

Landscapes of Injustice

Research News and Project Updates

Spring/Summer 2016



Message from Project Director

Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross

Landscapes of Injustice is hitting its stride. The research phase is now more than halfway completed. We've learned a great deal and shared our learnings with thousands of readers, listeners, and viewers. Scholarly publications are beginning to proliferate: soon we won't be able to begin our reflections on this topic by remarking on how little has been written about it. Soon, we will have written a lot. Students have completed theses on the dispossession of the property of Japanese Canadians, created a forum to discuss scholarly activism, and have left the project to attend prestigious international graduate programs. Our community partners continue to remind us of how high the stakes are and how far we must reach. I think we can be very proud of what we have accomplished so far, and I'm very excited for us to share what comes next.



LoI in the News – Kaitlin Findlay

We caught word that Director|Curator Sherri Kajiwarra and research archivist Linda Reid from the Nikkei National Museum (NNM) were traveling down to North Carolina on an archival mission just days before they boarded the plane. There they connected with Kay Kagetsu, daughter-in-law of the lumber baron Eikichi Kagetsu, assessed the family's extensive collection of research materials and artifacts, and returned to Burnaby with over 200 lbs of archival material.

This remarkable acquisition will help future researchers understand the story of Eikichi Kagetsu and the Deep Bay Logging Co. more closely. As Kagetsu was one of the wealthiest Japanese Canadians before the dispossession—off of whom many profited when his property was forcibly sold—this collection is of particular interest to LoI.

We were thrilled when the media picked up the story in early June. Visit the [Project Activity](#) section on our website to find the coverage by *The Globe and Mail*, *CBC Radio Vancouver*, *CBC Radio Victoria*, *Metro News Vancouver*, *UVic's publication The Ring*, and *The Times Colonist* in Victoria. The coverage told the story of Eikichi Kagetsu's pre-war accomplishments, of the forced sale of his property beginning in 1942, and of the artifacts' post-war journey and return to British Columbia. It highlighted the family's role in acting as historians as they preserved their own proud history against the discrimination and prejudice in Canada. Project director Jordan Stanger-Ross and Sherri Kajiwarra conveyed the richness that comes from the partnership between LoI and the NNM which will allow researchers to work through the collection immediately.

This media coverage was an important opportunity to reach a wider public and new audiences; already, local British Columbians have contacted us with their own research on the fascinating story. Over the next year project members will be studying the forced sale of Eikichi Kagetsu's personal property, business, and holdings.

Project coverage in *The Globe and Mail*

The story behind the Kagetsu collection

Kaitlin Findlay

Jack Kagetsu is responsible for amassing this outstanding collection, the product of a decade of meticulous research into the illustrious and tragic life of his father, Eikichi Kagetsu.

At the height of his career, Eikichi was the president of the Deep Bay Logging Co. Ltd. and an established member of Japanese-Canadian society. The donated collection reveals evidence of this past, including gifts given to Eikichi in 1940 when he was awarded the Green Ribbon medal of 8th order for his work to expand his logging empire and as president of the Canadian Japanese Association. Eikichi's hard-earned success ended abruptly when cabinet authorized the forced uprooting, interment, and dispossession of Japanese Canadians in 1942.

The seizure and sale of the Deep Bay Logging Co. Ltd. was a slow and complicated process. Eikichi's Vancouver Island operation included over 7,000 acres of prime timberland, 9.5 miles of railroad, a locomotive, 19 flatcars, 4 donkey engines, 2 tractors, 24 camp buildings, tools and equipment. Once dispossessed, these items sold quickly and cheaply on a flooded market. On the mainland, strangers and acquaintances swept up the family's belongings from their home in Kerrisdale, complicit in the process of erasing Japanese Canadians' material lives from the landscape of British Columbia. This scattered the evidence of the Kagetsu family history across North America. After cabinet repealed the internment legislation in 1949 the family relocated to Toronto and slowly rebuilt their lives. Fifty years after the rupture of the 1940s, Jack, Eikichi's youngest son, travelled across the continent to reassemble his father's past.

