

Challenging History: Public Education and Reluctance to Remember the Japanese Canadian Experience in British Columbia

Alexandra L. Wood

ABSTRACT

This paper argues that a shared reluctance to confront the causes and consequences of historical injustices endured by ethno-cultural minorities has hampered efforts by educators and activists in British Columbia to inform the public about Japanese Canadian internment during World War II. This reluctance was felt keenly by internment survivors, whose sense of trust in the wider civic community has not yet been re-established. Meanwhile, a desire to “turn the page” on past wrongs—for fear that drawing attention to such episodes generates inter-ethnic tension rather than promotes unity amongst Canada’s multicultural populace—has hindered federal and provincial involvement in educational activities related to WWII internment. Yet as this study suggests, refusal to participate in collective renegotiations of public memory about historical injustices does little to repair the relationship between the wronged group and wider public, or to prevent similar injustices from occurring again in the future.

RÉSUMÉ

Cet article décrit les efforts entrepris par des éducateurs et des activistes pour informer la population de la Colombie Britannique au sujet de l'internement des Canadiens d'origine japonaise pendant la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Ils durent faire face à une forte résistance du public qui refusait de confronter les causes et les conséquences des injustices subies par les minorités ethnoculturelles à cette époque. Les victimes de l'internement ont ressenti vivement cette dénégaration d'autant plus qu'ils n'ont pas réussi à rétablir complètement la confiance au sein de la collectivité. En même temps, l'envie de « tourner la page » sur les maux du passé—motivée par la crainte que le fait d'attirer l'attention sur de tels épisodes génère de la tension interethnique au lieu de promouvoir l'unité dans une population multiculturelle— a fait obstacle aux activités éducatives mises en place par les gouvernements provincial et fédéral quant à l'internement. Mais, comme le suggère cette étude, le refus collectif d'affronter ces injustices historiques ne peut que nuire au rapprochement entre le groupe lésé et la société toute entière ainsi qu'à la prévention de telles injustices dans l'avenir.

In the twenty-five years since the Canadian government's 1988 apology for the forced removal and internment of approximately 22,000 Nikkei (persons of Japanese ancestry) residing in British Columbia during World War II, contestation rather than

cooperation has characterized efforts to educate the public about this historical injustice. Throughout the 1990s, internal tensions plagued the Japanese Canadian National Museum in Burnaby. Later, educators and activists struggled to convince the BC Ministry of Education to fund and disseminate educational resources about WWII internment. The University of British Columbia similarly dragged its feet on extending honorary degrees to Japanese Canadian students forced to abandon their studies due to the 1942 exclusion order. Even BC's recent apology for its role in WWII removal and confinement—as well as the confiscation of Nikkei property and the ban that prevented Japanese Canadians from returning home for several years post-war—has been marred by revelations suggesting the act was a political maneuver rather than an expression of genuine remorse by the provincial government.

Drawing upon archival documents and semi-structured qualitative interviews with fourteen educators and activists in the Greater Vancouver area, this paper argues that a shared reluctance to confront the history of racist attitudes towards and injustices endured by ethno-cultural minorities has hampered efforts to inform the public in British Columbia about WWII internment. Within the Nikkei community, this reluctance was felt most keenly by those who lived through the war and its aftermath, the surviving Issei and Nisei (first and second generation) who feared that revisiting the past would invite renewed animosity and threaten their status as full-fledged Canadians. That the federal and provincial government, as well as various public institutions in BC, also demonstrated an aversion to participating in educational activities about WWII internment suggests that this event sits uneasily with a desire to “turn the page” on past wrongs, for fear that drawing attention to such injustices generates inter-ethnic tension rather than promotes social unity.¹ BC educators and activists' frustrated attempts to reshape public memory about WWII internment thus offer insight into the obstacles faced by wronged groups who seek to have their experiences recognized in Canadian schools, museums, memorials, and other “sites of memory.”²

But beyond telling the story of a recent contest for public memory, this article draws attention to the possible consequences of reluctance to revisit a historical injustice such as WWII internment. Political theorists have identified public education—defined as joint participation in rewriting the history of an injustice, reshaping public memory about the event, and ensuring that this revised account is presented in public institutions—as an activity with significant potential for facilitating reconciliation within societies where a minority group has endured unjust treatment.³ Working collaboratively on educational initiatives, representatives from the wronged group and the wider public reexamine the past together; in so doing, they reaffirm respect for shared norms and signal that members of the once-marginalized group are now considered valued members of society.⁴ By helping repair the injured group's sense of “civic trust” in the wider community, public education facilitates a type of cooperation that scholars argue is necessary for reconciliation in the wake of political violence or mass atrocity.⁵ Confounded by BC's “amnesiac culture of memory,” however, educators and activists found few willing partners for efforts to inform the public about WWII internment, straining relationships rather than repairing them.⁶

As such, this case study suggests that public institutions should be more responsive to participating in a collective renegotiation of the past, rather than assuming that an apology or passing mentions in textbooks will suffice.⁷ By denying citizens the opportunity to deliberate different memories of the same event, reluctance to confront a historical injustice thwarts reconciliation—a significant roadblock to uniting diverse groups with varying historical experiences under a common civic identity.⁸

Memory, History, and Reconciliation

Memory and history are interrelated yet distinct concepts. Memory belongs to the individual, but it is also a collective effort to retain or revive awareness about aspects of a common past.⁹ By ensuring “a sense of sameness over time and space,” memory also underpins identity by reminding the individual, the community, or the nation from whence each came.¹⁰ Yet memory, like identity, is not fixed; it is a representation of reality that changes over time in order to suit present needs.¹¹ Since particular episodes will evaporate from public consciousness when deemed no longer relevant or useful, memory is thus locked in a constant contest between remembering and forgetting.¹² Subgroups and excluded “Others” are often left to preserve historical events that go unrecognized by the wider public, and physical dislocation from where memories were made makes holding on to the past even harder.¹³ Japanese Canadians have particular memories about life before, during, and after WWII internment tied to specific sites in BC, but forced removal in 1942—among other factors—has made it a challenge to preserve the memory of the Nikkei experience in the province. Attempting to recover locations like Powell Street in Vancouver, home to the largest concentration of Nikkei before WWII, educators and activists are seeking to reclaim these “sites of memory” before they disappear.¹⁴

History records the relationship between memory and identity by offering a critical examination of the ways in which individuals and societies commemorate the past.¹⁵ Accordingly, public history, or “historical representations of memory that circulate in public on a wider scale,” offers insight into the experiences that have shaped a particular collective identity.¹⁶ Benedict Anderson asserts that conceptions of a shared past—commemorated via widely-told myths and familiar symbols—help to unite citizens into an “imagined community.”¹⁷ Pierre Nora maintains that museums, memorials, and other commemorative sites are the product of consensus about which particular historical episodes have fortified the civic community as it exists in the present.¹⁸ Michael Kammen similarly contends that public history involves purposeful preservation of memories that promote social cohesion in the service of nation-building. Selective amnesia, conversely, stems from a collective desire to keep a society from falling apart.¹⁹

