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Carceral Entanglements: Interrogating Gendered Public Memories of Japanese American World War II Incarceration

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Carceral Entanglements:

Interrogating Gendered Public Memories of Japanese American World War II Incarceration

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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in Gender Studies

by

Wendsor Sumie Yamashita

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Carceral Entanglements: Interrogating Gendered Public Memories of Japanese American World War II Incarceration

by

Wendsor Sumie Yamashita

Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Kyungwon Hong, Chair

This dissertation examines how death, generationality, and normativity operate intimately to legitimize Japanese American histories via their public memorializations. Japanese American incarceration has been popularly narrated as an exceptional moment in history that is resolved by redress. However, my work considers how the historical moment of the late 1980's and early 1990's, in particular the passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, has profoundly shaped race relations in the contemporary moment. Specifically, how the carceral functions to control and punish different groups of color at different historical moments. I explore how Japanese American World War II incarceration is remembered in a post-redress era wherein memories of incarceration both replicate and challenge settler colonialism and the prison industrial complex. Conducting ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, archival research, and cultural analysis I argue that Japanese Americans legitimize their history and gain visibility by strategically constructing

narratives of ideal citizen-subjects that revolve around their performances of proper gendered and heteronormative behavior through the concept of racial resolution. My dissertation demonstrates that the study of Asian American racialization in relation to other groups of color (like Blackness and Indigeneity) is needed to effectively address and challenge the prison industrial complex and settler colonialism.

This dissertation of Wendsor Sumie Yamashita is approved.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my great-aunts Yori Kanamori and Chiyoko Nishimori, both of whom passed away in 2017, within one week of each other. I am grateful to these Nisei women whose stories, silences, and critiques began my academic and thus feminist inquiry into the field of Japanese American Studies. Without them, this project might not even exist. And without their care work, our families (Kanamori and Hiji) might have looked entirely different. Thank you for teaching me about “no-nos” and “bad” girls, I keep those lessons close to my heart.

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INTRODUCTION

"Today, the young generation doesn't realize it, but we are a per capita basis are the most law abiding people in the United States, we have the lowest crime rate, we have the highest intellectual rate per capita wise, and we're among the three ethnic groups with the highest per capita income. That's not bad, from internment camps." Daniel Inouye, Japanese American National Museum 2011 Gala Dinner

"The inevitable passing of the generations has brought into question the ability of our Nikkei community to maintain its vitality." Terasaki Family Foundation, Signature Sponsor of the Japanese American National Museum 2011 Gala Dinner

My project came to be at this very particular moment, at the 2011 Japanese American Gala Dinner titled "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community." When the late Senator Daniel Inouye came to the stage to ask the audience for donations to bring buses of school children to the museum, several things happened. There was a staged conversation between Inouye and a young girl to whom he relayed his entire life story, emphasizing the importance of remembering Japanese American incarceration, to which she promised to "never forget." And after relating the above statistical information on Japanese Americans, he went on to say: "Today I stand before you when I was once declared an enemy alien on December the 7th and today I am president pro-tempore, third in the line for the presidency." And then he turned to the audience to say, "That's not too bad," to which the audience enthusiastically applauded. I remember feeling violently out of place in this moment. I did not join everyone else in clapping because I was forced to acknowledge the ways in which Japanese American memories were so intimately connected to justifying forms of racialized state violence and criminalization by touting our status as the "most law abiding" with the "lowest crime rate" even as they acknowledged our own experiences of incarceration during World War II. Consequently, this

dissertation asks: How do these narratives of worth and success that make Japanese Americans legible to the state come to be? And what are the consequences of such narratives?

I begin the introduction with these two quotes and personal memory because they are emblematic of two very important factors that shape contemporary Japanese American public memory in relation to incarceration. The first is Inouye's personal narrative of Japanese American history which is positioned within a discourse of implicit antiblackness where distance from racialized deviancy and failure, signified by criminalization, is meant to mark Japanese American worth and success. And the second is this generational anxiety surrounding the physical death of the Nisei where historical legitimacy is intimately linked to the living witness of racialized harm. In many ways, the living witness is assumed to make Japanese American history legible to the state (which occurred historically through redress and testimony) and thus makes this history worthy of national remembering. These quotes alert us to what kind of narratives are being produced as well as how they are being reproduced, circulated, and consumed in public spaces of Japanese American memory. I argue throughout this dissertation that death, both social and physical, has played an integral role in the memory practices of Japanese Americans. In particular, there are multiple ways in which death is racialized for Japanese Americans at different historical moments and has impacted memories of incarceration. First, Japanese Americans were denied personhood during their incarceration via dislocation, dispossession, and detention. Second, prior to redress and reparations Japanese American experiences of incarceration were absent from community and national memory. Japanese Americans had no language with which to talk about what had happened to them; incarceration was still remembered as a "military necessity" and therefore could not be articulated as racialized harm. Despite redress' promise to resolve these memories of racialized harm, they continue to

linger in the present and seep into how we remember today. Contemporary memory practices are shaped by this fear of disappearance from national historical memory and the denial of personhood. Entering national memory or the national archive promises a way of living beyond physical death. Consequently, as I will explore in the following sections, for the Japanese American community, death, generationality, and normativity are intimately wrapped up in legitimizing Japanese American histories via their public memorializations. To be worthy of remembering and thus state recognition, Japanese Americans strategically construct narratives of ideal citizen-subjects that revolve around their performances of proper gendered and heteronormative behavior. As I discuss later, in the 1980s these narratives were being shaped by larger national discussions about welfare dependency in which certain groups of color were being racialized and gendered as deviant through a discourse of heteronormativity that criminalizes and punishes them for being poor.

In these narratives, normativity is sustained by generationality wherein the future of Japanese American historical memory is no longer seen as precarious. The work of maintaining the legitimacy and visibility of Japanese American memory exposes how contemporary racial discourses maintain a neoliberal racial hierarchy that Japanese Americans willingly and unwillingly partake in but also disrupt at various moments. As I will elaborate later, because of the impact that redress and testimony have made on the Japanese American community—its understanding of itself, its knowledge production and community spaces—memory becomes an important vehicle to examine. Embedded in memories of World War II are these logics of "success" wherein the state has made Japanese Americans visible in order to proclaim that racism is either not happening or officially over.[1] This dissertation examines the relationship

[1] William Minoru Hohri, Repairing America: *An Account of the Movement for Japanese-American Redress*. Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1988.

between death, generationality and normativity to understand how Japanese American memories replicate nationalist and neoliberal narratives of resolution and racial reconciliation that sustain settler and carceral logics.[2] My intervention into the literature on Japanese American incarceration is to critically think about the ways in which that history relies upon generationality to posit racialized normativity as resolution in the face of a haunting or always looming racialized deviancy that comes directly from their incarcerated pasts. Prior to and during World War II, Japanese Americans were outside the racial and sexual mainstream that resulted in their exclusion from citizenship, immigration, owning land, and culminated in their removal and detainment from the rest of the population. This dissertation draws on a queer of color critique of racialized normativity and nonnormativity to analyze how "racist practice articulates itself generally as gender and sexual regulation" or the "social formations that compose liberal capitalism."[3] Although Japanese Americans do not constitute recognizably queer subjects, I read for racialized memories that enable non-normative discourses and narratives to emerge.[4] As an

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Mitchell T. Maki, Harry H.L. Kitano, and S. Megan Berthold, *Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.
Many of these narratives come from community spaces like: the Manzanar Committee, Day of Remembrances, and the Japanese American National Museum.

[2] Mitchell T. Maki, Harry H.L. Kitano, and S. Megan Berthold, *Achieving the Impossible Dream: How Japanese Americans Obtained Redress.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999.

[3] Like Ferguson and Hong in *Strange Affinities*, my work draws on a genealogy of women of color feminism and queer of color critique whose work "emerges to name the material conditions of racial and colonial violence" and is organized around "difference, the difference between and within racialized, gendered, sexualized collectivities."
Grace Kyungwon Hong and Roderick A. Ferguson, Editors. *Strange Affinities: The Gender and Sexual Politics of Comparative Racialization*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 9.
Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward A Queer of Color Critique*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 3.

[4] Discourses that refuse to and cannot be mobilized by the state to justify criminalization in the carceral and settler state. Memories of incarceration that are not resolved by redress and thus can hold the state accountable for past and current state violence.

intervention, this dissertation attempts to locate Japanese American racial formations and spatial modes of enclosure via public memory alongside other racial formations such as indigenous communities and settler colonialism and antiblackness and the prison industrial complex. I see these disruptions to normativity as offering not just alternative memories and histories becoming moments in time where previously unimaginable alliances can occur. I theorize that these alliances are distinctly different from a progressive historicism that narrates Japanese Americans as proof of the advancement of racial progress and instead establishes a different temporality. These alliances narrate their experiences of comparative containment (reservations, incarceration, prisons) as not just in the past but resonating in the present as well. This temporality renarrates containment as central to U.S. nation-building and thus forces a questioning of the construction of the "criminal" and "criminality." And as this dissertation will explore, this comparative temporality imagines and struggles for a future without racialized containment.

To do so, I examine Japanese American practices of public memory by examining museums, digital archives, pilgrimages, and student-run and performed plays as important sites where these narratives play out but are also disrupted.[5] As Roderick Ferguson argues, a "queer of color critique approaches culture as one site that compels identification with and antagonisms

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Please see Cathy Cohen's critique of a queer political activism rooted in identity politics or a single oppression framework and the possibilities of "theoretical conceptualizations of queerness" that attempts to broaden queerness to encompass the systems of oppression that interact "to regulate and police the lives of most people" (440, 441).
My usage of normative is in reference to the kinds of histories that emerge when narratives are constructed around punitive notions of state belonging: proper gendered, heteronormative behavior vs. a questioning of this historical production of knowledge.
Cathy J. Cohen. "Punks, Bulldaggers, and Welfare Queens: The Radical Potential of Queer Politics?" *GLQ* Vol. 3. 437-465.

[5] Please see: Ellen D. Wu, *The Color of Success: Asian Americans and the Origins of the Model Minority*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014.

to the normative ideals promoted by the state and capital."[6] By examining these sites of public memory, we are able to see how Japanese Americans occupy this "contradictory location" produced by the state. This dissertation is interested in how memories of incarceration (the denial of citizenship and property rights) prevent Japanese Americans from completely partaking in the neoliberal racial order despite the privileges obtained from redress.[7] In other words, redress promised to protect Japanese Americans from the social death that they experienced during incarceration, but only within the confines of a neoliberal order that justifies mass incarceration and settler colonialism by taking recourse to personal responsibility and heteronormative respectability. It is within this "contradictory location" that we can see what Lisa Lowe argues, that "culture is the material site of struggle" where "alternative forms of subjectivity, collectivity, and public life are imagined."[8] It is through an examination of culture that we can "question those modes of government" that regulate the citizen-subject. Thus, I argue that Japanese American public performances of memory are important sites of interrogation because the logic of redress, most visible in these memorializations, is arguably the epitome of contemporary neoliberal racial formation in the United States. My reading of these practices of Japanese American public memory is rooted in these cultural analyses and I look for these contradictions and disruptions to explore the complicated and nuanced ways Japanese American identity, memory, and history function. Therefore, I also read these performances of memory against the grain as a way of examining both their limitations and possibilities. Reading for this

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[6] Roderick Ferguson, *Aberrations in Black: Toward A Queer of Color Critique*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. 3.

[7] Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 302.

[8] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 22.

"contradictory location" allows for a reading of incarceration that is both wrapped up in and subject to racialized harm in a neoliberal racial order.

My comparative racial project is not merely about Japanese Americans and their memories, but is instead an interrogation of how the United States normalizes and justifies a neoliberal racial order. My dissertation is about the interlocking relationship Japanese American incarceration memories have to the prison industrial complex and settler colonial logics that at times unknowingly sustain it. A comparative project is necessary to understand how state violence is operating even as it is being disavowed.

The Heteronormative Logic of Generationality: Understanding Japanese American Historical Memory

Before moving forward, I want to explain how Japanese American historical memory is rooted in generationality. By using the term generationality, I refer to two aspects unique to Japanese American history. First, due to immigration patterns and restrictions, Japanese American history, community identity, and memories are organized by generations: Issei (first generation, 1885-1924), Nisei (second generation, 1900-1945), Sansei (third generation, 1942-1975), Yonsei (fourth generation, 1975-2010) and so on. Each generation is narrated as having a particular set of collective experiences that revolve around historical events such as incarceration (Issei and Nisei) and redress (Nisei and Sansei). This periodization of Japanese American history (prior to World War II) is characterized by immigration, labor, and racial exclusion that "restricted and regulated the possibilities of Asian American settlement and cultural expression."[9] During these early waves of Asian immigration, "capital needed a cheap, manipulable labor force" unconcerned about the "'origins' of its labor force, whereas the nation-state, with its need for 'abstract citizens' formed by a unified culture to participate in the political

[9] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 7.

sphere, is precisely concerned" with how to "maintain a national citizenry bound by race, language, and culture."[10] These contradictory concerns of state and capital then sought Asian immigrant labor and later sought to exclude them through exclusionary laws and policies.

Second, Japanese American history and generationality differ from those of other Asian immigrant communities at the time because loopholes in immigration restriction allowed for the creation of families that were denied or made more difficult for other groups. For example, The Page Law of 1875 "prohibited the entry of prostitutes" and it was "enforced so strictly and broadly it served to not only exclude Chinese prostitutes but also to discourage Chinese wives" from coming to the US because of the "rigorous interrogation and cross-examination by U.S. officials."[11] Chinese women's immigration to the United States between 1876 and 1882 "declined from the previous seven-year period by 68 percent."[12] This halting of Chinese women's immigration and the subsequent Chinese Exclusion Act in 1822 prevented the "formation of families and generations among Chinese immigrants."[13]

For Japanese immigrants, while the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907-1908 restricted the immigration of Japanese laborers to the United States, there remained a loophole that Japanese immigrants took advantage of, where "parents, wives, and children of laborers already in America would be allowed to emigrate."[14] According to Ronald Takaki, "thousands of women also entered Hawaii and the mainland through the same opening--66, 926 of them between 1908

[10] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 13

[11] Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1998. 40

[12] Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1998. 40

[13] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 11.

[14] Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1998. 46

and 1924." In addition, 20,000 women immigrated through the picture bride system: arranged marriages that occurred through the exchanging of photographs where wives and husbands did not typically meet until women arrived in the United States. This occurred until 1921 when Japan agreed to terminate picture bride emigration in the "Ladies Agreement."[15] Unlike Chinese male immigrants who largely formed bachelor communities due to immigration restrictions, this large influx of female Japanese immigrants allowed for families to be established and entrenched within Japanese American history. In this way, Japanese American racialization is the "material trace of the history of this 'gendering'" of immigration restriction.[16] In other words, immigration restriction gendered Japanese American communities where the reproduction of family enabled by the loopholes of the Gentlemen's Agreement meant that Japanese Americans' access to a nuclear family model was a direct result of immigration law and policies. Consequently, heteropatriarchal relations were artificially constituted through immigration law that allowed the nuclear family to form for Japanese immigrants but not for others. As I will argue later on, the reprosexuality of Japanese American history relies upon reproducing history via generations in order to maintain legibility, visibility, and vitality.

In addition, the Nisei are a focal point of Japanese American community identity because of their experiences of incarceration. In 1900 "there were only 269 Nisei children" but by the eve of Pearl Harbor "the Nisei outnumbered the Issei by two to one."[17] In particular, as children of the first generation, the Nisei were citizens by virtue of being born in the U.S. while the Issei

[15] Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1998.

[16] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1996. 12

[17] Yuji Ichioka with Gordan Chang and Eiichiro Azuma. *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006.10.

could not naturalize.[18] Historian Yuji Ichioka proposes that these generational categories "were fundamentally political constructs" in which the "production of differences between the Issei and Nisei rested with their citizenship status, which was in and of itself a product of racial formation under white American hegemony."[19] Citizenship is not only a marker of generational differences between Issei and Nisei but is held up as proof that incarceration is in fact a wrong. The Nisei's access to citizenship, as well as their age, is then central to historical retellings of World War II in which the Nisei serve as evidence and archive of state racialized harm.[20] In this way, World War II incarceration is central to these generational narratives that produce community identity and thus belonging.

Because the majority of the Sansei did not experience incarceration, the death of the Nisei, the impending loss of this entire generation, has produced an anxious Japanese American community constantly grappling with what it means to lose that connection to incarceration. That connection, established through generations, is personal and familial. Generations are also constructed within a familial discourse, one that centers the nuclear family as the proper site of historical memory and legacy. Japanese American history is reliant upon a kind of regeneration, a familial reproduction of their World War II incarceration history that ensures that history will be remembered by future generations.[21] However, often these narrative descriptions of these

[18] 1790 Nationality Act

[19] Eiichiro Azuma, "Introduction" in *Before Internment: Essays in Prewar Japanese American History*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006. xix, xx.