Jack found traces of this history in the national archives in Ottawa; the UBC Gonami Asian archive; the Consulate General of Japan in both Vancouver and New York; and in various archives in Japan. The acquisition contains the compiled notes from this research, in addition to records of conversations with former neighbors and Eikichi's employees.

It was a family history project tinged with the sadness of the dispossession. At the national archives in Ottawa, Jack and Kay had to make an appointment to view their family's possessions and were charged for access.

Jack rejoined the pieces of this history in his manuscript tentatively titled, *The Tree Trunk can be Called my Pillow*. When he passed in 2006, his wife Kay took on the responsibility to publish this work. The Nikkei National Museum has accepted this task as a commitment to Kay and the Kagetsu family.

"Deeply shocked and saddened to hear about the sale of the property": Reading Japanese Canadian Letters of Protest to the Forced Sale of their Property, WWII

On January 28, 2016 Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross gave a presentation to an interested audience of about 25 learners in the Uvic Pursuit of Knowledge lecture series.

Mrs. Toshiye Hoshiko wrote the Custodian of Enemy property, the body of federal government responsible for the sale of her home and belongings, on October 22, 1944 from Montreal, where she found refuge after her uprooting. "I was deeply shocked and saddened to hear about the sale of the property," she wrote, "it was my home for over twenty years. It was the work and hard work of two decades toiling. It was where my children were born and raised. And now you tell me that the property was sold?" Hoshiko was one of more than 200 Japanese Canadians who responded in written protest when the federal government informed them that, despite prior assurances to the contrary, all of their property had been sold without their consent.

Stanger-Ross' presentation (based on work co-authored with Lol co-investigator Nicholas Blomley) drew upon recent theorizations of value, to explore economic, temporal, experiential, and relational expressions of ownership and belonging in the letters of Japanese Canadians to the federal state. "The sales came as a shock to owners and prompted them to articulate powerful and sophisticated claims to their possessions, homes, and lands." he said.

The protests of Japanese Canadians illustrate the profound impacts of these policies, reveal the complex relations among ownership, citizenship, and belonging, and belie any notion that Japanese Canadians accepted the policies without voicing forceful dissent.

The audience listened intently, emitting collective gasps of disbelief as the writers wrote of the injustices that had befallen them. This was followed by an active question and answer period where the discussion of dispossession continued from the engaged crowd.

Research Cluster Updates

Land Title and Government Records

Jordan Stanger-Ross

The Land Title and Government Records cluster has RAs in three different roles this summer.

1. Title Searching: This summer, a group of title searchers will try to reconstruct the forced sale of the farmlands of Japanese Canadians, using as a case study Maple Ridge in the lower mainland. Hundreds of farms were sold in Maple Ridge to the Veterans Land Act in transactions that severely devalued the hard work and accomplishments of Nikkei farmers. Working in the Land Title Office in New Westminster, Alissa C., Mikayla T. and Anna G., are conducting title searches to trace the history of Japanese-Canadian-owned farms, both before and after the events of the 1940s. Once completed, this data will be comparable to data on the sales of non-Nikkei farms as well as the urban transactions in Powell Street, enabling us to begin to tell a fuller history of the forced sale of Japanese-Canadian-owned real estate.
2. Archival Research - In two separate trips to Ottawa, Adam K. and Kaitlin F. have continued our efforts to collect a full digital repository of federal records related to this history. Focusing on the Records of the Department of Justice and cases heard at the Exchequer and Supreme Court of Canada, this research helps our project to understand the legal claims made by Japanese Canadians who challenged the dispossession, as well as the arguments of officials defending their actions.
3. Special Projects: Nicole Y., based at the Nikkei National Museum, is working with our cluster on special projects, developing protocols and a manual for the transfer of digital materials to a new archival infrastructure, conducting research in important Vancouver-area records, and researching the losses of one of the wealthiest Japanese Canadians, Eikichi Kagetsu, and grappling with how to understand “value” in the context of such losses.

