

Nikkeijin Illinois

exhibit text

Introduction

This exhibit introduces the Japanese American historical experience through the lens of students, faculty, and staff of this university. These stories reflect the perseverance of the pioneering Issei (first generation immigrants from Japan) and their Nisei children (born in the United States) in the face of twentieth-century racism.

On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 stripped 110,000 Japanese Americans of their constitutional rights and forcibly removed them from their homes, businesses, and communities on the West Coast. Most would spend the next few years in 10 relocation centers. By the time the final camp closed in March 1946, the number of Japanese Americans incarcerated totaled around 125,000.

In the next rooms, objects depicting American racism and photographs from the exhibit American Peril contextualize modern anti-Asian sentiment. With the current rise in hate crimes, displaying the Japanese American experience reminds us of the importance of sharing these stories of everyday life and heroism, sacrifice and struggle, fortitude and endurance.

Timeline 1

Definitions

Issei: First-generation immigrants from Japan

Nisei: Second generation (born outside Japan)

Sansei: Third generation

Yonsei: Fourth generation

Gosei: Fifth generation

1867–1931

1867 The University of Illinois is founded.

1868 The first Japanese immigrants, known as the Gannenmono, arrive in Hawaii.

1870 The Naturalization Act revokes citizenship of naturalized Chinese citizens.

1882 The Chinese Exclusion Act ends immigration of Chinese laborers.

1900–1908 Anti-Japanese agitation rises as Japanese immigration to the US mainland increases.

1906 The San Francisco Board of Education segregates Japanese students.

1908 The Gentleman's Agreement halts immigration of Japanese male laborers but allows for wives and families to join workers already living in the US.

1913 The California Alien Land Law prohibits all aliens ineligible for citizenship from owning land.

1920 The ban on land ownership expands to cover Nisei and corporations controlled by Asian immigrants.

1924 The Johnson-Reed Act halts all Japanese immigration into the US.

Toichi Domoto

b. 1902 December 11 (Oakland, California)

d. 2001 May 6 (Hayward, California)

Nisei

UIUC

1923–1926 BS in floriculture

Cosmopolitan Club, president

WWII History

A day before entering the Merced Assembly Center, Toichi and Alice Domoto's daughter Marilyn was born. The family was then sent to Amache in Granada, Colorado. In 1943, Toichi left for work at Schramm's Nursery in Crystal Lake, Illinois, and his wife and daughter joined him a few weeks later.

Biography: Nurturing Nature

One of California's foremost horticulturists, Toichi Domoto was elected president of the California Horticultural Society in 1957 and received the Pacific Coast Nurseryman Award from the California Association of Nurserymen in 1970.

Toichi is the eldest son of Kanetaro and Teru Domoto. Kanetaro immigrated to the US in 1882, and along with Motonoshin "Henry" Domoto founded the Domoto Brothers Nursery, the largest nursery in Oakland, California.

Toichi arrived at UIUC in 1923 to attend one of the leading floriculture programs in the nation. Toichi enjoyed collegiate life and participated in many social events, including the YMCA's 1923 annual international mixer titled "As Broadening as Travel," spoke

about dwarf trees at a Burrill Botany club meeting, and served as president of the Cosmopolitan Club. In a letter to the Daily Illini, he provided a suggestion for more effective cheering at the upcoming homecoming game.

Graduating with the distinction of High Scholarship, Toichi returned to work at the nursery. He soon purchased 27 acres in Hayward, California to build his own nursery, becoming a specialist in camellias. After the WWII incarceration experience, Toichi returned to Hayward in 1946, and resumed operations with support from other professional colleagues whom he had earlier supported, in spite of continuing distrust of Japanese Americans.

History Note: Alien Land Laws

The Domoto family purchased land for their nursery in 1902, prior to California's passage of the Alien Land Law of 1913. The law and others like it in Oregon and Washington targeted Issei by prohibiting "aliens ineligible for citizenship" from owning agricultural land.

Many Issei found ways around the law by purchasing land through white intermediaries, in the names of their Nisei children (American citizens by birth), or by creating corporations to buy land on their behalf. California amended the law in 1920 to close some of these loopholes, banning "ineligible aliens" from owning stock in companies that bought agricultural land.

During and immediately after WWII, several more states passed alien land laws for the first time to discourage the permanent resettlement of Japanese Americans. It wasn't until 1952 that the Supreme Court declared alien land laws unconstitutional, ruling that they violated the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause.

Seichi Bud Konzo

b. 1905 August 2 (Tacoma, Washington)

d. 1992 November 15 (Urbana, Illinois)

Nisei

UIUC

1929 MS in engineering

1929–37 research assistant and associate

1937–47 research faculty

1947 teaching professor

1961 associate head of Mechanical Engineering

1930 S. Konzo listed as the Midwest Representative Japanese Students' Christian Association in North America

Quote:

“The class of yours has a special place in my memories because of the wonderful spirit of the returning veterans—no class before or since has ever appeared on the campus.”

July 14, 1971 letter to former student Dave Levinson (post-WWII Graduate Class)

WWII History

Employed outside of the West Coast military exclusion zone, Seichi Konzo maintained his station at UIUC as a research professor and contributed to the war effort as a fuels consultant. While he and his wife and daughter resided in Champaign, his mother and sister first reported to Stockton Assembly Center and were incarcerated at Rohwer 1942 to 1945.

Biography: Engineering the Home

Internationally recognized as a pioneer in home air conditioning and heating, Seichi “Bud” Konzo’s professional and academic career at UIUC in research, teaching, administration, and consulting in mechanical engineering spanned over 50 years.

After completing his BS in mechanical engineering from the University of Washington in 1927, he headed to UIUC for graduate work. He earned an MSME in 1929 continued his work at the Engineering Experimental Station.

He was active in the Japanese Students’ Christian Association, serving as Midwest Representative in North America in 1930, attended the first Japanese American Citizens League National Convention in Seattle in August 1930, and was listed as General Secretary of the Japanese Club at UIUC in 1931. In 1932, Seichi married Seattle native Kimi Furuya, a Fine Arts major he met in college. They lived in the first air-conditioned house in North America, an engineering research residence on Stoughton Street. They raised two daughters Margaret and Janice.

Record of Seichi addressing his Japanese American identity on campus includes speaking on discrimination at the 1959 International Welcome Weekend and a Dial Club lecture titled “Out of Two Cultures.” Seichi made his first trip to his “mother’s homeland” in 1971.

Seichi was a life member and Fellow of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) and received multiple awards for teaching and service. He was inducted in the ASHRAE Hall of Fame for his life-long service to and research in the field in 2018.

History Note:

Japanese American Citizens League (JACL)

Founded in 1929, the JACL is the oldest and largest Asian American civil rights organization, but it has a controversial history. During WWII, the JACL collaborated with the US government and urged compliance with removal orders while at the same time working to identify any “disloyal” Issei. In 1946, the board formally condemned all those who had protested their wartime treatment.

However, they also assisted other Nikkei with the process of relocation, and after the war, they lobbied to overturn racial restrictions on marriage, land ownership, and naturalization. In 2002, the JACL publicly apologized for collaborating with the government’s unconstitutional wartime policies and for marginalizing resisters.

Timeline 2

1931–1946

Immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, FBI agents arrested 5,500 Japanese nationals, mostly male Issei community leaders. The Immigration and Naturalization Service held detainees from anywhere between a few weeks to several months until they could be transferred to larger internment camps run by the Department of Justice.