Public history is an inherently political endeavor—for, as David Glassberg asks, “with all the possible versions of the past that circulate in society, how do particular accounts of the past get established and disseminated as the public one?”²⁰ Rather than viewing history as a product of consensus, historians such as Eric Hobsbawm and John Bodnar have argued that elites maintain their position atop the social and

political order by preserving those memories that justify their hegemony and forgetting those that threaten it.²¹ Public history, in this view, is a form of symbolic capital employed to maintain the status quo.²²

In recent decades, however, the politics of memory is increasingly influenced by the politics of recognition.²³ Amid demands for better inclusion in political and social institutions, marginalized minorities in Canada and other nations are also seeking to “recover their buried pasts.”²⁴ By engaging in remembrance, or “commemoration from a position of having been silenced,” indigenous peoples, for instance, are resisting dominant historical narratives in order to renegotiate their place in settler societies.²⁵ Yet Eva Mackey cautions that Canadian public history often overlooks the “conquest and cultural genocide that Canada is founded upon” in favour of a narrative presenting “a benevolent multicultural nation that treats its Native people well.”²⁶ Although the policy purports to recognize ethno-cultural groups as equals within the Canadian “mosaic,” some scholars allege that “official multiculturalism,” implemented under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1971, has made it more difficult for minority communities to challenge prevailing narratives about historical injustices.²⁷ According to Sunera Thobani, it has become “bad form” to bring up racism in Canada’s present or its past.²⁸

Fearing that a “surfeit of memory”—excessive attention to unfortunate historical episodes—provokes ethno-cultural nationalisms and threatens the fragile bonds that hold citizens together, other scholars maintain that selective forgetting is indeed necessary.²⁹ J.L. Granatstein laments the inclusion of topics like residential schools or WWII internment in Canadian history curricula, arguing that such “victimology” invites tension rather than unity amongst persons of various religions, classes, and cultures.³⁰ Despite such critiques, many minority groups remain resistant to being relegated to the margins of memory—although the ability to reshape public history depends largely on their relative political power.³¹

Investigating the so-called “age of apology,” recent acts of contrition for past sins by nations worldwide, scholars have argued that facing up to historical injustices is challenging but necessary for achieving reconciliation between an injured group and the wider society.³² By virtue of membership in an “intergenerational polity” whereby enjoyment of societal benefits requires acceptance of collective burdens, citizens inherit responsibility for addressing past wrongs.³³ Researchers warn, however, that those seeking to unearth “inconvenient truths” about the past should expect to encounter foot-dragging, questions about one’s motives or integrity, and other attempts to “quarantine information damaging to established histories.”³⁴ At the same time, squaring off against reluctance to remember an injustice creates a valuable “teachable moment”: when educators and activists bring an event back to the forefront of public memory, they compel citizens to consider why it continues to be relevant. “It is the conversation about history that is important,” Robert Weyeneth reminds us, “rather than judgments about crimes and culpability.”³⁵

Public education offers an important opportunity to foster social reconstruction in the wake of an injustice. Elazar Barkan has argued that joint participation in rewriting and disseminating a revised history of an event allows a society to demonstrate

that once-marginalized persons are valued members of the community, and to pledge that similar unjust acts will be prohibited henceforth.³⁶ By participating in collaborative educational efforts, members of the wronged group begin to repair a sense of “civic trust,” the belief that public institutions—and the wider community they represent—adhere to shared norms that govern the rights and protections afforded to all individuals.³⁷ Acknowledging that public education is unlikely to occur in settings where some degree of integration, trust, recognition has not been established, scholars nevertheless believe that confronting historical injustices is a critical step towards creating a more just society.³⁸

An emerging literature about Canada’s “culture of redress” posits that coming to terms with the past has been a fraught enterprise. Rather than encouraging public institutions to share the lessons learned from national mistakes, the federal government has instead used official apology and redress to impose “historical closure” upon events like WWII internment and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax in order to “reinforce a teleology of national progress that overwrites ongoing forms of racist and colonialist inequity.”³⁹ As Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham point out, the launch of the Indian Residential Schools Trust and Reconciliation Commission in 2008, for example, resulted from intense political lobbying by Aboriginal organizations, not government eagerness to make amends.⁴⁰ Although haphazardly designed and inconsistently implemented across cases ranging from Acadian deportation to Ukrainian Canadian internment during World War I, the federal approach to redress has featured a common element: discursive emphasis on “turning the page,” or letting go of the past.⁴¹ In lieu of promoting collective dialogue about injustices and their lingering impact on members of the mosaic, Ottawa has “performed” remorse vis-à-vis wronged groups in order to buttress the nation’s reputation as a “multicultural beacon,” at the same time side-stepping an opportunity to facilitate critical reflections about Canadian history.⁴²

Political scientist Matt James argues that redress is a similarly problematic endeavour in British Columbia. Documenting reluctance to acknowledge the rampant anti-Asian racism that characterized BC settler society, James maintains that the province has an “amnesiac culture of memory” whereby it effectively ignores culpability for incidents like the Komagata Maru, the Chinese Canadian Head Tax, and Japanese Canadian internment.⁴³ According to James, this “vacuum of provincial memory” stems from “reparation displacement”: the shift in blame for (and responsibility to amend) historical injustices from local to national actors, which results in part from redress campaigns’ tendency to focus their energies on Ottawa via pathways provided under federal multiculturalism policies.⁴⁴ That the federal government carried out policies such as WWII internment—albeit as a result of intense pressure from BC—also conveniently allows the province to “escape potential controversies of historical reckoning while simultaneously avoiding the notoriety of the obvious recalcitrant denier.”⁴⁵ While the province has engaged in some degree of commemoration—a waterfront Komagata Maru memorial in Vancouver’s Burrard Inlet, for instance—James claims that pervasive aversion to historical acknowledgement has profound impact on social relationships within the province today. BC’s reluctance

to confront the past, he alleges, compounds distrust felt by ethno-cultural groups towards the province; denies an opportunity for the wider public to better understand the lived experiences of marginalized communities; and allows the prevailing narrative about BC's benign settler history to persist.⁴⁶ Echoing James' concerns, this study suggests that the province should be a more proactive partner in efforts to preserve the memory of injustices endured by BC's ethno-cultural minorities. By not participating "energetically and sincerely" in public education about WWII internment, the province has hindered a potentially powerful means by which to facilitate reconciliation between Japanese Canadians and British Columbia.⁴⁷

