey of Japanese farmers in Colorado revealed that one-third of them sent annual remittances averaging one hundred dollars.

18 For details about Issei employment in the Pacific Northwest (Montana and Idaho, as well as Washington and Oregon), see William Thomas White, “A History of Railroad Workers in the Pacific Northwest, 1883-1934” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 1981) and “Race, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Railroad Work Force: The Case of the Far Northwest, 1883-1918,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 16 (July 1985): 265-83, especially pp. 273-76. In “Race, Ethnicity, and Gender,” White explains that most of the peak 13,000 Issei workers on western railroads were in the pay of the Northern Pacific, the Great Northern, the Southern Pacific, Union Pacific, and Milwaukee lines, with the Great Northern alone employing 5,000 of them, “although their number declined rapidly in the wake of the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1907-1908” (p. 274).

19 For an in-depth treatment of Nikkei railway employment within Wyoming, see Barbara Hickman, “Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming, 1891-1941” (master’s thesis, University of Wyoming, 1989). Hickman emphasizes that her study concentrates on “the Japanese who worked for the Union Pacific, both on the tracks and in its related industries across the southern tier of Wyoming, and along the Oregon Short Line northwest from Kemmerer in the southwest of the state” (p. 1).

20 For a brief overview of pre-World War II Issei railroad workers in Nevada, see Andrew Russell, “Friends, Neighbors, Foes and Invaders: Conflicting Images and Experiences of Japanese Americans in Wartime Nevada” (master’s thesis, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 1996), pp. 21-24. In “American Dreams Derailed: Japanese Railroad and Mine Communities of the Interior West” (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2003), Russell broadens his 1996 treatment of Issei railroad workers to embrace the Interior West region. After stating that in 1905 one-sixth of the Issei (11,783 out of 61,338) worked for railroads, he writes that initially most worked as trackmen in the northwestern and central mountain states. “However,” he concludes, “by 1906 the number of railroad workers had climbed to between 13,000 and 15,000 dispersed along virtually all of the major roads of the West. Thereafter, the ‘Gentlemen’s Agreement’ went into effect, causing a sharp decrease in Japanese railway workers by 1910. . . . The Union Pacific and other roads that traversed Wyoming, which once employed thousands, by then reported between 600 and 800 Japanese workers” (pp. 15-16).

21 In the peak year of 1906, some 13,000 Issei worked for the railroads.

22 See Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 125.

23 See Russell, “American Dreams Derailed,” p. 3.

southern Wyoming towns in the late 1890s, most Japanese immigrants did not labor in coal and copper mining camps until the first decade of the twentieth century. “The first Japanese coal miners in Utah,” surmises Russell, “probably arrived in 1904, when 145 hired on at the Castle Gate Mine in Carbon County . . . [and] around this time, coal mining companies in southern Colorado and northern New Mexico also began to employ significant numbers of Japanese miners.”²⁴

It is the opinion of Masakazu Iwata that Japanese working in the coal mines of Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah experienced harsher treatment than did Issei laborers in the coal mining industry within Wyoming, where they were more numerous than in the other three states. Although Issei miners in Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah avoided wage discrimination and were paid roughly the same as other immigrant groups, they typically were disallowed union membership and were consigned to live in a “Jap Town” outside of the boundaries of a given community settlement; they were also regarded by other races and ethnic groups to be in the same category as blacks. Wyoming—which in 1909 was home for over 13 percent of the total 7,000 Japanese living in the Interior West region—permitted Nikkei (and Chinese) to become members of the United Mine Workers, and this development led to a shortened work day and higher wages for Asian workers compared to their counterparts elsewhere in the region.

Barbara Hickman, a historian of the Nikkei experience in Wyoming, has observed that by 1909 the Issei residents of that state were increasingly finding the conditions of railroad and mining life too harsh. At the same time, they began to shift their goals: rather than continue to live in deprivation in order to save money and then return to Japan, they sought to become permanent settlers in America. “For those who stayed in the U.S.,” writes Hickman, “savings went towards the establishment of small businesses and family farms. Issei, for the most part, quit the perilous railroad and mining industries by 1910 and [thereafter steadily] moved away from the state of Wyoming.”²⁵

In her work, Hickman seeks to rectify the fact that historians of Wyoming history have tended to restrict their treatment of the Japanese experience in the so-called “Equality State”²⁶ to their World War II incarceration at the Heart Mountain Relocation Center (whose peak population reached 10,767); the camp was located in the northwest corner of the state between the small communities of Powell and Cody.²⁷ Wyoming’s population of people of Japanese ancestry did decline from a 1910 figure of 1,596 (1.09 percent of the state’s total population of 145,965) to 1,194 in 1920 and 1,026 in 1930, dropping somewhat precipitously to 643 in 1940. Despite these falling numbers, Hickman does not feel that this justifies the fact that “the Japanese [have] quietly disappeared” from Wyoming’s

24 Ibid., 16. Nancy Taniguchi, in *Castle Valley America: Hard Land, Hard-won Home* (Logan, Utah: Utah State University Press, 2004), places the arrival of the first Japanese miners in Castle Valley, Utah, in 1901, when they replaced Italian immigrants in the multinational, multiracial, and semi-segregated workforce. In *Planted in Good Soil*, Masakazu Iwata maintains that “it was not until 1903 that the members of this race [Japanese] entered the mines of southern Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah, at which time they were introduced as strikebreakers” (p. 127). For a detailed historical treatment of the experience of Japanese miners within the multicultural coal industry of southern Wyoming, see Ellen Schoening Aiken, “The *United Mine Workers of America* Moves West: Race, Working Class Formation, and the Discourse of Cultural Diversity in the Union Pacific Coal Towns of Southern Wyoming, 1870-1930” (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 2002).

25 Hickman, “Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming,” p. 30.

26 This nickname for Wyoming—bestowed because in 1869 it became the first place in the U.S. where women were granted the right to vote—is a bit of a misnomer: in 1869 Wyoming was still a territory and did not become the nation’s forty-fourth state until 1890.

27 The literature on the Heart Mountain Relocation Center is voluminous. The most comprehensive nonfiction studies are Douglas W. Nelson’s *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp* (Madison, Wisc.: State Historical Society of Wisconsin for the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, 1976) and Mike Mackey’s *Heart Mountain: Life in Wyoming’s Concentration Camp* (Powell, Wyo.: Western History Publications, 2000). In addition, Gretel Ehrlich’s *Heart Mountain* (New York: Viking, 1988) represents an overview of this camp’s wartime experience from the perspective of a historical novelist. At present, there is no book extant that examines the overarching history of people of Japanese ancestry in Wyoming.

historical record.²⁸ To make her point, she not only references the existence of pre-1910 communities in Wyoming with a considerable population of Issei, but also documents those towns—such as Rock Springs in south central Wyoming²⁹—that boasted *nihonmachi* (Japantowns).³⁰

Montana shares Wyoming’s historical experience of having had a sizeable Nikkei population at the outset of the twentieth century that thereafter dwindled in the decades prior to World War II.³¹ In 1900 Montana’s Japanese population was 2,441, which then spiraled downward: 1,585 in 1910, 1,074 in 1920, 753 in 1930, and 508 in 1940; this drop was even more dramatic than the Nikkei population numbers in Wyoming. During World War II, the U.S. Department of Justice operated the Fort Missoula Internment Camp for enemy alien Italians and roughly 1,000 Japanese internees. Unfortunately, the camp’s existence and its place within the context of Japanese America’s defining event—wartime exclusion and detention—has seemingly overshadowed all other facets of the Nikkei experience from Montana’s historical narrative and collective memory.³²

The two-pronged cause prompting the mass exodus of Issei railroad and mining gang laborers from Wyoming and Montana was their desire to pursue agricultural employment as well as the comparative paucity of opportunities to do so within these neighboring states. Wyoming suffered the most dismal agricultural scenario; subject to extremely cold temperatures and generally considered to be semi-arid, it was “climatologically inhospitable to farming.”³³ According to Masakazu Iwata, while the great majority of Issei immigrants were toiling in the railroad and mining industries in the southwestern part of the state,³⁴ in northern Wyoming a much smaller number took

28 “Of all the ethnic groups attracted to southwestern Wyoming by employment opportunities in the coal mines and the railroad,” explains Hickman, “the Japanese immigrants are arguably least recognized. Few studies of cultural diversity in Wyoming even mention the presence of Japanese, choosing to focus on the European immigrants.” See, Hickman, “Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming,” p. 52.

29 Rock Springs, Wyoming, was the site of the Rock Springs massacre on September 2, 1885. The result of racial tensions between immigrant Chinese and white (primarily immigrant) miners growing out of an ongoing labor dispute, this event ended with at least 28 Chinese miners dead and another 15 wounded, plus property damage that included 75 Chinese residences burned.

30 Drawing upon oral history evidence provided by a 14-year-old who was living in Rock Springs in 1907, Hickman notes that its Japantown—then consisting of 272 people—had “two Japanese pool halls, two Japanese professional photographers, grocery and fish stores, a noodle restaurant, and a regular restaurant.” Its residents staged a public parade to celebrate the Meiji emperor of Japan’s birthday. Moreover, while conceding that most of the post-1910 Japanese-ancestry population in Wyoming continued to be connected to the railroad and mining industries, Hickman relates that with growing frequency Nikkei entered a wide range of occupations. See Hickman, “Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming,” pp. 2, 32, and 42.

31 “Most of the Japanese [preponderantly men],” writes historian William Lang, “had come to Montana during the late nineteenth century as railroad workers . . . [chiefly maintenance crew members for the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and Union Pacific lines] and lived in railroad division-point towns such as Missoula [in the northwest] and Dillon [in the southwest].” See William Lang, “Alloyed Montana: Ethnic Components of a Twentieth-Century People,” in Michael P. Malone, ed., *Montana Century: 100 Years in Pictures and Words* (Guilford, Conn.: Globe Pequot Press, 1999), p. 86.

32 The only published volume spotlighting Nikkei history in Montana is Carol Van Valkenburg’s *An Alien Place: The Fort Missoula, Montana, Detention Camp 1941-44* (Missoula, Mont.: Pictorial Histories Publication Company, 1995). For two other books covering Nikkei internment at Fort Missoula, see: Yoshiaki Fukuda, *My Six Years of Internment: An Issei’s Struggle for Justice* (San Francisco: Konko Church of San Francisco, 1990); and Louis Fiset, *Imprisoned Apart: The World War II Correspondence of an Issei Couple* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998). Within the literature on Japanese Montanans, there is not even a counterpart to a periodical article such as Robert Swartout’s on the Chinese experience in Montana: “Kwangtung to Big Sky: The Chinese in Montana, 1864-1900,” *Montana: The Magazine of Western History* 38 (Winter 1988): 42-53.

