

Landscapes of Injustice



Research News and Project Updates

Fall 2015

Lansdowne Middle School “Whose History is This?” project

Kerry Quinn

As a part of our Socials and Language Arts curriculum, Catherine Beaulac and I, grade 7 teachers at Lansdowne Middle School, teamed up for a new and exciting project. The name of the project is ‘Whose History Is This?’ and it concentrates on learning about Canada's history with an emphasis on marginalized communities.

The first part of the project consisted of mini-lessons, each week focussing on a different community. The lessons included a variety of teaching techniques to appeal to a diversity of learning styles including guest speakers, field trips, video clips, structured activities, and assignments. The six weeks of lessons included the following topics: Women's Rights, Acadian displacement, the internment of Japanese Canadians during WWII, LBGQT history and rights, Chinese labourers during railroad construction and Residential Schools.

The second part of the project had the students organize their research into exhibits that was displayed in our collaborative museum and showcased to the rest of the school and to parents on Monday, December 7 and Tuesday, December 8th.

We were incredibly grateful to Michael Abe from Landscapes of Injustice who arranged for Dr. Henry Shimizu and Professor Jordan Stanger-Ross to come speak to our classes. The students were very engaged listening to Dr. Shimizu's stories of life in the internment camp at New Denver and seeing his beautiful art work. Jordan's discussion with the students provoked them to think about why it's important to study history and about social justice implications and consequences of government policy decisions.



Dr. Henry Shimizu talking to students about life in New Denver



Exile-Leaving Prince Rupert - Images of Internment Henry Shimizu



*Japanese Canadian internment display at the Lansdowne
“Whose History Is It?” collaborative museum*

Community Council

Vivian Rygnestad

At the end of September, the Community Council presented to the AGM of the National Association of Japanese Canadians after Jordan Stanger-Ross and Sherri Kajiware. Communication to and from the Japanese Canadian community is essential, and we were pleased to be invited.

The following is a summary of the Community Council's presentation as well as our thoughts afterwards:

- The CC feels it important to develop more interest in our history and to educate our own community as well as the general public. Our history is an integral part of Canadian history and must be taught in schools.
- We find that many Japanese Canadians take our history for granted. We often overlook our challenges and the many individual and group accomplishments. Sadly, stories from our elders are gradually being lost.
- We feel that the Landscapes of Injustice project needs more exposure within the Japanese-Canadian community. We realize that as a Community Council we play a major role in raising awareness and credibility for both the CC and LoI. By presenting at the NAJC AGM we feel that the role of the Community Council was highlighted. As part of our outreach we encouraged the delegates and other participants to take the information back to their groups for discussion.
- We were interested in and learned from reports from some of the organizations within the NAJC and we had many opportunities for informal conversations during the AGM. We thank the NAJC for inviting the Community Council. As a Community Council we will continue to represent the Japanese Canadian community to the Landscapes of Injustice project.

Landscapes of Injustice would like to congratulate Vivian for being chosen for one of the University of BC's Faculty of Education 100 Outstanding Alumni to commemorate their centennial.



Vivian Rygnestad

For dedication, impact and leadership as an educator and in community service:

In her retirement, Vivian continues to learn and to actively support education and educators in BC. She also continues to tirelessly work within the Japanese Canadian community in the areas of social justice and history.

For Vivian's full profile on the UBC website, visit <http://educ.ubc.ca/person/vivian-rygnestad/>

Touched By Dispossession

We would love to hear your stories. A section on the project website conveys stories that readers have submitted. These include firsthand accounts or stories of their JC neighbours as well as memories passed down through generations. The stories of people touched by the dispossession are an important resource that we hope to preserve.

<http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com/touched-by-dispossession/>

Connect with us

Like us on Facebook and stay updated on news and events on the project and in the Nikkei community

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Landscapes-of-Injustice/717741814954269>

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/LandscapesInjus

Invite your friends and colleagues to sign up for the newsletter on the website or facebook.

<http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com/subscribe-newsletter/>

Oral History Cluster

Ottawa Oral History Workshop

On December 12, 2015, from 10:00 am - 3:00 pm, Joshua Labove from the Oral History Cluster of the Landscapes of Injustice Project will be leading a workshop for the Ottawa Japanese Canadian Association. The workshop is an exciting partnership between the Ottawa chapter of the National Association of Japanese Canadians and the Landscapes of Injustice Project, helping to kickstart the OJCA's new oral history program, and introducing the Landscapes project to the Ottawa community.

If you are interested in participating in the workshop, register by the deadline, December 6, 2015. Space is limited!