The Nikkei Experience in BC

Home to 95% of the Issei and Nisei living in Canada in 1941, British Columbia is at the epicenter of WWII internment history. No event akin to Pearl Harbor took place within Canada's borders, but the attack still triggered fervent calls for the removal of persons of Japanese ancestry from BC.⁴⁸ But with little evidence of sabotage or espionage by Japanese Canadians, removal ran contrary to the counsel of the Canadian Army and Navy, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Even so, influential politicians and business leaders in BC—fuelled by wartime hysteria and anti-Asian prejudice—pressured Prime Minister Mackenzie King to evoke the 1914 War Measures Act and create a 100-mile exclusion zone along the Pacific Coast.⁴⁹ Denied the franchise in British Columbia (and therefore ineligible to vote in federal elections), Issei and Nisei had little choice but to comply.⁵⁰

The Canadian government hastily purged over 22,000 Nikkei from BC, first by separating able-bodied men from their families and sending them to labour camps and road projects in remote areas of the country. Those still remaining—including women, children, and the elderly—were corralled in dirty animal pens at Vancouver's Hastings Park before being scattered to internment camps in ghost towns or "self-supporting" camps in the interior of British Columbia. Some families fought to stay together by relocating to Manitoba and Alberta, where they worked for a pittance on sugar beet farms. Those with the financial wherewithal (and patience to endure a burdensome process of obtaining work and residence permits from other Canadian provinces reluctant to assume BC's "problem") were able to join relatives already residing east of the Rockies.⁵¹

During the internment, Japanese Canadians endured cramped shacks, harsh weather, a humiliating lack of privacy, and poor access to medical care.⁵² The British Columbia Security Commission, which oversaw the removal and internment until the federal Department of Labour assumed responsibility in 1943, provided few essential services—including food and schooling—and forced Nikkei to foot the bill for their own confinement. Although the government confiscated and sold off Japanese Canadians' homes, shops, farms, and fishing boats, leaving many Issei and Nisei nearly destitute, any attempt to raise the meagre wages they received elicited criticism that inmates were being "coddled."⁵³ And despite having served in World War I, Nisei were barred from military enlistment during World War II until 1945,

when the British Army came seeking translators.⁵⁴

As the war concluded, still more hardship awaited Japanese Canadians. Whereas the U.S. government began closing its concentration camps and permitting Japanese Americans to return home to the West Coast in 1945, decisions regarding Japanese Canadians' fate took longer to emerge, making it increasingly difficult for Ottawa to disguise that racism and not wartime necessity or even protective custody underpinned the removal and confinement.⁵⁵ With nativist BC groups pushing for Nikkei to be permanently banned from the province, even those detainees with Canadian citizenship were urged to "repatriate" to Japan.⁵⁶ Japanese Canadians and a few key allies spent the next three years fighting to prevent deportation, to receive reparations for confiscated and short-sold property, and to obtain the right to vote.⁵⁷ In 1948, Japanese Canadians received the franchise in federal elections, and, in 1949, they were finally permitted to return to the Pacific Coast.⁵⁸ In 1950, when a federal commission offered a small compensation package, the newly formed National Japanese Canadians Citizens Association (which would later become the National Association of Japanese Canadians) and the Toronto-based Cooperative Committee on Japanese Canadians took the deal, believing they were unlikely to receive a better offer.⁵⁹ Unwillingness to press for fair reparations reveals the devastating impact of the forced removal, internment, and post-war dispersal on the Japanese Canadian community:

Tired, disillusioned, demoralized, intimidated, they were unwilling to endure the pain that resistance would require. They were also broke, and more concerned with rebuilding their shattered lives than with fighting what now seemed to be old battles. Perhaps most important of all, they were ashamed, and felt that the best way to remove the stigma of their experiences was to lie low, assimilate, and make the most of their new status (as of 1 April 1949) as full-fledged Canadians.⁶⁰

The Redress Movement

Confrontation with the history of WWII removal, interment, and dispersal became imminent after the end of the thirty-year restriction on public access to government records, which allowed researchers in the early 1970s to begin examining wartime documents related to Japanese Canadians. In 1976, Ken Adachi published *The Enemy That Never Was*, one of the first books to describe Nikkei as "victims of racism and bureaucracy" and to call for the Canadian government to be held accountable for the injustice.⁶¹ Marking a century since the arrival of the first Japanese immigrant to Canada, Nikkei across the country participated in 1977's yearlong heritage celebration featuring music performances, traditional dances, conferences, and community festivals. The Japanese Canadian Centennial Project also produced a photography exhibit, *The Dream of Riches*, which documented the Nikkei experience in Canada—including WWII expulsion, confinement, and dispersion.⁶² *The Dream of Riches* and other projects commemorating the centennial are credited with sparking

a sense of outrage among community members about the treatment of the Issei and Nisei during the war, and signified it was “OK to talk about Japanese Canadian history again.”⁶³

Influential books also nudged the emerging movement along. Ann Sunahara's *The Politics of Racism*, like Adachi's *Enemy that Never Was* before it, drew attention for its meticulously-researched account of the prejudice underpinning the wartime and post-war policies. Published in 1981, *Obasan* also brought Japanese Canadian history to the public's attention. Joy Kogawa, a Nisei, wrote the novel to reflect on her family's internment during the war, as well as to express dismay at the group silence regarding the trauma experienced by Japanese Canadians.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, many Issei and Nisei found the idea of requesting compensation incongruent with their belief in self-reliance after having laboured for decades to regain their economic status. Still traumatized by the internment, they also feared government reprisal and negative public opinion, and thus viewed activists as “namaiki” (too bold and too brash). Clashing in the Nikkei press and at heated community meetings, Japanese Canadians in Vancouver, Toronto, and nationwide fought fiercely amongst one another to determine the best course of action for pursuing redress.⁶⁵

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau—the architect of Canadian multiculturalism—did not favour government apology for historical injustices. In a statement made to the House of Commons in 1984, he dismissed the idea of Japanese Canadian redress, arguing that it would only invite innumerable requests from other groups; that present citizens should not be held accountable for unfortunate decisions of the past; and that he “did not believe in rewriting history.”⁶⁶ Instead, Trudeau urged Japanese Canadians to accept a deal for a \$5 million “Justice Institute” and an “expression of regret” from the government, which the National Association of Japanese Canadians (NAJC) rejected.⁶⁷ Although Trudeau's Liberal Party lost to Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative Party later that year, a change in attitude towards redress did not accompany the change in government, as the Conservative policymakers continued “the familiar political use of multiculturalism to promote Canadian unity, but with no commitment to real change in the status quo.”⁶⁸