[20] And as I will explain later, these memories are often problematically narrated as exceptional, where Japanese American World War II incarceration is an aberration of U.S. democratic principles.

[21] There are many works, both scholarly and community based that revolve around the experiences of a generation such as Yuji Ichioka's *The Issei: The World of the First Generation*, Bill Hosokawa's *Nisei: The Quiet American*, Mei Nakano's *Japanese American Women: Three Generations, 1890-1990*. However, a lot of the work that explicitly rely on the familial as regeneration utilize oral history

groups are presented progressively within an assimilationist timeline, from Japanese immigrants to each following generation being further removed from their cultural heritage and, more importantly, further removed from histories and memories of incarceration. Japanese American authenticity of identity is often established through the "proper" remembering of incarceration that is exemplified in Inouye's "look how far we've come" speech. In addition, the Japanese American community is changing with the growth of Shin-Issei and Shin-Nisei (post-1965 immigrants) as well as multi-racial Japanese Americans.[22] The fear of Nisei death is rooted in these generational categories and is hinged upon a generational reproduction where the Japanese American community places a deep emphasis on familial responsibility to maintain its vitality. If the vehicle to tell Japanese American history relies upon the nuclear family and heteronormative transfers of memory, how does this affect what kind of narratives are remembered and which are forgotten?

This is important because these narratives remember incarceration in ways that collude with state narratives of redemption that allow the U.S. to imagine itself as a liberal democracy where racism ceases to exist. In this introduction, I will explore how Japanese American memory practices are structured by the struggle for and subsequent success of redress as it relates to state redemption. But first, I will explore how Japanese American incarceration operated as a form of

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methodology or the use of storytelling. Please see such works as Paul Howard Takemoto's *Nisei Memories: My Parents Talk about the War Years*. In addition, I will further elaborate on this in later chapters in relation to Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project, Manzanar at Dusk by the Manzanar Committee and Nikkei Student Unions.

[22]Please see Tritia Toyota who argues that the changing demography of the U.S. Nikkei community presents a narrative of community that is shifting and in transition where new conditions for membership remain undefined.
Tritia Toyota, "The New Nikkei: Transpacific Shin Issei and Shifting Borders of Community in Southern California." *Amerasia* 38:3 (2012): 2-27.

social death to better understand not only how redress became so important to the Japanese American community but how death becomes central to that visibility.[23]

Incarceration and Social Death

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the mass forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans from the West Coast. At the time, incarceration was justified as a "military necessity" within a language of national security but it was also conceptualized by the War Relocation Authority as "protecting" Japanese Americans from the possibility of violent crimes and riots in reaction to Pearl Harbor and "anti-racist" in its benevolence to help Japanese Americans assimilate. As I will discuss in the following section, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians during the redress and reparations movement would find that the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II was a product of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."[24] However, I argue that incarceration, its dispossession, dislocation, and detainment of Japanese Americans is a condition of social death and disposability. Redress is supposed to correct this, or as I will argue, it offers protection from the social death that Japanese Americans experienced during incarceration. However, these vulnerabilities seep into contemporary commemorations of incarceration and, rather than narrate

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[23] Orlando Patterson articulates social death within the context of slavery where slaves live under the constant threat of death by the master as well as the slaves natal alienation.
Orlando Patterson. *Slavery and Social Death*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.
Lisa Cacho argues that racism manifests itself as the "ineligibility to personhood refers to the state of being legally recongized as rightless, located in the spaces of social death where demands for humanity are ultimately disempowering because they can be interpreted only as aking to be given something sacred in return for nothing at all." She is interested in how the ineligibility of personhood create spaces and populations of living death and "dead to others."
Lisa Marie Cacho. Social Death" *Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 7.

[24] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), xi

World War II incarceration through a narrative of resolution, I draw on theories of social death and racialized space to situate incarceration within a longer history of containment. To understand the U.S. as a carceral state is to think about how the U.S. uses imprisonment at different historical moments to punish those outside the racial and sexual mainstream. To re-narrate incarceration within this longer history opens up the possibility of comparative racial analysis and solidarities.

Drawing from Clyde Wood's theorization of "racialized social-spatial enclosures" or the space used to "establish stable control over specific territories and their populations' which are maintained by a system of militarized regulation, physical boundaries and social, political, and economic traps" I argue that World War II incarceration is a formation of a racialized social-spatial enclosure.[25] Additionally, in her foundational text, *Golden Gulag*, geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore defines racism as "the state-sanctioned or extralegal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death."[26] Incarceration made Japanese Americans vulnerable to premature death through a "racialized social-spatial enclosure." Incarcerated Japanese Americans were deprived of decent housing, education, medicine, a sense of security—and in fact were experiencing a death that is physically apparent in their disposability. For example, Mine Okubo's *Citizen 13600* can also be read as a visual record of life in incarceration that chronicles the debilitating effects incarceration had on the Japanese American female body. Okubo illustrates the public latrines that afforded Japanese American women no privacy. In this sketch, Okubo shows that there are partitions that separate each toilet, but there are no doors to close. Instead, one woman creates a semblance of privacy by pinning a

[25] Clyde Woods, "Les Miserables of New Orleans: Trap Economics and the Asset Stripping Blues, Part 1." *American Quarterly* 61:3 (2009): 774.

[26] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. 28

sheet in front of her exposed body, and another stall seems to have a large discarded piece of wood in front of it, while another woman uses her own dress to cover herself from others. The discomfort of the women is apparent in the way that they never make eye contact with the viewer. The woman in the forefront has her eye downcast, the next woman has her eyes pinched with her hand over her nose, and the last woman's gaze is turned away from the viewer. The trauma of sharing these facilities is apparent in the creation of makeshift stalls and the pained expressions on these women's faces. In this particular narration, incarceration is narrated as poverty where the ability to relieve oneself is intimately tied to a loss of self.[27]

Another example is the questionnaire issued by the WRA as a technology to determine the loyalty or disloyalty of Japanese Americans. In this example, we can see where social death intersects with the physical death and further deprivation of protection of Japanese Americans. These questions asked incarcerees if they would be willing to serve in the US army and if they would forswear allegiance to the Japanese emperor by swearing qualified allegiance to the US.[28] By answering "yes" to the first question, Nisei men (of eligible draft age) were being asked to be willing to physically die as the ultimate proof of their loyalty. For Issei, who were not eligible for citizenship, answering "yes" to the second question rendered them stateless. If incarcerees answered "no" to either of the questions, they were classified as disloyal, segregated from those who were deemed loyal, and transferred to Tule Lake. Here, Japanese Americans are made to prove that they are capable of being citizens within the WRA's conflation of culture and loyalty

[27] Wendsor Yamashita, "What She Remembers: Remaking and Unmaking Japanese American Internment, M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010. 32-33

[28]Mae Ngai. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 183

with their literal bodies. They either must die (from war), be stateless and have even less access to protection, or be punished where they must be separated from other bodies.[29]

While I explore the significance of the Nisei soldier in relation to redress later in this introduction, here I want to explore how death and visibility intersect and are mobilized by the state during World War II as a means of propagating a disavowal of racism for a particular geopolitical agenda. As Takashi Fujitani argues, the Japanese American soldier was needed to visibly prove to the rest of the world that the United States was fighting for freedom and democracy and not for the preservation of Western dominance in the Pacific. In addition, the logic of total war and concept of manpower utilization persuaded the War Department to completely reverse its earlier decision and admit Japanese Americans into the army.[30] The segregation of Japanese American soldiers into separate units and the publicization of their exploits during the war strategically put their bodies (lives and deaths) on display to showcase this disavowal of racism. In this way, America was truly democratic because it allowed these young men to die for the nation. According to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, in its seven campaigns, the 442nd (Japanese American segregated combat team) "took 9, 486 casualties—more than 300 percent of its original infantry strength, including 600 killed."[31] These high casualty rates make visible the ways in which Japanese American bodies were expendable in the war, both in terms of a larger ideological struggle and

[29] Here, statelessness functions as a state of citizen non-being where Japanese immigrants lack any protections from the U.S. as "enemy aliens" and must forswear allegiance to Japan.

[30] Immediately after Pearl Harbor, many already in the army were released except for those in the Hawaii National Guard.
Takashi Fujitani, "Right to Kill and Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans During World War II" *Representations*, 2007; 13.

[31] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 258.

on the battlefield. As one soldier remarks, "it was a high price to pay," but "it was to prove our loyalty which was by no means an easy task."[32] Ironically, in order to prove they are worthy of life they must at least be willing to die. Pointing out the ways in which these interests converged is not meant to discredit the loss suffered by these men, but rather to highlight the ways in which the inclusion of the Nisei soldier allows for the complete transformation of the Japanese American from being a "symbol of racial discrimination into a living representation of America's denunciation of racism."[33] Their death (because it is tied up in this geopolitical agenda) allows for the Japanese American to be narrated within a story of heroism that affords a particular kind of belonging—where they are celebrated as America's "model minority."

Similarly, in her book, *Ends of Empire*, Jodi Kim demonstrates that after World War II both Japan and Japanese Americans underwent a process of "gendered racial rehabilitation" from "former enemy [and enemy alien] to proper Cold War junior ally" and "model minority" respectively.[34] More specifically, before World War II, Japanese American farming "successes" on the West Coast despite the Issei being unable to own land[35] were a threat to white economic security and therefore deemed punishable by forced removal and incarceration. As Kim argues, incarceration was then articulated as a space for producing "properly assimilated and

[32] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 258.

[33] Takashi Fujitani, "Go For Broke, the Movie: Japanese American Soldiers in the US National, Military, and Racial Discourses," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s),* ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 244.

[34] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 99.

[35] Alien Land Law 1913

anticommunist liberal" Japanese American subjects.[36] Japanese Americans could learn to be "productive subjects without 'damaging' the environment, becoming hyper-competitive in any field, or contributing to California's 'maladjustments.'"[37] Kim articulates the U.S. occupation of Japan in a similar fashion, where "these gendered valences" also occur "through the trope of domestication and its related trope of 'domesticity' where a "former enemy nation" is "demilitarize[ed] and feminiz[ed]" to produce "a sense of diminished masculinity for (former) patriarchs."[38] Through an analysis of Japanese American cultural producers, Kim shows how occupation and incarceration are "linked U.S. imperial projects" of gendered racial rehabilitation.[39] In other words, the successfully rehabilitated Japanese American body becomes one of the central figures through which U.S. democracy and empire could legitimize itself in a postwar era. Both Fujitani and Kim demonstrate the ways in which Japanese American "success" gets utilized by the state to justify international geopolitical and domestic projects. In this way, Japanese American bodies and memories have a long history of being utilized by the state to sustain whiteness and nationhood. During World War II, American Indian men were the highest rates per population to enlist with "99 percent of all eligible Native Americans" registered for the draft by January 1942 that created a similar masculinist, patriotic visibility.[40] Additionally, African Americans continued to serve in segregated units, escaping poverty produced by Jim

[36] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 99.

[37] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 113.

[38] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 99.

[39] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 33.

[40] Thomas D. Morgan, "Native Americans in World War II." *Army History* No. 35 (Fall 1995): 22-27.

Crow segregation only to return to these racialized spatial enclosures after the war.[41] However, the Nisei soldier and the rapidly shifting racialization of the Japanese American (from "enemy alien" to "model minority") marks Japanese American soldiers differently as the United States' global and national agenda changed. Grounded in these historical moments, Japanese Americans are recognized by the state as models for their "success" as patriotic soldiers and properly gendered racial subjects who were "liberal capitalist consuming and producing subjects."[42]

Returning to theories of social death, I want to think about the ways that Japanese American racialization began to shift. Lisa Cacho's conceptualization of social death explores how "permanently criminalized people" are "ineligible for personhood—as populations subjected to laws but refused the legal means to contest those laws as well as denied both the political legitimacy and moral credibility necessary to question them."[43] While Japanese Americans experienced a social death most visible in their incarceration, we can see how the figure of the Nisei soldier was already shifting Japanese American racialization vis-à-vis other groups of color that would come to a head with the successes of redress and reparations. Japanese Americans were criminalized during World War II and thus "ineligible for personhood" but that subjecthood is not necessarily permanent. During and after redress, rehabilitation was less about Japanese American subjectivity and more about the rehabilitation and redemption of the state, more specifically, how a recognition of Japanese American incarceration history could offer the state the evidence of itself as a true liberal democracy. Both incarceration, redress, and

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[41] George Lipsitz, "'Frantic to Join…the Japanese Army': Black Soldiers and Civilians Confront the Asia Pacific War" in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s)*. Durham: duke University Press, 2001.

[42] Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 103.

[43] Lisa Marie Cacho. Social Death" *Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 6.

Japanese American racialization became important to studying an emerging neoliberal racial order. In the next section, I will explore how this shift from social death to resurrection occurs through redress and how important a comparative analysis of this historical moment is necessary to our contemporary understandings of race and race relations.

Redress and Neoliberalism

Japanese American public performances of memory are important sites of interrogation because the logic of redress, most visible in these memorializations, is the epitome of contemporary neoliberal racial formation in the United States Grace Hong defines neoliberalism as "an epistemological structure of disavowal" or "a means of claiming that racial and gendered violences are things of the past" by "affirming certain modes of racialized, gendered and sexualized life."[44] Hong argues that a "new neoliberal order arose based on the selective protection and proliferation of minoritized life as the very mechanism for the brutal exacerbation of minoritized death" in response to the social movements in the 1960s and 1970s.[45] I argue that Japanese Americans are central to this disavowal in a neoliberal racial order and obtain "invitation into reproductive respectability, so as to disavow its exacerbated production of premature death."[46] In this section, I will explore how the struggle to obtain redress and reparations shifted memories of incarceration from the private sphere to a public national stage that mobilized these incarcerated experiences in the name of "truth." First, I show how the creation of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) and

[44] Grace Kyungwon Hong. *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. 7.

[45] Grace Kyungwon Hong. *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. 7.

[46] Grace Kyungwon Hong. *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. 7.

its subsequent reliance on testimony not only allowed Japanese American memories of their incarceration to be heard but it established a particular way of speaking about racial injury. As I argue later on, this way of speaking could be heard because the new neoliberal order needed to protect certain minoritized life. Second, the intertwining of testimony and narratives of racial injury that developed out of redress provided Japanese Americans with a continued way to remember what happened to them during World War II. These narratives while always in flux and never stable do continue to exist in the present moment.

Japanese American redress and reparations is often articulated as a defining historical moment for many reasons. First, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 gave Japanese Americans a national apology and monetary compensation of $20,000 to individual survivors for their unjust incarceration during World War II. Second, through the creation of the CWRIC, the Japanese American community was given the opportunity to speak about their incarcerated experiences on a national platform.[47] The resulting Commission's report was "rooted in both its hearings and archival research" after holding 20 days of hearings and taking testimony from more than 750 witnesses that included "Japanese Americans, Aleuts who had lived through the events of World War II, former government officials, public figures, interested citizens, and other professionals who had studied the subjects of the Commission's inquiry."[48] As a result, redress and reparations

[47] Please see *Personal Justice Denied: Report of the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilian*s. This is the published report of the CWRIC that includes historical research, testimonials, and the Committee's recommendations. The report is divided into four parts: the Nisei and Issei, The Aleuts, Recommendations, and Papers for the Commission. In the section on the Nisei and Issei, the report creates a linear historical timeline and divides the section into parts: pre Pearl Harbor life to E.O. 9066, exclusion and evacuation, economic loss, assembly centers, relocation centers, loyalty: leave and segregation, ending the exclusion, protest and disaffection, military service, Hawaii, Germans and German Americans, After camp, and an appendix on Latin Americans. The report was published because of the Civil Liberties Education Fund.

[48] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997) xxvii.

provided the Japanese American community "with the possibility of remembering and reclaiming their silenced pasts."[49] Because the CWRIC required Japanese Americans to testify, as witnesses to and victims of racialized state harm, testimony became an important strategy and way of speaking for Japanese Americans that continues to this day. I argue that the creation of the CWRIC established a dialogue between the state (as perpetrator) and Japanese Americans (as victim/witness). As part of the "evidence" to be examined by the Commission to determine the facts and circumstances surrounding Executive Order 9066 and its effects, Japanese American ways of remembering their incarceration are shaped by how the state was willing to listen to them almost forty years later.