1931 Japan invades Manchuria.

1939 World War II begins when Germany invades Poland, followed by France and Britain declaring war on Germany.

1941 Dec 7 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, resulting in over 3,500 American casualties. The US enters WWII.

1942 Feb 19 President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, allowing authorities to remove civilians, including American citizens, without due process within military zones. It also authorized the construction of Assembly Centers to incarcerate those detained.

1942 March The forced removal of Japanese Americans from the West Coast begins.

1942 May Temporary confinement centers, located mostly on fairgrounds and racetracks, house detainees while more permanent facilities are constructed.

1942 Oct Detainees are relocated to 10 concentration camps, where most will remain until the camps close in 1946.

1943 Feb 1 President Roosevelt activates the 442nd Regimental Combat Team made up almost entirely of Japanese Americans.

Japanese American Concentration Camps

Tule Lake War Relocation Center, California

May 27, 1942–March 20, 1946

peak population: 18,789

Manzanar War Relocation Center, California

June 1, 1942–November 21, 1945

peak population: 10,046

Poston War Relocation Center, Arizona

June 2, 1942–November 28, 1945

peak population: 17,814

Gila River War Relocation Center, Arizona

July 20, 1942–November 16, 1945

peak population: 13,348

Minidoka War Relocation Center, Idaho

August 10, 1942–October 28, 1945

peak population: 9,397 (1945)

Heart Mountain War Relocation Center, Wyoming

August 12, 1942–November 10, 1945

peak population: 10,767

Granada War Relocation Center, Colorado (also called Amache)

August 27, 1942–October 15, 1945
peak population: 7,318

Topaz War Relocation Center, Utah
September 11, 1942–October 31, 1945
peak population: 8,130

Rohwer War Relocation Center, Arkansas
September 18, 1942–November 30, 1945
peak population: 8,475

Jerome War Relocation Center, Arkansas
October 6, 1942–June 30, 1944
peak population: 8,497

Hideo Sasaki

b. 1919 November 25 (Reedley, California)

d. 2000 August 30 (Walnut Creek, California)

Nisei

UIUC

1944 Entered UIUC from Central YMCA College in Chicago.

1946 BFA in landscape architecture with highest honors

1948–50 instructor, landscape architecture

1952–53 associate professor, landscape architecture

WWII History

Hideo entered Poston War Relocation Center in Arizona with his parents and siblings on August 6, 1942. He is listed departing for Chicago with Indefinite Leave—Community Invitation on April 2, 1944. He worked for a photography studio and attend Central YMCA College before transferring to UIUC. The November 1944 Faculty and Student Directory lists the camp as his home address.

Biography: Shaping the Landscape

An internationally acclaimed landscape architect, Hideo Sasaki promoted collaboration among people from different fields; the integration of land, buildings, and the larger environment; and the concept of oasis, a designed landscape where the human spirit could be refreshed, especially in the city. He was the first recipient of the American Society of Landscape Architects Medal in 1971.

Hideo's immigrant parents Kaiichiro and Kiyome Sasaki were farmers in Reedley, California. WWII abruptly ended his time as a student in landscape architecture at University of California Berkeley. He eventually completed his BFA in landscape

architecture with highest honors at UIUC and then earned an MLA (Master of Landscape Architecture) at Harvard. Hideo returned to UIUC as an instructor and assistant professor in landscape architecture 1948–1950 and 1952–1953. He married Kisa Noguchi in 1952, and they raised two daughters.

Hideo established his own firm that became Sasaki Associates Inc. in Watertown, Massachusetts, in 1953, serving as president and chairman until 1980. He also served as chair of Landscape Architecture at Harvard 1958–1968. Hideo received 3 honorary doctorates, the first from UIUC in 1982. Landscape Architecture established the annual Sasaki Lecture series in 1983.

For 30 years, Sasaki Associates contributed to the UIUC landscape and master plans, providing guidance and design services for a master tree planting plan and numerous building projects including the Education Building, Fine Arts Building, multiple residence halls, Orchard Downs Housing, the Undergraduate Library Expansion, Psychology Building, and Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

History Note: Seeing Campus

Legacies of Japanese Americans on our campus are hidden in plain view. *An Illini Place— Building the University of Illinois Campus* (2017, Illinois Press) attributes Hideo Sasaki for landscaping in mid-century dorms in Champaign, benches on the Quad, and mounds at the southwest corner of the Fine and Applied Arts Building. His signature is also found in the “long sweep of lawn, the massing of trees in large groups, the strong lines created by hedges and allees of trees” which define the campus, according to one administrator.

Campus has held many other sites and structures associated with Japanese Americans. Seichi Konzo worked and lived in Research Residence No. 1 at 1108 West Stoughton in Urbana, the first air-conditioned house in North America. The original Japan House (902 West California), the Wescoga residence (the Wesley Co-op for Gals at 909 West Illinois), and the Cosmopolitan Club (605 East Daniels) no longer stand, but the stories of the students and staff live on.

Henry Aihara

Henry Kiyoyasu Aihara

b. 1926 April 7 (Garden Grove, California)

d. 2014 September 14 (Garden Grove, California)

1944–1945, Student at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Nisei

UIUC

October 1944 entered UIUC as a freshman

March 1945 placed first in broad jump, Illinois wins Big Ten Western Conference

June 1945 placed first in broad jump NCAA Championship

December 1945 left Illinois for military service

WWII History

During WWII, Henry Aihara's family was ripped apart by American federal policy. He and his mother and some older siblings directly entered Poston Incarceration Center; his father had been held separately at the Santa Fe Detention Facility administered by INS; and one of his brothers enlisted in the army. Henry left Poston with Indefinite Leave for employment in Winnetka, Illinois, in 1943. His father reunited with family members at Poston in 1944.

Biography: On Track

Henry Kiyoyasu Aihara was born April 7, 1926 into a Garden Grove, California, farming family headed by Issei parents. His father was a community leader, serving as President of the Orange County Japanese Association and founding member of Daishi Kyokai, the Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles.

After a year of incarceration in Arizona, Henry was cleared to leave for employment in Illinois. He boarded with and worked for a family while earning his diploma at New Trier Township High School, where he excelled as a track athlete. His application to UIUC was initially denied by the registrar's office due to his grades being below the top quarter of his high school class. Letters of support describe him as an exceptional athlete with an older brother serving in the army medical corps. The Board of Trustees authorized an exception, and Henry was admitted in October 1944.

Henry's brief experience at UIUC was noted in the press. His first-place broad jump image appeared in newspapers when the Illini won the Big Ten Western Conference in 1945. When the Illini placed second in the 1945 NCAA championship, the *Poston Chronicle* quoted the *Chicago Tribune*, exclaiming "Henry Aihara's victory in the broad jump the most spectacular performance." He was undefeated in broad jump in the 1946 season.

Henry joined the army in December 1945. He transferred to the University of Southern California after his service and was part of USC and US national teams. He married singer and actress Karie Shindo, who appears in the 1949 Humphrey Bogart film *Tokyo Joe*. They raised two children.

History Note: National Japanese American Student Relocation Council (NJASRC)

Forced to withdraw from their West Coast schools, many Nisei high school and college students were determined to continue their education. Established three months after forced removals began, the NJASRC provided a government-approved route to student

resettlement from the incarceration camps to inland and East Coast colleges.

The process was almost hopelessly complex. Some schools refused to issue the transcripts of their former Japanese American students. Applicants had to prove they could afford college without any financial aid and needed the testimony of a public official in the college community that they would “fit in.” Universities faced their own problems. Until 1944, schools could not accept Nisei students if they were conducting research funded by the Department of Defense. Others had to overcome local anti-Japanese sentiment.