As in the case in Montana, the placement of an enemy alien internment camp near Bismarck, North Dakota, during World War II (Fort Lincoln, whose Japanese-ancestry population numbered more than 1,800) has resulted in this one momentous chapter of the Japanese experience in North Dakota so overshadowing the rest of the state’s Nikkei story as to render it practically nonexistent. Whereas diverse dimensions of Fort Lincoln’s wartime situation have been featured in a book (Hyung-ju Ahn, *Between Two Adversaries: Korean Interpreters at Japanese Alien Enemy Detention Centers during World War II* [Fullerton, Calif.: Oral History Program at California State University, Fullerton, 2002]); a museum exhibition (*Snow Country Prison: Interned in North Dakota*, curated by Laurel Reuter and exhibited in Bismarck, North Dakota, at United Tribes Technical College, 2003); and a documentary film (Satsuki Ina, producer/co-director, *From A Silk Cocoon: A Japanese American Renunciation Story* [San Francisco: Center for Asian American Media, 2005]), there are no media representations whatsoever of any other aspects of the Japanese historical presence in North Dakota.

33 Hickman, “Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming,” p. 32.

34 See A. Dudley Gardner, “The Japanese in Southwest Wyoming,” http://www.wvcc.sy.edu/wyoz_hist/Japanese.htm (accessed July 11, 2009).

up farming in the Powell and Worland districts and around the town of Sheridan.³⁵ Most of the farmers remaining in Wyoming after 1910 found work as gang laborers in the northern sugar beet fields, although the majority of Issei agricultural workers migrated to such nearby Interior West states as Colorado, Nebraska, and, in particular, Idaho, for employment in those states' respective sugar beet operations.³⁶

The Japanese agricultural story in Montana, as Iwata has recorded, played out differently from that in Wyoming—and the primary factor in that difference was not climate, but racism. Very early in the twentieth century, as Japanese immigrant railroad workers began to seek other employment (due in part to the hostility they encountered from white laborers), they were recruited to work on labor gangs in the state's burgeoning sugar beet industry. By 1907 Issei had gained invaluable experience farming sugar beets, and they began raising this crop on land they controlled either as owners, or more generally, as leaseholders; most of these farms were located in south-central Montana, just north of Wyoming's border, around communities like Joliet, Park City, Bridger, and Fromberg. Shortly after World War I (which swelled Montana farm profits), Issei farmers began growing other crops (e.g., potatoes, melons, onions, and cabbage) as well as sugar beets. Issei also launched farming ventures in northwest Montana near the town of Whitefish, with some cultivating crops previously deemed not feasible for the area (such as celery and lettuce), and some abandoned vegetable production altogether for dairy farming. By 1923, anti-Asian sentiments were formalized in the form of an alien land law modeled on the one imposed in California; its strict enforcement both prohibited white landowners from leasing farmland to aliens ineligible for citizenship (i.e., Japanese and Korean immigrants) and persuaded many Issei to either stop farming in Montana or move, as many of their compatriots already had, to more accommodating Interior West states (in particular, Utah, Colorado, Nebraska, and Idaho)³⁷ and there pursue their agricultural aspirations.³⁸

The history of the sugar beet industry in the Interior West is too complicated to be discussed in much detail here,³⁹ but since it was of paramount importance to the frontier and settlement stages of Nikkei in this region, a few basic facts are in order. (Thankfully, Masakazu Iwata has admirably tackled how and to what extent the sugar beet industry influenced the development of Nikkei agriculture and community building in not only Colorado, Idaho, Nebraska, and Utah,⁴⁰ but also in such other Interior West states as Arizona, Kansas, Montana, New Mex-

35 Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, pp. 604-05. See also, Cynde Georgen, "Subjects of the Mikado: The Rise and Fall of Sheridan County's Japanese Community, 1900-1930," <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com~wyoming/ar-sheridanmikado.htm> (accessed July 11, 2009)

36 Hickman, "Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming," p. 33.

37 Thus, all four of these states experienced increased Japanese populations between 1910 and 1920—Colorado, 2,300 to 2,464; Idaho, 1,263 to 1,569; Nebraska, 590 to 804; Utah, 2,100 to 2,956— even after the passage of the 1908 Gentlemen's Agreement, by which the Japanese government agreed to limit issuance of continental passports to non-laborers; former residents; parents, wives, or children of residents; or settled agriculturists (i.e., those who wished to assume active control of an already possessed interest in a mainland farming enterprise). See Hickman, "Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming," p. 47.

38 The information about Japanese farming in Montana is drawn from Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, pp. 605-07.

39 For a baseline study pertaining to this topic, see Leonard J. Arrington, *Beet Sugar in the West: A History of the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, 1891-1966* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966). See also four articles on this same topic that appeared in volume 41 (January 1967) of *Agricultural History*: Leonard Arrington, "Science, Government, and Enterprise in Economic Development: The Western Beet Sugar Industry," pp. 1-18; Paul S. Taylor, "Hand Laborers in the Western Sugar Beet Industry," pp. 19-26; Gerald D. Nash, "The Sugar Beet Industry and Economic Growth in the West," pp. 27-30; and Wayne D. Rasmussen, "Technological Change in Western Sugar Beet Production," pp. 31-36.

40 For a discussion about Colorado, see Iwata, *Planted In Good Soil*, pp. 634-69, especially pp. 634-45 and 661-63; for Idaho, see *ibid.*, pp. 615-24, especially pp. 616 and 622-24; for Nebraska, see *ibid.*, pp. 607-614, especially p. 609; and for Utah, see *ibid.*, pp. 595-604, especially pp. 595-99, 601, and 603-04.

ico, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming.⁴¹)

The research and development phase of the industry—which primarily took place in Utah under the guidance of Mormon Church agricultural supervisors—was effectively completed by 1897; between 1898 and 1920, abetted by irrigation practices and the securing of sufficient labor throughout the region, the industry experienced tremendous expansion.⁴² Working in labor gangs, thousands of Issei dominated the handwork done in the regional sugar beet fields during the twentieth century’s opening decade. (As succinctly described by Masakazu Iwata, in *Planted in Good Soil*, “handwork” in the sugar beet fields consisted of “the bunching and thinning, the arduous hoeing, and the back-breaking work of topping and loading.”⁴³) By about 1920, however, most sugar beet hand laborers were Mexican immigrants.⁴⁴ This change occurred because Issei bachelors began to nurture a family-based Nikkei society here in the United States, in part due to both the Gentlemen’s Agreement of 1908 and the Immigration Act of 1924; they began to marry and bring relatives over from Japan. As Eric Walz writes, they “chose to move as quickly as possible from the ranks of the common laborer to operating their own farms and businesses.”⁴⁵

Not all Issei laborers who exchanged railroad and mining employment for agricultural pursuits in the Interior West migrated to this region from within the continental U.S., nor did these migrants always enter farming in their new locations via the sugar beet industry.⁴⁶ One way of giving these abstract points concrete embodiment is through examining a case study, that of the Japanese experience in El Paso, Texas. Invaluable to this case study is work done by two past graduate students at the University of Texas, El Paso: the first by a Japanese social scientist,

41 The situation in Arizona is discussed in *ibid.*, pp. 672-701, particularly pp. 674-75; for Kansas, see *ibid.*, pp. 614-15; for Montana, see *ibid.*, pp. 605-07; for Nevada, see *ibid.*, pp. 624-26; for New Mexico, see *ibid.*, pp. 701-08, particularly pp. 702-03; for South Dakota, see *ibid.*, p. 755; for Texas, see *ibid.*, pp. 717-41, particularly pp. 734-35; and for Wyoming, see *ibid.*, pp. 604-05. Of the 14 Interior West states, Iwata fails to mention only Oklahoma and North Dakota relative to the Japanese role in sugar beet agriculture. However, he does state that “in the Dakotas, statistics indicate that the Japanese population in North Dakota was from the earliest years greater than that of South Dakota because of the entry of railroad, mine, and farm workers from the neighboring state of Montana” (*ibid.*, p. 755).

42 Historian Leonard Arrington observes that in the 1898-1913 interval, a total of 86 new beet factories were built, more than half by 1903, involving an \$80 million investment (“Science, Government, and Enterprise in Economic Development,” p. 10). In “Japanese Settlement in the Intermountain West” Eric Walz, being more pointed, writes that in the states of “Colorado, Idaho, Nebraska, and Utah, sugar beet acreage expanded from a total of 168,425 acres in 1910, to 506,200 acres in 1920 [and that] the number of sugar factories in those same four states increased from ten in 1900, to forty-nine in 1920, while the total tonnage of sugar beets produced . . . grew from 39,385 tons in 1901 to 4,779,00 tons in 1920” (p. 2).

43 Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil*, p. 167. For a detailed account of sugar beet handwork, including a recollection by an Issei who experienced it, see Eric Walz, “Masayoshi Fujimoto: Japanese Diarist, Idaho Farmer” (master’s thesis, Utah State University, 1994), pp. 16-17.

44 Taylor, “Hand Laborers in the Western Sugar Beet Industry,” p. 22. For the role of Mexican labor in the Interior West sugar beet industry in the states of Wyoming and Colorado, see, respectively, Augustin Redwine, “Lovell’s Mexican Colony,” http://uwacadweb.uwyo.edu/RobertsHistory/lovells_Mexican_colony.htm (accessed July 13, 2009); Barbara Hawthorne, “Mexican American Cultural History,” http://library.ci.fort-collins.co.us/Local_history/topics/Ethnic/mexican.htm (accessed July 13, 2009).

45 Walz, “From Kumamoto to Idaho,” pp. 408-09.

46 For a useful multicultural study focused on the sugar beet industry within the Interior West, see R. Todd Welker, “Sweet Dreams in Sugar Land: Japanese Farmers, Mexican Farm Workers, and Northern Utah Beet Production” (master’s thesis, Utah State University, 2002). Welker’s scholarship builds upon three published studies of the sugar beet industry in Utah and Idaho—Arrington’s *Beet Sugar in the West: A History of the Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, 1891-1966*; J. R. Bachman, *Story of the Amalgamated Sugar Company 1897-1961* (Caldwell, Ida.: Caxton, 1962); and Fred G. Taylor, *A Saga of Sugar: Being a Story of the Romance and Development of Beet Sugar in the Rocky Mountain West* (Salt Lake City: Utah-Idaho Sugar Company, 1944)—and a newer unpublished work on the same subject: John L. Powell, “The Role of Beet Growers in the Cache Valley Sugar Beet Industry 1891-1981” (master’s thesis, Utah State University, 1995). Whereas the books by Arrington, Bachman, and Taylor are written, as their titles may indicate, from the perspective of the sugar companies, Powell’s thesis generally embodies the point of view of the white, Mormon beet growers. As for Welker’s thesis, it approaches the topic from the frame of reference of two racial-ethnic groups—Japanese/Japanese Americans and Mexicans/Mexican Americans—involved within a single sugar beet farming community in northern Utah.