When news arrived in August 1988 that President Ronald Reagan was expected to sign the U.S. Civil Liberties Act, which authorized an official apology and individual compensation for Japanese Americans, the Canadian government had little choice but to reconsider its position on redress for WWII internment, lest it look less compassionate than its North American neighbour.⁶⁹ Days later, NAJC representatives were summoned to Montreal for a meeting with Gerry Weiner, Minister of Multiculturalism, where a redress agreement was finally reached.⁷⁰ Acknowledging that “government policies of disenfranchisement, detention, confiscation and sale of private and community property, expulsion, deportation and restriction of movement, which continued after the war, were influenced by discriminatory attitudes,” Prime Minister Mulroney announced the terms of the agreement between the Government of Canada and the NAJC: \$21,000 in individual compensation to former internees; \$12 million provided to the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation to “undertake educational, social, and cultural activities or programmes that contribute

to the well-being of the Community or that promote human rights;” and a \$12 million fund to establish the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, which would “foster racial harmony and cross-cultural understanding to help to eliminate racism.”⁷¹

In the days that followed, the Canadian press generally expressed support for redress, conceding that the confinement represented “a shameful legacy for Canada, which likes to think of itself as a tolerant society without the kind of prejudice and conflict that has plagued other groups,” although some suspected the deal was a strategic move to attract Japanese Canadians and other so-called “visible minorities” to Mulroney’s Progressive Conservative party.⁷² Redress activists also bristled at the name given to the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, which they felt perpetuates an outdated concept of biologically distinct races.⁷³ Critics have since alleged that this crown corporation has performed very little outreach to Japanese Canadians over the last two decades, and generally failed to engage the community in collaborative efforts to inform the public about WWII internment.⁷⁴

Japanese Canadian National Museum

Years of battling the government—and each other—left the Japanese Canadian community exhausted and divided. Across the country, many Nikkei who participated in the redress movement remained deeply wounded by personal attacks made in Japanese Canadian newspapers such as the *New Canadian* and *Canada Times*. In British Columbia, these intra-community fractures complicated efforts to establish the Japanese Canadian National Museum (JCNM). When the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation authorized a \$3 million grant to build a heritage centre and museum alongside a senior housing complex, the Japanese Canadian community in BC became embroiled in a heated debate over the location of the new facility.⁷⁵ Many educators and redress activists wished to see it placed on Powell Street in Vancouver’s former Japantown, but the area had fallen prey to urban blight in the post-war era and had yet to recover.⁷⁶ Still home to the Japanese Language School and the Vancouver Buddhist Temple, both established in 1906, the neighbourhood holds important historical significance for the community; as such, many redress activists maintained that building the new complex there would hasten the area’s gentrification and encourage public interest in learning about Nikkei history. But a more conservative faction within the community felt that placing the complex in Japantown would be “too painful,” as the location would serve as a constant reminder of the suffering and loss experienced by Japanese Canadians. Others claimed that the area, rife with drug dealing and prostitution, was simply too dangerous for the seniors and their visiting families.⁷⁷

The conservative view ultimately won out, and community leaders accepted a deal from the provincial government to purchase a large parcel of land in Burnaby, located next to an electric power station and several stops away from downtown Vancouver via the SkyTrain, for a significantly discounted price.⁷⁸ In 2000, the Nikkei National Heritage Centre and Japanese Canadian National Museum opened to the public.

Building the JCNM in Burnaby was a missed opportunity to establish a direct

link between the museum and the community's history, but poor design hindered the facility as well. Hired as Executive Director shortly before the JCNM's inauguration, Grace Eiko Thomson was stunned by the small space reserved for the museum and its archives. The exhibit floor plan, essentially a square room, also lacked a necessary feature for a museum: walls. To Thomson, JCNM's design reflected "all wrong-thinking."⁷⁹ Despite her disappointment with the physical space, Thomson set to work on the museum's inaugural exhibit. Entitled *Reshaping Memory, Owning History: Through the Lens of Japanese Canadian Redress*, the exhibit directly confronted WWII removal, internment, and dispersal, as well as friction within the Japanese Canadian community during the redress movement. After touring across Canada, an abridged version remains tucked into an upstairs room at the Nikkei Centre, where it is used to teach visiting school groups about Japanese Canadian history—although students usually have to view the exhibit in small groups in order to fit into the compact space.⁸⁰

Internal issues also made things difficult for the JCNM. When the JCNM and Heritage Centre formally merged in 2002—thereafter managed by the same Board of Directors and renamed the National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre—tensions between the Board President and Thomson prompted her to resign.⁸¹ A BC social studies teacher who served on the merged Board describes the early 2000s as an "ugly" period for the JCNM. Shocked by the amount of money allocated for the Heritage Centre's cultural and recreational activities, the teacher pushed to increase the JCNM budget in order to improve the museum, especially its research and educational programs, which he believed should be the Centre's core function. He was not re-elected to a second term.⁸²

Even under these tumultuous conditions, the JCNM was able to develop educational resources about Nikkei history. Masako Fukawa, an elementary school teacher and principal from Vancouver Island, was hired as Education Coordinator in the early 2000s. Recognizing that not all schools could support field trips to Burnaby, she developed a "museum in a suitcase" containing various artefacts and a teacher's guide that could be loaned out. Fukawa also developed a program whereby students visiting the museum heard from internment survivors and redress activists (including her husband, Stan) and participated in cultural activities such as origami.⁸³ A series of part-time Education Coordinators succeeded Fukawa, but shrinking school budgets and an increasingly crowded BC curriculum contributed to a decline in the number of groups coming to the JCNM.⁸⁴

The JCNM's tough childhood may now be behind it, however. In 2009, the institution hired Beth Carter as Director-Curator. Conceding that the museum went through "many ups and downs" during its first ten years, she believes the JCNM has "proved that we can move forward as a professional, sustainable organization."⁸⁵ With a new strategic plan, new branding, and a new name (the facility again changed its title to the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre in 2012), the museum plans to establish a larger permanent gallery about Japanese Canadian history, which Carter views as essential for increasing school group visits. She also aims to fulfill the museum's national mandate by developing partnerships with other museums and

archives across Canada, and in the United States.⁸⁶

Staff turnover is also improving, and a full-time Education Coordinator was hired in 2011. By raising money from sources like the Vancouver Foundation and the BC Arts Council, the museum is steadily organizing and digitizing its archives, and is developing a national online clearinghouse for information on Japanese Canadian history. Carter has also mended fences with the Japanese Language School in Vancouver. Although the school was one of the oldest community buildings still standing, its administrators—smarting from the decision to put the Nikkei Centre in Burnaby and believing that the JCNM had stolen its limelight (and visitors)—had cut ties with the museum. Today, however, the school’s director and Carter have developed joint projects such as a walking tour of Powell Street.⁸⁷

Contentious Curricula

While internal problems beleaguered the JCNM, another project encountered external obstacles. In 2001, the BC Ministry of Education announced plans to update the Grade 11 social studies curriculum, noting that the redesigned guidelines would incorporate social justice themes and critical thinking approaches. Believing that a unit on Japanese Canadian history fit this bill perfectly, Masako Fukawa—who developed the JCNM “museum in a suitcase” a few years earlier—submitted a proposal to develop a resource on WWII removal, internment, and dispersal. Rejecting Fukawa’s request, the Ministry informed her that the project did not meet its criteria, which Fukawa found outrageous given that units on the Holocaust and on the War in the Pacific both received funding. Fukawa and other members of the British Columbia Teachers Federation appointed to examine the content of the Grade 11 curriculum believed this signalled the Ministry’s “reluctance to partner with or represent ethnocultural minorities,” and that the provincial government wanted curricula that focused on “WWII tragedies that occurred outside of the country, not within it.”⁸⁸