Despite these dizzying obstacles, the NJASRC facilitated the continuing education of more than 4,000 students at over 600 institutions.

Timeline 3

1946–2000

Japanese Americans begin the process of resettlement largely on their own, receiving only \$25 and a one-way train ticket from the US government. Because anti-Japanese sentiment was still rampant, many feared leaving camp and rejoining society.

1946 The 10 concentration camps run by the War Relocation Authority close.

1952 The McCarran-Walter Act reestablishes Japanese immigration to the US and allows Issei to become citizens for the first time.

1970 The redress movement begins with Japanese American communities demanding apology and recognition of wrongdoings from the federal government.

1981 The Commission for Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) holds public legislative hearings as part of its investigation into the incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII.

1988 Aug 10 The Civil Liberties Act provides individual payments of \$20,000 to each surviving internee and a \$1.25 billion education fund.

1990 The first redress payments are made, accompanied by a letter of apology signed by President George H. W. Bush.

David T. Katagiri

b. 1925 April 1 (Kent, Washington)

d. 2015 March 5 (La Jolla, California)

Nisei

UIUC

1948–1951 BS in mechanical engineering

WWII History

David's family was incarcerated at Tule Lake. After turning 18, David filed a draft registration card before departing with his family to work on a chicken farm in Arlington Heights, Illinois. He was quickly drafted and stationed in Europe. Assigned with a communications group in the second battalion of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team., David experienced combat in Italy. He was wounded by shrapnel in April 1945 and finished his service processing German prisoners.

Biography: Purple Heart Battalion

A purple heart veteran of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, David T. Katagiri entered UIUC on the GI bill in February 1948. After earning his BS in mechanical engineering at UIUC (where Professor Seichi Konzo had shifted from research to teaching), David enjoyed a 35-year career with the Boeing Company.

Born to immigrant parents Chuzo and Teiko, David grew up on a dairy farm in Kent, Washington. From an early age, he built and flew model airplanes. He brought an Ohlsson 60 model airplane engine with him when incarcerated in Tule Lake.

In 1950, David married his first wife Yukiko. They raised two sons, and one followed his father's academic career by attending UIUC to earn a degree in engineering.

In November 2011 David proudly attended the Congressional Gold Medal award ceremony honoring Japanese American veterans.

History Note: 100th Infantry Battalion / 442nd Regimental Combat Team

Japanese American soldiers were segregated into the 100th Infantry Battalion (mainly draftees from Hawaii's National Guard), and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (a combination of Hawaiians and mainlanders, including volunteers from the camps). The 100th saw seven months of heavy combat in Italy before becoming officially attached to the 442nd.

Under the motto "Go For Broke," the soldiers fought unceasingly and were rarely allowed time to recover. In October 1944, they were tasked with rescuing over 200 soldiers known as the Lost Battalion who were trapped behind Nazi lines in France. They succeeded after six days of brutal fighting and over 800 casualties and went on to play a crucial role in pushing German forces out of Italy.

Today, this team remains America's most decorated military unit for its size and length of service. Their "demonstration in blood" helped change popular opinion back home about the loyalty of Japanese Americans.

Lillian Chiyeko Kimura

b. 1929 April 7 (Glendale, California)

d. 2020 April 23 (Albany, New York)

Nisei

UIUC

1947–1951 BA in liberal arts and science

1954 MSW

1951 senior announcements committee

1951 Women's Athletic Association

1951 Wescoga social chair

WWII History

Lillian Kimura's family reported to the Manzanar Assembly Center, before it was re-designated as a Relocation Center on June 1, 1942. Thirteen-year-old Lillian spent more than 3 years incarcerated at Manzanar before she, along with her parents and younger sister, departed for Chicago in August 1945.

Biography: Social Justice Advocate

Lillian Kimura, daughter of Issei immigrants, grew up in Glendale, California. After incarceration at Manzanar, Lillian relocated to Chicago with her family in August 1945. She graduated from Hyde Park High School and entered UIUC as an undergraduate in September 1947.

Lillian enjoyed collegiate life at UIUC, as a Women's Athletic Association sports manager for badminton and social chair for a housing unit in 1950. She received a scholarship from the Campus Chest and the class of 1950. Lillian served on the senior

announcements committee for the class of 1951, which collected funds and established several scholarships.

After receiving her MSW (Master of Social Work) in 1954, Lillian began her long career with the YWCA, beginning in Chicago and rising to Associate Executive Director for the National YWCA in New York. She testified at the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians in Chicago, September 1981. Her testimony concludes:

“Clearly, the evacuation and the detention of 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were motivated for racist reasons. Clearly, this violation of human and civil liberties must not happen again. The YWCA supports the efforts being made by Japanese Americans for redress. We urge the Commission to recommend appropriate remedies to prevent the recurrence of such events.”

A hallmark of Lillian Kimura’s outstanding career was her continual pursuit of social justice and advocacy for civil rights. Lillian was the first woman to be elected president of the Japanese American Citizens League in 1992 and advocated for women’s and gay rights throughout her term.

History Note: Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC)

In the decades after the war, camp survivors moved forward as best they could. Survivors often chose not to share their experiences with their children. As part of a rising tide of protest movements in the 1960s and 1970s, Japanese American activists pushed for a federal response to the injustices of their forced removal and incarceration.

Led by four Nikkei politicians, Congress established the CWRIC in

1980 to review the constitutionality of the incarceration, as well as its long-term repercussions. The committee invited incarcerated individuals to testify about their experiences.

These national hearings were the first time many survivors had ever spoken about what they endured in the camps. Audience members wept, cheered, and shouted down government officials who tried to defend the incarceration. The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 granted survivors a public apology, individual reparations of \$20,000, and the establishment of a public education fund.

Ken Gunji

b. 1934 May 25 (Los Angeles, California)

d. 2017 September 30 (Champaign, Illinois)

Nisei / Kibei

UIUC

1955–1959 BS in management

1962 consultant and administrator, Housing Division

1963 assistant programming director, Illini Union

1969 MA in recreation and parks management

WWII History

In April 1941, Hajime and Umeyo Gunji left California to introduce their son Ken to relatives in Japan. Stranded in wartime Japan, Ken was prohibited from speaking English while receiving an ultra-nationalistic education. Travelling south in late August 1945 to visit relatives, Ken witnessed the aftermath of Hiroshima's destruction. The Gunjis returned to the US in 1949.

Biography: A Life of Service

Ken Gunji lived in service to community and country throughout his career advising students at UIUC and Parkland College, alongside 25 years with the National Guard, retiring of the rank lieutenant colonel in 1987. Core to this purpose was Ken's enduring journey with the Boy Scouts, becoming the first Japanese American Eagle Scout of the Chicago Council. Ken joined Rotary International in 1977, serving as president of Champaign Rotary in 1985–86.

Ken's fortitude stems from his father Hajime Gunji, first in his family to leave home to attend university in Tokyo. Supporting himself working for Japanese foreign minister Baron Matsukata, Hajime

graduated and departed for the US to study agriculture. California laws prohibited land ownership by Asian immigrants, so Hajime opened a grocery.

Ken and his parents were in Japan during much of WWII. The family returned to the US in 1949 and headed to Chicago to work for their sponsor Fred Toguri, owner of the Diamond Trading Company. Ken was placed in 5th grade to reestablish his English language skills.

Ken was salutatorian of his class at Wells High School, then enrolled in business at UIUC. In college, he worked as a scoutmaster and joined the Army ROTC and Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity, serving as president his junior year. He graduated in 1959, served his commission in the Army Signal Corps, and returned to Champaign for work in 1962. Ken married Kimiko Yoshihara in 1967, and they raised their daughters Tricia and Jennifer in Monticello, Illinois.