Tsuyako Miyasato, and the second by an American historian, Christe Celia Armendariz.⁴⁷

Most Issei migrants to El Paso, the largest city along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border, traveled either from Mexico or from diverse parts of the continental United States. After experiencing difficulty entering America from Mexico during 1906-1907, owing to widespread fears in the U.S. of a so-called “Japanese Invasion,” Issei laborers resorted to smuggling themselves across the border into El Paso, where Texas officials welcomed them because of their reputed agricultural expertise. When the Mexican Revolution erupted in 1910, the United States suspended its immigration laws in order to provide Nikkei refuge from Mexico. Thereafter, the refugees—primarily ex-railroad laborers in Mexico—formed the cornerstone of a small yet flourishing Japanese colony in El Paso.

Texas did not impose an anti-Japanese alien land law until 1921, so prior to that date the Japanese population in the city and the surrounding valley of El Paso grew steadily as Nikkei farmers availed themselves of the twin opportunities to farm their own land and to become permanent settlers. The first Issei to purchase land in El Paso did so in 1914, and just two years later El Paso had 44 Japanese residents. By 1920 Issei farmed—mainly as leaseholders—one-fifth of El Paso Valley’s 50,000 acres of fertile land, and by the next year there were 125 Japanese who owned 70 acres and leased another 5,000 acres proximate to the city. Cantaloupes were the chief crop, although it later suffered devastation by nematodes (i.e., roundworms).

A number of Issei men who came to El Paso not only married Mexican women, but they also adopted Spanish first names; thus, Ryiochi Okubo became José Okubo. During the 1930s, the El Paso Nikkei population swelled due to those who moved to Texas to escape the unbearable racism leveled against those of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast and in Mexico. Then, too, in the 1930s, as the actions of the fascist Japanese government became manifest in the media, some Japanese El Pasoans sought to protect themselves by changing their Japanese surnames to Mexican ones.⁴⁸ Of the 38 Nikkei who made El Paso their home during World War II, the majority escaped confinement in concentration camps, while El Paso Valley’s mainstream population and their organizations refrained from publicly demanding the wholesale removal of its Japanese-ancestry residents. When the war ended, however, the Japanese in El Paso became the victims of racial hatred, and this persecution drove many to move to other parts of the U.S.⁴⁹

Unlike Armendariz, who chiefly builds her account of El Paso’s early Nikkei community from local newspaper articles, Miyasato relies heavily upon oral history interviews to construct her community narrative. Because these life stories provide a window through which to apprehend the special character of the Japanese El Pasoans and the complex ways they became embedded in the history, culture, and society of the Interior West region, they merit careful attention. The following representative sample focuses on Mansaku Kurita, an Issei man, but it also captures his Issei wife Teru’s experiences.

47 See Miyasato Tsuyako, “The Japanese in the El Paso Region” (master’s thesis, University of Texas at El Paso, 1982); and Christe Celia Armendariz, “Inconspicuous but Estimable Immigrants: The Japanese in El Paso, 1898-1948” (master’s thesis, University of Texas at El Paso, 1994). A note: the author’s name on the title page of the first of these studies follows the Japanese practice of placing the surname before the given name; however, all references made to this source will follow the practice in English of a given name preceding the surname. For additional information on the early Japanese community in El Paso, see Beverly Ramirez, Kenneth Kurita III, and Elvi Nieto, “Japanese Immigration Came Slowly to Borderland,” *Borderlands: An El Paso Community College Local History Project*, <http://www.epcc.edu/nwlibrary/borderlands/26/japanese.htm> (accessed July 26, 2009); with respect to the World War II experience of the Nikkei community in El Paso, see Beverly Ramirez and Elvi Nieto, “World War II Affected Japanese Immigrants,” *Ibid.*

48 See Armendariz, “Inconspicuous but Estimable Immigrants,” pp. 18-44 passim.

49 See *ibid.*, 105-15 passim.

Around 1910, Mansaku Kurita came to El Paso through Mexico. He once worked for the railroad company, [and] then he started farming in Colorado. . . . In Colorado, he was in real good shape financially, but he got wiped out when his crops failed, so his friend Kuniji Tashiro called him in 1928 to come to New Mexico and farm there for a year. Then he came to El Paso. By the time he settled down in El Paso, he was financially secure. Mansaku married Teru, a woman from Shizuoka [Japan], who was about five years younger than he. When Mansaku called for Teru, she lived in Kansas. Teru had a college education and taught school in Japan. Later she worked as a midwife to many Mexicans in El Paso, and was known as the mother of El Paso.⁵⁰

For Nikkei, life in Arizona pre-World War II and during the war was markedly different from that in Colorado in important respects. By 1910 Colorado had some 2,500 Japanese immigrants, while fewer than 400 people of Japanese ancestry resided in Arizona; by 1940 Colorado claimed close to 3,225 Nikkei and Arizona nearly 900. The prewar distribution of these two states' Nikkei populations was also very different. Most Japanese Coloradans were scattered around their state in modest-sized farming communities; there was also a comparatively dense cluster in the area of Denver, where they were supported by the budding Japantown located within the city's deteriorated core. In contrast, Japanese Arizonans—who were primarily agriculturalists—congregated in the Salt River Valley's Maricopa County, in central Arizona, where they found rudimentary ethnic support systems in Phoenix, Glendale, Tempe, and Mesa.

Another distinguishing feature differentiating life for Japanese in Arizona and Colorado during this era is that Nikkei in Arizona had to contend with a greater degree of legal and extralegal prejudice, discrimination, and out-right racism than those residing in Colorado. This is not to say that Colorado's anti-Japanese climate was mild or sporadic—in fact, it was both severe and unremitting, as historian Kara Miyagishima has copiously documented. In the early twentieth century, because Colorado's laboring class generally viewed “little yellow men” from the Far East to be “invading” their state and, as railroad, mining, and farm workers, they were felt to be posing unfair employment competition. To counter this perceived problem, labor groups excluded them by creating associations such as the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League founded by the Colorado State Federation of Labor in 1908. Even after the Issei bachelors progressively transformed the Nikkei population within Colorado from one dominated by mobile laborers with a bird-of-passage mentality to one characterized by stabilized family-based farm and commercial enterprises, nativist groups organized against the Nikkei to hinder their ascent of the social and economic ladder. “Like the Negroes of the South,” writes Miyagishima, “the Japanese were accepted without rancor only so long as they remained in their place.”⁵¹ In Denver, where by 1920 some 85 percent of the population

50 Miyasato, “The Japanese in the El Paso Region,” p. 21. Although the names in this mini-biography were rendered in the Japanese mode—family names preceding given names—they have been reversed to reflect the American naming style.

Miyasato's study of the Japanese in El Paso does not end with World War II, an event that “fragmented psychologically the small number of Japanese living in the region.” Instead, she reveals how a new El Paso Nikkei community was formed in the post-World War II years by an amalgam of Japanese Americans, Japanese-Mexicans, and Japanese war brides who, during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, came in substantial numbers from Japan (where they met and married American soldiers—including, increasingly, African Americans—stationed there) to live in the El Paso area with their husbands at the nearby Ft. Bliss military base. See *ibid.*, pp. 38 and 38-92 *passim*, especially 38-53.

51 Kara Mariko Miyagishima, “Colorado's Nikkei Pioneers: Japanese Americans in Twentieth Century Colorado” (master's thesis, University of Colorado, Denver), p. 124. Miyagishima's study and another recent work by the late Bill Hosokawa—*Colorado's Japanese Americans from 1886 to the Present* (Boulder, Colo.: University Press of Colorado, 2005)—cover the same general historical territory. However, Hosokawa does so in an episodic, anecdotal, and engagingly colorful and palpable way without benefit of footnotes, while Miyagishima fashions a narrative featuring lineal chronological development, exacting factual detail, contextual amplification, extensive documentation, and clear writing. Accordingly, these two texts very nicely complement one another in style as well as content.

was native-born, restrictive covenants and similar segregating mechanisms were imposed, leaving only the city's Skid Row area open for residency by Nikkei and other people of color. With the onset of World War II, Colorado—and Denver, in particular—experienced a large infusion of Nikkei from the West Coast. Many arrived in Colorado during the period of “voluntary evacuation” and afterwards, with a large number settling there as a consequence of temporary work leaves and semipermanent resettlement from the WRA camps.

With an increase in Nikkei residents came a sharp increase in anti-Japanese sentiment and activity. The state's major newspaper, the *Denver Post*,⁵² became America's most venomous journalistic purveyor of Nikkei race-baiting. It pervasively promoted the notion that Japanese Americans “were not genuine U.S. citizens, but unassimilable and untrustworthy,” unacceptable even to harvest the state's direly endangered sugar beet crop, and altogether unwanted in Colorado without strict federal and military supervision and control. The *Post* also helped to provoke a rising wave of vigilante violence against Nikkei and championed the 1944 campaign mounted for a state constitutional amendment to restrict land ownership by alien Japanese residents (as well as East Indians, Malaysians, and Filipinos).⁵³

But the anti-Japanese movement in Colorado, from the early twentieth century through World War II, always had to contend with countervailing forces. Some came from within the Nikkei community, which possessed sufficient numbers to command the Japanese government's attention and to capitalize upon its considerable international power and influence. Nikkei had also developed an institutional network that could resist—or at least deflect—oppressive measures and campaigns designed to inflict damage upon or destroy Japanese Colorado. Thus, in 1908, to protect the interests of Japanese against the Colorado State Federation of Labor's Japanese and Korean Exclusion League and similar organizations, the state's Issei established, in Denver, the Japanese Association of Colorado. Along with other Japanese Association branches that developed throughout Colorado, it concurrently forged political ties to the Japanese government and encouraged the assimilation of Japanese Coloradans. This situation no doubt was a key reason why Colorado, unlike most other Interior West states, did not institute an anti-Japanese alien land law.

Although an attempt was made to do precisely that during World War II—at a point when mainstream negative feeling toward the Nikkei was at its zenith—via a state constitutional amendment, what transpired showed that the Japanese American community could count on countervailing support on its behalf outside the boundaries of its ethnic subculture. In seeking to counteract the drive for the amendment, which was spearheaded by the American League of Colorado in conjunction with such other supporters like the Colorado Veterans of Foreign Wars and citizens of Brighton and Adams counties (most of whom were truck drivers of Italian descent), the Nikkei were aided by a diverse array of backers. Organizations who sided with the Japanese in opposition to the amendment included a Citizens Emergency Committee formed by ministers and educators (with a statewide executive committee made up of prominent citizens), which disseminated its message via public meetings, newspapers, and radio; the Denver Council of Churches; the Denver YWCA; the Colorado State League of Women Voters; the Denver-headquartered National Civic League; the Cosmopolitan Club, a student organization at the University of Colorado; the Rocky Mountain Farmer's Union; and mainstream newspapers like the *Rocky Mountain News* and the *Pueblo Star Journal and Chieftain*, as well as vernacular newspapers such as the *Intermountain Jewish News* and the *Colorado Statesman* and the *Denver Star* (both of which were African American publications). As a result of this diverse

52 For an assessment of the *Denver Post*'s anti-Nikkei campaigns, see Kumiko Takahara, *Off the Fat of the Land: The Denver Post's Story of the Japanese American Internment during World War II* (Powell, Wyo.: Western History Publications, 2003).

