

Landscapes of Injustice Project Newsletter

Spring 2017



Photos: Tosh Kitagawa



Memories of Dispossession Panel: Successful Jan. 14 Public Event at Vancouver Public Library

The continuation of an on-going panel series, *Landscapes of Injustice* hosted Memories of Dispossession and Internment at the Vancouver Public Library on January 14, 2017. Moderated by Michael Abe and Vivian Rygnestad, the panel included Jean Kamimura, Sam Yamamoto, and Keiko Mary Kitagawa. The event also featured contributions by Tosh Kitagawa, Nicholas Blomley, and Research Assistants who shared posters with the audience following the panel. Public participation exceeded expectations, with 120 attentive guests filling the Special Collections Room.

Panel moderators Michael Abe and Vivian Rygnestad began the event. Michael gave an introduction to *Landscapes of Injustice*, explaining the project's focus and situating the event within wider commitments to public engagement. Community

Council Chair Vivian Rygnestad then introduced the panel, all long-time community volunteers and leaders.

The panelists began by recounting their pre-war memories, including the journeys and occupations of their parents and grandparents. Mary talked about pre-1942 Japanese-Canadian history, to provide the context of racial tension and discrimination which preceded the orders of incarceration. Mike raised the impacts of Order-in-Council PC1942-1665, which ordered that all property belonging to people of the Japanese race situated in the protected area of British Columbia be seized, vested in, and controlled by the custodian of enemy property. Jean recounted the widespread looting that occurred, with family heirlooms being stolen with enthusiasm. Mary recounted when the custodian

Upcoming events and important dates:

April 28, 2017 - Spring Institute Public Day

July 1, 2017 - Steveston Salmon Festival

Aug. 5-6, 2017 - Powell Street Festival

Landscapes of Injustice in the media:

Community Council Chair Vivian Rygnestad on CBC's Early Edition with Rick Cluff On January 13 Vivian Wakabayashi Rygnestad discussed the outreach program, "Memories of Dispossession and Internment" at the Vancouver Public Library taking place the following day. She shared her family's experiences during incarceration, the impacts of dispossession and discrimination on the Japanese-Canadian community, and the important role of *Landscapes of Injustice*. Listen [here](#).

visited her mother, with documents claiming that the property would be held 'in trust'. A personal friend, the custodian compelled her to sign offering his personal assurance that the property would be protected. Betrayed, a month later they received word that they would have to vacate the property.

However, the stories of the panelists also highlighted the strength of their parents and families, and the resistance of individuals and communities. Concluding the panel, Mike emphasized this resilience, citing the shoganai/shikata ga nai demonstrated by his own grandmother. Vivian concluded with a similar testament to these previous generations, sharing how her own childhood – though beginning in an internment camp – was filled with happiness and love. She stated that the values held by her parents – education and the betterment of one's community – are the principles that animate the *Landscapes of Injustice* project.

After the conclusion of the panel, presentations were made by Lane McGarrity (UVic, Community Records), Anna Gooding (UBC, Land Title Cluster), Rebeca Salas (SFU, Oral History and Land Title Clusters), Nicole Yakashiro (U of T, Government Records Cluster), Kaitlin Findlay (UVic, Land Title and Knowledge Mobilization Clusters), Dr. Eiji Okawa (UBC, Legal History and Government Records, and Community Records Clusters). Dr. Nicholas Blomley also presented, describing an upcoming academic article on the letters of protest of Japanese-Canadians to the Custodian of Enemy Alien Property.

The *Landscapes of Injustice* project thanks the panelists and the Vancouver Public Library for their generous partnership in this event. A filmed recording of the event will be available shortly on the website.