This logic of testimony that was established through these hearings relied upon a transparent way of articulating damages and violence that could then be recorded in the official report. In fact, because monetary compensation was being considered, economic calculations of property loss became a mode of speaking to the state. Economic loss was a tangible way to express how the Japanese American community suffered. In *Personal Justice Denied*, a section titled "Economic Loss" is divided into sub-sections that address the economic impacts of incarceration on: agriculture and fishing, small businesses, white-collar workers, automobiles, and property disposal. At the end of the section, the CWRIC reports that:

"the loss of liberty and the stigma of the accusation of disloyalty may leave more lasting scars, but the loss of worldly goods and livelihood imposed immediate hardships that anyone can comprehend. Moreover, it was the loss of so much one had worked for, the accumulated substance of a lifetime—gone just when the future seemed most bleak and threatening."[50]

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[49] Wendsor Yamashita, "What She Remembers: Remaking and Unmaking Japanese American Internment, M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010. 7.

[50] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997) 133.

This is not to say that Japanese Americans did not articulate loss in other ways or that the CWRIC only took into consideration economic hardships rather than what is repeatedly referred to as "scars" in the report. However, to justify monetary compensation, loss becomes synonymous with the material loss of these "worldly goods" and "livelihood." In this way, loss can be calculated, compensated, and thus resolved. In her book, *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*, Wendy Brown suggests that the emergence of identity politics is rooted in the discourse of injury, which simultaneously contests the nation-state while reaffirming white masculine middle-class ideals that are paradigmatic of citizen formation.[51] In the moment of redress, we are able to see the intertwining of Japanese American identity (and thus memories) with a discourse of injury that relied upon economic calculations of a liberal democratic, propertied subject who had "worked for" an "accumulated substance of a lifetime" that was lost. The loss that can be articulated within the testimony is the loss of a proper citizen subject. Japanese American incarceration is then remembered as an interruption to that citizen subject and therefore redress would resolve racial violence through a return to that proper subjecthood.

In addition, these hearings assume the idea that history can be recounted and retold, that the state can hear and listen, and that visibility and audibility before the state is a sufficient means of redressing violence. As a consequence of this, the legibility of said experiences were often articulated within narratives of patriotism, loyalty, masculinity, and never forgetting. In another section, "Military Service," the report finds the "Nisei had indeed distinguished themselves" and is where "the question of loyalty had been most powerfully answered by a

[51] Wendsor Yamashita, "What She Remembers: Remaking and Unmaking Japanese American Internment, M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010. 60.

battlefield record of courage and sacrifice."[52] This section also opens with a quote from former Senator S.I. Hayakawa, notoriously known for his conservative leadership and repression of the San Francisco State Strike (1968-1969). Here, we can see how military service as proof of one's ultimate loyalty and patriotism was a strategy for obtaining redress:

"'We are good Americans," they said. "We are good neighbors. We are useful and productive citizens. We love America and are willing to die for her.' These messages were communicated by the industry of workers and businessmen and farmers, by their service to the communities in which they live, by their behavior of good citizens, and by the war record of the 442nd."[53]

Nisei war veterans (both alive and dead) were *proof* that Japanese Americans were not only loyal but "good" citizen subjects. In this way, Daniel Inouye (as a starting point) is an important figure and fixture within Japanese American historical memory to unpack and his significance reveals the complicated ways masculinity and patriotism make Japanese Americans visible as deserving of redress. As a highly decorated World War II veteran who served in the famed Japanese American segregated unit, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Inouye and other Japanese American soldiers become emblematic of Japanese American suffering, loss, and death. As I have argued, these masculinist patriarchal narratives gain legibility during the Japanese American redress and reparations movement as a prime example of Japanese American heroic sacrifice. During World War II, patriotism via enlistment becomes the main avenue of demonstrating one's loyalty to the U.S. (a tangible means of resolving anti-Japanese American sentiments that culminated in incarceration) and long after (during the struggle for redress). This kind of patriotism gains cultural capital through these historical retellings that frame veterans as emblematic of worth. Redress in combination with patriotism, loyalty, and success promise to

[52] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997) 254, 260

[53] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997) 253.

alleviate the terrors of racialized violence that continued to linger long after incarceration's official ending. Here, Inouye becomes another part of that promise of resolution. Inouye is often identified as a key player in the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. He is credited with establishing the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians as a means of garnering political and public support for redress and reparations. In addition, Inouye is one of the key founders of the Japanese American National Museum who served for many years as the Chairman of the Board of Governors. Going back to Inouye's narration that began this introduction, his body (the absence of his arm that he lost during the war) and self-narration are emblematic of what makes Japanese Americans visible to the state. Inouye as decorated veteran, political leader for redress, and founder of the National Museum exposes how patriotism, loyalty, visibility, and historical legibility are intimately intertwined.

In addition to the official apology and reparations, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 also included the establishment of the Civil Liberties Education Fund, a federal program dedicated to educating the public about Japanese American World War II incarceration "in an effort to remind Americans that such events must never be allowed to happen again."[54] Not only were memories of incarceration allowed to be spoken through testimony, but they were now an important part of the lessons to be learned. The discourse of "never again" establishes a progressive temporality, which presumes that state violence is not happening in the current moment but is in fact always on the cusp of occurring. This discourse is a deployment of Holocaust memorialization, most notably articulated by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and provides an important lesson in the "fragility of freedom, the myth of progress, and the need for vigilance in preserving democratic values" while teaching about the "dangers of unchecked hatred and the

[54] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied*. (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997) xiii

need to prevent genocide."[55] Thus, Japanese American memories of incarceration are in direct relation to Jewish cultural narratives of genocide and the Holocaust that evoke a nationalism that positions Japanese Americans as a carceral exception. In other words, World War II incarceration is a "bad" mode of imprisonment that is most closely related to the Holocaust and not mass incarceration. This relationship to the Holocaust and inherent distancing from mass incarceration through public memory demonstrates how visibility and legitimacy are often gained on a national stage.[56]

Within the Japanese American community, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 is remembered as a "triumph for the Nikkei community as much as it was a triumph of our democratic processes" because like the "many gains of the broader civil rights movement [it] demonstrated the strength and resilience of American democracy."[57] "Never again" and celebratory commemorations of the Civil Liberties Act situate the state as reformed into a benign entity. More important than resolving racial traumas of Japanese American World War II incarceration, Japanese American redress provided the state with the opportunity to renew "their

[55] United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. "About the Museum: A Living Memorial to the Holocaust." https://www.ushmm.org/information/about-the-museum

[56] And at the same time, Japanese Americans have a complicated history with Holocaust commemorations of genocide. In 1998, the Japanese American National Museum was invited to "mount an exhibit called 'America's Concentration Camps: Remembering the Japanese American experience' at Ellis Island Immigration Museum" but was met with controversy over the usage of "concentration camp." The National Museum received pushback from the National Park Services over this terminology, citing that the phrase could be misunderstood by or offend the Jewish community in New York. Japanese American and Jewish groups met and reached a compromise that allowed the National Museum to use "concentration camp" if it explained the differences from Nazi death camps. In this complicated battle over correct terminology, the differences between the Holocaust and Japanese American incarceration disrupt the carceral exception that the discourse of "never again" allows.
Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga, "Words Can Lie or Clarify: Terminology of the World War II Incarceration of Japanese Americans. *Discover Nikkei*. 2010. 10.

[57] Bruce Embrey. "Message from Manzanar Committee Co-Chair." 44th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage Program. 27, April 2013. 5.

traditional commitment to the ideals of freedom, equality, and justice."[58] Thus, Japanese American redress and reparations becomes an important part of disavowing racism. Relegating racial violence (incarceration) to the past that is resolved (through redress) means that the state can legitimate itself as the arbiter of freedom, equality, and justice even as it continues to make those outside the racial and sexual mainstream vulnerable to premature death.[59]

Testimony, memory, and historical truth not only served an important function during the commission hearings but continued to have what Karen M. Inouye terms a long "afterlife."[60] While I am interested in Japanese American incarceration as "afterlife" and the concrete actions that "breath life" into these memories, my dissertation critically thinks about how trauma became testimony and thus recognizable to the state to significantly change how "afterlife" exists in the present moment. Japanese American redress shifted the "afterlife" of Japanese American

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[58] George H.W. Bush, "Letter from President George Bush to Internees" 1991.

[59] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007.
Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 after 9/11," *Asian American Law Journal*. 185 (2003).

[60] Inouye articulates "afterlife" as a "lingering experience" that people "are breathing life back into" in "order to make it immediate and recognizable to other people." In the case of Japanese American incarceration, she argues they do so "to avert complacency in the face of continuing injustice." She draws on Avery Gordon's theorizations of "haunting" but distinguishes herself from this methodology by instead focusing on "concrete action" and things that are "purposefully detectable." While my work looks at the concrete actions that move Japanese American incarceration memories into the present moment, I am also theorizing about trauma. Drawing on the works of Grace M. Cho, Avery Gordon, Diana Taylor and Ann Cvetkovich, I am not only looking at how trauma became recognizable and heard during Japanese American redress and reparations but what could not be translated into state injury and what continues to be misheard, misread, and misremembered. My dissertation then pays attention to the critiques these traumas make about family, cultural nationalism, and state violence. I seek to do a tracing of that which cannot be contained by redress.
For more, please see: Karen M. Inouye. *The Long Afterlife of Nikkei Wartime Incarceration*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2016.
Please also see: Grace M. Cho. *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008.
Ann Cvetkovich. *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.
Diana Taylor. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003.

incarceration where loss, trauma, and racial violence could be packaged as accumulated and then resolved by an official state apology and monetary compensation. In the next section, I will explore how the shift in speaking, visibility, and legibility had unintended consequences. During and after Japanese American redress, Japanese American history, memories, and bodies could be used as "evidence" that racism was officially over (something it would constantly need to prove over and over in a post-Civil Rights era). We can also think about this in the larger context of testimony that emerged in a post-World War II era as a way of redressing, for example, the Holocaust, colonial harm, and apartheid.[61] Testimony as a technology of neocolonial and neoliberal governance acknowledges and then apologizes for racialized harm in order to disavow it in the present. Allowing the victims of racialized and colonial violence to make their experiences legible to the state serves to resolve the past and absolve the perpetrator—an important technology of state violence.

Unintended Consequences: Redress as Disavowal in the Neoliberal Racial Order

With the passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the state could absolve itself of any responsibility and guilt because it had officially apologized for incarcerating Japanese Americans by giving living victims $20,000.[62] Because they had been awarded redress and reparations, Japanese Americans now had to present their historical memories of incarceration within a neoliberal framework that presented racialized harm as a thing of the past. That is, the "bargain" promised protection from precarity and social death (experienced during incarceration) in

[61] Nuremberg Trials, Germany (1945-1946); Truth and Reconciliation Commission, South Africa (1996); Testimonios, Latin America (1960s-1990s)

[62] Victor Bascara interrogates the Civil Liberties Act as an endpoint to make visible "the interests and limits of the nation-state (186). Drawing on Derrick Bell's theory of interest convergence, Bascara thinks about the passing of the Civil Liberties Act in conjunction with the dismantling of the welfare system. Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 after 9/11," *Asian American Law Journal*. 185 (2003).

exchanged for a sanitized history. In the struggle for redress and reparations, Japanese Americans had learned to make themselves visible to the state through testimony as those who were "deserving" of an official apology. As I argued in the previous section, this often occurred through masculinist patriotic retellings of injury or economic calculations of material loss that made Japanese Americans worthy of state recognition and apology. The "afterlife" of these particular narratives became useful when juxtaposed with other groups of color.

In a post-redress era, deservingness often rested upon proper gendered and heteronormative behavior of "success" as these ideal-citizen subjects who had been wrongly incarcerated while committing no real "crime." For example, when arguing for redress, the JACL stated that despite the fact that the Issei could not become citizens, "they worked to create exemplary communities" and "generally took care of their own problems so that the public records showed the Japanese had hardly a person on the public welfare list or police blotters."[63] The imagery surrounding who constitutes someone on welfare is racialized, gendered and sexualized. This kind of imagery was constituted through works like Daniel Patrick Moynihan's "The Negro Family: The Cast for National Action." This discourse of the public charge revolves around the disciplining of the black family who are outside of heternormative nuclear family formations which is seen as contributing to their socioeconomic status. The JACL's seemingly innocuous statement in reality plays on this imagery to constitute the Issei and thus Japanese Americans as proper citizen subjects who are deserving of redress because they do not rely on state resources for survival. Their value was established upon discourses of antiblackness at a crucial moment where the state was legitimizing its transformation from a welfare state to a

[63] Japanese American Citizens League Legislative Education Committtee. *Redress! The American Promise* (Los Angeles: JACLS Pacific Southwest District Council) 1986.
Please see: Daniel Patrick Moynihan. The Negro Family: The Case for National Action. Washington D.C.: Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor, 1965.

warfare state.[64] Here, I draw on Lisa Cacho's articulation of the violence of value where "human value is made intelligible through racailized, sexualized, spatialized, and state-sanctioned violences" and social value is both "contested and condoned through legally inflected notions of morality."[65] While Cacho looks specifically at the law, my work thinks about the ways in which forms of public memory also participate in the maintenance of these racialized value hierarchies.

Even the success of Japanese American redress itself provided the opportunity to deny African Americans and other groups of color reparations for historical racialized harm. Historian Alice Yang Murray writes that opponents of African American reparations rejected "the idea that one can determine the effects of slavery on later generations" while also contrasting Japanese Americans as "patriotic and hardworking" model minorities with "undeserving African American militants."[66] In addition, the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 intentionally awarded reparations to "former living victims" to then close off the possibility of other groups seeking reparations. The language of the "living victim" substantiates a progressive temporality in which past racial harm can only be resolved through life and privileges the "witness" to provide proof. It refuses to recognize the way that past racial violence and trauma can linger in the present and in the generations that come after. To acknowledge racial violence outside of the bodies of those who experienced it is to understand how systems of oppression (such as containment) shift and transform throughout history. To give reparations to groups whose "victims" are no longer living

[64]Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 after 9/11," *Asian American Law Journal*. 185 (2003).
Please also see: Lisa Marie Cacho. Social Death" *Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: New York University Press, 2012.

[65] Lisa Marie Cacho. Social Death" *Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. 4.

[66] Alice Yang Murray, *Historical Memories of the Japanese American Internmen and the Struggle for Redress*. Standford: Stanford University Press, 2008. 438

or did not necessarily live through "event" would disrupt how the United States as a carceral state narrates itself as non-racist in a post-Civil Rights era.

For Japanese American redress, the state repairs damages for a historical event, one that is neatly contained in the past, that can then be assessed and later apologized for and perhaps even compensated. The past is an important component of reparations in the United States because it functions to narrate the state within a progressive temporality that posits neoliberal inclusion as an end point. Here, we can see how remembering Japanese American incarceration and reparations operates within the historical framework of carceral neoliberalism. Carceral expansion is legitimized in the moment of apology because it operates to disavow racialized punishment via containment in the present. Apology also serves as a technology of neoliberal and neocolonial governance to ensure that contemporary racialized harm cannot be recognized in the present.

However, other groups struggling for reparations do not necessarily draw on Japanese American redress as their ultimate goal nor do they posit the state as the arbiter of freedom and democracy. Black and American Indian reparative claims disrupt the temporality established by reparations Both Black and American Indian reparative claims challenge a bounded and progressive temporality where racialized violence cannot necessarily be redressed monetarily. For example, monetary compensation cannot repair "land theft, genocide, ethnocide, and above all, the denial of the fundamental right to self-determination."[67] Reparative justice for settler colonial violence means a restructuring of settler society through "the restoration of Indian

[67] "Beyond Justice: An American Indian Theory of Justice." Wiliam Bradford. *Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International*. Paper 217, 2004. 64.

lands."[68] The current model for redress, its reliance on the state and capitalist exchange for past racial harm are already rooted in settler structures of governance that exist by denying American Indian self-determination. The struggle for Black reparations do not necessarily solely ask for monetary compensation, but rather seek reparations that "improve the lives of African descendants in the United States for future generations to come" that fosters "economic, social and political parity" and "allow for full rights of self-determination."[69] Thus Black reparations recognizes that reparations can and needs to "be in as many forms as necessary to equitably (fairly) address the many forms of injury caused by chattel slavery and its continuing vestiges." Pointing to the continuing vestiges, disrupts a progressive temporality established by Japanese American redress and holds the state accountable for racialized violences that exist in the present. In addition, reparations is an entire restructuring of United States society that cannot merely be repaired with monetary compensation.