Provincial Records

Kathryn Bridge

This cluster has one RA this summer, Gord L. who is working at the BC Archives. His work began in May with a focus on textual records and in particular the role of the province in the dispossession. We have a list of government records with content that will form the basis of a formal request for access via a research agreement. The Legal History cluster has also contributed a list of records they are interested in, so the application will go forward in the near future with Provincial Records, Legal, Land Title and Government Records cluster heads and researchers listed on the application as co-undertakers.

In addition to this initial focus on the province's role in dispossession, we are encountering records reflective of the province's role in the internment lives of Japanese Canadians in terms of education of children, medical and other areas. Government records also can reveal the strain of dispossession upon the Japanese Canadians as recorded through deaths due to suicide or violence, and on mental and physical health. Coroner's indexes and records, provincial mental hospital records and other sources might also hold poignant and personal perspectives for specific individuals. At this point these records and record series have been identified but will not form part of this particular research agreement.

A number of non-government records, not subject to the FOI act have also been added to our database. This includes private records of officials who were active in the dispossession, public figures whose actions and opinions reflect the general climate of the times.

The Provincial Records focus at the BC Archives this summer is on textual records, although attention to sound recordings is also in hand with a view to digitization. Gord will be involved later this summer first hand in digitization alongside museum staff.

Oral History Field School in Steveston

Josh Labove

After a productive weekend in Victoria for the 2016 Spring Institute, the Oral History cluster headed to the Lower Mainland. The first annual Field School offered the oral history team a chance to connect with various partners to bring Landscapes research to the Steveston community.

The Field School kicked off with a Community Mapping event, in partnership with the GIS Cluster and the University of Victoria Department of Geography. Facilitated by Ken Josephson and GIS cluster chair Reuben Rose-Redwood, the community mapping event brought GIS research in direct conversation with the life story narratives the oral history team cultivates. With large maps placed about the historic Gulf of Georgia Cannery, participants were encouraged to point, annotate, and share recollections of how the historic fishing village at the edge of Richmond has evolved. Oral history RAs captured the memories on the fly, while GIS researchers were able to ask questions based on their two years of cartographic research. Conversations cultivated around historic photos and maps became a catalyst for further research and oral histories over the course of the team's week in BC.

Reaffirming the cluster's cooperation with community partners throughout Richmond and Vancouver, Oral History RAs offered a hands-on workshop relating the best practices of oral history to community partners. A group of museum and public history professionals from across the region came together to hear from Oral History researchers who guided them through the tips and techniques of doing socially just, ethical, and public-informed oral history.

The oral history team remained in BC for two additional days—ample time to tour the region, conduct further interviews, and experience firsthand the landscapes narrators speak to. From Powell Street to Stanley Park and the docks of Steveston, the oral history team benefited from spending time throughout the region together and left with a deepened sense of the people and places of the Lower Mainland.



Hands on activities at the field school at the Gulf of Georgia Cannery in Steveston
Photos: Josh Labove

Historical GIS

Reuben Rose- Redwood

Our cluster currently employs two graduate RAs (Samantha R. and Sonja A., SFU) who are conducting digital mapping and spatial analysis of the Powell Street study area. Samantha is helping to analyze the spatial patterns of property ownership by ethnicity, while Sonja is re-classifying building use data from 'buildings' to 'property parcels', which will enable us to conduct additional spatial analyses of land use by property parcel, which can incorporate a 'mixed' land use category (e.g., residential and commercial) into our mapping and analysis.

The grad RAs have also georeferenced and digitized historical maps of Maple Ridge and Mission, and calculated the percentage of JC-owned properties per township section, to assist the Land Title Cluster in determining the study areas for these two sites.

A new undergraduate RA (Erl E., Queens U.) is working with our cluster in collaboration with Audrey Kobayashi to reformat Dr. Kobayashi's spatial databases so that new maps can be generated for the LOI project. Erl is currently preparing data to map the location of origin in Japan of Japanese Canadians affected by the dispossession, with the aim of tracing individual/family spatial trajectories from Japan-to-Canada.

Once the Directories and Community Records Cluster finishes classifying city directory data by ethnicity of surname, our cluster will proceed with mapping and analyzing the spatial patterns of residential clustering.