To register, send your name and contact information to ojca_ojcc@yahoo.ca. Include

- a sentence or two about your expectations for the workshop
- any dietary restrictions (for the lunch)
- special requirements (e.g., child care; transportation)

Time: 10:00 – 3:00 p.m. (lunch will be provided)

Place: OJCC, 2285 St. Laurent Blvd., Unit B16

Cost: Free for OJCA/OJCC members. Non-members pay \$30, and will receive an OJCA/OJCC membership

The OJCA gratefully acknowledges the support of the Landscapes of Injustice project, and the Dept. of Canadian Heritage's "World War Commemorations Community Fund."

Lots of HR Transitions for the Oral History Cluster

There have been many personnel transitions within the Oral History Cluster in the latter half of 2015. First, we bid a fond farewell to several members of our team in August. We congratulate Momoye Sugiman and Alicia Fong, two of our Oral History Researchers, who graduated from their MA program at Ryerson University. We also wish good luck to Elena Kusaka, who had been working as a Research Coordinator and Videographer for the cluster for most of 2015; Elena returned home in August to be closer to her family in British Columbia.

We were excited to welcome three new researchers, Eglantina Bacaj-Gondia, Peter Hur and Liam Stormonth to our cluster in September. They are all pursuing MA degrees at Ryerson University, and are already making great contributions to our research.

Finally for 2015, we have to say a temporary farewell to our Postdoctoral Fellow, Dr. Heather Read for a great reason; Heather will be heading off on maternity leave as of December 18th! We wish Heather and her family all the best, and hope to see her back in the cluster next year. In the meantime, we are lucky to have a deep well of talent in our cluster. Joshua Labove, already one of our cluster researchers, is excited to be transitioning into Heather's role in January.

Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall

The Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall (VJLS-JH) are pleased to announce the hiring of Momoko Ito as the first general manager of the Japanese Hall. Momoko was previously the operations manager at Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre in New Denver, and was a recipient of the BC Arts Council Early Career Development grant in partnership with the Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre. In this new role, Momoko will be working together with the board, school and facility staff to promote the school and the Japanese Hall while supporting new and existing programming and enhancing the day-to-day operations.



Momoko and "Big Icelandic Tomcat"

Founded in 1906, VJLS-JH is the oldest Japanese language school in Canada. A unique and special institution in the history of Vancouver and Canada, it is the only pre-war property remaining within the Japanese Canadian community after the internment of the Second World War. The school currently has two divisions – Children's World, a licensed daycare and preschool facility in the newly restored 1928 heritage building, and VJLS-JH, which offers K-12 Japanese language instruction and classes for adult learners. The school also maintains a strong community partnership and rents facilities to numerous local and cultural groups, as well as working to promote cultural experiences through public outreach and cultural events. To learn more about the school, programs, and rental facilities, please visit www.vjls-jh.com.

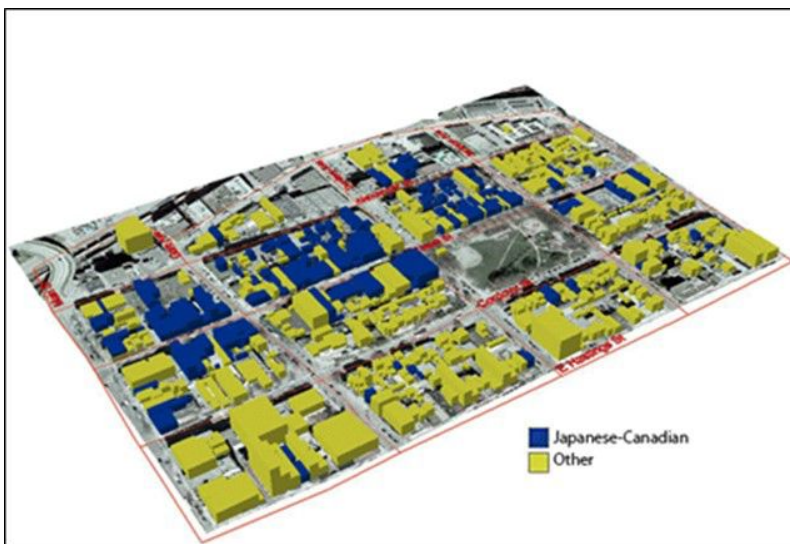
Historical GIS (Geographic Information System)

Cluster Chair: Reuben Rose-Redwood

Research Assistants: Sonja Aagesen, Samantha Bets, and Jacqueline Clare

The Historical GIS Research Cluster is currently completing the digitization of historical fire insurance maps of the expanded Powell Street study area in Vancouver to better understand how the dispossession of Japanese Canadians reshaped the social geography and built the environment of the city. Once completed, the cluster will then examine the spatial patterns of changes in property ownership, residence, and land use as well as produce a series of geovisualizations of the research findings for the Powell Street neighbourhood. These research results will provide the basis for a jointly-authored article to be submitted to the journal, *Urban History*, within the next year, which we have proposed to present at the 2016 Canadian Historical Association conference. Research assistants (Sonja Aagesen and Samantha Bets) also presented the cluster's preliminary results at the BC Studies Conference in May 2015 and at SFU's GIS Day event in November 2015.