The "success" of both Japanese Americans and redress allowed the state to simultaneously claim that racism was over via reparative resolution and continue to deny life-sustaining resources to people of color. My dissertation then seeks to place Japanese American incarceration and redress within a longer history of the carceral in order to disrupt the way the United States imagines itself as a nation of freedom and democracy in the neoliberal moment. In order to do this, I interrogate the contradictory location of Japanese Americans and their memories as simultaneous victims of carceral violence and those who gain privilege from Redress. For example, during the 1980s and 1990s, geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore argues that the contemporary prison system "was constructed deliberately--but not conspiratorially--of

[68] "Beyond Justice: An American Indian Theory of Justice." Wiliam Bradford. Aboriginal Policy Research Consortium International. Paper 217, 2004.

[69] N'Cobra Website, "Reparations" http://www.ncobraonline.org/reparations/

surpluses that were not put back into work in other ways."[70] What it did was "make use of a lot of idle land, get capital invested via public debt, and take more than 160,000 low wage workers off the street."[71] Through this shift from a welfare-warfare to workfare-warfare state, "the new state built itself in part by building prisons" is where Gilmore locates the crisis of this particular historical moment. By connecting the prison to these state logics, Gilmore is able to show how the prison functions as a geographic "fix" for these economic crises stemming from the "crumbling foundations of [an] old order."[72] The build-up of what Beth Richie calls the "prison nation" also relies upon "the ability of leaders to create fear (of terrorism or health-care reform); to identify scapegoats (like immigrants or feminists); and to reclassify people as enemies of a stable society (such as prisoners, activists, hip-hop artists)."[73] Here, Japanese Americans were reclassified as "enemy aliens" during World War II where racial fear was produced to justify incarceration. However, as I showed earlier, after redress, Japanese Americans become essential to the breakdown of the welfare state as they are positioned as "successful" in relation to the "failures" of other groups of color deemed racially and sexually deviant. Japanese American public memory is then intimately connected to racialized discourses and carceral logics (even as it struggles against it) by relying on generationality and normativity as vehicles of visibility. In the growth of the prison nation, Japanese Americans, in exchange for redress, then distance themselves from other groups of color which ends up sustaining the build-up itself.

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[70] Ruth Wilson Gilmore. *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, 83, 88.

[71] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, 88.

[72] Ruth Wilson Gilmore, *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis and Opposition in Globalizing California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007, 26.

[73] Beth Richie, *Arrested Justice: Black Women, Violence, and America's Prison Nation*. New York: NYU Press, 2012. 3.

This dissertation also thinks about the relationship between the colonial and the carceral, their similarities as well as their differences and how they sustain one another. Memory practices, such as the fight for official recognition of former sites of incarceration as having national significance, is predicated on Indigenous dispossession and containment by the National Parks Service preservation in conjunction with reservations. Japanese American preservation is often rooted in settler colonial logics. As Patrick Wolfe explains, the increase of indigenous people obstructed settler access to land that could then be turned into private property, a cornerstone of liberal democracy.[74] Preservation can only occur through a continued means of maintaining settler access to territory. To disrupt this disappearance of Indigenous peoples from the landscape (past, present, and future), I explore the complicated ways in which Japanese Americans who were organizing around carceral memories were confronted with their contradictory location as both settler and incarceree. To situate the Asian (and in this case, the Japanese American) as a settler who benefits from U.S. settler colonialism is to look, as Alyosha Goldstein suggests, at these "complex reciprocities, seemingly opaque disjunctures, and tense entanglements" that offer us "new insights for anticolonial struggle."[75] And yet at the same time, as I will explore later, there exist slippages in memories of carceral and colonial confinement in which reservation and incarceration are comparatively placed together to challenge racialized punishment in its varied forms. Therefore, it is important to examine the relationship between Japanese American memories and those of other groups of color to understand how a settler state and prison nation are maintained.

Chapter Breakdown

[74] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4) 2006: 388

[75] Alyosha Goldstein, *Formations of United States Colonialism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. 2.

In Chapter One, "From Distance to Proximity, Japanese Americanness and Blackness: The Limitations of Post Redress Japanese American Incarceration Narratives" I compare and contrast two events held or sponsored by the Japanese American National Museum. Located in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles, California, this museum serves as an important community archive that legitimizes and makes visible Japanese American memory, culture, and community as historically significant. This chapter explores how narratives of death function within Japanese American memory to sustain narratives of progress or resolution by drawing on discourses of either antiblackness or multiculturalism. Despite the seeming difference between these two events, with the creation of distance or proximity to blackness, both events failed to consider how Japanese American positionality and thus memories play a part in sustaining the carceral state even when it attempts to uncover it. In this chapter, a convergence between history, family, and violence emerges in these narratives that make visible racialized subjects' reliance upon gender and sexual regulation. I argue that a queering of these heteronormative transfers of memory is about a refusal to rely upon cultural nationalist and masculinist narrative logics and to reckon with the violence of the nuclear family.

Shifting to the virtual space of the digital archive, Chapter Two, "The Intimate Connection Between Truth, Memory, and Life: Refusals in the Densho Digital Archive" explores Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project to deconstruct how community remembering is inherently tied up in the biopolitical logic of life and death. Exploring Densho's website and promotional materials, we can see how death haunts the archive in a variety of ways: it serves as part of its mission to document stories before they are gone forever while giving purpose to the stories which are meant to serve as lessons for younger generations. However, in many ways, death is constantly banished, as archiving becomes a way to not only provide "living proof" of

Japanese American incarceration through the video recording of personal histories but it also provides a way of living beyond death. There is an intimate connection between truth, memory, and life which are seen as being sustained by the passing on of stories through a discourse of family and lineage that centers the importance of Japanese American incarceration to historical memory. But death, trauma, and forgetting manage to find their way into the oral histories and cannot be completely banished from the archive. In an examination of Densho's curriculum development, a component of its archive that offers concrete lesson plans for 6-12th grade educators, I argue that a centering of Japanese American incarceration is actually decentered when comparing World War II to other moments of racialized violence, opening up the possibility of learning about a longer carceral history that is central to the United States.

Chapter Three, "The Colonial and the Carceral: Building Relationships between Japanese Americans and Indigenous Groups in the Owens Valley" takes part in the growing dialogue that is thinking about the convergence of Indigenous nations and Asian/American communities within the carceral state. Assessing the carceral state across diverse communities contributes to the conversation about the settler state which uses multiple logics of containment, surveillance and punishment to maintain its power. More specifically, I explore how the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power's proposed solar ranch threatened not just the viewshed of Manzanar but exposed the layers of colonial violence in the Owens Valley, first by white ranchers and then the LADWP who diverted Owens Valley water to Los Angeles. In the fight against the LADWP, for the first time, Japanese American and indigenous peoples of the Owens Valley worked together to eventually defeat the LADWP, building important coalitional relationships. From my ethnographic fieldwork (participant observation and interviews), I discovered that this historic fight not only put these different groups in conversation with each

other but also forced a recognition of the ways in which the colonial and the carceral sustain each other.

And finally, Chapter Four, "NSU Culture Night and Generational Transmissions of Memory: Performative Disruptions and Other Futures" looks at how Nisei death informs a transfer of responsibility to younger generations of Japanese Americans to care for history and community when the Nisei are gone. For the Japanese American community, Japanese American youth are the "future" and are often positioned as the community's singular hope of surviving. In this chapter I look specifically at the Nikkei Student Union's Culture Nights at the University of California, Los Angeles to analyze how Japanese American college students engage with these generational transmissions of memory through the medium of performance. I argue that through performance (in particular script writing and acting) Japanese American youth grapple with the charges of generational responsibility, sometimes embracing it and other times rejecting it. These performative disruptions often highlight the limitations of the Japanese American historical memory that form community identity as a way of opening up spaces of connection.

CHAPTER ONE: From Distance to Proximity, Japanese Americanness and Blackness: The Limitations of Post-Redress Japanese American Incarceration Narratives

"Today I stand before you, Lane, when I was first declared an enemy alien on December the 7th and today I am president pro-tempore, third in line for the presidency. That's not too bad." Daniel Inouye at the Japanese American National Museum 2011 Gala Dinner

"Every 28 hours a black man, woman, or child is murdered by the police or vigilante law enforcement. An estimated 25.1 percent of black women live in poverty, this is higher than any other ethnic group. The average life expectancy for trans Black/ transgendered women is just 35 years. Dr. Curtiss Rooks Takada, 2015 Day of Remembrance Los Angeles

I begin this chapter with these two different moments to mark the contrasting ways Japanese Americans remember their incarceration. Through a discourse of Japanese American "success" the late Senator Inouye strategically garners donations from wealthy individuals and businesses in order to sustain Japanese American knowledge production via the Japanese American National Museum. In utilizing a narrative of "look how far we've come" Inouye ultimately distances himself from those who have remained racialized enemies of the state. This distancing from other groups of color legitimates Japanese American history and experiences often at the expense of other groups of color. On the other hand, Dr. Rooks makes visible the way the state devalues black lives today and narrates through a discourse of proximity that Japanese Americans should care about police brutality, antiblack racism, and mass incarceration as former incarcerees. Highlighting the ways in which black and Japanese Americans' lives were once historically intertwined, the Day of Remembrance event organizers hoped to garner Japanese American support for black lives. In this chapter, I argue that Japanese American public memory (such as these two Japanese American community events) not only produce knowledge about Japanese American history and identity but often unknowingly participate in neoliberal logics. These logics justify the death and destruction of "deviant" populations,

including the structuring of feelings that allow state violence to persist. By contrasting the Japanese American National Museum's 2011 Gala Dinner with the 2015 Day of Remembrance Los Angeles, I examine how these opposing narratives both rely upon a discourse of generational responsibility that privileges heteronormative family formations where Japanese Americans are seen as "ideal" citizens performing "proper" gender roles. Taking seriously the limits of the previously mentioned strategies, this chapter seeks to re-narrate Japanese American incarceration from a contradictory location: it is simultaneously a site where technologies of carcerality work to demonize and dehumanize Japanese Americans in ways that legitimize punishment and imprisonment but it also happens to be a site of rehabilitation and normativization. By analyzing Japanese American incarceration as a racialized spatial-social enclosure within this contradictory location, I present an alternative to discourses of "never again" and instead position prison abolition as necessary, desirable, and possible.

The Japanese American National Museum as Community Archive

The Japanese American National Museum located in Little Tokyo, Los Angeles opened in 1992. The idea for a museum was generated by two distinct groups: businesspersons and World War II veterans. These two groups came together with a common vision "to ensure that Japanese Americans' heritage and cultural identity were preserved."[76] With the passing of the Issei and the Nisei, they "realized that their children and grandchildren the Sansei and Yonsei were often unaware of the hardships and successes of earlier generations."[77] The National Museum as a community archive would ensure that their lives and experiences would be remembered even long after they were gone. In her narration of the importance and significance

[76] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 3.

[77] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 3

of the National Museum, former Executive President of the National Museum, Irene Y. Hirano argued that "by placing the Japanese American experience within the context of American history and by working to improve the understanding and appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity, the National Museum has striven to serve and enrich a global audience."[78] And not only does the museum interpret the past, but the "National Museum is also committed to building bridges among ethnic and cultural groups for the future," believing that their institution brings "together people in the telling of their stories."[79] In the present moment, the National Museum situates itself as an institution that reaches "across diverse ethnic communities nationally" while seeking "new global partners to explore the relevancy of history to current events."[80] After September 11th, remembering Japanese American incarceration was discussed as even more important in underscoring the "need to ensure that the loss of civil liberties reflected in our history is not repeated." Hirano sees the post 9/11 moment as opening up conversations and bringing "together two communities affected and then intertwined by world events nearly sixty years apart."[81] In this way, Japanese American community and knowledge production often see the relevance and urgency in sharing the lessons of incarceration so that it may never happen again. By utilizing the logic of "never again" Japanese Americans are allowed to position themselves as model citizens who stand up for other groups of color experiencing similar injustices.

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[78] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 1

[79] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 2

[80] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 11

[81] Akemi Kikamura-Yano, et al, *Common Ground: The Japanese American National Museum and the Culture of Collaborations*. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2005, 175.

One of the main ways the National Museum financially sustains itself is through the monetary contributions of various museum stakeholders that range from individuals to large corporations such as American Airlines or Wells Fargo Bank. The annual gala dinner, as the largest fundraising event for the National Museum, is simultaneously a space of community celebration and business—an intertwining of Nikkei community vitality with money from wealthy donors who are encouraged throughout the night to support the museum in any way possible. At the Japanese American National Museum's 2011 Gala Dinner, *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, the celebration was articulated as an opportunity to expand our histories by deliberately shifting the focus away from incarceration to the post-World War II era. Analyzing the way in which the Japanese American community is seeking to utilize a language of lineage and legacy that situates the past as a way of legitimating the present and a specific future, I explore the ways in which death (as the past that needs to be remembered) and education (about the past for the vitality of the future) are intertwined not only as a way of furthering the museum's mission but also as a means of interpellating Japanese Americans as proper, worthy citizen-subjects. By situating the dinner's theme, mission, and articulation of history within a larger context of Japanese American nationalist remembering I point to the ways in which these modes of memory reproduce a kind of surveillance and carcerality that operated during wartime incarceration.

The Parameters of a Gala Dinner: The Temporalities of Look How Far We've Come and Where We Are Going

The focus on celebration and money establishes very particular temporalities. The temporality of "look how far we've come" situates the community as "successful" while the temporality of "where we are going" envisions its "successful" future as a way to entice attendees to desire to be part of it. But this conceptualization of time through success also posits

the past as the authority where the dead and the not quite dead are resurrected back to life in order to serve "the purpose of glorifying the new struggles."[82] For example, the dinner begins with a tribute video remembering important community members with ties to the National Museum who passed away in the last year. The video is comprised of small excerpts from previously recorded interviews conducted by the museum and each clip provides a particular glimpse at what each individual was best known for. Included in this video was: William Hohri, who filed the court case against the United States for redress; Frank Emi, a draft resister; Hisaye Yamamoto, author of *Seventeen Syllables*; Wally Yonamine, Nisei baseball pioneer; Toshiko Takaezu, artist and Professor at Princeton University; and UCLA coach John Wooden, from the Japanese American basketball documentary *Crossover*. This featuring of death is sorrowful in its language of loss but also simultaneously brings that person back to life. By watching the interview clips, the deceased are resurrected even in the moment you are reminded that they are no longer here. And even as we are meant to mourn the loss of these important community members through this remembrance video, we are also expected to acknowledge what makes this community great. Those who are memorialized in this video are those whose contributions are worthy of our attention and remembrance. As the Japanese American community mourns these individuals "they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honored disguise and this borrowed language."[83] In other words, the dead are utilized by the community to situate the National Museum's recent or "new" knowledge production within a legacy of successful individuals. In this way, the dinner is a space where history's

[82]Karl Marx. "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." In the *Marx-Engels Reader*. Ed. Robert C. Tucker. (New York: Norton, 1978), 597

[83] Karl Marx. "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." In the *Marx-Engels Reader*. Ed. Robert C. Tucker. (New York: Norton, 1978) 595

terrors are domesticated into safely consumable narratives and emotions.[84] The dinner as a performance of Japanese American identity demands a particular relationship to community and history that inherently expects a particular affective response from their dinner guests. The dinner aspires to make us feel a sense of belonging and community that should propel us to donate our money that is also meant to legitimate a particular kind of knowledge production. It also situates the National Museum's survival as community survival---one that can only be understood in "terms of profit rather than in terms of human need."[85] Throughout the night, the convergences between history, profit, and community through "success" recur in different moments that are as violent as they are problematic.

Another way the dinner utilizes "success" is to talk about the National Museum itself as a legitimate educational institution that attendees should want to support. This can only allow for certain responses and emotions to emerge in the celebration of the National Museum. For example, throughout the night and the program, congratulations were made to the museum for being awarded the National Medal for Museum and Library Services. An image of the president of the National Museum standing with First Lady Michelle Obama with the award in hand constantly circulated throughout the night. This ultimate honor and recognition became a way for the museum to not only honor itself (which is what this gala dinner ultimately does) but to show longtime and potential supporters that their work is not only vital to the community but to the nation as well. Donors also made contributions by placing advertisements in the program and many of them had full pages dedicated to the National Museum because they received this award. This constant parading of the National Museum's successes forces attendees to also

[84] This is a sentence of Ann Cvetkovich that I have reworked to fit into thinking about the dinner Ann Cvetkovich, *The Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. 21.

[85] Audre Lorde. *Sister Outsider*. (Trumansburg: Crossing Press, 1982) 55

participate in this celebration. Any other emotions or responses that cannot fit within this celebratory logic are deemed inappropriate. In this way, the dinner manages our responses (and potential responses) to Japanese American nationalism. Even the pace of the dinner itself does not allow for its attendees to really dwell on what these "successes" are making invisible[86] as we are guided through performance after performance of celebration and ceremony.