When Fukawa demanded that the Ministry reconsider her proposal, she received a response that the Japanese Canadian experience could be “tacked onto the Pacific unit.” Angered by what she perceived as the Ministry’s insinuation that WWII removal and internment resulted from Japanese imperialism rather than a historical injustice of the province’s own making, Fukawa implored the Nikkei Centre Board, the Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens Association (GVJCCA), and the NAJC to write letters of support for the project.⁸⁹ In 2002, the Ministry finally authorized a \$70,000 grant to Fukawa and her team of local educators to develop a Grade 11 curriculum guide on WWII internment and redress.⁹⁰

Rick Beardsley was a key contributor to the guide. As a social studies teacher at Steveston High School in the early 1970s, Beardsley decided to develop a unit on local links to Japanese Canadian history.⁹¹ Discovering a dearth of teaching resources on the subject, Beardsley examined an edited volume by James Banks at the University of Washington, which included some of the earliest published lesson plans about Japanese American confinement. During the winter of 1974, he drove to WWII internment camp locations in the BC interior to experience the

harsh conditions first-hand. By decade's end, Beardsley had successfully crafted a comprehensive unit that challenged students, via primary documents and a mock Parliamentary Committee simulation, to debate whether military necessity had justified WWII removal and confinement.⁹²

In 1983, Beardsley joined a team of educators assigned to update the BC social studies curriculum. When he suggested that WWII internment, the Komagata Maru, and the Chinese Canadian Head Tax should be addressed in the guidelines, the province's Director of Curriculum and Director of Resources refused to do so. Beardsley subsequently advocated for a compromise whereby the 1985 curriculum recommended that teachers "investigate the experiences of Japanese Canadians, Chinese Canadians, and Southeast Asians, or any other groups significant to your local area."⁹³

The BC Ministry of Education later hired Beardsley to contribute to a secondary-level social studies textbook. Beardsley was impressed by the manuscript's treatment of Japanese Canadian internment, covered over seven pages of the book. When sent out for review, however, the manuscript was not well received by Ministry officials or BC teachers. Many believed WWII internment, because it only impacted 22,000 people, was too small an event to receive such extensive coverage. Others felt uncomfortable with the assessment that Canada, and BC in particular, was rampant with racism in the early twentieth century. After a contentious meeting about the manuscript's negative appraisal, Beardsley sent the BC Director of Curriculum, Director of Resources, and Social Studies Coordinator a bibliography of scholarship on WWII internment; apparently offended by his tactic, the Ministry terminated him from the project.⁹⁴

The achievement of redress in 1988 brought about a "sea change" at the Ministry of Education and in BC schools, according to Beardsley. His suggestion to include WWII internment and redress in the 1997 edition of the BC social studies curriculum was readily accepted.⁹⁵ But whereas the subject had become more palatable for teachers and school officials in BC, some members of the Japanese Canadian community remained uncomfortable with Beardsley's approach to teaching about their ordeal. Late one evening in 1992, Beardsley received a phone call from a Nisei and former elementary school teacher who pleaded with him to cancel a workshop on his resource guide, "The Internment of Japanese Canadians in World War II," at a conference the next day. The caller was upset that the guide included excerpts from Patricia Roy and J.L. Granatstein's controversial 1990 book, *Mutual Hostages*, which compared the experiences of Japanese Canadians and Canadian POWs in Japan. Beardsley's curriculum used the book to illustrate the erroneous connections made between Japanese Canadians and Japanese nationals—during the war and long after—but community members feared it perpetuated misinformation.⁹⁶

Sensitive to community elders' concerns, Beardsley did not press forward with plans to publish "The Internment of Japanese Canadians in World War II" or distribute it more widely. Nevertheless, he continued to workshop the resource, and encouraged new teachers such as Mike Whittingham to use the unit in their classrooms.⁹⁷ The pair eagerly agreed to join Fukawa's team when she received the grant from the BC Ministry of Education in 2002. Other contributors included teachers from the

Richmond, Burnaby, and Coquitlam districts; Stan Fukawa; and Mary and Tosh Kitagawa of the GVJCCA Human Rights Committee.

The group produced a draft of their curriculum guide, *Internment and Redress: The Japanese Canadian Experience*, in less than a year. Utilizing Beardsley's mock hearing approach and challenging students to consider multiple perspectives on the removal and internment, the curriculum also included a number of "smoking gun" documents that made it nearly impossible for students to miss the "stereotyping and overgeneralization that plagued leaders in the winter of 1942."⁹⁸ The team also assembled an elementary-level resource guide, as many team members believed it was critical to introduce students to the topic at a young age.⁹⁹

Although the BC Ministry of Education (reluctantly) provided funding to develop the unit, its support suddenly vanished when the time came to print and distribute it. Fukawa refused to seek another publisher, however, because she felt very strongly that the Ministry should issue the curriculum, which described WWII internment as "a black mark on the history of a nation that prides itself on its diversity, its tolerance and its multicultural policies."¹⁰⁰ To these educators and activists, the guide represented an act of contrition by the province that was (at that time) yet to issue its own apology for its treatment of Japanese Canadians:

I suppose the government thought they had done that by giving funding to the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation. They may think they abdicated their responsibility, but I think—redress or not—that's part of our history and to just ignore it is wrong.¹⁰¹

Fed up with the Ministry's stall tactics, Beardsley, Whittingham, and the other educators on the team used photocopies of the materials in their classrooms and in workshops around the province.¹⁰² A frustrated Fukawa again turned to the NAJC and other community groups to write letters demanding that the province follow through and produce the resource.¹⁰³ Two years after the group completed work on the unit, the Ministry finally published *Internment and Redress: The Japanese Canadian Experience* and distributed it to schools throughout BC. Today, the teacher's guides are available for purchase via the Japanese Canadian National Museum, but many of the educators who contributed feel that, with more provincial support, the guides could have reached a broader array of schools—within and beyond British Columbia.¹⁰⁴ Satisfied with their accomplishment, and that the topic is at least mentioned in the 2005 Grade 11 curriculum for BC social studies, several educators who assembled the curricula remain offended and disturbed by the "song and dance" that they allege the Ministry put them through to get there.¹⁰⁵