History Note: Nisei / Kibei

Nisei are second-generation American-born Japanese, children of the first-generation Issei who immigrated. Kibei are Nisei who returned to America after being sent to Japan for their education.

Viewed as outsiders in Japan and “too Japanese” by their Nisei peers, Kibei struggled with an identity that embodied knowledge of both cultures and languages. This duality was further complicated when the US government targeted Kibei as “disloyal” during WWII while simultaneously recruiting them to serve in the Military Intelligence Service.

Momoko Iko

b. 1940 March 26 (Wapato, Washington)

d. 2020 July 19 (Los Angeles, California)

Nisei

UIUC

1958–1961 BA in English with honors

WWII History

Momoko Iko was 2 when her family was incarcerated at Portland Assembly Center, then transferred to Heart Mountain. Eventually, three elder siblings left for work in Chicago, military service, and a nursing program. The remaining Ikos departed Heart Mountain for Philadelphia in July 1945, working as migrant farm labor in New Jersey, before settling in Chicago where eldest son Tetsuo relocated.

Biography: Literary Pioneer

Momoko Iko's most noted work is *Gold Watch*, a play first receiving top prize for an East West Players writing contest in 1970 and production at LA's Inner City Cultural Center in 1972. Excerpted in *Aiiieeeee!: An Anthology of Asian-American Writers* in 1974, *Gold Watch* depicts the issei-nisei intergenerational conflict and the hardships of immigrant farm life. Its success culminated with a 1976 PBS broadcast premiere and programming in the 1977 Monte Carlo International Television Festival.

Momoko was the youngest daughter of a Yakima Valley farming family of immigrant parents Kyokuo and Naksuko Iko. After their WWII incarceration experience at Heart Mountain, Wyoming, the family settled on the South Side of Chicago. Momoko started

college at Northern Illinois University and then transferred to UIUC. She was socially active in student organizations including the Hawaii Club and Busey Hall Stages. She completed her degree in English with honors in 1961.

In 1966 Momoko attended the Iowa Writers' Workshop led by Nelson Algren and headed to Mexico to focus on her writing. Her early work focused on personal essay, fictional short story, and novel forms. Seeing Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in the Sun* was transformative for Momoko, who related to the portrayal of African American lives, recognizing parallel characters and situations from Japanese American life.

In 1975 Momoko wrote and produced several films for the Japanese American Service Committee in Chicago. Her playwriting continued with "*Flowers and Household Gods*" regarding three generations of a Japanese American family and "*Boutique Living and Disposable Icons*" reflecting on identity, assimilation, and racism.

History Note: Japanese Americans in Chicago

With relatively less anti-Asian sentiment, Chicago replaced the West Coast as the center of Japanese American life during the war. The new arrivals' Japanese ancestry was less important than the fact that they were non-white, and they were forced into "buffer zones" between white and Black Chicago. The search for established support networks led to the creation of two Nikkei enclaves: one on the South Side between the Oakland and Kenwood neighborhoods, and the other on the Near North Side around Division and Clark Streets.

In 1940, only 390 Americans of Japanese descent called Chicago home. By the war's end, nearly 20,000 Japanese Americans had

“resettled” in the Chicagoland area from the internment camps. When the military gave up control of the West Coast in 1946, many of the refugees returned home, and the Japanese American population in Chicago stabilized at about 15,000 by 1960.

Ross Masao Harano

b. 1942 September 17 (Fresno, California)

Sansei

UIUC

1960–1965 BS in finance

WWII History

Ross was born while his Nisei parents were incarcerated at Fresno Assembly Center. They were then transferred to the Jerome War Relocation Center in Arkansas. Ross had 7 uncles who served in WWII. Four served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Three served in the Military Intelligence Service in New Guinea, the Philippines, and Sagamihara, Japan.

Biography: Civic Engagement in Chicago

Ross Harano served public and private organizations in areas of public policy, management, and finance. He served as the Managing Director of the State of Illinois Trade Office, and prior as the President of the World Trade Center Chicago. His civic engagement work is recognized with awards from the Illinois Department of Human Rights, American Jewish Committee, Chicago Commission on Human Relations, and Illinois Ethnic Coalition.

Ross's Issei grandfathers emigrated to Hawaii in 1898 as sugar cane laborers, then travelled to the mainland to work on the Union Pacific railroad before settling in California. After wartime incarceration, his Nisei parents moved to Alton, Illinois, for employment in a greenhouse. They then moved to Hyde Park in Chicago where Ross was raised in a house full of extended family,

including his maternal grandparents. Ross enrolled at University of Illinois Navy Pier in 1960 and completed his BS in finance on the Urbana campus in 1965.

His extensive business career in Chicago was balanced with leadership roles in several civic organizations addressing civil rights issues. He served as president of the Illinois Ethnic Coalition and Chicago Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and chaired the Asian American Advisory Committee established by Mayor Harold Washington in the 1980s. He also served as Treasurer of the Illinois Humanities Council and as Board President of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform. In 1992, Ross was the first Asian American to be appointed as an Illinois Elector for the Electoral College. In 1994, he was the first Asian American to run for statewide office as a Democratic candidate for Board Trustee, University of Illinois.

History Note: Military Intelligence Service (MIS)

The army's Military Intelligence Service (MIS) knew it was going to need Japanese-language speakers to fight Japan effectively. On November 1, 1941, the MIS established a school for Japanese translation and interpretation at the Presidio in San Francisco. Even after exclusion orders condemned Japanese Americans along the West Coast to relocation camps, internees continued to be quietly recruited for MIS training.

Over the course of the war, MIS linguists interrogated more than ten thousand Japanese POWs. They also saw combat in the Pacific, accompanying troops to intercept and translate messages to ascertain the opponent's strengths and future movements.

Because the MIS served on classified missions, the extent of the

Nisei contributions went unrecognized for decades after the war. When declassification began in the 1970s, the significance of their service was revealed. The work of the Nisei MIS interpreters was credited with saving tens of thousands of American lives.

Yukiko Okinaga Hayakawa Llewellyn

b. 1939 April 22 (Los Angeles, California)

d. 2020 March 8 (Columbia, Missouri)

Sansei

UIUC

1967–1972 University Office of Public Information, Citizens Committee Secretary

1972 administrative assistant, fourth annual American College Theatre Festival, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

1972–1977 clinical psychology programs, administrative secretary to graduate division

1977–1983 executive Director, U of I Mothers Association; assistant to the director, Office of Campus Programs and Services

1983–2002 assistant dean of students and director of Registered Student Organizations

WWII History

Living with her mother Mikiko Hayakawa in Los Angeles, Yukiko Okinaga Hayakawa was 3 years old when forced to relocate to Manzanar in April 1942. This transitional moment was forever captured in the iconic photograph by Clem Albers of young Yuki sitting on luggage, eating an apple during evacuation. Raised by her single mother, Yuki believed her father had died during the war. She discovered much later that he was also incarcerated at Manzanar during the same time. Mikiko and Yukiko left Manzanar on October 2, 1945, for Cleveland, Ohio.

Biography: A Career at Illinois

With sponsorship from the Buddhist Church in Cleveland, Ohio, Mikiko and Yukiko departed Manzanar for the Midwest. Writing in

the 1970s, Yuki recalls leaving Manzanar “on train trip East, Mother having to stand with me in her arms because troops returning home were also on the train; being refused passage on a bus....”