Continuing Family Stories: The Language of Lineage and Legacy

As previously mentioned, the National Museum emerged from a fear of the "permanent loss" of Japanese American history, where founding members directed the "focus to the preservation and documentation of the Issei and Nisei generations."[87] For the Japanese American community, the National Museum became a way not only to address their literal absence from mainstream histories and archives but to legitimize that history within a discourse of diversity. Throughout the dinner, we were constantly reminded of the National Museum's successes in preserving such a history and instantly propelled into a "new" phase of our story. This desire to expand history was purposely about articulating a Japanese American identity that did not revolve around incarceration. In addition, while the Japanese American community has always been concerned with preserving living histories in the face of looming death—it is this physical loss of the Nisei that prompts the National Museum to rethink their relationship to the past. It is "the inevitable passing of the generations [that] has brought into question the ability of [the] Nikkei community to maintain its vitality."[88] Fearing and seeing their own disappearance

[86] As I explore later in the chapter: these successes hide the way that these narratives are inherently rooted in antiblackness.

[87] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 10

[88] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 7

intertwined with that of the Nisei, the National Museum is forced to re-legitimate and re-vitalize their mission. As a result, the National Museum identifies the post-World II era and subsequently "the Sansei and Yonsei generations and the arrival of a new group of immigrants from Japan beginning in the 1950s" as its new subjects of inquiry.[89]

In order to make this shift, the National Museum utilizes a language of lineage and legacy to incorporate this "new" history into the Japanese American experience. The National Museum articulates "this new group's history [as] reach[ing] back 50 years or more with family stories reminiscent of the original immigrants and their descendents."[90] Throughout the program and dinner they reiterate that they will "work diligently to find and document the family stories that have been accumulating during" this neglected era.[91] This continuation of family stories eases the National Museum's anxiety about having to establish a "new" past that authorizes this "new" present they are envisioning. This expansion of history desires not only to move away from World War II, but to make visible the connections between Japanese Americans and Japan. It can imagine this history as always having been there, merely overshadowed by internment and redress, and thus can situate these stories as belonging to a Japanese American historiography. This language also serves to naturalize a progression of Japanese American history within a linear temporality of progress that can only ever situate our experiences as "successful." In

[89] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 2

[90] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 2

[91] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 1

addition, this progress and expansion are articulated as being "healthy for all involved."[92] Here, the Japanese American community is revitalized or brought back from the brink of death, disappearance, and irrelevancy. Relating to the past in this hetero-patriarchal way reifies the National Museum itself, while mobilizing the family as a proper subject of study---one that is worthy of historical recognition and deserving of state visibility. Consequently, the family[93] as a unifying narrative institutes a language of obligation and debt to the community that enables a type of surveillance that disciplines subjects who remain outside nationalist rememberings of the past.

Three Honorees: Cultural Ambassadors as the New Subjects of History

The dinner sought to honor three individuals, representative of the National Museum's desire to acknowledge previously ignored histories. These honorees are emblematic of not just different immigration patterns, but their contributions to the community are constituted through art, beauty, and food. At the same time, this focus on the preservation of Japanese culture revolves around these individuals' ability to operate within a global economy. Honored with the Cultural Ambassador Award, Stan Sakai, a commercial artist and illustrator best known as the creator of the samurai rabbit character Usagi Yojimbo (1984), a samurai rabbit, was recognized because of his work's ability to share Japanese culture and history with the rest of the world. Similarly, Jane Aiko Yamano, honored with the Creative Visionary Award for her ability to modernize the traditional Japanese kimono and entice young people around the world to wear it,

[92] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 7

[93] The title of the gala dinner, "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" demonstrates how the metaphor of "family" is used to incorporate histories and narratives that were once outside cultural nationalist boundaries of what constituted Japanese American community and history. Here, "family" is used to bring these narratives into the generational narratives that constitute Japanese American history. "Family" and generationality work hand-in-hand to legitimate history.

was recognized as having revitalized an important part of Japanese culture indicative of the postwar era.[94] And recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award, Noritoshi Kanai, the Japanese executive of the food importer business, Mutual Trading Company, was recognized for his desire to provide the United States with access to quality Japanese food and preserve Japanese food culture around the world. Within this rhetoric of culture and the global economy, the National Museum identifies these individuals as successful. In this postwar era, the ideal citizen subject is no longer confined to the nation-state but is someone who can operate within this global economy that is necessitated on the commodification of difference. Making Japanese culture available for consumption ensures its vitality but also intimately links Japanese Americans to Japan in very particular ways.[95]

Through the honorees, the National Museum is narrativizing the post-war era as a moment when the Sansei are coming of age and when the "exchange and sharing of culture across the Pacific has become more prevalent than ever."[96] In our dinner programs, the National Museum provides historical background to understand this major shift within the Japanese American community. Because of the Immigration Act of 1924, "immigration was reduced to a trickle" and most of the growth in the community came from the births of the Sansei generation.[97] However, with "the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, which abolished the

[94] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 13

[95] The Japanese American community can be linked to Japan in regards to business relations, culture, and crisis but not in relation to the legacies of Japanese colonialism. Japanese American can selectively choose which histories and presents it wants to inherit from Japan.

[96] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 1

[97] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 10

discriminatory national origins quotas, immigration from Japan and Asia suddenly was placed on equal footing with Europe." [98] The National Museum identifies this influx of Japanese immigrants as being crucial to the Japanese American community and the United States. It is this articulation of these new immigrants as cultural ambassadors that not only allows the Japanese American community to make and see connections to Japan but also to narrativize itself within a discourse of economic and cultural exchange that ultimately validates the United States as a geopolitical power of benevolence. This situating of Japanese American historiography and community as beneficiaries of United States benevolence is not a new narrative but one whose recurrence needs to be problematized. For example, as Takashi Fujitani argues, the figure of the Nisei soldier (one that is so integral to the community) was mobilized by the state as a means of propagating a disavowal of racism for a particular geopolitical agenda. The Japanese American soldier was needed to visibly prove to the rest of the world that the United States was fighting for freedom and democracy and not for the preservation of Western dominance in the Pacific. Similarly, the way in which the struggle for redress is remembered relies upon a redemption of the state that positions Japanese Americans as worthy of an apology and compensation. As Victor Bascara argues, by highlighting the ways in which Japanese Americans achieved "success" despite racial hardships and incarceration, the United States could demonstrate "how the system [could] correct itself without the need for radical change."[99]

Showing the ways in which Japanese American history and imaginings of community identity converge with those of the state, I want to consider how the National Museum also aligns its "new" historiography with the United States' imagining of itself in the postwar era and

[98] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 10

[99] Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 After9/11" *Asian American Law Journal*, 2003;108.

within this contemporary global terrain and economy. The Immigration Act of 1965 in opposition to the 1924 Immigration Act is characterized as life affirming and more specifically a legislation that reinvigorates the Japanese American community with a diversity of peoples and experiences. Unlike the previous era, power now operates as a "potentially productive rather than exclusively negative force."[100] In this way, Japanese American historiography colludes with state power and is unable to critically think about the ways in which this new mode of power, or the Immigration Act of 1965 itself, creates the conditions for even more exacerbated forms of death. In this way, the global citizen and ideal citizen subject are "accorded forms of 'pastoral' care" that other citizens are not.[101] Within this same logic of being cultural ambassadors, the National Museum forces our attention to the recent natural disasters in Japan by sharing stories, showing a video montage of footage from Japan, and a musical tribute "to the spirit of the Japanese people."[102] As cultural ambassadors, the National Museum asks that we donate money to the Red Cross in the name of the museum. Japanese victims of recent natural disasters are seen as worthy of aid and care but they are also afforded such measures by the museum because of the way it establishes them within this global economy of benevolence. How is it that Japanese Americans can identify with victims in Japan but not black communities who suffered in the wake of Katrina? Looking at responses to natural disasters exposes the way in which Japanese Americans replicate the state in who is deemed worthy of protection and thus life and how this sudden connection to Japan inadvertently participates in rendering certain populations surplus. In this moment, it becomes appropriate to make connections to Japan, but

[100] Roderick Ferguson, "Administering Sexuality," *Radical History Review* 100 (Winter 2008): 158

[101] Aihwa Ong. Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Politics of Transnationality. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

[102] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, Addendum Schedule

this connection is only viable within the context of the global economy. To think about Nikkei community within a legacy of Japanese colonialism is not useful for the National Museum because of the way it makes visible our connections to a history of violence.

Rethinking Generation: Rupture and Reification

In addition to this rhetoric of the cultural ambassador, the National Museum made sure to highlight the ways in which these individuals did not and could not fit into a Japanese historiography previously invested in categories of "generation" such as Issei and Nisei as a way to signify that their production of knowledge was progressing. Kanai immigrated in 1964 representing a newer generation of immigrants, while Yamano was born in the United States but returned to Japan to fulfill her role as the heir to her grandmother's beauty business, and Sakai is the son of a Nisei father and Japanese mother. While none of these honorees can fit themselves into the already existing frameworks for understanding Japanese American history, the National Museum is narrativizing the Sansei generation through a discourse of "progress" that relies upon the very categories it seeks to distance itself from. Alongside the different immigration pattern of Japanese in the postwar era, many Sansei were attending colleges and being moved by "social causes" such as redress and became involved in fighting to "pursue change within their communities and within their country."[103] They are characterized as the generation that pushed their "grandparents and parents to share their experiences during the war years so it would not be lost to history."[104] In this way, the National Museum is unable to de-centralize incarceration entirely from its production of knowledge. Or more precisely, the National Museum is unable to articulate why incarceration (its violences and traumas) may persist in the generations that did

[103] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 11.

[104] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 11.

not directly experience it.[105] But what marks this generation as unique is that they had many more opportunities available to them than the Nisei and Issei. According to the National Museum, the Sansei had "more choices and greater acceptance into mainstream society" but that ultimately "means that [they] are not always connected to their cultural heritage or their ethnic communities."[106] In this way, the National Museum utilizes the narrative of Sansei "progress" in relation to their parents and grandparents, inadvertently marking the "progress" of the United States. With the civil rights and liberation movements of the 1960s and 1970s making visible the ideological and necropolitical formations constituted through white supremacy, power is forced to shift to accommodate the demands being made by these nationalisms. Even as the National Museum narrates the Sansei as an integral part of those movements and struggles, it simultaneously situates them within a model minority discourse, serving as "proof" that communities of color can materially and economically "succeed." Japanese American racialization through the language of the model minority that is at first imposed on them by the state for a particular agenda is later taken up by National Museum via Japanese American historiography as a means of understanding and celebrating ourselves.

As our favors for attending the dinner and supporting the museum, we were given tins of the National Museum's own brand of Generation Teas, created by the Los Angeles tea retailer Chado.[107] These teas are available in the following flavors: Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei, and Gosei that "starts with a Japanese tea as the base which is [then] combined with unexpected

[105] Which is very different to how Sansei women filmmakers, Rea Tajiri and Janice Tanaka are choosing to think about and remember internment.

[106] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program, 11.

[107] There is also a shift from economies of scale (or Fordism) to small economies. I need to read more about this /didn't feel comfortable inserting any kind of analysis about this into the actual paper.

flavors from new cultures."[108] Each tea honors a different generation starting with the Issei who are honored for their immigration and becoming "their family's first generation of Americans," or the Nisei who are noted for embracing American values while "they honored their parent's Japanese values of *gaman* (perseverance) and *ganbatte* (doing the best they can)."[109] The younger generations are noted for their "imaginative twists" on traditions, rich cultural mixtures, or "youthfulness" and "fresh new perspectives."[110] Each flavored tea is supposed to be representative of those qualities. But despite their differences they are ultimately marketed within a discourse of family, as "a five-generation family of teas, dressed in colorful labels, snuggling tin-to-tin on the shelf they call home."[111] In addition, the teas are about marketing and consuming a way of thinking about history that are reliant upon narratives of "progress" and assimilation as well as our own investments in them. Produced for the knowing post-redress Japanese American consumer, the National Museum commodifies generation in a way that constructs identities that you can now purchase. As the museum's public relations officer explains our dinner favors to us he jokingly tells us that we "do not have to be Issei to drink Issei tea" but that you "just have to *feel* like an Issei."[112] Throughout his explanation and his humor the audience laughs, signaling the ways in which they understand the categories of generation as having particular qualities, narratives, and ways of feeling. But I also want to think about the laughter as also acknowledging the ridiculousness of being able to buy a tea based on Japanese

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[108] JANM Product Website: http://janmstore.com/genteas.html

[109] JANM Product Website: http://janmstore.com/genteas.html
Gaman and Ganbatte are often discussed in relation to incarceration experiences and survival.

[110] JANM Product Website: http://janmstore.com/genteas.html

[111] JANM Product Website: http://janmstore.com/genteas.html

[112] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

American categories of generation as much as it is about belonging to community. Reading this moment in the dinner exposes disruptions as well as continued investments in what defines a generation.

Conversing with the Senator: Education and Bidding for the Future

The dinner comes to a close with Professor Mitch Maki's enthusiastic and booming voice encouraging the audience to donate money to the Bid for Education Fund that provides bus transportation for school field trips that were threatened by state budget cuts.[113] The audience expecting Mitch Maki to come to the stage instead finds his eleven year old daughter, Lane Maki, standing in the spotlight. What ensues is a staged conversation between Lane and Senator Daniel Inouye who not so subtly discuss with each other the importance of funding this museum initiative. Lane begins by asking: "You talk a lot about World War II and how it was a really bad time for our nation, and I know it wasn't a good time for you either, so why hold on to those memories? Isn't it easier just to forget about them?"[114] Inouye replies with his own particular history, talking about the ugliness of war, the death of his friend who is "just a memory now," or his visit to Rohwer, Arkansas and seeing his "fellow Japanese Americans behind barbed wire," and witnessing and experiencing segregation in the army.[115] He situates this earlier part of his history as belonging to an earlier moment of national history identifying the various ways in which power manifests itself through white supremacy and the way democracy failed him. But his narration also marks redress as a moment of national redemption in which "great democracy

[113] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program 14

[114] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[115] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

apologized" and Japanese Americans flourished.[116] Inouye ends with his greatest concern, that the next generations will forget a past that they should be aware of. He tells Lane, "And I hope you won't forget."[117] To which she replies, "Senator, I won't forget, I promise. And I won't forget you either. Thank you for everything you've done."[118]

Forgetting is not an option because of the way it invalidates the museum's purpose and existence to preserve stories of the past. The National Museum as a community archive has a very important function---it serves to legitimate a marginalized voice and thus life in the face of impending physical and social death. In other words, the National Museum functions as a way of banishing death—to save marginalized peoples from social death and thus to give them a life beyond physical death. In responding to the way that the state treats their bodies and lives as disposable and unworthy of historical inclusion, community strategies of memory expel death but this expelling constructs a very particular kind of narrative and way of remembering itself. These strategies of community remembering remain inherently tied up in the bio-political logic of life and death. In his article, "The Will to Institutionality," Roderick Ferguson argues that the "differences that were once articulated as critiques of the presumed benevolence of political and economic institutions (like incarceration) become absorbed within an administrative ethos that recast those differences as testaments to the progress of the university" or in this case the museum.[119] Lane's promise to Inouye ensures that he will live on in the memories, actions, and

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[116] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[117] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[118] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[119] Roderick Ferguson, "Administering Sexuality," *Radical History Review* 100 (Winter 2008): 161

lives of the younger generation—fixing him into a community archive guarantees that his voice (and those like him) will be heard and that he will not have died only to disappear entirely. Inouye's testimony (and the genre itself) functions as a method of truth-telling that is most concerned with objectivity and legitimacy. As a result, truth is always on the side of life while death can only mean something if being brought back to life. The intimate connection between truth, life, and remembering is made visible in the way that this performance produces a kind of knowledge production that all Japanese Americans should be invested in. This enforces a particular relationship to life and death, where forgetting can only be seen as death and therefore the negation of life that ultimately forecloses other possibilities of narrativizing.

After her promise to Inouye he promptly leaves the stage, having served his purpose in guiding the younger generations towards an acceptable future. Lane continues to preach to us about the lessons of the past in which she argues that her generation needs "to make sure that we learn about the bad things that have happened so they are not repeated."[120] We are told to never forget about incarceration, or the sacrifices of Japanese American veterans, and how we struggled for redress and that "we won!"[121] To "honor the strength and courage of our Issei and Nisei" is "what community is all about."[122] Lane situates herself as a symbol of survival and futurity—she is representative of the generation that needs to be guided and educated about the past in order to move into an "acceptable" and "successful" future.