53 See Miyagishima, “Colorado's Nikkei Pioneers,” pp. 57-178 passim, but especially pp. 57-60, 122-26, and 175-78.

support, the amendment was defeated.⁵⁴

The smaller number of Issei in pre-World War II Arizona—as well as the state’s proximity to California, where anti-Japanese emerged earliest and most intensely—made Japanese Arizonans more vulnerable than Japanese Coloradans to racist mainstream attacks. Thus, as Eric Walz has documented, beginning in 1913, the state’s Nikkei farmers had to contend with the alien land law that Arizona (following California’s lead) passed that year; this law forbade members of racial groups ineligible for U.S. citizenship, which included the Japanese, from purchasing land but did permit them to enter into leasing arrangements.⁵⁵ An attempt was made in 1921 to legally close this loophole, although Issei circumvented the new law by leasing land in their children’s names or through non-Japanese landlords and neighbors. Still, the Issei were swimming against the tide of public opinion, for “non-Japanese farmers in Maricopa County,” to quote Walz, “resented competition from Japanese immigrants . . . and accused the Japanese of using unfair labor practices (Japanese wives and children worked in the fields), of paying too much in rent, and of taking up the best farmland in the [Salt River] valley.”⁵⁶

In late 1923, the Maricopa County Farm Bureau’s president forwarded Arizona’s governor a Farm Bureau resolution opposing creation of a Japanese population with the potential to “expand in time and prove to be undesirable residents” and requesting “a strict enforcement of the Arizona Statute which forbids the selling to [Japanese] or leasing of farming lands in this state.”⁵⁷ In reply, the governor promised to urge the state attorney general and the county attorneys to strictly enforce the laws. Notwithstanding this official resolve to see that the alien land law’s spirit as well as its letter were respected, the Issei community was “cohesive enough to defend itself”: while Japanese immigration was slowed, “the number of Japanese farm operators in Arizona increased from sixty-nine in 1920 to 121 in 1930.”⁵⁸

By the early 1930s, with the Depression in full swing, this situation was reversed. In that dire economic climate, the market value of agricultural products was slashed, and a series of circumstances led to Japanese farmers essentially monopolizing cantaloupe production. They also enjoyed a bumper crop that, confronted by very little competition, brought windfall profits even as Maricopa County’s non-Japanese farmers, who had reduced their sideline cantaloupe acreage, were hit by dismal returns for their principal cotton and alfalfa crops. As a consequence, strong anti-Japanese sentiments—including enforcement of the alien land laws—came to the fore once again. The capstone to this escalating racist climate was the explosive situation that Eric Walz has so graphically depicted:

On August 16, 1934, 600 Caucasian farmers met in Glendale to decide how to rid the [Salt River] valley of their Japanese competitors. At a rally the following day, more than 150 cars paraded through town. One carried a banner that read:

WE DON’T NEED ASIATICS
JAP MOVING DAY AUGUST 25TH, WE MEAN IT

54 Ibid., pp. 177–8. It should be noted, however, that the legislative vote on the measure (the Senate’s narrow victory margin of 15 to 12 and the House’s overwhelming repudiation of 48 to 15) highlighted the prevalence of anti-Japanese sentiment in Colorado.

55 Eric Walz, “The Issei Community in Maricopa County: Development and Persistence in the Valley of the Sun, 1900–1940,” *Journal of Arizona History* 38 (Spring 1997): 1–22.

56 Ibid., pp. 8–9.

57 Ibid., pp. 9–10.

58 Ibid.



MOVE OUT BY SATURDAY NOON AUGUST 25TH
OR BE MOVED

Over the next few weeks nativists and their minions flooded Japanese farms, bombed Japanese homes, pushed pick-ups owned by Japanese farmers into irrigation canals, and fired shots at Japanese farmers who tried to protect their growing crops.⁵⁹

A bloody catastrophe was prevented by timely intervention by the general community's educational and religious leaders, Arizona Japanese Association lobbying efforts, and the local Japanese community's appeals to the Japanese consulate. However, in the long run persecution was halted by economic pragmatism: the Mitsubishi Company, a large Southwest cotton purchaser, warned that the price of persisting violence against Japanese farmers would be the loss of cotton contracts; the U.S. government also made it clear that federal water projects for Arizona would be put at risk should the maltreatment of Japanese farmers continue. But the damage had already been done. "While few Japanese farmers actually left the valley as a direct result of violence," concludes Walz, "discrimination and depression reduced their numbers in Arizona from 121 in 1930 to 52 by 1940."⁶⁰

In prewar Arizona's towns and cities there also existed racist feelings toward Nikkei (as well as other people of color) which had hardened into customs and institutional practices. Susie Sato, an Arizona native reared in Lehi, a small Mormon community in the central part of the state, has testified that while the kindness of Mormon neighbors mitigated prejudice against her Nikkei family, she encountered discrimination at movie theaters and swimming pools in the municipalities surrounding her hometown. Nikkei, along with other Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, African Americans, and Native Americans, "were not permitted to swim in the Tempe public pool, and throughout the [towns of the] Phoenix area, movie theaters practiced a strict policy of segregation."⁶¹

The Japanese Arizona World War II experience has been assayed by two historians, both working at Arizona universities: Charles Ynfante at Northern Arizona University and Andrew Russell at Arizona State University. Their work on this topic has in common the fact that both consider it within the context of Arizona's overall home-front experience during World War II.⁶² Russell's article in *Arizona Goes to War: The Home Front and the Front Lines during World War II*, co-edited by Brad Melton and Dean Smith, is not very compatible with the celebratory tenor of the anthology. Smith, for example, observes that World War II "brought about amazing changes in Arizona's economy," and he suggests that these changes were matched by Arizona's "improvement in race relations." To support his contention, he does not emphasize changes occurring during or immediately after the war, instead

59 Ibid., pp. 10-11.

60 Ibid., p. 12.

61 See Vicki S. Ruiz, "Tapestries of Resistance: Episodes of School Segregation in the Western United States," in Peter F. Lau, *From the Grassroots to the Supreme Court: Brown v. Board of Education and American Democracy* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 55. See also the following sources: Susie Sato, "Before Pearl Harbor: Early Japanese Settlers in Arizona," *Journal of Arizona History* 14 (Winter 1973): 317-34; Mesa Historical Museum, "Mesa Leadership Talk with Angy Booker, Celia Burns, and Susie Sato," audio recording, November 1, 2003 at the Mesa Historical Museum in Mesa, Arizona; and Valerie Matsumoto, "Shigata Ga Nai": Japanese American Women in Central Arizona, 1910-1978" (senior honors thesis, Arizona State University, Tempe, 1978); and Valerie J. Matsumoto, "Using Oral History to Unearth Japanese American History," presentation at Japanese Americans in Arizona Oral History Project Workshop, Arizona State University, Tempe, November 8, 2003.

62 See Charles Ynfante, "Arizona during the Second World War, 1941-1945: A Survey of Selected Topics" (PhD diss., Northern Arizona University, 1997), later revised and published as *The Transformation of Arizona into a Modern State: The Contribution of War to the Modernization Process* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen Books, 2002); and Andrew B. Russell, "Arizona Divided," in Brad Melton and Dean Smith, eds., *Arizona Goes to War: The Home Front and the Front Lines during World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003), pp. 38-55.



focusing on ones that, while catalyzed by the war, did not materialize until later in the postwar period.⁶³ “Even the Japanese Americans,” contends Smith, “[who were] vilified after Pearl Harbor and herded into relocation centers, gained new acceptance after the war as Arizonans increasingly embraced the ideal of cultural diversity.”⁶⁴ While Russell’s narrative and sidebars are not without some triumphalism, he does not shield readers from the darker aspects of the wartime exclusion and detention experience in Arizona. Thus, at one point, he writes:

Within a few short weeks [after Pearl Harbor] the climate of tolerance evaporated [in Arizona]. By March of 1942 the southern half of Arizona (including much of Maricopa County) became part of the huge military zone from which all Japanese Americans were to be evacuated. Military planners at the headquarters of the WDC [Western Defense Command] ultimately drew the exclusion line that cut across Arizona, but Arizona forces probably played a significant role in the shaping of evacuation policy within the state. Considering the high levels of anti-Japanese antagonism that had surfaced during the Salt River War [in 1934], it is not difficult to imagine that some Arizonans would have jumped at an excuse to finally rid the valley of Japanese farmers. Governor [Sidney P.] Osborne’s collected papers and state newspapers bear witness to the steady growth of anti-Japanese sentiment in wartime Arizona.⁶⁵

Russell indicates, too, how the Arizona press barely even paid attention to the U.S. government-sited concentration camps in Arizona for incarcerating Nikkei.⁶⁶ When newspapers did write about the Japanese they “tended to be negative,” as headlines such as “[Gila] River’s Japs Take 600 Jobs” and “[Officials] Forbid Japs to Leave Camps Lest Hostile Acts Occur” confirm. Russell also describes specific developments about the Nikkei presence in wartime Arizona that incited negative press coverage.⁶⁷ Finally, he floats this mordant note: “Japanese Arizonans can recount few if any pleasant memories of World War II.”⁶⁸

As for Charles Ynfante’s study of World War II Arizona, it tests historian Gerald Nash’s thesis that the war transformed the western region into a modern economy by applying it to a western state Nash largely neglects in

63 Smith cites, for example, a desire by Native Americans to “broaden their horizons” and the breakdown of segregation for African Americans and Mexican Americans (along with Raul Castro’s 1974 gubernatorial election). In 1962, the United States Commission on Civil Rights (USCCR), which five years earlier Congress had established “to document disparities in the rights, laws, and social experiences of those deprived of rights and legal recourse as a result of race, color, religion, or national origin,” made Phoenix its first urban metropolis study site, “because of its tremendous growth, the diversity of its minority groups, and because it is a city where there are few, if any, antidiscrimination laws, and where progress in the realization of civil rights has reportedly been made.” However, after hearings held in Phoenix, the USCCR discovered that Arizona’s largest city, whose population had exploded from 65,000 to 440,000 between 1940 and 1960, and contained a modest “Oriental” and “Indian” population, a substantial number of “Negroes,” and a large, rapidly growing “Mexican American” community, had as late as the 1950s segregated schools, theaters, and even many restaurants—sometimes with the force of law. See Tom I. Romero, “Of Race and Rights: Legal Culture, Social Change, and the Making of a Multicultural Metropolis, Denver 1940-1975” (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2004), pp. 253-55, which compares the findings of the USCCR in Denver with those in other western urban centers such as Phoenix.

