

An Investment in Research That Matters

Tess Elsworthy

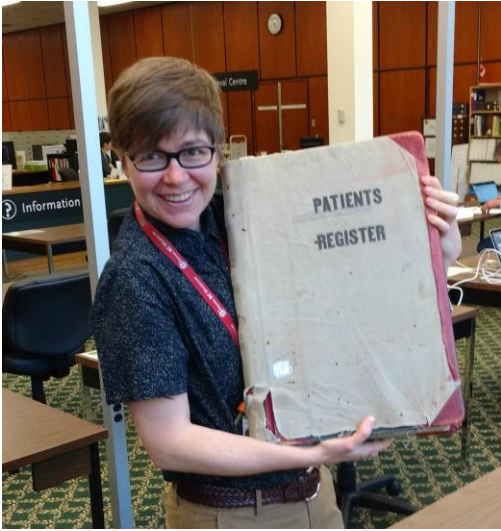
My name is Tess Elsworthy and I am currently researching my MA thesis in History at McGill University under the supervision of Laura Madokoro. My topic is McGill's own exclusion of Japanese-Canadian students from admission during the Second World War. I made my first foray into the university's archives to learn more about the policy while working on a study of the redress movement in an undergraduate class on social movements with Professor Madokoro. I am indebted to her for her guidance and encouragement.

As the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu research scholarship recipient for 2017, I am grateful to have been welcomed very generously by everyone at the National Association of Japanese Canadians and Landscapes of Injustice, especially the Community Council. I am additionally grateful to have had the chance to connect with Sachiko Okuda of the Ottawa NAJC chapter, who helped me with my application, put me in touch with community members in Montreal, and welcomed me to the AGM in Ottawa last fall.

I spent the summer working in the Provincial Records Cluster with Kathryn Bridge and three other Research Assistants, Gord Lyall, Sydney Fuhrman, and Camille Haisell. Together we sifted through a large volume of files from multiple collections at the BC Archives. We were able to capture relevant material from the Departments of Public Works, Fisheries, Education, Municipal Affairs, Child Welfare, and Provincial Secretary along with the Premier's Papers, Attorney General's files, corporate registries, numerous county courts, the Mental Health Branch, and multiple private fonds.

In addition to valuable archival experience, being awarded the Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship and working for Landscapes of Injustice enabled me to connect with scholarly mentors, archivists at the Nikkei National Museum, like-minded peers, and members of the Community Council. It was a great privilege to meet with Community Council member Mary Kitagawa, whose campaign to recognize the Japanese-Canadian students forced to leave UBC in 1942 helped inspire my project. Working with Landscapes has been one of the most enriching experiences of my academic career; the lessons I absorbed in the Provincial Records cluster will stay with me as I move forward as in my studies.

This year Landscapes of Injustice moves into the Knowledge Mobilization phase and will be preparing to share our findings with the public through a traveling museum exhibit, websites for both scholars and the broader public, and elementary and secondary school curriculum materials. The next Hide Hyodo-Shimizu research scholarship recipient will have the chance to help shape stories told about the dispossession of Japanese-Canadians. This is a fantastic opportunity to be part of the telling of history. In partnership with Landscapes of Injustice, the NAJC continues to make its mark on Canadian history. I strongly urge interested students to apply for its Hide Hyodo-Shimizu Research Scholarship.



Tess in the Provincial Archives in Victoria. Photo credit: Gord Lyall