This past summer, the research team began digitizing historical maps for the other study areas of Steveston, Maple Ridge, and Salt Spring Island, and the cluster also provided cartographic support for the Oral History cluster by producing maps that have been used as visual resources in oral history interviews. Additionally, we are in the early stages of planning to conduct a community mapping exercise at next year's Powell Street Festival and possibly at a workshop in Steveston in collaboration with the Oral History cluster.



A 3D view of the Powell Street Neighbourhood on top of a satellite image, with accurate building footprints and heights. The blue buildings are those that were indicated to be "Japanese" on the Goad's 1930 Fire Insurance Map.

Knowledge Mobilization Cluster

Kaitlin Findlay

This fall, I joined the Knowledge Mobilization cluster and got a boot-camp experience in media relations. Under Dr. Kathryn Bridge at the Royal BC Museum and with invaluable advice from Community Council members Susanne Tabata and Sally Ito, I began by working out a strategy to sustain a social media presence and to begin producing monthly media releases.

Our first release, September 22nd, marked the 27nd anniversary of Redress. Jordan and Community Council chairperson Vivian Rygnestad sat down to discuss the relation between Redress and *Landscapes of Injustice*. The two reflected on the power the movement had in bringing together the Japanese-Canadian community, and the potential of *Landscapes* to create the same momentum around this important history. This anniversary coincided with the NAJC AGM, held in Victoria. The team presented at the AGM, generating significant interest in how communities across Canada can take advantage of project materials. The following week, Jordan opened a Victoria speaker series, *Café Historique*, with a sold-out presentation on the roles of a politician, a bureaucrat, and a Japanese Canadian in the forced sale of Japanese-Canadian-owned property. In addition to these presentations, Jordan and Vivian had a spot on the CBC and Jordan discussed the *Café Historique* on CFAX FM. September was a busy, fruitful month.

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Jordan speaking at Café Historique

Knowledge Mobilization (cont'd)

After this flying start, my social media production came to an abrupt halt when, in preparing a story for October, I hit sensitive content. This was an important reminder to communicate our research findings responsibly and with consideration to those affected by this history. We decided to shelve the release and move on to the next month.

In November, Dave Mitsui was generous to share his grandfather's story with us to mark Remembrance Day. Masumi Mistui was a World War I veteran; following forced-uprooting, disenfranchisement, and dispossession, the Veteran's Land Act sold his land to veterans returning from World War II. Josh Labove, Heather Reid, and Dr. Pam Sugiman from the Oral History cluster worked with Dave to write a powerful piece exploring what it means to remember Masumi's story and the importance of telling this difficult past. If you missed one of these releases, they are stored under the "Project Activity" section on the project website.

<http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com/news/landscapes-of-injustice-research-explores-a-complicated-family-legacy-of-remembrance/>

In December, I hit finals and looming class deadlines put my *Landscapes of Injustice* media campaign on hold. In a *this-is-as-exciting-as-it-gets-for-a-history-MA-student* moment, I accompanied Mike and Jordan to the mainland to watch Jordan present to City of Vancouver planners on the role of their predecessors in the development of the 1943 liquidation policy. Jordan made a compelling presentation that will hopefully be the first of many conversations with the city.



Jordan Stanger-Ross presents research material to Vancouver city planners

An unexpected benefit of this position is the opportunity to communicate with project members from various institutions and across the country. What an inspiring, passionate team. If anything, I hope to communicate the excitement that so many members bring to their work through my media releases. Keep your eyes open for upcoming material and please let me know if you have any good stories to send my way!

In researching for media release content, I encountered a story that will become my MA thesis project. I will write on Masue and Rinkichi Tagashira. Drawing from sources that Linda Reid at the Nikkei National Museum helped me identify and from project material I digitized over the summer, I will trace the lives of the Tagashiras for almost seven decades, starting prior to the disruptions of the war-era, following the family's complicated response to the policies of the 1940s, and then chronicling their re-establishment in postwar Canada. I will start researching in earnest after I complete my coursework in April, but am very open to stories or suggestions. I understand that Masue was deeply involved in the Redress movement and that we might have project members who remember her.



Landscapes of Injustice

The *National Association of Japanese Canadians* and the
Landscapes of Injustice Partnership
Project are proud to jointly offer the:

“HIDE HYODO-SHIMIZU RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP”

Valued at \$10,000, this research scholarship will be awarded to a student who was enrolled full time at a Canadian University in the 2015-2016 academic year. The successful applicant will join the *Landscapes of Injustice* research team in late April 2016, participating in its 2016 national Spring Institute, and then join the research team for the duration of the summer.