Message from the Project Director:

Jordan Stanger-Ross



Spring is a time of excitement on *Landscapes of Injustice*, though I say this without the usual gesture to birds-chirping and new love. Rather, spring is when we do our budgets! This is the time of year when our funding agency, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, sends a new installment of funding, and each cluster submits its annual reports and ambitious plans. This is the time of boasting and planning. The Executive Committee reviews these and approves new funding while offering suggestions. The reported accomplishments are impressive: the Research Collective has digitized thousands of archival files, traced the histories of hundreds of properties, digitized directories for key Japanese-Canadian communities, catalogued relevant laws, interviewed over 100 people, created complex and compelling digital maps, and developed innovative teaching tools. We've given over 75 presentations, been interviewed or appeared 34 times in popular media outlets, and have over 40 publications published or forthcoming. And we're just getting started. And the plans are exciting. On April 28, for the first time on our project, all of the clusters will join together in a cohesive public presentation of our project. We'll explain what we've done so far and invite feedback. Please consider joining us: those of you in the Vancouver area should consider taking the bus that we will charter for the occasion, leaving from Nikkei Place that morning and returning home in the evening (read more about this event within). Our exciting plans also include hiring. Once again, we are seeking outstanding applicants for the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship, jointly sponsored by the National Association of Japanese Canadians and *Landscapes of Injustice*. Read more about this important scholarship, and the recipient last year, inside, and encourage qualified students across Canada to apply before the March 31 deadline. Yes, spring is in the air.

Scholarship and Activism Forum:

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March 2nd, 2017, was the debute of the S&A Forum to the UVic community! It was an energizing afternoon with remarks from UVic Dean of Humanities, Dr. Chris Goto-Jones, and a roundtable discussion with Drs. John Lutz (Department Chair, History), Georgia Sitara (Instructor, History and Gender Studies), Karen Kobayashi (Associate Professor, Sociology), and Janni Aragon (Director – Technology Integrated Learning, Political Science). We had a full audience and stimulating discussion.

Following the opening remarks, Chris laid out a vision of the university that held the two complex topics of scholarship and activism together, rather than pushed apart as we may often imagine. To view the topics as separate, he explained, was a symptom of the commodification of higher education wherein “activism” is considered a form of market risk. Describing this separation—the push and pull, rejection and retreat of scholars from public engagement and activism—Chris ended with remarks on a particular sense of the relation between the topics, one that was not only about education and intervention, but about the role of scholarship in the self-transformation of the scholar.

The roundtable discussion captured the spirit of the S&A Forum at this exciting juncture. The panel held a range of expertise, methodologies and approaches but also personal perspectives. Yet the



topic of activism held a personal place for the panelists, who each situated their engagement with activism within their life stories. Scholarship was a way to engage with the broader forces that shaped their lives: for Georgia to understand her family’s migration from Greece to hard labour in Montreal and for John, involved in radical organizing in his youth, to see the world in more complex ways. Karen recalled the influence of her grandmother who had raised eight children as a single mother under the internment of the 1940s in her upbringing and suggested that her engagement with questions of social justice was inevitable. “I was born to be an activist in some way,” she reflected.

Not that the academy is somehow separate from broader society. Janni recalled her experience as a working-class Chicana at San Diego State, wherein simply her presence on the—predominantly white—university campus was an act of resistance. Even now, such bias in the academy motivates her: “sometimes we say ‘yes’ to things because we say this voice or area of expertise needs to be represented on this board, within the area of

reviewers, within this research,” she reflected.

Karen also discussed the academy as a location of activism, highlighting the biases of funding agencies and their influence on research. In particular, she described the challenge of working within a field that privileges a certain research methodology over another. In her field, agencies privilege a bio-medical model over a socio-cultural understanding of aging and health. Her intervention was in the form of feedback to research institutes that the granting structures must make room for faculty and researchers from humanities and social sciences.

The discussion also touched on storytelling. Georgia described her role in giving students tools to deconstruct the narratives of society and themselves, to think critically about the world around them, and John extended the discussion of storytelling to the scholars’ status to influence the stories we tell ourselves about a just society. Universities, he explained, are one of the rare places where we can step outside of the dominant capitalist world where societal critiques can arise.