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[120] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[121] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[122] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

This anxiety about younger generations' ambivalent relationship to the past and therefore the museum itself is a constant presence. Not only is the National Museum concerned about getting these generations to participate in this kind of remembering but it is also trying to sustain the Japanese American community through them. As the identifiable future, the museum sees these generations as future investors in its programs. Recently, the National Museum has sought to attract a younger audience by holding particular youth-related events such as the Giant Robot Exhibition (2009-2010) or Mike Shinoda's Exhibit *Glorious Excess* (2008). In addition, after the dinner, an after-party was hosted by the Japanese American National Museum's Young Professional Network where young professionals (over the age of twenty-one) could mingle, have fun, and create community together by being convinced to join the organization. The Young Professionals Network, established in 2010, describes itself as representing "the next generation of leaders and supporters of the Museum."[123] The emphasis on the "young professional" is about who can legitimately be a true museum supporter---that person is someone who can provide monetary support in the years to come, who has and will continue to have a certain economic stability and ability.[124] Participating in community means not just "appreciating the past" but financially investing in and building a particular future.[125] Lane as

[123] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program 72

[124] In other words, when the Nisei are no longer alive to fund the museum (this is a huge portion of which their funding comes from---Nisei donors).

[125] Japanese American National Museum. "Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community" Program 72

this symbol of our future exposes the intimate connections and collusions between economic success and a poetry from the past which our vitality is said to depend upon.[126]

Identifying a future and a past within the parameters of "success" as the only way of understanding and relating to Nikkei community is dangerous in the way it affirms the state and violently moralizes the deaths of other racialized groups of color. Before Daniel Inouye comes to stage, he is introduced by his wife, Irene Hirano, a past president of the National Museum. Introducing him means that she must list all of his accomplishments and his continued investment in the museum that forces us to honor him as well. And of course she cannot help but include how Inouye is third in line for the presidency as she proudly jokes that this is the reason why there are secret service agents running around. And after Inouye narrates his life story that should never be forgotten (as he tells Lane) he begins discussing "how far Japanese Americans have come" by relating statistical information to the audience about our law-abiding nature, our low crime rates, our high intellectual rates, and that we are among the "three ethnic groups with the highest per capita income."[127] He then goes on to incorporate his own life into this "success" narrative saying, "today I stand before you, Lane, when I was first declared an enemy alien on December the 7th and today I am president pro-tempore, third in line for the

[126] In the "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," Karl Marx is critical of revolutions' relationship to the past, present, and future, warning that "the social revolution of the nineteenth century cannot draw its poetry from the past, but only from the future." As I have argued, Japanese American nationalism constantly utilizes the past to legitimize the present moment and to build a "successful" future. This relationship to the past is problematic for the way it allows for the policing and surveillance of "unworthy" populations through the positioning of Japanese Americans in opposition to such deviancy. Karl Marx, "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." In the *Marx-Engels Reader*. Ed. Robert C. Tucker. (New York: Norton, 1978), 597

[127] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

presidency."[128] And then he looks affectionately at the crowd and states, "that's not too bad" to which the audience enthusiastically applaud him.[129] By incorporating us into this logic of "success" Inouye situates Japanese Americans as exceptional citizens who are worthy of state recognition and thus affirmation. As I have mapped out in this paper, throughout the evening the model minority discourse manifests itself in different ways and quite dangerously positions Japanese Americans in opposition to other minoritized groups. "Success" is only measurable in relation to the "failures" of these other groups and is in fact predicated on that. This logic of celebratory success institutionalizes affects within community that allow for and teach us to abandon people.[130] This success narrative as a strategy for survival allows Japanese Americans to hold on to the very things that protect us from state violence but allow for the death of others.[131] This is the way in which the state can mobilize Japanese Americanness to do "its repressive work and its policing of civil society" and ourselves.[132] By utilizing this notion of "success" Inouye strategically distances Japanese Americans from blackness that legitimates state violence, but four years later I find myself at another community event with an entirely different intention. Instead of creating distance between these two racialized groups, this Day of Remembrance event sought to connect us by focusing on relationships that developed out of geographic proximity. However, as I will argue further, this narration of closeness ends up

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[128] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[129] *Continuing Family Stories: The Expanding Nikkei Community*, Japanese American National Museum. DVD. 2011

[130] Thank you to Grace Hong for this.

[131] Again, thank you to Grace Hong.

[132] Wahneema Lubiano "Black Feminism and Black Common Sense" from The House that Race Built." (New York: Pantheon, 1997), 235

replicating the lessons that Inouye was trying to teach us rather than fostering forms of ethical cross-racial solidarity.

Day of Remembrance 2015: A Starting Point in Carceral Connections

Every year, Japanese American communities across the nation hold Days of Remembrance (DOR) during the month of February to "commemorate the Issei and Nisei who suffered tremendously, including the loss of property, businesses, dignity, freedom and due process of law" when President Franklin Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942.[133] In Little Tokyo (Los Angeles), the event is put on by four main organizations: the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), the National Museum, the Manzanar Committee, and the Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress (NCRR). On February 18, 2015, the 2015 Day of Remembrance event titled, "EO 9066 and the [In]justice System Today" was held at the National Museum and highlighted the urgency of recognizing that the US "justice system continues to imperil communities of color with police violence, profiling, and mass incarceration."[134] This year's speakers were Povi-Tamu Bryant, Rey Fukuda, and Mike Murase and was meant to:

> "feature a conversation with Japanese Americans and African American reflections on injustice in the United States" in light of the "recent and ongoing protests sparked by the deaths of unarmed Black Americans, including Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Ezell Ford, through police use of lethal force, and the lack of related indictments, the nation's attention is turned to the growing concerns of anti-black racism, state violence and failure of government/state leadership."[135]

Recognizing police brutality, anti-black racism, and mass incarceration as contemporary forms of state violence, DOR 2015 sought to place the deaths of black men by police within the context

[133] Day of Remembrance Committee, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Program. February 21, 2015. 1.

[134] Day of Remembrance Committee, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Program. February 21, 2015. 1.

[135] Day of Remembrance Committee, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Facebook Event Description.

of Japanese American history. In other words, speaking to "the importance of remembering the Japanese American struggle during World War II" means that "we seize today's opportunity to begin a conversation in our community about the interrelated yet distinct injustices other communities face."[136] In this section, I explore how the visibility of black death via police brutality shifted Japanese American narratives from that of distance to proximity. I argue that while making connections to blackness via space, these narratives ultimately perform the same ideological work as the gala dinner because of the limitations of familial and generational narratives of belonging that make up Japanese American historical and community identity.

The program began with a somber roll call in which former incarcerees were asked to stand and was followed by an annual remembrance ceremony where each person in the audience was given a tag "similar to the ones worn by Japanese Americans as they boarded buses and trains to 'assembly centers' and then to the concentration camps" on their chair.[137] Each tag had a different concentration camp name on it, including the Justice Department detention centers and Citizen Isolation camps—the audience was asked to stand when the name on their tag was called. Once every person in the audience was standing, there was a moment of silence to pay our respects to those who were affected by Executive Order 9066 as well as those who were no longer with us but who "left a tremendous legacy about the Japanese American experience and fighting for justice."

Following this traditional ritual of remembrance, the emcees, Helen Ota (of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center) and Dr. Curtiss Takada Rooks (professor of Asian

[136] Day of Remembrance Committee, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Program. February 21, 2015. 1.
Helen Ota, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[137] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

Pacific American Studies at Loyola Marymount University) began a multimedia presentation that historicized Japanese American and African American collaboration within a familiar narrative of Japanese American history from incarceration to redress and reparations. For the DOR Committee it was important to "show how our two communities have come together during important parts of history," exploring "notable intersections we should not forget."[138] The emcees begin with a history of incarceration, from Executive Order 9066 to the horse stalls used at "assembly" centers that 120,000 Japanese Americans were herded into and the construction of the ten concentration camps while reminding us that "no person of Japanese descent was ever found guilty of sabotage or espionage." [139] From here, they discuss non-Japanese who believed that EO 9066 was a violation of civil liberties, citing Hugh MacBeth, an African American attorney in Los Angeles who helped to defend Ernest and Toki Wakayama (inmates at Santa Anita Assembly Center) by arguing that there was no military necessity for removal.

After the war, "reintegrating into their former neighborhoods proved to be a daunting task for Japanese Americans" as they "like other people of color were met with housing covenants, restricted them from homes in white neighborhoods."[140] In Los Angeles, Japanese Americans were able to find housing in "industrial areas, low rent areas for migrant workers, settling in Boyle Heights and the Eastside, as well as Central Avenue, Little Tokyo and South Los

[138] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[139] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[140] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

Angeles."[141] In particular, after the war, Dr. Rooks states that the Crenshaw district was where "blacks and Japanese Americans made progress in integrating the Westside with Crenshaw as its central focus."[142] They then identify examples of community spaces where integration thrived, including the Holiday Bowl, a "popular multiethnic bowling alley and coffee shop that served grits, udon, chow mein, and hamburgers."[143] Not only did blacks and Japanese Americans have fun together but they also went to the same schools and churches. Showing a class photo from the 39th Street Elementary School in 1958, the emcees argue that this Crenshaw district school demonstrated that blacks and Japanese Americans "were at the forefront of the movement to bring down color barriers."[144] In another photo, the emcees point to the All People's Christian Church in South Central Los Angeles where "Japanese and black children as well as that of other ethnicities grew up, learned, and played next to each other in the church's nursery class." By placing Japanese Americans in these black geographic spaces, DOR attempts to re-narrate Japanese American history and thus identity within a multicultural discourse that demonstrates proximity as solidarity.

While the emcees do try to acknowledge that these moments of interaction are not always successful, they simply state that "many Nisei mirrored the prejudices against blacks held by the white majority" and that many Nisei and Sansei remember their parents not wanting them to date blacks. Glossing over these not-so-rosy moments of anti-black racism that permeated these

[141] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[142] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[143] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[144] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

shared spaces, the emcees then transition to those who were "ready for the influence of the civil rights movement and the ethnic power movements."[145] In this section of their presentation, the emcees identify Hisaye Yamamoto, Yuri Kochiyama, and the Yellow Brotherhood as key examples of where black and Japanese American experiences continued to intersect in the 1960s and 1970s. Drawing on the life and work of Nisei writer Yamamoto, the emcees discuss her work for the *Los Angeles Tribune*, an African American newspaper and what they called her "essay," "A Fire in Fontana" to show another form of solidarity via proximity in the workplace. In summarizing "A Fire in Fontana", the emcees recount the memoir that centers upon a black man who came into the newspaper office seeking help after receiving death threats because he and his family had recently moved into an all-white neighborhood. Soon after, the house went up in flames, killing the entire family, with the "police conclud[ing] that the man had set the fire himself and closed the case."[146] The emcees argue that it is through this "essay" and her work with the *Los Angeles Tribune* and the black community that a transformation took place within Yamamoto. And somewhat similarly, utilizing Kochiyama's experiences with the black power movement and most notably her friendship with Malcom X, including the iconic photograph of her holding him as he lay dying, the emcees utilize her relationship to the black community as a "powerful example of the spirit of collaboration for justice."[147] In addition, they mark that relationship by the proximity of her home within historically black neighborhoods, citing that after the war she lived in a housing project in New York and later moved to Harlem where she

[145] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[146] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[147] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

was further politicized in the struggle for total liberation rather than integration. By drawing on the life narrative of a respected activist in both communities, the presentation tries to show how these moments of proximity and eventual politicization were able to mobilize a form of solidarity between two racial groups.

And finally, before ending their re-narration of Japanese American history through examples of black and Japanese American interaction, proximity, and support, the presentation moves into a discussion of redress and reparations with the emcees declaring that the "success" of the redress movement "would not have been possible without the support from non-Japanese allies." [148] For example, in 1982, Congressman Mervin Dymally, "who represented the thirty-first district that included Gardena and Compton grew closely with the NCRR" and helped to "write legislation for monetary reparations" and an official apology while also offering staff support and the use of his offices.[149] The emcees state that he "will always be remembered as a staunch supporter of redress and a true friend to the community." They also point out Congressman Ron Dellums who gave an "impassioned speech" on the floor of the House of Representatives before a key vote, "sharing with his congressional colleagues his memories as a young boy seeing his Japanese American friend and neighbor being taken away from his home through no apparent reason other than the color of his skin and the legacy of his ancestry."[150] Concluding this portion of the presentation, the emcees tell us that "these are examples of the exceptional work of black and Japanese American community leaders committed to fight for

[148] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[149] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[150] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

each other through struggles of racism" in order to urge us to continue this kind of collaborative work for justice.[151]

A Discourse of Proximity as Shared History: Multiculturalism and Solidarity

In this re-narration of Japanese American history that focuses on black and Japanese American mutual support, interaction, and shared spaces, we are able to see how a connection to black lives and communities is being made through a discourse of multiculturalism. Forged through a linear historical narrative from World War II incarceration to its resolution of Japanese American redress and reparations, many of the examples utilized sought to legitimize black and Japanese American relationships by literally placing Japanese Americans in "black" spaces (a newspaper office, Harlem, etc.). Constructing this narrative of sharing space (both at work and at home) becomes one of the only "valid" ways these two groups could develop meaningful relationships with each other. As I have outlined earlier, this dominant imaginary for imagining interracial solidarity, that pervades not only spaces of community but also Afro-Asian American scholarship as well, nostalgically remembers moments of connection as only being fruitful ones. While this re-narration is powerful, it is ultimately the moments of disconnect highlighting exactly where our histories diverge and our connections are missed or broken, that reveal much more about state violence and the possibility for solidarity.

For example, in their use of Yamamoto's "A Fire in Fontana" which they mistakenly label an "essay" rather than a memoir, we can see how a narrative of multicultural solidarity takes precedence over what exactly Yamamoto is struggling with throughout the narrative. The presentation fails to acknowledge what Grace Kyungwon Hong argues is Yamamoto's "contradictory location" as a Japanese American woman. First, is Yamamoto's own critique of

[151] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

her journalistic work in which she wrote an "unbiased" report about the man who moved into a segregated neighborhood that told a "calm, impartial story about the threats [he] described."[152] Her objective writing of the story did not incite a sense of urgency within readers, a type of writing that inadvertently supports and legitimates the state in its denial of property rights and life to African Americans. Her memoir is a re-writing of this event, one that seeks to counter the erasure of this family—that she once unknowingly participated in. This reading of Yamamoto's memoir calls attention to Japanese American participation in the continued denial of property rights for some, and importantly shows the contradictory location of Japanese Americans. In her article, "Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered: Private Property and Cross Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto," Grace Kyungwon Hong argues that "to say that African Americans and Japanese Americans have a common history is false" but "cross racial solidarity based on the critique of property system is possible" by recognizing "the differences between their very uneven and discrepant histories."[153] Here, sharing space is not the focus of cross-racial solidarity; instead, the "relationship between these two groups is defined by differences" which is visible in Yamamoto's linking of segregation and Japanese American incarceration with the difference between herself and the man who comes into the *Tribune.*[154] Furthermore, Hong draws on the juxtaposition of Yamamoto, a housewife, "sitting safely in her house which was located on a street where panic would be the order of the day if a Black family

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[152] Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 304.

[153] Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 292.

[154] Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 293

should happen to move in" as she watched the Watts Riots on her television noting her "contradictory location."[155] While she is the viewer and someone who is "benefiting materially from suburbanization" she "cannot participate completely" because of her "memory of the ways in which citizenship and property rights have been denied to Japanese Americans."[156]

In addition to their multicultural reading of "A Fire in Fontana" the DOR presentation concludes by saying that redress would not have been successful had it not been for the help of non-Japanese American friends and allies. While this may be true, it is also important to note the way in which Japanese American redress is inherently predicated on the devaluation of other groups of color. For example, the Commission on Wartime Internment and Relocation of Civilians's 1983 report recommended reparations but limited eligibility to "living victims" to help "alleviate concern" that "redress could set a precedent for the descendants of slaves, American Indians forced onto reservations, Mexicans who lost land, and other historical victims of racism."[157] Therefore, in response to African American campaigns for slavery reparations, President Bill Clinton replied that "it's been too long and we're so many generations removed."[158] Opponents of African American reparations stated that Japanese Americans as "the victims themselves were compensated for *quantifiable, provable* suffering at the hands of an

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[155] Hisaye Yamamoto, "A Fire In Fontana," in *Seventeen Syllables and Other Stories*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 137.
Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 301

[156] Grace Kyungwon Hong, "'Something Forgotten Which Should Have Been Remembered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto. *American Literature*. 71: 2 (1999): 302

[157] Densho, "Redress" Encyclopedia entry. http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Redress_movement/

[158] Alice Yang Murray, *Historical Memories of the Japanese American Internmen and the Struggle for Redress*. Standford: Stanford University Press, 2008. 438

identifiable perpetrator."[159] Underlying these oppositions was the direct contrasting of African Americans and Japanese Americans with terms like "living victims" with "later generations," coupled with notions of "deserving" and "undeserving" that constituted what a legitimate victim of racial discrimination could and *should* be. In addition, as I've argued earlier, redress coupled with the model minority discourse justified the dismantling of social welfare programs where Japanese Americans are seen as having achieved "success" despite racial hardships that included their unjust incarceration. It could then be argued that other groups of color were "undeserving" of social welfare programs because of their own "failures." In this way, the presentation's identification of Black congressmen's support for the "success" of redress fails to consider the way that Japanese American "success" hinged upon the state's abandonment of black communities.