As a Japanese-speaking child, Yuki struggled to adjust to public school in Cleveland. But when her mother started managing a boarding house, Yuki found support from the Japanese American students residing there. Hard work qualified her for admittance to an accelerated high school program, and she won awards for art and service.

Yuki earned her BA in 1962 from Lake Forest College and her MFA in theatre from Tulane University in 1966. While at Tulane, Yuki directed a production of *Rashomon*, collaborating with her future husband Don Llewellyn who created the sets. The Department of Theatre at UIUC hired Don in 1965, and Yuki got involved with community theater before starting her 37-year career at UIUC. Their son David Tatsuo was born in Champaign before Yuki and Don divorced.

“Because of Manzanar...I will do anything in my power to prevent such an inequity from ever again affecting any group of Americans be that group racial, political, or social in nature,” Yuki wrote. “In a time when many are finally prompted to fight for equality of the minorities, it is important to remember that not only public awareness and national solidarity, but also individual compassion for one’s fellow man help shape the temperament of our nation and, consequently, our laws. We are all accountable.”

Quote

“When I was here in 1965, I had to look for somebody who could cut Japanese hair. And when I went into a beauty shop, they would go, Oh No. [laughter] Look who just walked in. And I would say, not

to worry if you do not know how to work my hair. I'm not coming to you, you know I just came to check because I'm new to town and they would always suggest somebody but, but they wouldn't cut it."
- Yuki Llewellyn

2010: From East To West: Journeying Through The Lives Of Asian-Americans In Champaign-Urbana, Community Productions, Illinois Public Media, August 28, 2010.

History Note: Asian American Student Organizations at Illinois

In 1920, UIUC was nearly all white. Although it had one of the highest numbers of foreign students at any state university (including 300 Chinese and 150 Japanese students), Asian American students were considered a "novelty." Nisei students before WWII found social support through organizations including the Cosmopolitan Club, Young Men's Christian Association, and Japanese Students' Christian Association.

In the 1960s, Asian American college student numbers began to grow. Students began joining pan-Asian organizations like the Hawaii Club that transcended ethnic lines. Organizations like the Asian American Alliance and the Asian American Association encouraged the development of a distinct Asian American student identity through community-building activities and political activism. The activism of these organizations led to the formation of the Asian American Studies Program in 2000 and the Asian American Cultural Center in 2004.

photo

Yuki Llewellyn near Manzanar, 2005

Photo by Paul Kitagaki, Jr.

Japanese American Pilgrimages

Many Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII and their descendants return to the sites of confinement that transformed their lives. At the age of 66, Yuki Llewellyn returned to Manzanar for the first time as part of the 2005 pilgrimage where Paul Kitagaki, Jr. took her portrait seen here.

Founded in 2016, Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages (JAMP) was established to document pilgrimage stories, share experiences of WWII incarceration, and offer insight on intergenerational trauma. According to JAMP, the first pilgrimage to Manzanar in 1969 brought a group of 150 people out to the former incarceration site to pay homage to their ancestors' suffering. A pilgrimage to Tule Lake was held the same year. Today annual pilgrimages to several Japanese American sites of incarceration are organized throughout the year, with information consolidated at the JAMP website.

Ray Sasaki

b. 1948 October 22 (Fresno, California)

Sansei

UIUC

1975–2001 professor of music (trumpet)

WWII History

Ray Sasaki's father Masaru enlisted into WWII military service before Executive Order 9066. Ray's paternal grandparents were incarcerated at Fresno Assembly Center, Jerome, Tule Lake, and repatriated to Japan on December 27, 1945. Ray's mother Hinako was incarcerated with her parents and siblings at Fresno Assembly Center, Jerome, and Rohwer, departing on February 27, 1945 to return to Fresno.

Biography: Making Music

Ray Sasaki's Nisei parents, Masaru J. and Hinako (Yamagiwa) Sasaki, were part of the Bowles farming community in Fresno County, California. Masaru enlisted into military service on January 28, 1942, before his parents' incarceration experiences at Jerome and repatriation to Japan. After his military service, Masaru returned alone to Fresno, arriving in full uniform to reestablish the family raisin farm by single-handedly planting 20 acres of vineyards.

Hinako Yamagiwa's farming family also incarcerated during the war, returning to Fresno in February 1945. Her marriage to Masaru was arranged in 1947. As the couple built their family farm and raised 2 sons, they also helped many family members relocate from Japan to the US, assisting in establishing livelihoods in farming and gardening.

After experiencing much continued racism growing up in post-WWII Fresno, Ray earned his undergraduate degree at Cal State Fresno in mathematics and music, then an MA in trumpet performance at North Texas State University. In 1975 he joined the music faculty at UIUC, where he established deep musical and personal relationships with faculty Morgan Powell, Thomas Fredrickson, Edwin London, and Salvatore Martirano, among others. He married collaborative pianist and vocal coach Jeanne Dayton in 1986 and raised his family in Champaign-Urbana until he accepted a position at the University of Texas at Austin, where he was a professor of trumpet until retiring in 2018.

History Note: Expatriation and Repatriation

From 1943 to 1946, over 20,000 incarcerated Japanese Americans applied for "repatriation" (Issei as non-citizens) and "expatriation" (Nisei as citizens) to leave the US for Japan. In total, only 4,724 departed for Japan directly from the camps of which 1,659 were resident aliens and 1,949 were American citizens. Federal courts later ruled the renunciations had been given under duress, were therefore void, which allowed many to return to the US and regain their citizenship.

Jason Finkelman

b. 1968 December 22 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Yonsei

UIUC

2012–present artistic director, Global Arts Performance Initiatives,
Krannert Center for the Performing Arts,
program administrator, Robert E. Brown Center for World Music,
School of Music

2009–2012 communications manager, School of Music

2007–2012 events coordinator, Asian Educational Media Service,
Center for East Asian and Pacific Studies

WWII History

My grandparents Toshio and Yukiko Miyahara were running a nursery in Venice, California, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. In April 1942, they reported to Santa Anita Assembly Center and then were moved to the incarceration center in Jerome, Arkansas. The fact that they requested repatriation and did not fully answer the federal government's loyalty questionnaire classified them as "disloyals." The Miyaharas were sent to segregated Tule Lake, where my mother Reiko was born.

Biography: Hidden Histories

As a person of mixed heritage with a Jewish last name, my Japanese ancestry is not immediately apparent. For more than 35 years of my adult life, I have strived to reclaim hidden histories buried in my grandparent's generation. As is common with survivors of wartime trauma, my Kibei grandfather Toshio never spoke of his wartime incarceration, and my Nisei grandmother Yukiko shared little before (and thankfully more after) Toshio's passing in 2000.

My grandparents made a successful appeal in the Tule Lake Renunciant Hearings to remain in the US. Within 10 days of the ruling, the Miyahara family departed Tule Lake in February 1946 to start new lives at Seabrook. I've viewed family members in photographs displayed there on the walls.

I continually strive to better understand the experiences of WWII on my Japanese and Jewish families. Raised with a Japanese cultural identity isolated in a vacuum of immediate family, I am thankful to have visited Tottori, Japan, the ancestral land of both my grandparents, where I've met extended family, climbed sacred mountains, and slept in the farmhouse my great-grandmother Kuma resided in. I've made a pilgrimage to Arkansas sites, where nearly 16,000 Japanese Americans from October 1942 to November 1945 were incarcerated. Jerome and Rowher became the second and third largest cities in the state in those years.

Sharing my story in this exhibit, along with those of Japanese Americans at this institution before me, reveals complexities of hidden experiences that define our lives as we take responsibility to build a better present.