64 Dean Smith, “Conclusion,” in Melton and Smith, *Arizona Goes to War*, 178-79.

65 Russell, “Arizona Divided,” pp. 44, 46.

66 Arizona’s detention facilities included Mayer Assembly Center, Poston and Gila River Relocation Centers, Leupp Isolation Center, and Catalina Federal Honor Camp, which collectively imprisoned upward of 35,000 Nikkei, far more than in any other Interior West state during World War II.

67 Specific developments mentioned by Russell include the following: when a profit-making cooperative at the Gila River camp was established in 1942; when the War Relocation Authority [WRA] instituted a policy allowing those behind barbed wires to accept temporary jobs or long-term employment outside the military zone (especially in the Intermountain states); when, in mid-summer 1943, “a team of army investigators from WDC had to travel to Phoenix . . . because some Arizonans had blamed ‘Japanese sabotage’ for fires that consumed two produce-packing sheds”; and when, in 1944, the federal government lifted West Coast exclusion orders and announced the imminent closing of the WRA camps, thereby causing “renewed concerns that the camp populations might try to settle in Arizona.”

68 *Ibid.*, 53-55.

his scholarship—Arizona.⁶⁹ Additionally, Ynfante explores the wartime experiences of Native Americans, African Americans, Japanese Americans, and Mexican nationals (but not Mexican Americans) to determine whether Nash is right in judging World War II a watershed for Arizona’s racial-ethnic minorities. While conceding that Nash is correct in concluding that Arizona experienced a major turning point economically during and after the war, Ynfante enters this caveat:

At the same time, Arizona’s dominant Anglo society was generally racist toward its resident minority groups. Perhaps Nash should have made further inquiry into the social experiences of this southwestern state before making his optimistic assessment about the war’s impact upon minority groups in western society. Had he done so, he would have found that Arizona was laggard in improving its own racial relations. Arizona is as vital a state as any in the western region. Its experiences deserve exploration that penetrates deeper than Nash’s general assessment.⁷⁰

Ynfante’s closing words nicely lend themselves to appropriation and reapplication here. Directly put, they can be used to support the argument that the Interior West experience of Japanese Americans is as vital as that for any other region of the United States, and that it deserves a much deeper exploration by dedicated students of Nikkei history, society, and culture than it has received to date.

This essay has thus far examined how scholars from varying disciplines have, in recent years, supported a deeper exploration of the Interior West Nikkei experience from pioneering days through World War II. Let us now briefly explore recent scholarship pertaining to the post-World War II experience of Interior West Nikkei. A strategic starting point is a 2006 study done by Joel Tadao Miyasaki.⁷¹ The larger and direct concern of Miyasaki—who describes himself as “the son of a Japanese American father and a white mother”—is Nikkei identity in Utah and Idaho during the World War II exclusion and detention experience of Japanese Americans (and, indirectly, for Nikkei generally in the period since World War II).⁷²

Miyasaki’s study has a three-part theoretical base: first, it draws on a concept from sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant, that “historical circumstances influence the process of ‘racialization,’ the creation of racial identity [and that] this identity in turn affects the way that historical actors live and make decisions within any particular moment in time”⁷³; second, it explores the idea from historian George Sánchez, “that cultural adaptation affects identity [which] occurs when ethnic groups encounter the dominating influence of white society”⁷⁴; and third, it examines the concept, put forth by historian Lisbeth Haas, that “history occurs both in time and space [and] power relationships [are] formed by different groups as they enter a particular space and attempt to manipulate that space for their own purposes.”⁷⁵

69 See Gerald D. Nash, *World War II and the West: Reshaping the Economy* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1988) and *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1985).

70 Ynfante, “Arizona during the Second World War,” p. 317; for Ynfante’s evaluation of the Japanese American experience in World War II Arizona, see Chapter 8, pp. 208-39, in which he baldly states that “the legacy of Japanese internment is deplorable” (p. 232).

71 See Joel Tadao Miyasaki, “Claiming a Place in the Intermountain West: Japanese American Ethnic Identity in Utah and Idaho” (master’s thesis, Utah State University, 2006).

72 Miyasaki’s specific interest is with the area extending southward from Rexburg in southeastern Idaho to Price in northern Utah.

73 See Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1980s* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987).

74 See George Sánchez, *Becoming Mexican American: Ethnicity, Culture and Identity in Chicano Los Angeles, 1900-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

75 See Lisbeth Haas, *Conquests and Historical Identities in California, 1769-1936* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995).

For Miyasaki’s articulation of his study’s tripartite theoretical base, see “Claiming a Place in the Intermountain West,” pp. 1-3.

Miyasaki uses this conceptual framework to illuminate the World War II story of the “small, but influential” and “largely ignored” Japanese American population in Utah and Idaho, who “found themselves dispersed inside a largely white, Mormon population.” He then concludes that, in general, “these regional circumstances created a much different communal identity” from that constructed by West Coast Nikkei, and in particular, that the relative “freedom” Interior West Japanese Americans had during World War II (together with the wartime prejudice in their region) “created a discourse of self-preservation among Utah’s and Idaho’s Nikkei [and] the spirit of survival found its way into the JACL’s [Japanese American Citizens League] wartime policies and [thereby] consequently affected the United States’ larger Japanese American population in real and tragic ways.”⁷⁶

Miyasaki argues that not only have scholars showed a preoccupation with World War II politics and prejudice, but also that traditional Japanese American historical scholarship has been “California-centric.” As a result, the wartime experience of Utah and Idaho—Interior West states in the “Free Zone”—has been woefully slighted. Still, recent work on the Nikkei experience, especially that stimulated by oral history interviewing, has placed a premium on first-person perspectives; this work has provided Japanese Americans in the Interior West a chance to examine “how they participated in the creation and absorption of culture.” This, in turn, has allowed studies like “Claiming a Place in the Intermountain West” to at long last “find a home and [gain] a sense of importance.”⁷⁷

The heart of Miyasaki’s study is its fourth chapter, entitled “A Discourse of Survival.” Therein, Miyasaki maintains that the two Utah-based Japanese vernacular newspapers—the *Utah Nippo* and the *Pacific Citizen*—progressively sounded a chauvinistic message reflecting a “discourse of good citizenship.” (The *Utah Nippo* had an English-language section edited by Mike Masaoka, a Mormon convert; just before the outbreak of World War II he became national secretary and field executive for the Japanese American Citizens League, the organization recognized by the U.S. government as the Nikkei community’s “voice.” The *Pacific Citizen* was the JACL’s newspaper, and during the war it relocated, along with the organization’s national leadership, from San Francisco to Salt Lake City.) Convinced that for Nikkei to “survive” in Utah and Idaho they needed, at all costs, to preserve the American way of life, Sunao Ishio—Masaoka’s successor as *Utah Nippo*’s English-language section successor—trumpeted this uncritical patriotic anthem on October 8, 1941: “Let there not be found within the Japanese American Community one to criticize the course set by the people of the United States.”⁷⁸

Ishio’s verbal flag-waving, as Miyasaki explains, foreshadowed “the policy the JACL and its allies would use in the months and years after Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor.”⁷⁹ Moreover, because the national JACL increasingly relied on those chapters constituting the organization’s newly organized Intermountain District Council⁸⁰ (which just weeks before Pearl Harbor held its second annual convention in Pocatello, Idaho, with the theme of “Thank God I am an American”)⁸¹ for membership and funding support during the war, the “local” survival discourse of

76 Ibid., iii-iv.

77 Ibid., 4.

78 Ibid., pp. 68-69. The gold standard for the articulation of the JACL’s discourse of citizenship was achieved the previous year by Mike Masaoka in his widely circulated “Japanese-American Creed” (for this creed, see *ibid.*, p. 67). By way of prefacing it, Miyasaki notes that Masaoka’s creed “represents his feelings as an intermountain Nisei” and characterizes it as “the first written manifestation of the policies the JACL supported during World War II.” Miyasaki alludes to precursors to this brand of nationalistic boosterism in Utah, such as the *Rei Nei Magazine*; this periodical was published in the 1920s in Salt Lake City explicitly to “promote patriotism,” and the existence of an informal Salt Lake City-based organization in the 1930s, the *Rei Nei Kwai*, that “often found ways to perform . . . patriotic fervor” (*ibid.*, pp. 63-64).

79 Ibid., p. 69.

80 Ibid., p. 89.

81 Ibid., p. 72.

militant Americanism increasingly reverberated in the public philosophy espoused by national JACL leaders and within the pages of both the *Utah Nippo* and the *Pacific Citizen*.

These two newspapers, along with two Denver-based vernaculars, the *Colorado Times* [*Kakushu Jiji*] and the *Rocky Shimpo* [*Rocky Jiho*], were all “authorized” by the U.S. government to serve as the “free” Japanese American wartime press, and they substantially enlarged their print runs to serve the expanded Nikkei readership within the concentration camp and resettlement populations. Responding to government subsidization (and a fear of being forced by the government to suspend operations), the *Utah Nippo* and *Colorado Times* English-language sections intensified their prewar editorial policy espousing a muscular Americanism, and in so doing they complemented—and, arguably, deepened—the all-English *Pacific Citizen*’s nationalistic message and tone.⁸²

As interpreted by Miyasaki, the content and tenor of both the JACL and the vernacular press led to Japanese Americans feeling as if they had to fit into American society in a nonthreatening way: they had to work harder than whites, maintain low profiles, fully support government actions, personify the idea of “blood assimilation” through risking and even losing their lives on the battlegrounds of America’s wars, and privilege “playing American” over protecting civil liberties and individual rights.⁸³ According to an influential theory postulated by historian Gary Okihiro, this situation represents a quintessential example whereby the mainstream (in this case, the national Japanese American community) was transformed through the ideas and actions occurring on one of its margins (in this instance, the regional Nikkei community of the Intermountain West).⁸⁴

In his study of World War II Nevada, Andrew Russell contends that “few scholars have looked east of California at Japanese-American life, history and wartime experiences outside the camps.”⁸⁵ He suggests that this neglect of the Interior West states, where some 12,000 to 14,000 Japanese Americans (one-tenth of the pre-World War II Nikkei population) lived prior to and just after Pearl Harbor, “represents a large gap in history.” In his opinion, this gap represents a serious problem, not simply because “historical significance of a group is not determined strictly by its size,” but also because information about the general Japanese American experience provides a master “mainstream” narrative to which are bound the stories and struggles of the “marginal” Interior West region. Russell reveals his indebtedness to Okihiro’s work in the observation that if “great lessons for mainstream America have emerged from the study of how Japanese Americans were victimized and how they protested these transgressions of justice during and after the war,” so too can “the images and experiences of Japanese Americans that emerged and evolved beyond the West Coast and the barbed-wire parameters of the camps . . . shed additional light on experiences of the ethnic mainstream, on the attitudes and actions of the larger American mainstream, and, most importantly, on the historic margins and mainstreams of interior states like Nevada.”⁸⁶ Thus, a searching examination of both “the historic margins and mainstreams” is crucial to achieve the broadest and deepest understanding of the Japanese American experience.