While intimate connections between blacks and Japanese Americans are important to identify, they cannot simply be narrated as merely where we share space and thus histories. To do this would be to continue participating in the denial of property rights via incarceration that devalues black lives and subjects them to even more brutal forms of punishment and death. Going beyond a discourse of proximity is very much about interrogating how the state utilizes Japanese Americans to devalue other groups of color. In other words, the presentation fails to consider the ways in which Japanese Americans are utilized by the state to legitimate forms of racialized violence. My questions then are: How does acknowledging our contradictory location inform our relationships to other communities? What does it mean to make Japanese American privilege visible when narrating our experiences of incarceration and racialized violence?

A Different Set of Statistics

[159] Emphasis Added. Alice Yang Murray, *Historical Memories of the Japanese American Internmen and the Struggle for Redress*. Standford: Stanford University Press, 2008. 438

Transitioning from their historical re-telling of black and Japanese American interaction to their panel discussion, the emcees provide the audience with a handful of statistics that expose the way that black lives are devalued today. Dr. Rooks tells us:

> "Every 28 hours a black man, woman, or child is murdered by the police or vigilante law enforcement. An estimated 25.1 percent of black women live in poverty, this is higher than any other ethnic group. The average life expectancy for trans Black/ transgendered women is just 35 years."[160]

Unlike the statistics that Inouye presents to us in his Bid for Education speech that are about "how far we've come" these statistics show the ways in which state violence persists in our present. And in some ways the presentation identifies the ways in which "how far we've come" is actually part of the problem. Rooks then states his concern about these statistics within an urgent discourse on Nikkei youth that asks: "what is the impact on our children growing up [in the] absence of these integrated environments, absence of friendships, absence of coalition for action, absence from the shared struggle in the vision for justice?"[161] Similar to Inouye, Rooks draws on the youth within a language of family and lineage that intimately ties together remembering the past with generational responsibilities that privilege heteronormative family formations. As I will discuss later, this heteronormative transfer of memory (in this case, public memory) is pervasive in the Japanese American community and often problematically privileges masculinist and cultural nationalist narratives of belonging that violently erase not just other experiences but other ways of remembering. The presentation is concerned about what happens

[160] Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[161] Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

when "we no longer honor our connectedness as people of color"?[162] And so they conclude by asking us: "How do Black lives matter to Japanese Americans? Where are the connections today?"[163]

Queering the Conversation: The Panelists Speak

Following the media presentation, the event transitioned into a discussion that featured Povi-Tamu Bryant of Black Lives Matter, Rey Fukuda of East LA Community Corporation's Real Estate Department, and Mike Murase of the Little Tokyo Service Center, with Dr. Takada Rooks moderating the panel. Unlike the media presentation that explicitly drew out black and Japanese American connections throughout history, I argue that the panel disrupted this narrative by queering the conversation and forcing a discomfort with cultural nationalist and masculinist retellings of Japanese American history. More specifically, Bryant and Fukuda's life experiences as a black queer womyn and a bi-racial transgender and queer person respectively, highlight how narratives of Japanese American history violently erase and marginalize them. Queering the conversation not only allowed a rethinking of what it means to be an ally but it also forced the audience into an uncomfortable space that required them to think about their privilege. In doing so, the panelists challenged the Japanese American community (and also scholars) that continue to rely on heteronormative narratives of family and generation to understand our past, present, and future.

Both Bryant and Fukuda situate their life experiences as not only integral to their different forms of activism but also how they approach solidarity work that disrupts Japanese American historical narratives. In particular, Fukuda, who works on equitable transit

[162] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

[163] Helen Ota and Curtiss Takada Rooks, 2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Event. February 21, 2015

development in East Los Angeles, "grew up in six different cities including Tokyo (Japan), Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) and Oslo (Norway)" and self-identifies as an immigrant and a biracial transgender and queer person. [164] In discussing how he got involved in community work, Fukuda stresses the importance of his personal story. Before getting into the specifics of his experience, Fukuda carefully defines what he means by transgender, telling the audience that "you don't necessarily identify with the sex you were assigned at birth" and "when you are transgendered you grow up not necessarily identifying with those identities."[165] He explains that he was "born female at birth, but identif[ies] as male and also gender fluid because [he is] not 100 percent male, if that exists" at all.[166] Then Fukuda goes on to share how coming out to his parents informed the kind of work that he does and how. When he came out he also had a black partner and realized that his parents, but his mom in particular, "had a lot of issues with [him] being queer and transgender but also a lot of her issues came from [him] deciding to be with a girl who is black."[167] Realizing how intertwined his mother's homophobia was with her antiblackness "really shined a light on [his] understanding of how perpetual and pervasive antiblackness is" and is the reason why Fukuda positions the abolition of prisons as a main part of his activism.[168] In thinking about where do we go from here, Fukuda tells us that he thinks about incarceration, total liberation, and reparation "interconnectedly" that show us that "we still

[164] Day of Remembrance Committee, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Program. February 21, 2015. 4

[165] Rey Fukuda, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[166] Rey Fukuda, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[167] Rey Fukuda, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[168] Rey Fukuda, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

have a lot of work to do" because "there are still millions of people incarcerated and a lot of them are black."[169] For Fukuda, the trajectory of his experiences as a transgender, queer person, where the violence of coming out to family is intertwined with antiblackness, has informed the kind of abolitionist work that he does.

Positioning the family as a site of violence, Fukuda disrupts generational and thus heteronormative transmissions of memory that are inherently imbedded in Issei, Nisei, and Sansei narratives of family that make up not only Japanese American communities but inform Japanese American knowledge production. As I discussed with the National Museum's gala dinner, these generations construct very particular identities and memories that naturalize a particular lineage where incarceration is often at the center that Fukuda himself cannot take part in because of his identity as a transnational bi-racial transgender and queer person. But I also want to focus on how the community is constituted by the traumatizing disavowal of the queering of the Japanese American experience. While Japanese American incarceration is a space where Japanese American rehabilitation takes place (as I will discuss in further detail) it is also a space where heteronormative family formations and thus proper gender roles breakdown and are made impossible by the very carceral structure. For example, some scholars discuss how the traditional roles of men and women were switched because of incarceration. As I have argued in my thesis, Issei men were no longer the breadwinners or the family's main source of income because children and wives were allowed to work.[170] They also argue that the change in roles was affected by the equal pay that both women and men received that allowed women to

[169] Rey Fukuda, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[170] Wendsor Yamashita, "What She Remembers: Remaking and Unmaking Japanese American Internment, M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010.

have more independence because they are no longer had to rely on men for their livelihood.[171] In addition, some scholars have drawn attention to the fact that children no longer sat with their parents during meals at the mess halls—disrupting important family time and parental control over their children. My own great-grandfather decided to take sugar beet contracts in Colorado because of his concern over his daughters' behaviors. In an interview with my grandmother's sister, she remembers her father saying that "we are going to go; if we stay here [in camp] you girls are going to be *bad*."[172] Although there is a problematic way in which women and girls who gain independence while incarcerated is often talked about in the scholarship,[173] it is important to think about how carcerality at times challenged and made heteronormative family formations very messy. Taking "bad" subjects seriously, we can also see the ways in which they were made "good" again. By providing racialized labor for the state they are transformed into "good" daughters but are also taken from enemy aliens to proper citizen subjects. The inability of Fukuda to narrate himself within Japanese American community and historical narratives not only points to a disjuncture between the DOR's historical retelling of black and Japanese American relationships but also highlights the violence of it. Fukuda refuses to narrate his personal life story as one of proximity and thus solidarity---instead he makes it a point to discuss a moment where queerness and blackness are both rejected within the site of the heteronormative

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[171] Valerie Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women During World War II," in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*, 1984. 3.

[172] Chiyoko Nishimori. Personal Interview. 31 Jan. 2010. Emphasis Added.

[173] Often these works argue that cultural patterns that produce gender specific roles inadvertently works to justify the need for incarceration. This discussion of incarceration as a vehicle for improved women's rights implies that Japanese American women would still be subject to "patriarchal Japanese culture" without the intervention of the government. It is in this moment that the production of the Japanese American woman becomes essential to the construction of internment as benevolent and necessary for their insertion into modernity.

family. Fukuda's use of this personal story refuses to play into cultural nationalist and masculinist narrative logics and instead he forces the audience to reckon with the dangers of the heteronormative family. As I will discuss later, this is something that the audience does not wish to hear and ultimately ends up dismissing.

On the other hand, Bryant, who was born in Chicago, Illinois and moved to Los Angeles as a child talks about what it meant to grow up as the only black person in her neighborhood or classroom. This meant that "always for her own safety" she had to think about how to work in solidarity with others which pushed her to "learn about other people's experiences and learn about other communities to build [a] connection."[174] But she also stresses that in doing so it meant that she was also constantly "challenging people to learn about [her] own experiences [and] the legacy of antiblackness in the US."[175] Like Fukuda, Bryant defines exactly what she means by antiblackness, telling the audience that "all of those statistics that we heard and there are so many more are representative of the disproportionate ways that black folks experience harm and violence in the US."[176] After clarifying she begins by discussing her own family as having a diversity of experiences: her brothers, straight sisters, and she herself as a woman who plays with gender, all experience antiblackness in different ways. Branching off from this discourse around family, Bryant connects queerness to her own understanding of how all black lives matter. This means that we need to think about:

> "black queer lives, and what black queer folks are going through, and how they have to navigate the world differently than black straight folks, understanding black women and

[174] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[175] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[176] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

> their narratives, black trans folk and how being trans informs their experiences of antiblack racism and included in that is black mixed race folks."[177]

In thinking about where to go from here, Bryant (quoting Soya Jung) explicitly states that there needs to be "a model minority critique" where we think about how "we [can] fight for our rights and struggle against our own oppression but not at the expense of or without consideration to the other types of oppression and marginalization that folks are facing.[178]" Unlike the media presentation that assumed solidarity via proximity, Bryant is careful to highlight that this kind of narrative is not enough to bridge Japanese American and black communities together. She ends with practices of being an ally, the first of which is self-awareness, meaning "really understanding yourself and your relationship to the world." In other words, it means to think about all the "identities that I have, all of the ways that I walk through the world, how do those things afford me privileges" and how do they affect the way that one also experiences oppression.[179] In acknowledging a contradictory location of simultaneous oppression and privilege, Bryant skillfully disrupts the entire DOR program by not so subtly calling the audience to action by assessing their privilege *not* just their oppression. In addition, Bryant lists self-education as being an important practice of being an ally where it is important to understand other people's experiences of privilege and oppression. This is exactly what Fukuda and Bryant do throughout the panel: they present no explicit relationship between blacks and Japanese Americans for the audience, but instead a strongly emphasize the sharing of personal stories, not just their own but listening to others as well. In fact, their entire discussion revolves around how

[177] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[178] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[179] Povi-Tamu Bryant, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

their experiences as a "black queer womyn" and a "biracial transgender and queer person" not only show how antiblackness has been a part of their lives but also how they have come to activism and how they approach solidarity work. Unlike the media presentation that provided us with a well-crafted historical narrative full of examples of interracial solidarity, the panel refuses to operate within a discourse of multiculturalism. Instead, Fukuda and Bryant force the audience to listen to their life experiences and understand their positionality. In doing so, they strategically push the audience to consider how Japanese American historical narratives have silenced their personal stories.

On the other hand, the third panelist Mike Murase served to reinforce those historical narratives that privilege heteronormative family formations via the use of generations, in particular that of the Sansei (third generation) and their experiences of coming of age in the 1960s and 1970s. Although Takada Rooks never asks him where he comes from (he only directs this question to Fukuda and Bryant) Murase answers it anyway much later in the panel. He narrates his coming of age as a student at UCLA who was influenced by the black power moment, in particular the assassination of Malcom X and Edlridge Cleaver's visit to campus. He discusses how the 1960s were often focused on black/white issues but it was also an era where the Sansei thought about who they were as Asian Americans and as young people. Frustrated with the panel's focus on personal identity, Murase challenges this by discussing the importance of collective identity to think about "what do we do about the conditions that exist?"[180] And what does it mean to act "as a group and not as individuals to address these questions."[181] Re-solidifying the category of Sansei by using a generational coming-of-age narrative inspired by

[180] Mike Murase, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

[181] Mike Murase, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

the black power movement, Murase strategically tries to take the conversation back to a familiar place of knowledge production. He then goes on to talk about his own work with the South African movement in Los Angeles, remembering what it was like when Nelson Mandela was released from prison to discuss how there are many other days of remembrance to think about. He goes through a list of murdered black men from Emmett Till to Martin Luther King Jr. to Eric Garner and Michael Brown, saying that these are "not just [the] killing [of] random individuals but they are significant" because "they represent a continuation of racism, hysteria, and the failure of political leadership."[182] After he says this, the audience loudly applauds him. This is the only time the audience will clap during the panel, until it is finished. Linking his statement with the audience's reaction to it and their non-reaction to the other moments of this panel, we can see how Murase invokes a familiar narrative of Japanese American incarceration to link these seemingly disparate moments of black male death. In making this linkage, Murase legitimizes Japanese American history by discussing its relevance wherein black lives matter. Here, black lives matter only when we (Japanese Americans) can validate our own history through intimate connections via state violence.

"The Kids Were the Best Part": Nikkei Futurity

One of the comments circulating about DOR 2015 was that the panel "got off track" or off topic and the "kids were the best part, can you believe she is only 15?" In a Call to Action that ended the entire program, the event had 19 year old Gosei (fifth generation) college student Alex Kanegawa and 15 year old African American-Japanese American Mariko Fujimoto Rooks (the daughter of Dr. Takada Rooks) give a speech about what they see as the next course of action as Nikkei youth. In doing this call to action, Kanegawa says that he was asked to answer

[182] Mike Murase, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Panel. February 21, 2015.

the following question: "why should this matter to me and why should others care?"[183] His call to action was to "everywhere here to invest in people," to "invest in justice," to "to converse and express joy, sadness, and be unapologetically angry when it stirs within us" and to urge for a "radical kind of love that is courageous, challenging and sometime difficult but absolutely critically necessary."[184] Interestingly, Kanegawa's brief call to action asks us not to learn a particular kind of history or narrative but rather to change our investments—ones that are not necessarily about legitimacy but about connecting affect with social justice and movements for change. However, despite this shift he makes, it is Rooks who captures the focus and hearts of the audience. And it is within her speech we can see the ways in which Japanese American narratives are rebuilt after being broken down by the panel that preceded it.

Rooks centers her speech on her position "as a mixed race Japanese African American youth is how do I fit into the Japanese American community?"[185] To answer this question she discusses her experience following Ferguson[186] that forced her to think about what the youth need to do in order to stand in solidarity with other communities. She eloquently tells us that even after Ferguson many people did not realize that we "still do live in a racist culture and a racist society, because they are not on the receiving end of this. But she states:

> "Being part black, I am. And often the people who don't realize this, are the people perpetrating, not on purpose, but still do perpetrate this sort of racist society because the

[183] Alex Kanegawa, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

[184] Alex Kanegawa, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

[185] Mariko Fujimoto Rooks, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

[186] On August 9, 2014 Michael Brown was fatally shot by Officer Darren Wilson in Ferguson, Missouri. His murder and the failure to indict Wilson sparked massive protests against police brutality and the carceral state.