Legal History research cluster

Eric Adams

This summer, the legal history cluster has two research students based at the University of Alberta engaged in primary research and analysis. Rachel W. is conducting primary and secondary research for the article Jordan Stanger-Ross and I, Eric Adams, are writing on the orders in council which dispossessed Japanese Canadians, and the 1944 legal challenge by Japanese Canadians, *Nakashima v Canada*, to those orders. Rachel has been instrumental in placing the orders and the ensuing case in the context of the 1940s Canadian law of trusts. She has also helped uncover the different ways in which newspapers, including *The New Canadian*, wrote about the orders and the lawsuit. We have recently secured the *Nakashima* case file from the archives which contains a detailed transcript of the hearing of the case, a never-before used record which discloses new evidence of the racist ideologies motivating government action.

Lauren C. continues her work on the immigration and deportation of Japanese Canadians in the 1930s. Both Rachel and Lauren continue to build our database with newspaper coverage and treatment of Japanese Canadians in the 1940s. As research cluster chair, I am working on two articles for submission to law journals this fall. The first, *The Promises of Law*, is on the wartime orders in council concerning Japanese Canadians with Jordan Stanger-Ross. The second is the story of Munetaka Samejima and his legal challenge to a deportation order that he took all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. I have been presenting the research of both articles at numerous conferences and will continue to do so in the fall and winter.

Community Records & Directories

Sherri Kajiwara & Stewart Arneil

At the Nikkei National Museum, Trevor W., one of our grad RA's spent a couple weeks reviewing the Hidaka Fonds – Kunio Hidaka was very active in advocacy and immigration, fighting the 1946 deportation, and acted as a general consultant for a myriad of Japanese Canadian community matters before and during internment, but his fonds also contain documents and letters directly relevant to dispossession. As of July 1st our undergrad RA's are almost finished with digitization of pertinent material and file level descriptions for the database, over 1,000 items. Japanese language expert RA, Eiji O., will review a small selection of Japanese letters from the fonds to assess relevance.

Eiji is continuing his investigation of the Sato Fonds (Vancouver Japanese Language School) and also editing what was digitized and described from his research last summer to match Japanese language documents to proper archival descriptions. He will move onto Kimura and Morishita fonds.

For the NNM Admin, the Kagetsu fonds are all consuming. Linda R. (Research Archivist) and Lisa U. (Collections Manager) have been coordinating proper archival preservation practices and preparing the fonds for safe processing by our research team. We have had, as most people know, a flurry of media activity around this recent acquisition.

The UVic team, Josie G. and Ariel M. are working with Stewart and Martin H. RA's have primarily been working on marking up and transcribing protest letters written by Japanese Canadians, and by the Custodian. They have also been working on transcription and mark-ups of the more directories, similar to the process completed for the 1941 Haney and 1941 Steveston.

Teacher Resources research cluster

Although originally slated to begin in the second phase of the project, it has become very apparent that the development of teacher resources should begin sooner than later.

And thus the Teacher Resource research cluster with co-chairs Greg Miyanaga and Mike Perry-Whittingham have become very engaged in the project and have made great strides in setting and achieving milestones.

They are currently developing a mini lesson with plans to be ready in the Spring 2017. They've added a teacher, Patrick Anderson, to the research and writing team and are looking for at least one more. They are also

seeking schools/classrooms to pilot the materials, currently two schools/classrooms have been lined up.

Both Greg and Mike are experienced educators, Greg has taught in the Coquitlam School District for over 25 years and Mike is currently a secondary administrator in the Richmond School District after teaching high school history, law and social sciences for 17 years.

Greg attended the Governor General conference as a past recipient of the Governor General's History Award for Excellence in Teaching (2006) and helped disseminate information about Landscapes of Injustice and his role in the development of teacher resources. Mike will be presenting a paper on the challenges of integrating specific historic injustices into the classroom at the Canadian History of Education Association conference in Waterloo, Ontario in October 2016.

Both were involved with the development of www.JapaneseCanadianHistory.net, a teacher's resource website related to the internment of Japanese Canadians during WWII. Mike and Greg are extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic about being part of Landscapes of Injustice.