History Note: Seabrook Farms

The largest vegetable farm and food processing plant in the US, New Jersey's Seabrook Farms was suffering without a steady source of labor during the war. At the same time, the War Relocation Authority was struggling to resettle Japanese Americans from Relocation Centers that were scheduled to close at the end of 1945. The WRA partnered with Seabrook to offer both travel expenses and "lodging, lunch, and utilities" in exchange for a minimum 6-month work contract, and more than 2,500 individuals (approximately 600 families) resettled there from 1944 to 1946.

Timeline 4

2000–Present

2017 Jan 27 President Trump's Executive Order 13769 bans foreign nationals from 7 majority Muslim countries from visiting the US for 90 days, bans Syrian refugees indefinitely, and suspends the entry of all refugees for 120 days.

2020 The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic leads to an uptick in anti-Asian hate crimes and racist rhetoric.

2021 March A 21-year-old man murders 8 people, including 6 women of Asian descent, at spas in Atlanta, Georgia.

2021 April Illinois passes the Teaching Equitable Asian American Community History (TEAACH) Act, ensuring that public schools include Asian American history and contributions in their curriculum.

Objects in cases in center of the room

Wood Panel Art Poem

circa 1940s

The origin story of this exceptional wood panel carving is unknown, but this style of bas relief carving using wooden planks is a noted artistic practice during the Japanese American incarceration experience. Curator Jason Finkelman has identified the work hanging on the wall in the Miyahara home in photographs from the mid-1960s. Most of the calligraphy in the work is indecipherable, but the characters 三十三間堂 representing Sanjūsangen-dō, a Buddhist temple in Kyoto, Japan is clearly seen. These are followed by the character 雨 “ame” which translates to rain. Those who have reviewed this work believe it’s a poem about a bird flying in the rain by Sanjūsangen-dō.

Raechal Miyahara with her prom date Bruce Hamlyn in the early 1960s standing in front of the poem panel. Photo courtesy of Raechal Finkelman.

Burl Wood Art

circa 1940s

Japanese Americans incarcerated during WWII found materials to create works of art. One common practice was seeking out pieces of burl wood to make freestanding sculptures. In Arkansas, incarcerated often used Cypress wood to create *kobu*, which in Japanese translates to “bump” or “lump.” This wooden sculpture created during WWII was one of two, curator Jason Finkelman admired in the Miyahara home in Bridgeton, NJ.

On loan from Jason Finkelman, courtesy of Raechal Finkelman.

50th Anniversary T-Shirt

1992

Japanese American Day of Remembrance is held annually on February 19, the date President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the establishment of military exclusion zones, and initiating the forced removal of all Americans of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast in 1942. Los Angeles artist David Monkawa designed the 50th anniversary image.

On loan from Jason Finkelman.

AACC Stop the Hate Materials

The Asian American Cultural Center's Stop Asian Hate program explores the impact of anti-Asian hate on our community.

<https://oiir.illinois.edu/aacc/stop-asian-hate-program>

On loan from Jason Finkelman.

Origami Cigarette Paper Umbrellas

ca 1976-1980

These origami umbrellas created from soft pack cigarette wrappers were made by Mrs. Mitsuko Omura (1918–2012) in Upper Deerfield Township, NJ. During the WWII incarceration experience, Japanese Americans learned to craft these unique paper umbrellas. As a child, curator Jason Finkelman recalls his mother collecting soft pack cigarette packaging from friends to have these umbrellas made.

On loan from Jason Finkelman, courtesy of Raechal Finkelman.

Wooden Crate Dresser

circa 1940s

Japanese Americans reported to Assembly Centers with “only what they could carry.” Modest furniture was constructed from wooden produce crates and scrap materials by incarcerated. When Toshio and Yukiko Miyahara departed Bridgeton, New Jersey, for San Diego in 1994, Jason Finkelman assisted in moving furniture for his family. Just before leaving with a fully loaded U-Haul truck, Jason learned about the dresser in the basement constructed during the internment. Fitting perfectly in the last empty space on the truck, Jason enthusiastically acquired this exceptional internment artifact. Later he would notice the intact paper labeling that visibly remained inside the dresser, revealing the painful irony of using a “liberty” produce crate in its construction.

On loan from Jason Finkelman.

Detail of interior of chest showing the Liberty brand label.

This Buddhist altar was made from scrap lumber in Jerome Relocation Center in Arkansas. Buddhism was among the religions that was practiced in the internment camps. However, it was not formally recognized in the camp or marked with a specific house of worship within the internment camp grounds. This altar would have been kept in the barracks and used privately. Gift of Sam Oda. Courtesy of the National Museum of American History.

Small Wooden Case of Drawers

circa 1940s

Constructed from scrap wood during the incarceration experience this small wooden case comes from the Miyahara family. Up until this exhibition, Jason Finkelman's brother Jeremy actively used this case to store small objects and photographs.

Quite a surprise occurred upon inspection by Spurlock staff: the discovery of two baby teeth within the recesses of the drawers, leading us to wonder, "they couldn't possibly be the baby teeth of Uncle Fred as a toddler in the 1940s, could they?"

On loan from Jason Finkelman. Courtesy of Jeremy Finkelman.

Walking Stick

circa 1940s

The origin story of this walking stick is unknown, but family members always believed it was produced during the WWII incarceration experience. In examining WRA files for Toshio Miyahara, curator Jason Finkelman notes a medical history of suffering from chronic backache thus the need for a walking stick.

In a family photograph believed to document their departure from Jerome, Arkansas, the walking stick seems to be visible on top of the luggage.

On loan from Jason Finkelman, courtesy of Raechal Finkelman.

Finkelman's grandparents and uncle leaving the Jerome War Relocation Center in Arkansas.

College Nisei at the University

These documents from the University Archives illustrate the response to the admittance of Japanese American students at UIUC. Without advocates such as the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council and others, UIUC may never have admitted Japanese Americans during the war. Many more Nikkei students enrolled at Illinois after the end of the war in the Pacific and the relocation of 20,000 Japanese to Chicago.

March 1942

When Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Roosevelt on February 19, 1942, approximately 2,500 American-born students who were enrolled in West Coast colleges were forced to withdraw from their programs.

The next month, after receiving many transfer inquiries from institutions and students within the Western Military Zone, the president of the University of Minnesota, W.C. Coffey, corresponded with UIUC president Arthur C. Willard regarding Japanese American students.

“I do not believe the Board of Trustees and other authorities of this institution look with favor upon the admission of either Japanese aliens or Americans of Japanese ancestry,” responded Willard on March 20.

April 1942

Based on its work in government-sponsored research and its proximity to Chanute Air Force Base, UIUC determines itself a Military Exclusion Zone to justify the prohibition of Japanese American students. “The University of Illinois would not look with

favor on the transfer to this institution of Japanese students from other colleges and universities.”

– President Willard, April 8, 1942

May 1942

The National Japanese American Student Relocation Council, formed in May 1942 in Chicago, and other civic organizations continually inquire about the possibility of Japanese American students enrolling at UIUC. By late 1942, Japanese Americans started resettling in Chicago, and the War Relocation Authority opened a regional field office in the city in early 1943

February 1944

UIUC conducted its own survey of Japanese American acceptance policies among peer institutions.

“I think this is a particularly bad time to change our present policy which has been to discourage the admission of Japanese students.”

– Registrar G.P. Tuttle

March 1944

The Board of Trustees approved a rigorous policy to admit Japanese American students, including a completed Personal Security Questionnaire approved by the Office of the Army's Provost Marshal General.