82 For a critical assessment of the Japanese American press during World War II, see Takeya Mizuno, “The Civil Libertarian Press, the Japanese American Press, and Japanese American Mass Evacuation” (PhD diss., University of Missouri, 2000). The situation of the *Rocky Shimpo*’s English-language edition, particularly during the January-April 1944 editorship of James Omura, which featured editorial support for the organized Nisei draft resistance at the Heart Mountain concentration camp, was different from these other three papers both in its greater emphasis upon civil liberties and social justice and its independence from and even spirited opposition to the JACL. However, after the U.S. government, encouraged by the JACL leadership, forced Omura out of his editorship and replaced him with JACL stalwart Roy Takeno, the *Rocky Shimpo*’s English-language section was in editorial accord with its three Interior West counterparts.

83 See Miyasaki, “Claiming a Place in the Intermountain West,” pp. 71-72, 86, and 89.

84 See Gary Y. Okihiro, *Margins and Mainstreams: Asians in American History and Culture* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).

85 See Russell, “Friends, Neighbors, Foes and Invaders,” pp. 1-4.

86 *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

In order for scholarship to continue in this area, the present wealth of studies pertaining to the mainstream Japanese American experience before, during, and after World War II must be supplemented by a proliferation of *published*—and thus readily accessible—work centering on the Interior West Nikkei experience. While a good start has been made by the appearance in print of some of the books and articles referred to in this essay,⁸⁷ a next step must be to convert a selected number of currently unpublished book-length manuscripts cited in this essay.⁸⁸ Readers are encouraged to go beyond the select secondary sources cited in this essay to explore some of those not mentioned but nonetheless pertinent and readily obtainable,⁸⁹ along with the abundant (if more ephemeral) virtual

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- 87 Bill Hosokawa, *Colorado's Japanese Americans from 1886 to the Present* (2005); Masakazu Iwata, *Planted in Good Soil: A History of the Issei in United States Agriculture* (1992); Mike Mackey, ed., *Guilty by Association: Essays on Japanese Settlement, Internment, and Relocation in the Rocky Mountain West* (2001); Andrew Russell, "Arizona Divided" (2003); Susie Sato, "Before Pearl Harbor: Early Japanese Settlers in Arizona" (1973); Kumiko Takahara, *Off the Fat of the Land: The Denver Post's Story of the Japanese American Internment during World War II* (2003); Eric Walz, "The Issei Community in Maricopa County: Development and Persistence in the Valley of the Sun, 1900-1940" (1997), "From Kumamoto to Idaho: The Influence of Japanese Immigrants on the Agricultural Development of the Interior West" (2000), and "Japanese Settlement in the Intermountain West, 1882-1946" (2001); and Charles Ynfante, *The Transformation of Arizona into a Modern State: The Contribution of War to the Modernization Process* (2002).
- 88 Ellen Schoening Aiken, "The *United Mine Workers of America* Moves West: Race, Working Class Formation, and the Discourse of Cultural Diversity in the Union Pacific Coal Towns of Southern Wyoming, 1870-1930" (2002); Kara Allison Schubert Carroll, "Coming to Grips with America: The Japanese American Experience in the Southwest" (2009); Barbara Hickman, "Japanese Railroad Workers in Wyoming, 1891-1945" (1989); Kara Miyagishima, "Colorado's Nikkei Pioneers: Japanese Americans in Twentieth Century Colorado" (2007); Joel Tadao Miyasaki, "Claiming a Place in the Intermountain West: Japanese American Ethnic Identity in Utah and Idaho" (2006); Tom I. Romero, Jr., "Of Race and Rights: Legal Culture, Social Change, and the Making of a Multiracial Metropolis, Denver 1940-1975" (2004); Andrew Benjamin Russell, "American Dreams Derailed: Japanese Railroad and Mine Communities of the Interior West" (2003) and "Friends, Neighbors, Foes and Invaders: Conflicting Images and Experiences of Japanese Americans in Wartime Nevada" (1996); Eric Walz, "Japanese Immigration and Community Building in the Interior West, 1812-1945" (1998) and "Masayoshi Fujimoto: Japanese Diarist, Idaho Farmer" (1994); and R. Todd Welker, "Sweet Dreams in Sugar Land: Japanese Farmers, Mexican Farm Workers, and Northern Utah Beet Production" (2002).
- 89 Since books are much easier to access and use than articles, the references here pertain only to books. Listed by state, they represent but a select sampling of those rendered within an interethnic/multicultural context: (Arizona) Brad Melton and Dean Smith, *Arizona Goes to War: The Home Front and the Front Lines during World War II* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003); (Colorado) Adam Schrager, *The Principled Politician: The Ralph Carr Story* (Golden, CO: Fulcrum, 2008); (Idaho) Robert Hayashi, *Haunted by Waters: A Journey through Race and Place in the American West* (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2007); (New Mexico) Richard Chalfen, *Turning Leaves: The Photograph Collections of Two Japanese American Families* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1991) and Everett M. Rogers and Nancy R. Bartlit, *Silent Voices of World War II: When Sons of the Land of Enchantment Met Sons of the Land of the Rising Sun* (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2005); (Oklahoma) Juli Ann Nishimuta, *The Nishimutas: An Oral History of a Japanese and Spanish Family* (New York: iUniverse, Inc., 2006); (Texas) Irwin A. Tang, ed., *Asian Texans: Our Histories and Our Lives* (Austin, TX: The It Works, 2007) and Thomas K. Walls, *The Japanese Texans* (San Antonio: The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, 1987); and (Utah) Leslie G. Kelen and Eileen Stone, *Missing Stories: An Oral History of Ethnic and Minority Groups in Utah* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 2000) and Allan Kent Powell, *Utah Remembers World War II* (Logan, UT: Utah State University Press, 1991).

sources available on the Internet.⁹⁰ Before proceeding down this path of inquiry, you are invited—and strongly encouraged—to read the contents and ponder the meanings of the luminous five essays that are included with this curriculum: each has a unique perspective on the enduring communities created by Japanese Americans in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah.⁹¹

- ⁹⁰ The following state-by-state entries for websites pertaining to the Interior West Japanese American experience are not intended to be comprehensive, but rather to provide information that is particularly relevant, interesting, reliable, useful, and, when possible, interethnic/multicultural: ([Arizona](#)) Naomi Miller, “Racial Identity in Balance,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, January 7, 2004, <http://chronicle.com/article/Racial-Identity-in-Balance/44738/> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Colorado](#)) “History of Longmont,” *ColoradoInfo*, <http://coloradoinfo.com/longmont/history> (accessed August 15, 2009), Takeya Mizuno, “Keep and Use It for the Nation’s War Policy: The Office of Facts and Figures and Its Use of the Japanese-Language Press from Pearl Harbor to Mass Internment,” <http://list.msu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=indo309D&L=aejmc&P=7317> (accessed August 15, 2009), and Takeya Mizuno, “To Suppress or Not to Suppress, That is the Question: Pros and Cons Over the Suppression of the Japanese-Language Press from Pearl Harbor to Mass Evacuation,” <http://list.msu.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A2=indo411a&L=aejmc&P=11852> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Idaho](#)) Laurie Mercier, “Japanese Americans in the Columbia River Basin,” <http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/crbeha/ja/ja.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Nebraska](#)) Twin Cities Development Association, Inc., “Cultural Diversity [in Southern Panhandle of Nebraska],” <http://www.tcdne.org/cultural.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009), and “Sugar Beet Production in Nebraska,” Panhandle Research and Extension Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, http://panhandle.unl.edu/web/panhandlerec/sugarbeet_nebhistory (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Nevada](#)) “Japanese-American Experience,” University of Nevada, Reno, Oral History Program, <http://oralhistory.unr.edu/JapanWW.html> (accessed August 15, 2009), and Joan Whitely, “Bill Tomiyasu (1882-1969),” Stephens Press, <http://www.ist100.com/parti/tomiyasu.html> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Oklahoma](#)) Dianna Everett, “Asians [in Oklahoma],” Oklahoma Historical Society, *Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History & Culture*, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/A/AS006.html> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Wyoming](#)) Western Wyoming Community College, *Wyoming History*, http://www.wvcc.cc.wy.us/wyo_hist/toc.htm (accessed August 15, 2009), and Cynde Georgen, “Subjects of the Mikado: The Rise and Fall of Sheridan County’s Japanese Community, 1900-1930,” <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wyoming/ar-sheridanmikado.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([New Mexico](#)) “Albuquerque Ethnic Cultures Survey,” <http://www.abqarts.org/cultural/survey/index.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009), “Japanese Americans – City of Albuquerque,” <http://www.cabq.gov/humanrights/public-information-and-education/diversity-booklets/asi...> (accessed August 15, 2009), and Brian Minami, “Justice Camp Remembered in Santa Fe,” April 20, 2002, <http://manymountains.org/santa-fe-marker/020420.sfmonument.php> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Texas](#)) “The Japanese Texans,” The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio, <http://www.texascultures.utsa.edu/publications/texasnoneandall/japanese.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009), “Japanese-Texans,” *Texas Almanac*, <http://www.texasalmanac.com/culture/groups/japanese.html> (accessed August 15, 2009), and “Texas Since World War II,” *The Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/TT/npt2.html> (accessed August 15, 2009); ([Utah](#)) Helen Zeese Papanikolas, “Peoples of Utah” (updated by Phil Notarianni), *Utah History to Go*, http://historytogo.utah.gov/people/ethnic_cultures/peoplesofutah.html (accessed August 15, 2009), Raymond S. Uno, “Minority Racial and Ethnic Mix of Utah,” Utah Minority Bar Association, February 2005, http://www.utahbar.org/bars/umba/judge_uno_racial_ethnic_mix.html (accessed August 15, 2009), Helen Z. Papanikolas and Alice Kasai, “Japanese Life in Utah,” *Utah History to Go*, http://historytogo.utah.gov/people/ethnic_cultures/the_peoples_of_utah/japaneselifeinutah (accessed August 15, 2009), Nancy Taniguchi, “Japanese Immigrants in Utah,” *Utah History Encyclopedia*, <http://www.media.utah.edu/UHE/j/JAPANESE.html> (accessed August 15, 2009), Barre Toelken, “Dancing with the Departed: Japanese Obon in the American West,” <http://www.worldandi.com/specialreport/1994/august/Sau588.htm> (accessed August 15, 2009), and Joel Tadao Miyasaki, “Mike Masaoka and the Mormon Process of Americanization,” *The Juvenile Instructor*, March 22, 2008, <http://www.juvenileinstructor.org/mike-masaoka-and-the-mormon-process-of-americanization> (accessed August 15, 2009).
- ⁹¹ The author would like to extend his profound appreciation to Sherri Schottlaender for her remarkable work in copy-editing the present essay. The time, energy, and intelligence she invested in this undertaking far exceeded reasonable expectations. Her efforts not only greatly improved the essay, but also provided the author with an invaluable learning experience.