Reported by Michael Abe

Facebook

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

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

and follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/LandscapesInjus

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 account, stories from of 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/>

I offer one of my own family stories of dispossession and a unique form of repossession.

The Town That History Plum Forgot

Michael Abe

My mother, Ruth Abe (nee Toyota) was a young girl when her family was uprooted and sent to Popoff and New Denver during WWII. She was the second youngest of 14 children belonging to Shoshichi and Kiriye (nee Obuchi) Toyota. They lived in the sawmill town of Paldi, between Duncan and Lake Cowichan on Vancouver Island. Next door was Shoshichi's brother, Daigoro who, incidentally, was married to Kiriye's sister, Hanayo. There are often stories of picture brides meeting their husband for the first time and what happens if they don't match up well. In this case, the brothers exchanged the sisters and it must have worked as Daigoro and Hanayo had 11 children of their own (but that is another story for another time).

Paldi was a unique town in the middle of a racist British Columbia. Here, children of Chinese, Japanese and East Indian descent played together and shared cultures, foods and traditions, it was truly an anomaly of the time.

With a Paldi map from 1933, updated in 2000 by Tom Tamagi with the locations of over 80 pre-war families, I set off to find the original site of their homes last year with my cousin Dr. Jane Toyota and her partner Richard Kenno. There is very little left of the original town, but we were fortunate to be guided by Joan Mayo. Joan is the wife of the eldest son of Mayo Singh, the founder of Paldi and she is the author of the book, *Paldi Remembered*. Like following a treasure map, we tried to locate the site of an old water tower to triangulate with the site of the old school house that had burned down a number of years before. Joan enlisted neighbour Wayne Bahler who had lived there for the last 20 years. "Yes, I know the tower, I dismantled it several years ago because it was getting to be a hazard" he told us. With map in hand, we trudged through the brush and he

pointed out the remains of the water tower. We came across a clearing that we figured was the site of the two Toyota houses. The houses were built by our family but the land had always been owned by the Mayo family so strictly speaking, other than personal items, there was no land dispossessed by the government as investigated by the research in *Landscapes of Injustice*.

In passing, Wayne mentioned that there were two plum trees that stood somewhere near the site that were beautiful in the spring but stood in the middle of the forest, so he had dug them up and transplanted them in front of his home nearby.

Excited with finding the site of my mother's former home, I was equally excited to show her the site when she was visiting from Ontario in the spring. And when told of the plum trees, my mother quickly reminisced about how her mother and aunt would pickle the small plums to make *umeboshi*, the sour plum used in the middle of *onigiri* (rice balls). They were a staple of the immigrant family and helped keep the *bento* box contents preserved without refrigeration during long work days.

This spring, along with my mom, wife, daughter and cousin, Kerry James, I again knocked on the door of Wayne for permission to traipse around his woods. The area we were interested in was actually owned by his neighbour, Richard, who happened to be doing some log work nearby. Upon hearing our story, Richard was able to point us to a more exact spot where the houses would have stood. The top photo shows my mom on the "front porch" of her home. "*Tadaima*" (I'm home).

On July 1st, I returned with pails and ladder and with the help of Wayne, we collected about 3 kilograms of the small, green, unripe plums from the trees in front of his house. Although not using a recipe handed down from generation to generation, I followed the directions from the Japanese CookDo website and prepared the *umeboshi*, hoping to recreate the flavours of over 75 years ago. And finally, after three weeks of salting and pressing, they have come to the last of 3 days drying in the sun. So tart! So salty! Just the way *umeboshi* should taste. I can't wait to send some to my mom and aunts to see if they conjure up any taste bud memories.

Oishikatta, gochiso sama deshita. (Such a delicious feast)



Photos: Michael Abe

Spring Institute, April 29 - May 1, 2016

Kaitlin Findlay

This past May marked our second annual Spring Institute. The three-day institute brought together over 60 researchers, students, and museum professionals from across the country. We took stock of the work done in the past year and embarked on the upcoming year of research. Responding to feedback from the first institute, the program included a variety of activities that aimed to share research findings and promote integration. With ice-breakers and organized events, students had the opportunity to meet a range of project members who they may have otherwise not met.