September 1944

The Board of Trustees made an exception to the policy to admit New Trier High School student and track star Henry K. Aihara.

May 1945

Board of Trustees considers rescinding employment policies for hiring Japanese American students.

Campus Units

Asian American Studies

The roots of the Asian American Studies Program (AAS) lie in student activism demanding the establishment of a dedicated program. In 1997, an AAS Committee chaired by George Yu and Clark Cunningham was charged by the University to develop the framework for an academic program in Asian American Studies. With the establishment of the AAS program in 2000, faculty and students were formally positioned to contribute to academic scholarship on Asian American experiences and histories. The program became a department in 2012.

Asian American Cultural Center

Asian American Cultural Center (AACC) opened in Fall 2005 as a long-awaited space where the diversity of rich cultures representing the Asian American experience is promoted to the greater campus community. With one of the largest Asian American university communities in the Midwest, AACC provides resources addressing the combined needs and interests of Asian American and Asian international students who make up nearly 40% of our campus population. Most recently, AACC's Stop Asian Hate initiative explores the impact of anti-Asian hate on our community, through programs discussing the impact of COVID, the history of anti-Asian rhetoric and laws in the US, and anti-racism activism.

Japan House

The origin of Japan House stems from courses on Japanese art and culture taught by Shozo Sato in 1964. These popular classes were later moved to a renovated Victorian house in Urbana near where Alice Campbell Alumni Center stands today. The current location of Japan House was dedicated in June of 1998 under the leadership of Kimiko Gunji. Along with the foundational teaching

of *chadō*, the Japanese way of tea, Japan House director Jennifer Gunji-Ballsrud has broadened student engagement, class offerings, and public events. The forthcoming Ogura-Sato Japan House Annex will further promote and make accessible the beauty of traditional Japanese art and aesthetics for everyone.

東西融和
Tōzai yūwa

“Harmony between East and West”
calligraphy executed by Mrs. Yoko Muroga.
On loan from Japan House

東= East

西= West

融= Melting, melding, fitting in, adapting, integrating, blending, uniting,

和 = Harmony, peace

The framed calligraphy was executed by Mrs. Yoko Muroga and given to retired UIUC Chancellor Dr. Morton Weir. This statement was embraced by Dr. Weir and his wife, Mrs. Cecelia Weir, as an underscoring of their belief in what Japan House provided this campus and the community. Dr. and Mrs. Weir were close friends of Mrs. Muroga, Professor Shozo Sato, and Professor Kimiko Gunji. Both continue to be supporters of Japan House (both the original and current). Dr. Weir retired from the Chancellorship in 1993 and stayed in the Champaign community until 2020. He and Ceil have moved to Arizona but visit the community that they called home for so many years at least twice a year.

Rob Buscher Collection

The objects on display in this area provide a historical record of anti-Japanese propaganda art from World War II through the US-Japan economic trade wars of the 1980s. We are reminded that racist bias in the media contributed significantly to the forced eviction and mass incarceration of over 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry. Appearing in all aspects of popular culture, these materials demonstrate the extreme racial prejudice Japanese Americans have endured.

Images included in the exhibit may trigger some viewers.
Please explore cautiously.

On loan courtesy of Rob Buscher and Cathy Matos.

Anti-Japanese Postcards

1942–1945

A universal symbol of America personified, these postcards show Uncle Sam committing violent acts against Japanese. The physical stereotypes conveyed in these caricatures reflect earlier racialized propaganda that portray Asians as racially inferior to white Americans.

Arthur Szyk Political Cartoon, Collier's Magazine

June 20, 1942

Cartoonist Arthur Szyk moved to New York in 1940 to help popularize the plight of Allied Powers suffering under Nazism in Europe. After Pearl Harbor, Szyk's attentions turned to Japan with a series of caricatures featuring Emperor Hirohito alongside fellow Axis leaders. Notably, only Hirohito was dehumanized to the extent that he no longer resembled a human being.

Empire Wringer Co

circa 1880s

appears as a direct reference in 1942 Homefront Propaganda Postcard showing Hirohito being run through the wringer

This 1942 Homefront Propaganda Postcard shows General Tojo being run through a laundry wringer and appears to directly reference the accompanied Empire Wringer Co and Peerless Wringer trade cards, which date from the Chinese Exclusion Era, circa 1880. Despite a sixty-year gap between their publication, the similar themes demonstrated in these pieces suggests the continuity of Anti-Asian racism throughout this period.

“Wipe That Sneer Off His Face”

Dr. Seuss, *PM* Newspaper

October 12, 1942

Decorated children’s author Dr. Seuss was mobilized as part of the war effort to create a series of anti-Axis cartoons. Seuss’s portrayal of Japanese was particularly offensive, as seen in the cartoon in New York City based daily newspaper *PM*.

“Krak-A-Jap Mail-in Order Form”

circa 1942

Anti-Japanese sentiment was integrated into all aspects of daily life in America during WWII, to a far extent greater than Anti-German or Anti Italian propaganda. This “Krak-A-Jap” mail-in order form was found in a popular children’s comic book.

“Made in Japan” Ink Blotter

circa 1942

This ink blotter was used as a salesman sample by New Mexico based commercial art firm Babcock & Borough. This image was repurposed as both a postcard and advertisement by companies looking to cash in on anti-Japanese fervor.

“Jam Your Cigarette Butts on This Rat” Ashtray

manufacturer unknown

circa 1942

Common household objects such as a drinking glass or ashtray were manufactured during the war years and served as constant reminders of the conflict with Japan. In many cases, these objects continued to be used by their owners for years following the war.

Prevent Forest Fires

1943

During WWII many experienced firefighters were serving in the military. The empire of Japan took advantage of this and attempted to weaponize forest fires by launching incendiary balloons across the jet stream. As the campaign evolved, axis leaders were eventually replaced with Smokey the Bear, as the caricature of Tojo was thought to be too scary for young children.

Propaganda Buttons

1942–43

Wearable propaganda buttons made anti-Japanese rhetoric a regular facet within daily life during the early war years. Note the implications that the “a Jap’s a Jap” phrasing might have on Japanese Americans.

Anti-Japanese Printed Mailing Envelopes for US Homefront Propaganda

circa 1942–1944

These envelopes were printed with “Cinderella” stamps, lacking postage value. Throughout the war years they were commonly used to send correspondence by mail.

“Just Say No” Hat

circa 1980s

While time heals some wounds, the ascendancy of Japanese auto imports in the late 1970s and early 1980s led to an influx of anti-Japanese wearable propaganda to an extent that had not been seen since WWII.

US Marines Comic No3

Sensationalized cartoon violence such as this image of Prime Minister Hideki Tojo being scorched by a flamethrower helped to normalize the dehumanization of Japanese people for the youth and adolescent audience. This comic book series was done with the approval and collaboration of the United States Marine Corps.

Propaganda Buttons

1942–43

Wearable propaganda buttons made anti-Japanese rhetoric a regular facet within daily life during the early war years. Note the implications that the “a Jap’s a Jap” phrasing might have on Japanese Americans.

Religious Tracts:

The Yellow Peril (Japan) and Bible Prophecy

1943

Emperor Hirohito of Japan: Satan's Man of Mystery Unveiled in the Light of Prophecy

1944

Written by evangelist Dan Gilbert, these two religious tracts suggest that the Empire of Japan is acting on behalf of the biblical devil. While Gilbert’s views may not have been widely accepted, they did have a significant impact on some elements within the religious right during and after WWII.