(But, he ended, if universities are knowledge creators, they aren't so much wisdom creators and we can improve at applying our knowledge wisely.) Karen saw the link of storytelling to her methodology, explaining that her vision of a just society was one wherein we all have equal opportunity to tell stories in meaningful ways. The topic of mentorship and teaching permeated the discussion. In their position as scholars, our panelists saw an opportunity to train students in new ways of seeing the world, to encourage those who might not see a reflection of themselves within the academy, and to disrupt historically problematic methodologies of research. This captured an important goal of the S&A Forum: to foster connections and perhaps a spark for future research and projects.

Thank you to the University of Victoria Department of History, History Department Graduate Program, THUGS and *Landscapes of Injustice* for their support towards this event.



The *National Association of Japanese Canadians* and the *Landscapes of Injustice Partnership Project* are proud to jointly announce 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 2016-2017 academic year. The successful applicant will join the *Landscapes of Injustice* research team in late April 2017, participating in its 2017 national Spring Institute, and then join the research team for the duration of summer.

Applications will be accepted until 4 pm PST Friday, March 31, 2017 and then on a rolling basis after that until a successful candidate is selected. See pages 7 and 8 for more information, or online [here](#).





Nicole Yakashiro:

A Yonsei's cultural journey with the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Scholarship

My experience with *Landscapes of Injustice* has been (and continues to be) an invaluable one. On both academic and personal levels, this work invigorates, motivates, and challenges me in ways I would not have thought possible before stumbling upon the project in March of 2016. There are few moments that seem overwhelmingly “meant to be” – for me, discovering *Landscapes* was one of them.

My academic career prior to joining *Landscapes* was limited to three years of undergraduate studies spent at three different universities between two different provinces. This wasn't because of a lack of love for learning, but rather, a lack of both direction and inspiration. At the University of Toronto, I (finally) started building a foundation in the Book and Media Studies program (with minors in History and Music History & Culture), but it wasn't until the opportunity with *Landscapes* arose that I started to

feel like my passions – for social justice, for greater historical understanding, for communication and community – could be both realized and utilized.

Last summer, I had the privilege of taking on my first term of research in the Land Title and Government Records cluster as the recipient of the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship (offered jointly by the NAJC, *Landscapes of Injustice*, and the Shimizu family). I met the incredible folks of the *Landscapes* research collective at the project's annual Spring Institute and I began working closely with historical records, looking for some answers to the project's big questions: why did the dispossession of Japanese Canadians occur? Who benefitted from it? How has it been remembered and forgotten? I became gripped by the policies and stories of the dispossession, particularly of Eikichi Kagetsu, a well-established logger in Fanny Bay on Vancouver Island. I explored the complexities of

his property loss and the diverse conceptualizations of value evident in his story, developing my own questions along the way: how are we, as members of Canadian society, honouring different understandings of value? Are we disregarding value's diversity when we neglect to see value, for example, in a house which is someone's home? And if we are, what are the consequences of that? I remain motivated by these questions today.

While *Landscapes of Injustice* is foremost an academic research project, it has also offered me an entry-point into Japanese-Canadian, student, and activist communities. I am indebted to the peers and colleagues I've met through *Landscapes* (who have all revealed to me the strength of collaboration), to my fellow members of the *Landscapes* Scholarship & Activism forum (whose dedication to making scholarship that matters inspires me daily), and to the Japanese-Canadian community, especially the JC Young Leaders (who have provided me, as a yonsei, a place to begin understanding myself). As I embark on my second term of research with *Landscapes*, I find myself reflecting on the troubling, yet important relevance of this project. I also find myself recognizing the significance this work has had in my life, both academically and personally, in less than a year. I am so very grateful for this project and everyone I have encountered through it. *Landscapes of Injustice* is incredibly worthwhile and I strongly encourage students to apply for this year's Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship – it is an exceptional opportunity.



Landscapes of Injustice



The *National Association of Japanese Canadians* and the *Landscapes of Injustice* Partnership Project are proud to jointly announce 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 2016-2017 academic year. The successful applicant will join the *Landscapes of Injustice* research team in late April 2017, participating in its 2017 national Spring Institute, and then join the research team for the duration of summer.