A central highlight of this year's Spring Institute was the "Memories of Internment" panel hosted by CBC Victoria's Gregor Craigie. For this afternoon session, community council members Mary and Tosh Kitagawa, and Art Miki spoke about their first-hand memories from the internment years and of the dispossession. This was an incredible moving presentation and a special opportunity for the younger generation to hear such stories.

Research presentations and a poster session communicated the past year of project findings. Dr. Pamela Sugiman opened the sessions with a compelling presentation on silence within narratives of the dispossession. Cluster leads and students synthesized raw data and worked to make the material accessible to the individuals from varying backgrounds who attended the sessions. The Historical GIS cluster teamed with the Land Titles researchers to demonstrate preliminary conclusions on the changing character of the Powell Street neighborhood in the mid-twentieth century. In another partnered presentation, the Teacher Resources cluster worked with the team from Community Records to communicate how the new research might be used in primary and secondary schools across the country.

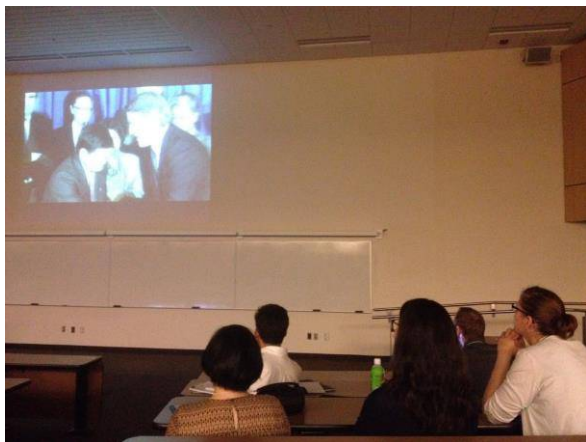
In a moving presentation, the Oral History cluster discussed the complicated and often contradictory narratives that have come out in the course of their interview process. Over the course of these presentations it was exciting to see the preliminary research analysis and the students' growing familiarity with this history.

Amidst these updates on project findings, one significant addition to this year's institute was to address the relation of the dispossession of Japanese-Canadians to longer histories of dispossession in British Columbia. As such, we were honoured to have University of Victoria's Dr. Andrea Walsh present on her work with residential school art and the curation of difficult pasts. It was a fascinating presentation that brought a different history into dialogue with our project research in fruitful ways.

Drs. Laura Ishiguro and Doug Harris also led a seminar that probed deeper into scholarly work the intersections, parallels, and differences of the dispossession of Japanese Canadians and First Nations people in British Columbia.

A screening of Mitch Miyagawa's *A Sorry State* brought into consideration the varied responses to state apologies in Canada and was a strong reminder of how the legacies of traumatic histories are lived out and understood differently across generations.

Following these presentations, the various guiding bodies met to review the project progress and look towards the future. It was a full three days of activity that left many intellectually stimulated and engaged, if not, a little tired. Later feedback emphasized the value of the institute for fostering connections between project partners who are usually at separate ends of the country. We left the institute with great momentum to jump into our third year of project research.



Project members watch Mitch Miyagawa's *A Sorry State* at the Spring Institute. Mike introduces Mitch before the film.



Research clusters giving presentations.



Photos: Tosh Kitagawa

2016 Hide Hyodo Shimizu Scholarship Recipient Nicole Yakashiro

LOI: Congratulations on receiving the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship funded by the National Association of Japanese Canadians, Landscapes of Injustice and the family of Hide Hyodo-Shimizu.

NY: Thank you so much! I am so excited and honoured to be this year's recipient of the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship.

LOI: Can you tell us a bit of your academic background and what drew you to this project?

NY: Currently, I am at the University of Toronto, with only a few more courses to go before I complete my BA in Book and Media Studies (Honours), with minors in History and Music History & Culture. My academic background is quite diverse (I was in film school at one point), but my focus has always drawn me back to the same questions: how do we educate and communicate about social inequality and injustice (both historical and contemporary), and how do we go about changing the structures in society that systemically privilege some at the expense of others? The intersection of scholarship, education, and activism is one I hope to engage with further and more fervently in my career.