Landscapes of Injustice is a 7-year multi-sector and interdisciplinary project to uncover and tell the history of the dispossession of Japanese Canadians to audiences across Canada and beyond. The first years of the project include research in a range of areas necessary to telling this history. Our work will result in a traveling museum exhibit, teaching materials for elementary and secondary school classes, educational websites, scholarly and popular publications, and public presentations across the country. Most Canadians know that people of Japanese ancestry, the large majority of them Canadian citizens, were uprooted from the British Columbia coast during the 1940s. Much less known is the policy, unique to Canada, to forcibly sell all of their property. The dispossession of Japanese Canadians caused lasting harm. It left Japanese Canadians without homes to which they could return after restrictions were finally lifted in 1949. It forced the eradication of Canada's historic Japanese-Canadian neighbourhoods and settlements, thereby transforming individual lives and identities, and the broader landscapes of Canadian ethnic and urban life. It caused material hardship that stretches across multiple generations.

Like other shameful episodes of our national history, these events may seem to belong to a distant past, to a history left behind by multicultural Canada. In reality, however, the past is not so easily escaped. As Canada enters a century in which it will grow ever more diverse, a deep conversation about the enduring legacy of racism is of pressing importance. *Landscapes of Injustice* is committed to telling this history. Our team includes 15 institutions and over 30 specialists from universities, community organizations, and museums across Canada. The project is funded by a major grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada and by participating institutions.

Hide Hyodo-Shimizu

Hide Shimizu (née Hyodo) was born in Vancouver in 1908 and died in 1999. She spent one year at the University of British Columbia before transferring to Teachers' Training School. She received her teaching certificate in 1926 and began teaching Grade One at Lord Byng School. Shortly thereafter, the provincial government prohibited any other Japanese Canadian from receiving a certificate. Thus at 18 years old, Hide Hyodo was the first and only Japanese Canadian to hold a teaching certificate. In 1936, she was the female member of a delegation of four sent to Ottawa by the Japanese Canadian Citizen's League to seek the franchise for Japanese Canadians. Parliament defeated the motion but she and the others set a precedent for a non-white community demanding the vote. With the removal of the Japanese Canadians from the BC coast in 1942, Hide was asked to supervise the education of the Japanese Canadian youth first in Hastings Park, a clearing house for out-of-town Japanese Canadians, and then in the internment camps of the interior. She set about planning primary curriculum, organizing a school system among seven camps, and recruiting and training volunteer teachers and principals. She constantly travelled from camp to camp throughout the war. She was inducted into the Order of Canada in 1982. And in 1993, she was honoured by the Status of Women-Canada, the Secretary of State and Eaton's of Canada in a month long tribute to thirty-two women who helped shape the history of Canada.

To honour the life-long dedication of Hide Shimizu to education; support of Japanese Canadian heritage and civil liberties for all Canadians, the National Association of Japanese Canadians is proud to partner with the Landscapes of Injustice Project, University of Victoria.

Position Details

The successful Research Associate will participate with students, faculty, and staff in the third summer of research on this project, beginning April 29, 2016.

They will work in one of several possible “clusters” of research activity this summer:

- Land Title & Government Records Cluster: works with records of Land Title and official records to learn what precisely happened to the homes and businesses of Japanese Canadians when they were forcibly sold;
- Community Records and Directories Cluster: works with community directories, and other local records to reconstruct the communities disrupted by the uprooting and the liquidation of property;
- Oral History Cluster: explores perspectives and memories of Japanese Canadians as well as witnesses and bystanders through oral history interviews focused on the topic of property;
- Legal History Cluster: conducts research into legal historical sources on the dispossession of Japanese Canadians;
- Knowledge Mobilization Cluster: initiates the dissemination of the research;
- Historical GIS Cluster: develops databases that link the data collected by the other clusters to enable spatial analysis.

This position includes participation in team meetings, training sessions, and archival research. It may be located outside of Victoria, with travel paid for by the project.

The fellowship is valued at \$10,000 in wages and other costs associated with training and travel as the student participates in the project.

The position will last *approximately 16 weeks*, depending on specific arrangements with the supervisor.

A faculty or staff member who is a team leader on the project will supervise the Research Associate. Payment of the full funding amount is contingent on successful participation in the project as directed by this supervisor.

Application Details

Should include a:

- A cover letter demonstrating engagement with and strong interest in Japanese Canadian history and community;
- A letter of support from a NAJC local chapter;
- Full official academic transcripts, including for the 2015-2016 academic year;
- CV;
- Contact information for three referees;

Applications should be emailed to Mike Abe, Project Manager at mkabe@uvic.ca

Applications will be accepted until 4 pm PST Thursday, March 31, 2016.

We will begin reviewing applications on Friday, April 1, 2016 and continue on a rolling basis until the position is filled.