Timeline for Japanese Americans in the Interior West

(Compiled by Arthur A. Hansen)

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- 1882 • U.S. Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, essentially cutting off Chinese immigration and creating a demand for Japanese labor for the American West's railroad, mining, and agricultural industries
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- 1900 • Issei immigrant population in the Interior West is 5,278
 - 1907–8 • Gentlemen's Agreement between the U.S. and Japan becomes effective and greatly reduces Japanese immigration into the American West
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- 1910 • In the decade between 1910 and 1920, Interior West region experiences an economic boom fueled by railroad construction, coal and hard-rock mining, and agricultural development; also, sugar beet production increases dramatically in this region during this peak period of Japanese immigration to the U.S., as seen in the rise in acreage devoted to this crop in Colorado, Utah, Idaho, and Nebraska from 168,425 to 506,200
 - 1913 • California and Arizona pass anti-Japanese alien land laws, leading to migration of Issei laborers to Interior West states
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- 1921 • Washington, Texas, and Nevada enact anti-Japanese alien land laws, while New Mexico adds an amendment to its constitution that serves a similar function
 - 1922 • The U.S. Supreme Court rules in *Takao Ozawa v. United States* that Japanese aliens are definitely prohibited from becoming naturalized U.S. citizens on the basis of race, and this ruling remains in effect until 1952
 - 1923 • Oregon, Montana, and Idaho pass anti-Japanese alien land laws
 - 1925 • Kansas enacts an anti-Japanese land law
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- 1930 • Population of Japanese immigrant community in Interior West is estimated at 12,862
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- 1940 • U.S. Census reports Japanese American population of Interior West to be 9,624, a numerical loss reflecting the Depression's impact
 - 1941 • Mike Masaru Masaoka, a Mormon from Salt Lake City, Utah, becomes executive secretary of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL); Japan bombs U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawai'i, an act that precipitates America's entry into World War II and marks the beginning of arrests of Nikkei and the imposition of restrictive measures on the Japanese American community
 - 1942 • President Franklin Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, setting the stage for the mass removal of people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast and detention in U.S. Army, Department of Justice, and War Relocation Authority (WRA) concentration camps sited mostly in Interior West states; Fred Isamu Wada departs Oakland, California, with 21 people, en route to Keetley, Utah, to form Keetley Farms, a "voluntary resettler" community in the Interior West; U.S. Army issues Public Proclamation No. 4, which effectively ends the period of "voluntary evacuation" responsible for a substantial migration of West Coast Japanese Americans into the "free zone" states of the Interior West; JACL moves its national headquarters from San Francisco to Salt Lake City; U.S. government authorizes two Nikkei newspapers in Denver, Colorado (the *Colorado Times* and the *Rocky Nippon/Shimpo*) and two in Salt Lake City (the *Utah Nippo* and the *Pacific Citizen*) to serve as the "Free Zone" Japanese American wartime press; emergency meeting of JACL leaders

held in Salt Lake City, which is followed by wave of anti-JACL beatings, riots, and strikes in the WRA camps; WRA issues policy statement on resettlement from its camps, resulting in a greatly enlarged Interior West Nikkei population, including a substantial number of farm workers credited with saving the region's imperiled sugar beet crop

- 1943 • Utah and Wyoming pass anti-Japanese land laws
- 1944 • Native Nebraskan Ben Kuroki, an Army Air Corps sergeant, achieves acclaim as Japanese America's first war hero upon completing 28 bombing missions in the European Theater, and then goes by order of the U.S. War Department on a controversial morale-raising tour of three Interior West WRA camps; two federal trials are held in Cheyenne, Wyoming, for Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee draft resisters and their leaders, and another federal trial, for treason, is held in Denver for three Nisei sisters charged with assisting in the escape of two German prisoners of war that they met when all five were working on a Trinidad, Colorado, farm; U.S. government removes restrictions preventing resettlement of Japanese Americans on the West Coast, which catalyzes a steady migration in the following years from the Interior West to California, Oregon, and Washington
- 1945 • World War II ends
- 1946 • JACL holds its first postwar biennial convention in Denver, at which former Colorado governor Ralph Carr, the keynote speaker, is feted for being the only Interior West governor to welcome West Coast Nikkei to resettle in his respective state after Pearl Harbor
- 1948 • JACL holds its second postwar biennial convention in Salt Lake City

1953 • President Dwight Eisenhower confers the Congressional Medal of Honor on Hiroshi "Hershey" Miyamura of Gallup, New Mexico

1962 • Idaho voters approve a constitutional amendment extending basic American rights to naturalized Asian Americans, ending their exclusion from voting, holding civil office, and serving as jurors, and also terminating Idaho's status as the only U.S. state holding such restrictions

1967 • Salt Lake City razes its *nihonmachi* (Japan Town) and replaces it with the Salt Palace Convention Center

1973 • Sakura Square, a one-block complex of shops, housing, and a remodeled Buddhist church, opens in downtown Denver, near the heart of the Nikkei community's historic *nihonmachi*

1978 • At the JACL biennial convention in Salt Lake City, the organization adopts a resolution calling for redress in the form of individual payments of no less than \$25,000 to compensate Japanese Americans for their World War II mass exclusion and detention by the U.S. government

1988 • President Ronald Reagan signs Civil Liberties Act, which involves a presidential apology to the Japanese American community for its World War II mistreatment, along with a redress payment of \$20,000 for each surviving camp inmate and the establishment of a civil liberties public education fund

2006 • New Mexico repeals its anti-Asian alien land law

2008 • Bryan Clay, a Texan of mixed African American and Japanese American heritage,

wins the gold medal for the decathlon held in Beijing, China, and is declared “the world’s best athlete”; the Japanese American National Museum ‘s project *Enduring Communities: Japanese Americans in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah*, as a highlight to its three-year existence, stages a national conference in Denver, “Whose America? Who’s American? Diversity, Civil Liberties, and Social Justice”

Japanese Americans in Utah

Nancy J. Taniguchi

From earliest human habitation, the area now called Utah has exhibited ethnic diversity. The prehistoric-era Fremont and Anasazi people built villages and cultivated crops. Goshuite, Paiute, Navajo (Dine'), Shoshone, and Ute cultures replaced them—the last of whom gave its name to the state. The arrival of subsequent groups of people squeezed Native Americans to marginal lands where they remain today.

In the 1700s the Spanish (and then Mexicans) forged the Old Spanish Trail, which bisects Utah. While they brought the gift of horses, they also enslaved native people and encouraged an inter-Indian slave trade. In the nineteenth century, other people of European (and a few African) descent from the eastern United States sought religious sanctuary in Utah. In 1847 the vanguard of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS, also called Mormons) arrived and established a theocracy that would be transformed into the state's dominant force in all aspects of life. To be non-Mormon in Utah is to be a minority. Hence, the Japanese in Utah—definite latecomers—were originally both a racial and a religious exception to the rule.

Prior to Japanese arrival, other racial and ethnic groups, usually recruited as contract labor, came to Utah in the late nineteenth century. They also belonged to minority religions—Taoist or Confucian, Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish, primarily—and included Chinese, Finns, Italians, Irish, Yugoslavs, and later, Greeks and Syro-Lebanese, among others.

Initially, Utahns saw Japanese either as exotic or expendable. Although representatives of the newly westernized Meiji government received a gracious reception when they visited in 1872, they made no lasting impact. In the 1880s Japanese contract labor arrived, as well as female prostitutes and men to work on railroad gangs. They evidently didn't stay because an 1890 census of pre-statehood Utah reported only

five Japanese in Utah (Utah became a state in 1896). Numbers rose to 417 in 1900, 2,110 in 1910, and a pre-World War II high of 2,936 in 1920. (For comparison, the 2005 total of all Asians in the state was approximately 48,000, including more than 10,000 people of Japanese descent.)

Labor agents, themselves Japanese immigrants, recruited many of the workers who came to Utah in the early twentieth century. For example, in 1902 Edward Daigoro Hashimoto established a labor agency in Salt Lake City; his agency provided strikebreaking miners during the great Carbon County coal strike of 1903–04. Competing contractor Kyutaro Abiko opened an Ogden office in 1905 to provide Utah's sugar beet harvesters with workers. U.S.–Japanese agreements of 1907–08, which prevented laborers from leaving Japan for the U.S. mainland, forced Abiko to recruit workers from Hawai'i, including some for the Western Pacific Railroad in 1906. Another labor agent, Hayao Oda, procured workers for Utah's Bingham Canyon copper mine after 1909. Some Japanese immigrants also secured jobs as “houseboys” for Salt Lake City's society matrons, replacing servant girls. Ultimately Hashimoto became Utah's leading Japanese labor contractor: his agency supplied sugar beet harvesters, established the Clearfield Canning Company, opened a sugar beet center in Delta, imported Japanese food and supplies, provided banking services, and helped his fellow Japanese immigrants with government forms and legal problems.

A growing number of economically independent Japanese developed new businesses and cultural institutions. For example, several Japanese-run newspapers served to knit the community together, beginning in 1907 when the Japanese-language *Rocky Mountain Times* began publishing. Seven years later the Terazawa family began publishing the rival *Utah Nippo*, a newspaper still in existence today. Entrepreneurs opened fish markets, restaurants, and variety stores that provided specialized goods in the Japanese

enclaves of Ogden, Salt Lake City, and Helper. Reflecting a traditional Japanese respect for farmers, Utah's Japanese agricultural enterprises raised specialty crops, including nationally acclaimed celeries and strawberries. The preservation of Japanese cultural traditions was also very important: touring Kabuki troupes would perform traditional Japanese drama in the communities, while the first school in Salt Lake City to teach children Japanese language and culture opened in 1919; other communities soon opened their own schools.

The Japanese also built churches. In 1912 a memorial service conducted by a Buddhist priest from San Francisco prompted the formation of the Intermountain Buddhist Church. The church's first minister, the Reverend Kenryo Kuwabara, served first in Ogden and later at the Salt Lake Buddhist Church. In 1918 both churches established a Fujinkai, a women's organization originally created to help young Japanese brides adapt to American life. That same year, Japanese Christians founded the Japanese Church of Christ in Salt Lake City.