When I discovered the work of *Landscapes of Injustice*, it seemed like the most perfect opportunity. Not only is *LOI* an esteemed academic project, with many talented and diverse members as part of its collective, but it



Nicole with Mary Kitagawa

Photo: Tosh Kitagawa

also tackles an issue with ever-increasing importance. The dispossession of Japanese Canadians is an historical wrong that remains largely in the shadows of our understanding of what Canada is and who we are as Canadian citizens. For that reason alone, I was eager to be a part of this dedicated team of people looking to shed light on this history, to bring about a more just present and future. Beyond my academic and social interest in this type of project, I also recognized that this work would also fulfil me personally, as a fourth generation Japanese Canadian and as someone who is still learning what that means exactly.

LOI: What kind of research are you doing this summer and how are you finding the experience?

NY: This summer I am working in the Government Records Research cluster, which has given me the opportunity to work with varied archival materials and begin my own analysis of particular cases of dispossession. It has been challenging, but incredibly rewarding. The Nikkei National Museum has graciously let me use their space to do my research, where I've worked alongside fellow Landscapes' researchers as well as members of the Japanese-Canadian community. I love that this position affords me room to learn and grow as both a researcher and as a Japanese Canadian. The mentors I've had the privilege of working with have been encouraging and stimulating.

For this year's Powell Street Festival, I prepared a poster with the generous help of my cluster, entitled "What do we value?: Exploring the Complex Losses of Japanese Canadians," which focuses on the dispossession of Eikichi Kagetsu and the claim he brought to the Bird Commission in 1948. This research looks at the multitude of perspectives on value, and how the concept of "value" cannot be broken down into only monetary worth. Kagetsu's story continues to inspire me – his established logging company on Vancouver Island was not only a successful business venture, but a home to an entire Japanese-Canadian community. His journey is one that speaks to the wider Japanese-Canadian experience of dispossession and I am grateful to have this opportunity to give it voice. In September, I will also be sharing my research at the NAJC AGM in Calgary.

LOI: Have you drawn any connection to your personal background and heritage?

NY: I feel my personal connection to this project really brings a new type of depth to the research I'm doing. As someone who has been largely separated from the Japanese-Canadian community my entire life, I have re-discovered a part of my identity that I couldn't have done anything else. I have been provided the opportunity to meet with incredible Japanese-Canadian scholars, activists, and artists through just a few months as part of this collective. I have met and become involved with the inspiring young people who make up the Japanese Canadian Young Leaders group in Vancouver. This experience is truly invaluable to me. Beyond the connections made with new people, I have cultivated stronger relationships with my family, particularly my grandfather, who was interned in Sandon, BC, but was moved around a lot throughout the 1940s. My grandmother, too, who passed away when I was young, has re-entered my life – I discovered that Hide Hyodo-Shimizu (the incredible woman for whom this scholarship is named) taught my grandma at Lord Byng School in Steveston. The numerous resources and knowledgeable people that are a part of this project have given me the chance to better understand and engage with a history that is my family's own.

LOI: Do you have any words of encouragement or advice for the JC youth to identify with their heritage?

NY: I would definitely say two things. Number one – reach out! Before this project, I really didn't know this amazing community existed. I lived on the outskirts, and really, never saw anyone who shared my heritage or experience. Number two – you are wanted! I think the biggest obstacle for me, being a mixed race Japanese Canadian, is recognizing that I am *still* Japanese Canadian, and I *am* a part of this community. I participated in this year's Japanese Canadian Young Leaders retreat (I would highly encourage contacting this group as well!), and one of the most powerful statements made I think, was that whenever we come together as Japanese Canadians, this is an act of resistance in itself. Dispossession forced our dispersal across Canada. Reclaiming our culture, reclaiming our community can happen and is happening. It is an indescribable feeling to be a part of this movement. I really encourage anyone who feels – even a little bit – that they want to reconnect with and rediscover this beautiful, resilient Japanese Canadian part of themselves, to take the plunge. It's worth it.