University of Illinois Press

The University of Illinois Press established the book series the Asian American Experience in 1992, one of the first by an academic press to focus on this topic. It is one of a cluster of series initiated by Press director Richard Wentworth seeking to document American social and cultural history, with a particular emphasis on grassroots communities and elevating voices outside the mainstream. To edit the interdisciplinary series, Wentworth recruited Roger Daniels, an immigration historian at the University of Cincinnati whose own expertise included the Japanese American incarceration. The first volume focused on the Nisei experience in Hawaii. Subsequent subjects included Japanese American midwives, Japanese in Latin America, and the Nisei in California. Topics specific to the Japanese American internment and its aftermath range from assembly centers to photography and journalism in the camps and from Japanese American student placement in American colleges to eventual redress and restitution for families of incarcerated.

The Museum thanks the Press for providing a selection of their books for visitors' use in this exhibit.

American Peril: Faces of the Enemy

American Peril: Faces of the Enemy is a portrait series depicting members of the Japanese American and Muslim American communities directly impacted by negative Japanese and Islamophobic propaganda. It reminds us all to be vigilant of the racial bias in our society's media. No group should be vilified for the color of their skin, the shape of their eyes, or the religion they practice.

<https://jlchiu.com/americanperil>



Alix W. with “Japanese Hunting License Certificate,” circa 1942

“With my mixed heritage, I’m not going anywhere. I’m very clear that the U.S. [oppressed and dehumanized] and can do this to groups of people. As an activist, I’m still terrified more than my peers. I hate demonstrations. I hate rallies and big groups of people and having to be loud and raise signs. I have to lean on other people to do that, and yet I also can’t imagine not doing it. From my background, it feels like vigilance is a necessity. Continuing to fight until things really change. Taking a stand is going to continue being necessary.”

– Alix W., Biracial Japanese American, fourth generation, granddaughter of internees

Aneel S. with “Terrorist Body Bag” Novelty Sack, 2002

“Racism is not something you’re born with. It’s something you learn, just by watching your parents, from watching TV, from your friends, your family, your network. That’s why kids are so pure. Kids at a

young age don't even see [skin] color. It's not until later they realize there is a distinction and you're 'supposed to' treat different people a different way—because that's how everyone else is doing it.”

—Aneel S., Pakistani American immigrant, first generation, secular Muslim

Hiro N. with “KraK-A-Jap” mail-in order form, circa 1942

“Those who don't remember history are doomed to repeat it, and I had that reaction after 9/11. To his credit, President George W. Bush visited a mosque and came out the next day and said, ‘Hey, don't do anything stupid. We are a country of laws, and we need to treat people fairly.’ And yet, what happened? After 9/11, all of these people were slammed into Guantanamo [without due process]. For the Japanese American Citizens League, when we see these things, we think, ‘Didn't we learn something 60 or 70 years ago?’ The non-judicial detention is highly reminiscent of what Japanese Americans went through when we were thrown into prison camps—no procedures, no challenges, nothing. People were handled as procedures and not court proceedings.”

—Hiro N., Japanese American, third generation, incarceration camp survivor

Ed N. with “Buy American” hat, circa 1980s

“My parents met in [incarceration] camp and they got married in 1942, and I was born in September 1943 in camp. I describe myself as an authentic product of American racism...one of the ironies of my life.”

—Ed N., Japanese American, third generation, born in incarceration camp

**Ali K., Chloe K., and Rieko W. with *Ken Magazine*
Issues 1 and 4, 1938**

“I’m worried about [my biracial Iranian-Japanese daughter]. It’s disheartening to see how willing the media is to dehumanize our perceived opponents of the moment and how these same practices go on today. What’s especially concerning is how the actual news media, which we’d want to be more responsible, show such caricatures. The covers of the Ken Magazines are extremely dehumanizing, and we’re not supposed to feel anything about that. Media can be used as propaganda in a very subtle way. It isn’t like Soviet propaganda that’s in your face. This is a lot more insidious and can affect us without us knowing it.”

—Ali K., Iranian American, second generation

Zehra W. with Islamophobic book *Stop the Islamization of America*, 2017

“People like us have to fight two battles: one with Islamophobes and the other with religious extremists. We have to take the narrative back from them. I want to reach out to people and tell my story, my narrative religiously, culturally, individually. I want people to see a South Asian Muslim woman in this exhibition. I hope people learn the stories of my life, and that will help them understand that just ‘Muslim’ as an abstract doesn’t mean anything.”

—Zehra W., Pakistani American immigrant, first generation, practicing Muslim

Rea T. with “Made in Japan” ink blotter, circa 1942

“My father was drafted before Pearl Harbor, so he was actually serving in the army. After Pearl Harbor, everything changed. Later that night, he had guard duty for the base. A truck came by, and he had to stop it. He looked inside, and he saw that there was a

Japanese farmer and his daughter. And he said, ‘I realized at that point, I was looking into the face of the enemy—and that the enemy was me.’”

—Rea T., Japanese American, third generation, daughter of internees

Aisha K., Rumi S., and Atif S. with “Coast Japs Are Interned at Mountain Camp,” *Life* magazine, April 6, 1942

“Being an immigrant is empowering to us. We’ve seen more. We’ve experienced more. We have a sense of community. We’re connecting and communicating. That’s the hope from us. What do we want the future to be? A lot of futurism is about survival—but it doesn’t have to be about that. It can be a future that you can take control of. Living with a nihilistic point of view is not liveable. Even if there is no hope, you create it. You create hope. Create it through your work—through art, through community.”

—Aisha K. and Atif S., Pakistani American immigrants, first generation, secular Muslims

Teresa M. with “Arizona War Worker Jap Skull” Picture of the Week, *Life* magazine, May 22, 1944

“Any time you look different or have a difference from the ‘mainstream of American,’ it’s going to be targeted. [Growing up], I always felt inferior—inferior [Japanese] products, inferior [Japanese] people. There were a lot of prejudices, but it gives you an idea of why Japanese Americans were incarcerated. People believed Japanese and Japanese Americans were inferior—they were rats, they were infiltrating, they were portrayed as lowlife. These stereotypes are still with us. It takes activism to keep people aware of the prejudice present in our lives.”

—Teresa M., Japanese American, third generation, born in labor camp

**Teresa M. and Hiro N. with “Factory Fires Help the Japs”
Philadelphia Quartermaster Depot poster, circa 1944**

“The horrendous nature of some of this [propaganda] attracts attention. In today’s context, they may seem ludicrous, [and one might think], ‘Okay, it was a whole different time—it’s not that way anymore.’ It puts people in an assumption comfort zone that can hinder progress into seeing what’s still happening. Lots of things are just taken for granted that people think, ‘I don’t have to think about it.’ And so, it evolves into an environmental neglect and denial, but I’m hoping that [the propaganda] will provoke people [into thinking]: ‘Okay, today we’re not as bad, but maybe I should pay more attention to the issues of today that are built on similar kinds of perceptions, hatred, racism, etc.’ [against] different targeted groups.”

—Hiro N., Japanese American, third generation, incarceration camp survivor

**Darian E. with “Head Shot!” morale military patch,
circa 2018**

“Growing up during a time when Iran was labelled an ‘Axis of Evil’ by Bush and obviously post 9/11, I was always hesitant to even say where I’m from or my family is from—and not want to be seen as an enemy.”

—Darian E., Iranian American, second generation

**Makoto H. with Tokio Kid on *Douglas Airview* magazine,
1942–1945**

“Having to wade through feeling like ‘Other’ all the time from an early age completely shaped my entire existence—my entire life. It’s inextricable from my life experiences as an adult.”

—Makoto H., Japanese American, 1.5 generation