Honours and Dishonours

By the mid-2000s, numerous U.S. colleges, universities, and high schools had provided honorary degrees to Nikkei forced to withdraw from school due to WWII exclusion. Upon learning that the University of Washington had recently granted

honorary degrees to its former Japanese American students, Mary Kitagawa of the GVJCCA Human Rights Committee organized a working group to petition the University of British Columbia to grant honorary degrees in 2010.¹⁰⁶ Kitagawa believed that the university's actions during the war obligated it to do right by its former students: unlike some universities in the U.S., which spoke out against WWII removal and confinement and helped Japanese American students transfer to schools outside of the exclusion zone, UBC did not protest the exclusion, nor did it provide assistance to Nikkei students in 1942.¹⁰⁷

Arguing that the university did not technically expel any Japanese Canadian students, UBC initially denied the request to issue honorary degrees, but finally relented under continued pressure from the GVJCCA and the NAJC. In May 2012, seven decades after being forced to withdraw from school, seventy-six former Japanese Canadian students were honoured at a special university convocation.¹⁰⁸

That same month, British Columbia apologized for its role in WWII internment. Introduced by Naomi Yamamoto, the first Japanese Canadian elected to the provincial government, the motion acknowledged the province's culpability in pushing for the enactment of the War Measures Act, and for confiscating and selling off Nikkei property. New Democratic Party Leader Adrian Dix, recalling that the province also wanted to permanently ban Japanese Canadians from returning to BC after WWII, commemorated the occasion as an opportunity to "reflect on our past—which we often do with pride—with some realism."¹⁰⁹

An unfortunate development has cast doubt on BC's change of heart, however. In March 2013, a leaked "multicultural outreach plan" revealed that the BC Liberal government had been urged by the party to "score quick political 'wins' by identifying and correcting historical wrongs."¹¹⁰ Although Yamamoto virulently denies that the gesture had anything to do with politics, the Liberal government received the dubious policy memo just months prior to its apology to Japanese Canadians. Some Nikkei maintain that, rather than making amends, the Liberal party has "stained" reconciliation efforts in BC and perpetuated distrust amongst Japanese Canadians towards the province. As seventy-eight-year-old internment survivor Tosh Suzuki put it, "I am persuaded that [MLA Yamamoto's] effort was most genuine and sincere. What I am questioning is what was going on in the dark halls of the legislature? That's the question that lingers."¹¹¹

Reconciliation and Resistance to Forgetting

Considering the obstacles they faced, educators and activists in BC have made significant achievements in preserving the memory of WWII internment. In addition to the accomplishments highlighted in this article, these individuals have successfully challenged how WWII internment is represented in Hastings Park; blocked the naming of a federal building in downtown Vancouver after a former government official who espoused anti-Nikkei views; preserved historically significant sites throughout BC; and ensured that the subject is addressed in school textbooks and provincial curriculum guidelines.¹¹² Yet what accounts for the frustrations they experienced along

the way, and what does this suggest about the state of reconciliation for WWII internment in BC?

Within the Japanese Canadian community, an ongoing sense of distrust towards the province, stemming from BC's role in advocating for WWII internment in 1942, made few elders eager to draw public attention to their experiences. A lack of political representation and inter-generational tensions also confounded educators and activists' attempts to gain support for educational initiatives. At the same time, by initially denying redress, and by largely avoiding participation in educational activities thereafter, the federal government provided minimal opportunity for Canadians to understand the lessons learned from a national mistake such as WWII internment, nor its long-term impact on the Nikkei community. Ottawa's approach to redress also failed to create incentive for BC to confront its own responsibility for WWII internment, or to reconsider how this episode should be commemorated. Moreover, by repeatedly demonstrating disinclination to highlight WWII internment as an important event in BC history, public institutions signaled little interest in preserving the memory of events that challenge prevailing narratives about the province's past. Given this shared reluctance to revisit WWII internment via collaborative education initiatives, reconciliation between Japanese Canadians and BC seems elusive.

Educators and activists' efforts to inform the public about WWII internment have been impeded by factors related to the Japanese Canadian historical experience. Pressured to disperse across the country and traumatized by WWII internment, many Nikkei laid low, focused on pursuing an education, and sought to thoroughly integrate into the Canadian middle class.¹¹³ As young adults in the 1970s, however, Sansei—inspired by growing calls for recognition of minority rights and bolstered by new scholarship documenting the racism and war hysteria that motivated WWII internment—urged Issei and Nisei to confront their WWII experiences and to participate in pursuing redress. Despite the movement's eventual victory in 1988, community elders in BC remained apprehensive about public commemoration of Nikkei history; recall, for example, the decision to locate the Japanese Canadian National Museum in Burnaby rather than in Vancouver's former Japantown. The tendency to fund cultural or recreational activities rather than historical preservation or public education activities further suggests that surviving internees preferred to avoid drawing attention to a time when Nikkei were considered "unassimilable aliens." It is also likely that the relatively small Nikkei population in BC, combined with continued unease about their status as citizens, contributed to a lack of Japanese Canadians in political office: Naomi Yamamoto, as noted earlier, became the first Nikkei to win a seat in the BC Legislative Assembly in 2009. Educators and activists in BC have thus only recently gained a political ally who might help move WWII internment from the margins and into the mainstream of public memory.

BC's apology (despite the dubious policy memo) and recent restructuring at the JCNM are promising new developments, but this case study suggests that a sense of vulnerability has dampened Nikkei participation in educational initiatives about WWII internment—a wartime policy carried out by Ottawa at BC's behest. Neither the federal nor provincial government has done a stellar job at regaining Japanese

Canadians' civic trust. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Ottawa refused to extend redress to Japanese Canadians; many critics allege that it only eventually did so to avoid political embarrassment when the U.S. passed legislation authorizing redress for Japanese Americans in 1988. Acting consistently with its own multiculturalism policies whereby ethno-cultural groups are permitted to make autonomous decisions about what is in their best interest, the federal government then provided funds to the Japanese Canadian Redress Foundation, an independent entity administered by and for Japanese Canadians. By disengaging from direct involvement in educational activities thereafter, the government (and its proxy, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation) effectively signalled that repairing the damage done by WWII internment was up to Japanese Canadians, and not a Canadian concern. As a consequence, the federal government neither set an example nor created incentives for Canadians to engage in critical reflection about ethno-cultural minorities' experiences or how past injustices continue to impact such communities. Instead, Ottawa appears to have acted in accordance with a "culture of redress" that seeks to impose historical closure on national mistakes like WWII internment.

British Columbia has similarly sought to "turn the page" on this historic wrong. Although Ottawa evoked the War Measures Act in 1942 in large part to appease BC nationalists, the provincial government and other public institutions seem less-than-eager to highlight less-than-laudable attempts to create a "white man's province" during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Educators and activists, on the other hand, believe that BC is an intergenerational polity and has therefore inherited a responsibility to acknowledge sins of the past. Reparation displacement—brought about in part by redress activists' decision to target the federal rather than provincial government—has seemingly allowed BC to perpetuate an "amnesiac culture of memory" regarding its culpability for WWII internment.¹¹⁴ In response, educators and activists have engaged in acts of remembrance to challenge silences about WWII internment and other historical injustices: recall, for example, that UBC required significant prodding by community activists before conceding to an event commemorating its former Japanese Canadian students, and that educators repeatedly clashed with the Ministry of Education about the representation of WWII internment in curricular materials well after the federal government's 1988 apology.