Landscapes of Injustice is a 7-year (2014-2021) multi-sector and interdisciplinary project to uncover and tell the history of the dispossession of Japanese Canadians to audiences across Canada and beyond. Our team includes 16 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.

Applications will be accepted until 4 pm PST Friday, March 31, 2017 and then on a rolling basis after that until a successful candidate is selected.

Position Details

The successful Research Associate will participate with students, faculty, and staff in the third summer of research on this project, beginning April 26, 2017.

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

- Land Title & Government Records Cluster: uses official records to track the administrative processes and material impacts of the dispossession of property;
- Community Records 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;
- Provincial Records Cluster: works with provincial records related to the Japanese Canadians in British Columbia;
- Historical GIS Cluster: works with databases that link the data collected by the other clusters to enable spatial analysis and mapping applications.

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. This may include a presentation at the NAJC AGM in Ottawa in September.

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

Include:

- A cover letter demonstrating engagement with and strong interest in Japanese Canadian history and community;
- A letter of support from a NAJC local chapter. Click on <http://najc.ca/about-new/> for a list of NAJC chapters;
- Full official academic transcripts, including for the 2016-2017 academic year;
- CV;
- Contact information for three references;

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

We will begin reviewing applications on Monday, April 3, 2017 and continue on a rolling basis until the position is filled.

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.

Student profile: Ester Rzeplinski



I worked in the Knowledge Mobilization cluster during *Landscapes of Injustice's* (LOI) inaugural year in 2014-15. As there wasn't yet much knowledge to mobilize, I spent most of my time in the

BC Archives. Under the supervision of Kathryn Bridge, I classified and analyzed newspaper articles, government records, and photographs. I took my preliminary findings to the BC Museums' Association (BCMA) annual conference in Penticton and networked with various museum professionals over the course of my employment.

Since then, I completed my Master's at the University of Victoria and landed a job in the Legislative Assembly of BC's Parliamentary Education Office (PEO) as their Parliamentary Education Coordinator. Working in PEO, I lead a number of educational partnerships, assist in exhibit design and development, and plan new programs (including a partnership with the Royal BC Museum and a spring break program!). I thoroughly enjoy my new work and being able to both plan and deliver programming.

The two positions may seem dissimilar, but this is not the case—during my time with *Landscapes* I honed skills that help me in my current job. When I worked with *Landscapes of Injustice* it was a new project; my current role is also brand new. As the Parliamentary Education Coordinator, I am carving out space for myself and running brand new programs. This requires organization, flexibility, and proactivity—things I learned while working in the archives for the first time and promoting a fledgling project.

I was really fortunate to be a part of the *Landscapes* team. I learned so much from Kathryn, Jordan, and my fellow LOI students. I wish everyone the best over the next few years—thank you for working hard to share this important, complicated history.

Congratulations:

Lane McGarrity
Recipient of the Kalman
Award for International
Heritage Studies



Congratulations to Lane McGarrity as a recipient of the 2017 Uvic Kalman Award for International Heritage Studies. Lane, a UVic CRMP Diploma student, will be using the award to travel to the international "Museums and Their Publics at Sites of Conflicted History" Conference in Warsaw, Poland in March 2017. He is currently a research assistant on *Landscapes of Injustice* at the Nikkei National Museum and Cultural Centre, and hopes to learn from this conference the most effective ways to educate the public on stories of conflicted history. Of special interest to Lane is "how the historical narratives constructed in museums help to shape new social relations in a dynamically changing present."

Continuing Studies at UVic offers the Kalman Award for International Heritage Studies to students looking to participate in a heritage studies learning activity abroad.

Kate Siemens
Recipient of a Jamie Cassels
Undergraduate Research Award

Kate's project *History on the Web: Prototyping a Website on Japanese Canadian Internment* involves developing an innovative digital environment to present and explore a fascinating primary source, the letters of Salt Spring Island resident Captain V.C. Best, who wrote federal officials in the 1940s offering his opinions on Japanese Canadians in BC and government actions directed towards them.