During the 1920s increased racism against them—including prohibitive legislation—helped to foster Japanese community cohesion and self-help. In 1922 the United States Congress passed the Cable Act, which deprived Nisei (American-born Japanese) women of citizenship if they married Issei (immigrant men), a law abolished in 1931, while the Immigration Act of 1924 prohibited the immigration of all Japanese. When local schools started excluding Nisei children from extracurricular activities, concerned parents formed a Young Buddhist Association (YBA) at the Salt Lake Buddhist Church in 1923. Adult Japanese also organized a variety of fraternal and benevolent societies. For example, the Carbon County Kyo Ai Kai, still in existence today, established its own segregated cemetery and provided pensions in the event of a disabling coal-mining accident. Salt Lake's Hiroshima Kenjinkai, a group whose members all came from a

particular area (Hiroshima) in Japan, provided similar services, as did organizations in Segoe, Eureka, Bingham, Elberta, and Payson.

Conditions continued to worsen for Utah's Japanese American as the twentieth century progressed. During the Great Depression as jobs for nonwhites disappeared, more than a thousand Japanese left Utah, among them LDS convert Mike Masaoka, who moved to San Francisco to accept the position of national secretary and field director of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL). As the organization's main spokesperson, he brought national awareness to the Japanese American community beyond the West Coast; his chief responsibility became trying to head off a growing national hysteria as Japan attacked China in 1937. After Japanese warplanes bombed Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the U.S. joined World War II, and Utah's Japanese Americans began immediately to face increased prejudice, including vandalism of their cemeteries, an unsuccessful confinement attempt by Utah's legislature, and an alien land law that restricted Issei to only one-year leases on land.

Three months later the federal government ignored the constitutional rights of its citizens of Japanese descent in an act later blamed on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership": on February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which forced the exclusion of all Japanese Americans from the entire state of California, western Oregon and Washington, and southern Arizona and mandated their imprisonment in concentration camps in the interior. Voluntary exclusion from the West Coast remained open until March 30, 1942, which allowed Oakland resident Fred Isamu Wada (whose wife Masako was from Ogden) enough time to negotiate a lease of almost 4,000 acres near Keetley in Wasatch County; soon 90 relocated Japanese Americans were growing food there for the war effort. Despite anti-Japanese protests by Emery County residents,

another group of 40 families leased 1,500 acres to raise sugar beets near Green River.

While some businesses supported their Japanese American employees; others were quickly fired. Radios, cameras, and hunting rifles were confiscated from some citizens by municipal authorities. Prejudice existed despite the efforts of Senator Elbert D. Thomas, formerly a Mormon missionary in Japan and a mentor to Mike Masaoka, who worked to mitigate the effects of wartime hysteria.

Japanese Americans began to be forcibly moved to Utah from other states. When voluntary exclusion ended, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) detained approximately 8,000 evacuees from the San Francisco Bay area at Topaz, just outside Delta. Three other WRA locations utilized old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) centers: Antelope Springs, used as a Topaz recreation center; Dalton Wells near Moab, utilized as a temporary isolation center for “troublemakers”; and Dog Valley, south of Emery, where inmates mined coal for Topaz from the nearby mine. Due to the increased numbers of Japanese in the state, the circulation of the long-lived *Utah Nippo* rose from 600 per issue to about 10,000 during the war years.

The influx of Japanese Americans also brought new institutions to Utah. The incarcerated Topaz population included the Reverend Kenryo Kumata, head of the Buddhist Churches of America, who directed his church from Utah despite government restrictions; released from Topaz in 1943, he worked with the Ogden Buddhist Church and founded branches at Honeyville, Deweyville, Garland, and Corinne before the church’s offices were returned to San Francisco in 1945. The JACL’s headquarters were also relocated from San Francisco to Utah during the war, as was its newspaper, the *Pacific Citizen*. In 1943 the organization’s leaders, which included Shigeki “Shake” Ushio, set up the National JACL Credit Union (which is still headquartered in Salt Lake City today). Ushio, who initially worked to assist Japanese Americans whose

assets were frozen or restricted when the war began, continued to serve as chairman of the credit union’s board for more than thirty years; the credit union also provided financial assistance to those leaving detention camps, including members of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

The war’s end brought many changes to the state as Utah continued to adapt to its Japanese Americans and vice versa, including an increased Japanese American population: the 1950 census counted 1,183 ethnic Japanese in Utah. In 1947 the Utah legislature repealed the state’s Alien Land Law, which allowed Issei to buy land. That same year, Utah’s Wataru “Wat” Misaka was picked first in the first round of the initial National Basketball Association (NBA) draft by the New York Knicks, breaking the professional color barrier in basketball as Jackie Robinson had in baseball. As wider societal changes continued to occur, Mike Masaoka was spearheading an intensive lobbying effort for redress. These efforts resulted in the 1948 Evacuation Indemnity Claims Act (unfortunately, only \$38 million of an estimated \$400 million loss were paid out). During the war, Alice Kasai—the wife of detained leader Henry Y. Kasai—carried on her husband’s work in establishing a Utah JACL. When the war ended and Henry returned, the two of them helped form the Salt Lake Chapter of the JACL (Utah now has three chapters). The Kasais also became active in the World Peace Study Mission, and Alice helped to create the Japanese Peace Garden in Jordan Park in 1949. Mary and Charlie Kawakami, driven out of Spring Canyon (a Carbon County mining camp) during the war, relocated to Provo, where Mary cut hair during the week to support her disabled husband and family; on weekends she took the bus to Los Angeles to study beauty care from industry professionals, leading to her recognition in 1954 as “One of the World’s Ten Best” in Hollywood. In addition, she founded a beauty college in Provo which operated until 1999.

The national JACL has brought many Utahns recognition. In 1950 Mike Masaoka became the very first “J.A. of the Biennium,” the organization’s highest honor for Japanese Americans who have succeeded in their chosen field. The most recent Utahn so honored, National JACL Credit Union Chairman “Shake” Ushio, won the award in 1998; Henry Y. Kasai had received the award in 1964, and in 1974 Judge Raymond Uno, who had broken the color barrier in the Utah court system, was given the honor. Judge Uno became Utah’s first minority to hold a number of increasingly important legal positions, and in 1985 he was elected to Utah’s Third Judicial District court, becoming the court’s first minority judge. Judge Uno worked tirelessly to encourage all minorities to study the law, and in 2005 he was among the first 50 people honored by the Utah Minority Bar Association, a group that includes African Americans, Asians,

Hispanics, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders. A year later, Utah native and LDS Church member S. Floyd Mori became the interim director of the national JACL after long service in the Mount Olympus chapter and as national president (2000–04) and director of public policy in Washington D.C. since 2005.

Utah’s appreciation of Japanese culture in recent years has been somewhat spotty. Salt Lake City and Japan’s Matsumoto City have been sister cities since 1958, but in 1967 city officials destroyed all of Salt Lake City’s so-called Japan Town (except for the Japanese Church of Christ and the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple) to make way for the Salt Palace Convention Center. But advances and adaptations will undoubtedly continue: Utah’s minority population now exceeds 15 percent, and the state’s citizens of Japanese descent exemplify the positive potential of a challenging history.

Timeline for Japanese Americans in Utah

(Compiled by Nancy J. Taniguchi)

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- 1776 • Old Spanish Trail is established, linking Santa Fe, New Mexico and Los Angeles, California via Colorado, Utah, Arizona and Nevada
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- 1847 • First members of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS)(also known as Mormons) arrive
-
- 1872 • Japanese Meiji government officials visit Utah territory
-
- 1880s • First Japanese contract laborers arrive
-
- 1890 • Utah census counts five Japanese
 - 1896 • Utah gains statehood
-
- 1900 • Utah census counts 417 Japanese
 - 1902–06 • Several Japanese labor agents open firms in Salt Lake City
 - 1907 • *Rocky Mountain Times*, a Japanese-language newspaper, begins publishing
 - 1907 • So-called Gentlemen’s Agreement forbids emigration of Japanese laborers from Japan
 - 1908 • Root-Takahira Agreement formalizes restrictions of Gentlemen’s Agreement, allowing only diplomats, merchants, and students to leave Japan for the United States (not including Hawaii)
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- 1910 • Utah census counts 2,110 Japanese
 - 1912 • Intermountain Buddhist Church is formed
 - 1914 • Terazawa family establishes *Utah Nippo* newspaper
 - 1919 • First Japanese school in Salt Lake City is established
 - 1918 • Fujinkai (women’s organization) formed by combined Salt Lake and Ogden Buddhist churches
-
- 1920 • Utah census counts 2,936 Japanese
 - 1922 • Cable Act states that Nisei women who marry Issei men will lose their U.S. citizenship; this law was repealed in 1931
 - 1923 • Young Buddhist Association (YBA) is established for Japanese American children at Salt Lake City Buddhist Church
 - 1924 • Congress passes the Johnson-Reed Act (Immigration Act of 1924)
-
- 1941 • Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor
 - Utah legislature passes an alien land law, which prohibited land purchases, instead restricting Issei to yearly leases; the legislation was repealed in 1947
 - 1942 • U.S. War Relocation Authority (WRA) imprisons Japanese Americans in Utah at camps in Topaz, Dalton Wells, and Dog Valley
 - Buddhist Church of America directed from Topaz
 - Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) headquarters are moved to Utah, including their newspaper, *Pacific Citizen*
 - 1943 • JACL opens National JACL Credit Union in Salt Lake City
 - 1947 • Wataru “Wat” Misaka breaks National Basketball Association (NBA) color barrier
 - 1948 • Congress passes Evacuation Indemnity Claims Act
 - 1949 • Establishment of Japanese Peace Garden in Jordan
-
- 1950 • Utah census counts 1,183 ethnic Japanese
 - 1954 • Provo beauty salon owner Mary Kawakami is selected as “One of World’s Ten Best” in Hollywood
 - 1958 • Salt Lake City and Japan’s Matsumoto City become Sister Cities

- 1967 • Salt Lake City officials raze the area informally known as Japan Town in order to build Salt Palace Convention Center

- 1985 • Judge Raymond Uno becomes first minority to sit on Utah's Third Judicial District court
- 1988 • President Ronald Reagan signs Civil Liberties Act, in which the U.S. formally apologizes for its treatment of Japanese Americans and grants each surviving World War II inmate \$20,000
- 1989 • Congress appropriates funds for 1988 Civil Liberties Act and payments begin

- 2005 • Utah census counts approximately 48,000 Asians, including more than 10,000 of Japanese descent

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—Studs Terkel, Forward to *This I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Remarkable Men and Women*, 2006

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