To these educators and activists, reshaping public memory about WWII internment necessarily involves challenging dominant narratives about BC's benign settler past. But whereas some of these individuals viewed BC's reluctance to participate in educational initiatives about WWII internment arising from a hegemonic imperative to maintain control over public history, the province may not be engaged in a calculated, conscious attempt to whitewash the past. Instead, public institutions in BC may adhere to the belief that the purpose of public history is to promote consensus and unity amongst citizens; future research might investigate BC policymakers' attitudes towards public education about WWII internment, and whether they fear that a "surfeit of memory" regarding historical injustices will trigger inter-ethnic tensions rather than foster social cohesion.

BC's selective amnesia may be motivated by a desire to maintain civic unity, but

this case study suggests that such an approach is ultimately counterproductive: reluctance to remember WWII internment seems to have hindered reconciliation between Japanese Canadians and British Columbia. Silence and forgetting has done little to build trust or mutual understanding. Public education, on the other hand, promotes reconciliation by bringing representatives from the wronged group and the wider public together to engage in a collective renegotiation about the past. When they disseminate a revised account of an historical injustice, public institutions not only signal that the wronged group are considered important members of society, but also vow to prohibit this type of unjust treatment in the future. At the same time, educational activities provide opportunity for the wider public to better understand how an injustice has impacted the injured group. By spreading new knowledge about the injustice, public education repairs civic trust and serves as “reparation through memory.”¹¹⁵

Achieving reconciliation in the wake of injustices is a challenge facing nations worldwide, yet researchers are unsure whether collective confrontation with the past is possible in a society where some degree of integration and trust-building has not already occurred.¹¹⁶ Public education represents an important step towards escaping such a conundrum, but this intervention will not work if calls for historical recognition are left unanswered by public institutions and government leaders. With an increasingly diverse population, BC needs a collective history that allows groups to live together as fellow citizens, but also as Canadians who will remember the dark episodes in the past as a means to prevent them from happening again. This case study suggests that the federal and provincial government must work harder to demonstrate that their apologies are more than empty pledges, and to counter charges that multiculturalism policies whitewash the past. Canadian public institutions should participate in educational initiatives about historical injustices in order to truly make amends with wronged groups; in so doing, the nation and the province will reaffirm a shared commitment to multiculturalism, and to the protection of rights and freedoms for all citizens.

Notes

- 1 Patricia Roy, *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858–1914* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 1989), 265–268.
- 2 Peter Seixas and Penney Clark, “Obsolete Icons and the Teaching of History,” in *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada*, ed. Penney Clark (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 282–283.
- 3 Elazar Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations: Restitution and Negotiating Historical Injustices* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000) 320, 328–330, 348.
- 4 Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness: Facing History after Genocide and Mass Violence* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998), 4–5.
- 5 Pablo de Greiff, “The Role of Apologies in National Reconciliation Processes,” in *The Age of Apology: Facing Up to the Past*, ed. Mark Gibney, Rhoda E. Howard-Hassman, Jean-Marc Coicaud and Niklaus Steiner (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 121.

- 6 Matt James, "Scaling Memory: Reparation Displacement and the Case of BC," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 42, no. 02 (2009): 363.
- 7 Scholars argue that WWII internment is more likely to be addressed in Canadian schools today than prior to redress in 1988; see Ken Montgomery, "Imagining the Antiracist State: Representations of Racism in Canadian History Textbooks" in *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education* 26, no. 4 (2005): 427-442.
- 8 John Gillis, *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 20.
- 9 Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 21-22.
- 10 Gillis, *Commemorations*, 3.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 8-9.
- 13 Jenéa Tallentire, "Strategies of Memory: History, Social Memory, and the Community," *Social History/Histoire Sociale* 34, no. 67 (2001): 205.
- 14 Masumi Izumi, "Reclaiming and Reinventing 'Powell Street': Reconstruction of the Japanese Canadian Community in Post-World War II Vancouver," in *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Louis Fiset and Gail M. Nomura (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2005), 308-333.
- 15 Gillis, *Commemorations*.
- 16 David Glassberg, "Public History and the Study of Memory," *The Public Historian* 18, no. 2 (1996): 7-23.
- 17 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities, Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, UK: Verso, 2006), 6-7.
- 18 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 12.
- 19 For more, see Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1991).
- 20 Glassberg, "Public History and the Study of Memory," 11.
- 21 John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), and Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).
- 22 Jennifer Henderson and Pauline Wakeham, eds., "Introduction," in *Reconciling Canada: Critical Perspectives on the Culture of Redress* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 16.
- 23 Seminal works on this subject include Nancy Fraser, *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the 'Postsocialist' Condition* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997); Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1995); and Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994);
- 24 Nora, "Between Memory and History," 15.
- 25 For more, see Dee Horne, *Contemporary American Indian Writing: Unsettling Literature* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 1999).
- 26 Eva Mackey, "The Apologizers' Apology," in *Reconciling Canada*, 49.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 158-163.
- 29 Charles Meir, "A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy and Denial," *History and Memory* 5, no. 2 (1994). 137.

- 30 J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto, ON: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998), 5-6; see also Robert Bothwell and Granatstein, *Our Century: The Canadian Journey in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto, ON: McArthur, 2000), 250.
- 31 Barkan, *The Guilt of Nations*, xl.
- 32 Rhoda E. Howard-Hassman, and Mark Gibney, "Introduction: Apologies and the West," in *The Age of Apology*, 1-9.
- 33 Janna Thompson, "Apology, Justice, and Respect: A Critical Defense of Political Apology," in *The Age of Apology*, 1-9.
- 34 Martin Heisler, "Introduction: The Political Currency of the Past: History, Memory, and Identity," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 617, (2008): 16.
- 35 Robert Weyeneth, "The Power of Apology and the Process of Historical Reconciliation," *The Public Historian* 23, no. 3 (2001): 32-33.
- 36 de Greiff, "The Role of Apologies," 121
- 37 *Ibid.*
- 38 Elizabeth Ann Cole, "Introduction: Reconciliation and History Education," in *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation*, ed. Elizabeth Ann Cole (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 16.
- 39 Pauline Wakeham, "Rendition and Redress: Maher Arar, Apology, Exceptionality," in *Reconciling Canada*, 290.
- 40 Henderson and Wakeham, "Introduction," 4.
- 41 Matt James, "Neoliberal Heritage Redress," in *Reconciling Canada*, 33-46.
- 42 Henderson and Wakham, "Introduction," 13.
- 43 Roy, *White Man's Province*, and Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia* (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978).
- 44 James, "Scaling Memory," 372.
- 45 *Ibid.*, 353.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 380-381.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 364.
- 48 By 1941, approximately 30% of the Nikkei population in BC was Canadian-born. Even so, Issei and Nisei constituted a tiny fraction (2.7%) of the population in BC at the time of the exclusion order; Ward, *White Canada Forever*, 110.
- 49 Greg Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy: Japanese Confinement in North America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 74-79; 132-136.
- 50 This is not to say that Japanese Canadians passively accepted their fate. The Nisei Mass Evacuation Group protested the break-up of families and resisted transfer to road work camps. Rounded up and placed in POW camps in Ontario, these individuals inspired smaller acts of resistance by hundreds of other Issei and Nisei men; Roy Miki, *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004), 57-85.
- 51 Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 171-175.
- 52 *Ibid.*, 88.
- 53 *Ibid.*, 178.
- 54 *Ibid.*, 216.
- 55 Tomoko Makabe, *The Canadian Sansei* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 25-30.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 269.
- 57 For more on the post-war period, see Stephanie Bangarth, *Voices Raised in Protest: Defending North American Citizens of Japanese Ancestry, 1942-49* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2008).
- 58 Robinson, *A Tragedy of Democracy*, 274.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 284-285.

- 60 Audrey Kobayashi, "The Japanese-Canadian Redress Settlement and its Implications for Race Relations," *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 24, 1 (1992):1-19.
- 61 Kevin Donovan, "Author and Critic, Ken Adachi, Taught Beloved Literature," *Toronto Star*, 11 February 1989.
- 62 Miki, *Redress*, 144; 314.
- 63 Mayumi Takasaki, in discussion with the author, August 2011.
- 64 National Association of Japanese Canadians, "Joy Kogawa," http://www.najc.ca/thenandnow/today_kogawa.php (accessed 7 October 2012).
- 65 Miki, *Redress*, 63-168.
- 66 Martha Minow, *Breaking the Cycles of Hatred: Memory Law, and Repair* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 124-125.
- 67 Miki, *Redress*, 317.
- 68 *Ibid.*, 297.
- 69 *Ibid.*, 272.
- 70 Miki, *Redress*, 306-307.
- 71 Arthur Miki, *The Japanese Canadian Redress Legacy: A Community Revitalized* (Winnipeg, MB: National Association of Japanese Canadians, 2003), 178-179.
- 72 Herbert H. Denton, "Ottawa to Pay Reparations for War Internees," *Washington Post*, 23 September 1988.
- 73 Roy Miki, in discussion with the author, May 2010.
- 74 Interview respondents who shared their concerns about the CRRF asked for these comments to be kept anonymous.
- 75 Takasaki, August 2011.
- 76 *Ibid.*
- 77 Randy Enomoto, in discussion with the author, August 2011.
- 78 Grace Eiko Thomson, in discussion with the author, September 2011.
- 79 *Ibid.*
- 80 Raymond Nakamura, in discussion with the author, August 2011.
- 81 Thomson, September 2011.
- 82 Although the BC teacher in question did not ask to be kept anonymous, I do so here in order to prevent any bad blood between him and former JCNM Board members. The interview was conducted in Richmond, BC, in August 2011.
- 83 Masako Fukawa, in discussion with the author, September 2011.
- 84 Nakamura, August 2011.
- 85 Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Association, "Kizuna: Connecting Through Generations," *The Bulletin*, 20 October 1910.
- 86 Beth Carter, in discussion with the author, August 2011.
- 87 *Ibid.*
- 88 Rick Beardsley, in discussion with the author, September 2011.
- 89 Fukawa, September 2011.
- 90 *Ibid.*
- 91 Steveston was home to the second-largest Nikkei settlement before WWII. Today, the town has an elementary school named after Tomekichi Homma, a community activist who fought (unsuccessfully) for the franchise; for more, see Keiki Tenney-Sean Homma and Carey Georgia Isaksson, *Tomekichi Homma: The Story of a Canadian* (Surrey, B.C.: Hancock House Publishers, 2008).
- 92 Beardsley, September 2011.
- 93 *Ibid.*
- 94 *Ibid.*
- 95 *Ibid.*
- 96 *Ibid.*
- 97 *Ibid.*

- 98 British Columbia Ministry of Education, *Internment and Redress: The Japanese Canadian Experience—A Resource Guide for Social Studies 11 Teachers* (Victoria, BC: Ministry of Education, 2002), 10.
- 99 Fukawa, September 2011.
- 100 British Columbia Ministry of Education, *Internment and Redress*, 10.
- 101 Fukawa, September 2011.
- 102 Beardsley, September 2011.
- 103 Fukawa, September 2011.
- 104 Mike Whittingham, in discussion with the author, August 2011.
- 105 *Ibid.*
- 106 Mike Hagar, “UBC to Honour Japanese-Canadian Students Sent to Internment Camps 70 Years Ago,” *The Vancouver Sun*, 18 November 2011.
- 107 *Ibid.*
- 108 Heather Amos, “Japanese Canadian Students Tribute: Symposium and Honorary Degree Ceremony,” <http://www.publicaffairs.ubc.ca/2012/03/15/japanese-canadian-students-tribute-symposium-and-honorary-degree-ceremony> (accessed 7 October 2012).
- 109 Michael Booth, “Seventy Years Later, BC Apologizes,” *Now*, 10 May 2012.
- 110 Justine Hunter, “Doubts Cast Over B.C. Liberals’ Apology for Japanese Internment Camps,” *The Globe and Mail*, 10 March 2013.
- 111 *Ibid.*
- 112 For more on these and other examples, see Kirsten Emiko McAllister, *Terrain of Memory: A Japanese Canadian Memorial Project* (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2010); Ben Hamamoto, “Vancouver Building Renaming Aborted After Outcry from Canadian Nikkei,” *Nichi Bei Times*, 15 March 2007; Greater Vancouver Japanese Canadian Citizens Association, “In Conversation with Art Miki,” *The Bulletin*, 3 August 2008; and Gail Sjuberg, “District Helps Redress Historic Wrong at Galiano,” *Gulf Islands Driftwood*, 25 November 2012.
- 113 Ann Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism* (Toronto, ON: Lorimer, 1981), 149-150.
- 114 James, “Scaling Memory,” 372-373.
- 115 Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness*, 119.
- 116 Examples from this emerging literature include Rosalie Metro, “Postconflict History Curriculum Revision as an ‘Intergroup Encounter’: Promoting Interethnic Reconciliation among Burmese Migrants and Refugees in Thailand,” *Comparative Education Review* 57, no. 1 (2013): 145-168; Eric Stover and Harvey M. Weinstein, eds., *My Neighbor, My Enemy: Justice and Community in the Aftermath of Mass Atrocity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004); and Sarah Warshauer Freedman et. al., “Teaching History after Identity-Based Conflicts: The Rwanda Experience” in *Comparative Education Review* 52, no. 4 (2008): 663-690.