> same people who are tagging photos with #blacklivesmatter are the ones who also say that people are so ratchet and that they are ghetto or they don't take into account social and political class when they judge other people without knowing who they are. And when I hear that this music is black and this music is ratchet and I remind them that I too am black, I'm told you're black but you're not one of them. To which I say, I am one of them when my father's tailed at department stores, I am one of them when my father is asked if he is the security guard, I am one of them when I am seen as a threat, when I am seen as a threat, as competition for being successful at anything as a woman of color in general." (CLAPPING).[187]

Here, Rooks is doing something similar to Fukuda and Bryant by discussing how her positionality as a mixed race Japanese and African American young woman has impacted the way she sees opportunities for interracial solidarity in the future. She is also critical about the ways in which antiblack racism persists in our daily lives, and expands on the definition given by Bryant by linking racialized violence to popular discourse about class and black culture. Antiblack racism looks like Ferguson but it also looks like youth calling things "ratchet" or "ghetto." In addition, Rooks also thinks about our privilege as Asian Americans, asking how those with "class privilege [or] economic privilege" stop "this less obvious racism?"[188] But in asking these questions that address Asian American privilege, Rooks (unlike Fukuda and Bryant) couches her discussion within a generational narrative of family and education. She wonders, "how do we raise awareness as young people?" and "how do we pass this to others?" while also asking the "older generation, how do we educate young people as to what's happened in America in the past and how do we stop it in the future?"[189]

[187] Mariko Fujimoto Rooks, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

[188] Mariko Fujimoto Rooks, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

[189] Mariko Fujimoto Rooks, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

Unlike Fukuda and Bryant who queer the conversation away from family responsibility that is passed down through the generations, Rooks is adamant about the future of solidarity being within this framework. She also sees solidarity with other communities occurring because the "Japanese American community has already experienced and has already fought for *recognition*" and that "we have redress and reparations for E.O. 9066."[190] Here, Rooks reaffirms the Japanese American experience and positions the Japanese American community as an example to follow in order to achieve recognition whereas Fukuda and Bryant address privilege in order to call out Japanese American narratives that participate in antiblack racism. Rooks identifies recognition and thus visibility as the ideal solution when in fact Fukuda and Bryant see Japanese American recognition as part of what justifies and allows for the devaluation of black bodies that allow for brutal forms of punishment (death, incarceration, etc.). The audience's overwhelming response to Rooks' speech demonstrates how familial narratives of responsibility where Japanese Americans are the leading example of how to deal with racialized state violence are how we have come to know ourselves. Fukuda's and Bryant's inability to narrate themselves or their strategies for coalition-building within these familial narratives as well as the audience's discomfort with the panel expose how our understanding of interracial connections and solidarity remain problematically within the confines of heteronormativity—a narrative that consequently allows Japanese Americans to be continually narrated as "successful," as "models," and as "deserving of life." When we are not narrated as such, we are uncomfortable, there is no enthusiastic applause, and there are comments that this "panel got off topic." As I have been asking in this dissertation, what then would it mean to narrate ourselves as something other than ideal citizens? What would that look like?

[190] Emphasis Added. Mariko Fujimoto Rooks, "2015 Day of Remembrance: EO 9066 and the [In]Justice System Today" Call to Action. February 21, 2015.

A the end of the program, the audience was asked to sign their names and emails to a large piece of paper hanging in the National Museum's donor hall. The event was supposed to inspire the audience to want to seriously invest in interracial solidarity and those who put their names on the paper would be put on the Black Lives Matter Listserv. At the end of the program there were only four names listed.

Re-narrating Japanese American Incarceration History: A Contradictory Location

Drawing on these two important events within the Japanese American community, I wanted to show the varied ways that Japanese Americans remember incarceration, from highlighting our "success" by creating distance from blackness and at other times looking for intimate connections by way of our proximity to each other. However, as different as these events may have been, they ultimately perform the same kind of work--one that legitimizes Japanese American history and positions Japanese Americans as worthy of inclusion, visibility, and thus life. In this next section, I want to re-narrate Japanese American incarceration history to think about the complex ways that Japanese American racialization shifts at different historical moments as a way of interrogating how the state utilizes our bodies. Drawing on Yamamoto's conceptualization of Japanese America's "contradictory location" this renarration articulates a complicated and messy incarceration history in order to imagine a different future: an abolitionist one.

CHAPTER TWO: The Intimate Connection Between Truth, Memory, and Life: Refusals in the Densho Digital Archive

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project is a non-profit organization started in 1996 based out of Seattle, Washington that uses digital technology to preserve and make accessible primary source materials on the incarceration of Japanese Americans. Their digital archive currently contains 908 interviews as well as historic photographs, documents, and newspapers but also includes an encyclopedia and lesson plans for educators to teach Japanese American history with an emphasis on their World War II incarceration. Densho's mission is to "preserve the testimonies of Japanese Americans who were unjustly incarcerated…before their memories are extinguished" by offering "these irreplaceable firsthand accounts coupled with historical images and teacher resources to explore principles of democracy and promote equal justice for all." In this vein, Densho articulates itself as "preserving stories of the past for generations of tomorrow." Even its name, Densho, translates to "to pass on to the next generation or to leave a legacy" which is an "American story with ongoing relevance" that "during World War II, the United States government incarcerated innocent people solely because of their ancestry." In the space where memory meets technology, the digitization of oral history videos allows for Japanese American incarceration history to be "readily viewed and replayed on demand," breathing life into narratives that always seem to be on the verge of disappearing. Premised on this generational narrative of reproduction and the bio-political logic of archiving in the face of looming death, Densho as a digital archive not only provides insight into how memory practices are shifting but offers carefully constructed lesson plans that demonstrate what Japanese American incarceration can teach us in the present.

In this chapter, I explore Densho as a digital archive to deconstruct how strategies of community remembering remain inherently tied up in the bio-political logic of life and death. In his conceptualization of biopower, Michel Foucault argues that there is a shift from the sovereign's right to kill to the administration over life as a way of managing populations. But I want to argue for the ways in which the right to kill as a mode of power and control never ceased for racialized (as well as colonized) bodies. I interrogate how Japanese American memory practices seek to banish death (both physical and social) by participating in biopolitical logics that then allow for "certain minoritized subjects and populations [to become] recognizable as protectable life."[191] I also analyze Densho's website to explore how it frames what the archive contains and thus how it should be used by exploring its Civil Liberties Curriculum. Incorporating its archival material into the lesson plans, students can learn to utilize primary source materials to understand the value of Japanese American incarceration to teach about "critical issues affecting our democracy in both the past and the present." In other words, the intertwining lesson of Japanese American incarceration with American democracy often sustains a neoliberal racial order that narrates incarceration as an exceptional moment of racial violence. However, this chapter also provide an alternative reading of the archive to construct a more precarious lesson on Japanese American incarceration, one that recognizes Japanese Americans' "contradictory location" within the carceral landscape of past, present, and abolitionist futures. Instead, I read the archive for moments of refusal where interviewees cannot or will not remember their incarcerated pasts to understand forgetting as an important strategy of survival that resists archival attempts to establish the living witness. In addition, I examine the Civil Liberties Curriculum's High School lesson plans' inability to center Japanese American

[191] Grace Kyungwon Hong. *Death Beyond Disavowal: The Impossible Politics of Difference*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015. 10.

incarceration (an inherent part of Densho's mission and its intention) that reframes the United States as a carceral state. In this next section, I examine the relationship between death and the archive to better understand how Japanese American oral history projects gain momentum, legitimacy, and urgency.

The Specter of Death and the Archive: Japanese American Oral History Projects

Because of the way redress mobilized the Japanese American community around their World War II incarceration, testimonials as a genre of speaking became a popular form and strategy for addressing their literal absence from mainstream histories and archives. Oral history projects allowed Japanese Americans to give voice to a variety of experiences and have remained an integral part of the community's formation of its past, present, and future.[192] In addition, death, both physical and social, haunts the way that marginalized groups remember and therefore how they construct their memories and histories.[193] For these marginalized groups, there is a sense of urgency in their concern about the next generations' memories that illuminate the very real fear of disappearance. As I have been arguing, because the nation will not remember, if the next generation forgets, then it would be as if they never existed; death is an integral part of marginalized communities via the passing down of memories and customs. That is, the telling of life stories is always wrapped up with death. As Ann Cvetkovich notes in relation to lesbian public cultures in *The Archive of Feeling*, "the specter of literal death serves as a pointed

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[192] Arthur A. Hansen, *Japanese American World War II Evacuation Oral History Project*. California State University Fullerton, 1994.

John Tateishi, *And Justice for All: An Oral History of the Japanese American Detention Camps*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999.
Japanese American National Museum. *Regenerations Oral History Project: Rebuilding Japanese American Families, Communities, and Civil Rights in the Resettlement Era*, Oral History Project, 2000.

[193] Orlando Patterson. *Slavery and Social Death*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982.

reminder of the social death of losing one's history."[194] This relationship between life and death in the process of remembering is one that is simultaneously necessary and problematic for marginalized groups and in this section I will explore this dialectic in relation to Densho and Japanese American incarceration history to interrogate how death becomes such an integral part of Japanese American memories, narrations, and the archive. Death as the motivating factor for archiving relies upon memory practices that are wrapped up in establishing the living witness as proof where remembering is reliant on state recognition and visibility through state redemption. The Japanese American communities' relationship and vulnerability to death as a racialized group has shifted them from the outside (incarceration) to the inside (as protectable life). Interrogating this is important because it reveals how Japanese American community memory practices are unintentionally susceptible to neoliberal logics that sustain racial hierarchies of worth.

In a nine and a half minute "About Densho" video located adjacent to the archive on Densho's Youtube page, the Densho Project articulates its mission, history, and significance, in order to show the impact a Japanese American digital archive has on the world. The video begins by framing Densho as a historical education project where these "thousands of voices" in the archive "can teach us about a dark chapter in America's past."[195] As a result, it is the Densho Project's mission to "preserve these memories before they fade away."[196] This "fading away"

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[194] Ann Cvetkovich, *The Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. 270

[195] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[196] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

like many of the forms of public memory within this dissertation, is what fuels and legitimizes the museums, pilgrimages, plays, and in the late 1990s, the emerging digital archive. Ikeda tells us that in the beginning there were two forces shaping Densho:

> "The first one was that our elders in our community were dying. These were people who lived through World War II and we need to get their story so there's a sense of urgency. The second force was the emergence of high technology. Here we had digital video, the internet, and multimedia computers to preserve these stories for the future."[197]

The feelings of urgency to address the death of community elders combined with this new technology enabled Densho to capture voices of those who witnessed and experienced historical trauma via racialized state violence. And yet, Ikeda goes on to claim that the biggest hurdle to overcome when the project started was to convince these community elders to share their story. He states that many of them said that "the stories were too painful."[198] In an interview with *Rainmakers News*, Ikeda also admits that the project met with some ambivalence, with potential interviewees arguing, "we know the story, why should we tell people?"[199] However, in the end, Densho convinced Japanese American elders to share their stories by telling them that "the stories weren't for them, or really for my [the Sansei] generation, they were future generations."[200] In other words, it was important for interviewees that their "grandchildren and great grandchildren hear about the stories and that is how Densho got started."[201] The traumatic memories of incarceration are what make many Nisei hesitant to share and preserve their stories

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[197] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[198] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[199] Rainmakers Television, "Densho, Japanese American Legacy Project" YouTube video, 28:30, August 3, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I_1WR1m1c4

[200] Rainmakers Television, "Densho, Japanese American Legacy Project" YouTube video, 28:30, August 3, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I_1WR1m1c4

[201] Rainmakers Television, "Densho, Japanese American Legacy Project" YouTube video, 28:30, August 3, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I_1WR1m1c4

and it is only when Densho utilizes a discourse of generational responsibility to the family that they begin to agree. Drawing on a language of familial guilt to share racialized trauma is meant to "capture these stories so that people *know* what happened."[202] Transgenerational haunting "suggests [that] an unspeakable trauma does not die out with the person who first experienced it" but "rather it takes on a life of its own, emerging from the spaces where secrets are concealed."[203] Taking the trauma from the "spaces where secrets are concealed" to the public archive makes the trauma legible. Generational responsibility to the familial transforms the trauma from unspeakable to recordable. As recordable, the trauma is now legible to the state, it is redressable and becomes co-opted by the state to articulate that racism is officially over. The replaying of that trauma, its accessibility as well as its fixity within the digital archive ensure that even in the face of looming death, Japanese Americans' World War II experiences remain. Furthermore, the use of digital video within the archive, allows for the resurrection of not just memories but of that person—their life history, their image, their gestures, and their voice.

Within this promotional video, Densho also narrates a brief but linear and generational Japanese American history that supports and grounds the archive's mission. This history begins with Issei immigration to the United States who "by 1940" were "more or less settled into American society" which is quickly transformed by December 7, 1941 "when suddenly [Japanese Americans] looked like the enemy."[204] From the archive, Densho pulls a collage of interview videos where Nisei men and women talk about how December 7th changed their

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[202] Rainmakers Television, "Densho, Japanese American Legacy Project" YouTube video, 28:30, August 3, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3I_1WR1m1c4

[203] Grace M. Cho, *Haunting the Korean Diaspora: Shame, Secrecy, and the Forgotten War* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 7.

[204] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

families, lives, and how they imagined themselves. While there are three interviewees speaking about their separate experiences, Densho places them right after each other, constructing a cohesive narrative in which time can be marked as before and after Pearl Harbor:

"And before my mother got home, the FBI showed up, and it must have been shortly after lunch. They came for my dad that night, early in the morning of December 8th.
One of the teachers said, 'you people bombed Pearl Harbor.' And I'm going, "My people? All of a sudden, my Japanese-ness became very aware to me.
I was seen as a 'Jap,' just the same as the enemy."[205]

The transition for these children is remembered as "sudden." They go from student and child to enemy in a matter of a day, which is seen in the examples of the FBI's appearance in exchange for family disappearances and the accusations of the teacher. This "suddenness" of racialization is felt immediately and Densho highlights this shift from "more or less settled" to "just the same as the enemy" in order to demonstrate the lived consequences of a post December 7th world for Japanese Americans. While we can dispute the "more or less settled" narrative Densho succinctly narrates for pre-Pearl Harbor Japanese American life, the shift is meant to illuminate the centrality of World War II incarceration to Japanese American historiography. It is also meant to make the viewer realize the importance of Densho's work. Inserting these videos from the Densho archive (which they point out in text as the interviewees speak) works to support the historical narrative being constructed within the promotional video that is legitimized via the living witness. The oral histories prove that these experiences need to be learned.

After the collage of interviews, the narrator returns to discuss how "the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor made America angry and afraid" which led to "most Americans" thinking it was "perfectly reasonable to take action against their Japanese American neighbors here at home" as

[205] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

images of Executive Order 9066 and incarceration appear on the screen.[206] However, what is striking for the narrator is that even today, "many Americans still don't know that more than a hundred and twenty thousand Japanese Americans, two-thirds of them U.S. citizens were forced from their homes and put behind barbed wire because of their race."[207] Lamenting how forty years had passed before the U.S. would create a congressional commission that "would uncover evidence from the war years proving there had been no military necessity for the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans," Densho's mission then is to not only preserve but to teach.

In an interview, Ikeda articulates the archive being for "the rest of America" which he identifies as having the ability to be "much more powerful."[208] Initially, Densho focused solely on the collection of oral histories because they were a "small non-profit with limited resources" that was unable to "launch [a] large marketing campaign."[209] However, with their continued growth, Densho has been able to focus on creating "curriculum, videos, and other materials so

[206] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[207] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[208] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[209] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

that [they] can" now "outreach to the rest of the country.[210]" In the promotional video, while Ikeda expresses his excitement about how many people visit Densho's website (over 80,000 every year) there is footage of three students looking at Densho's website in their school library being shown simultaneously. For Ikeda, the fact that the majority of these visitors are students is important because Densho's mission is to educate where they are not "just about preserving the past" but about "inspiring the future also."[211] To show the kind of impact Densho has on the future via students, the video gathers testimonials from students and teachers who attest to the significance of the archive. Many of the testimonials attribute the oral history video as having the most impact on them. For example, a college student tells us, "when I see them talking about their experiences it hits me much harder. And I really *feel* their presence and their experience."[212] A high school student then tells us that "the most important thing is to have "firsthand experience" which is something you cannot get in a "textbook, no matter how hard you try."[213] For this student, "to have someone actually tell you what happened, that's

[210] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[211] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[212] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[213] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

priceless."[214] Here, the students' affective responses are produced by digital technology's ability to reproduce the witness and it is this connection that seems to enhance student learning about Japanese American incarceration. However, the centrality of the reproduction of the witness mimics the use of testimony as evidence of racialized violence in the congressional hearings about incarceration that eventually led to redress and reparations. The video makes that connection itself by jumping back into its historical narration and we find ourselves at the signing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 that "mandated monetary payments and formal apologies to all survivors of the incarceration."[215] In this way, Densho argues that "for anyone who didn't live through World War II, the idea that the American government would put its own citizens inside barbed wire camps might seem beyond belief, not possible."[216] Testimony makes it possible to believe. The affective responses of students and teachers to using the archive in their classroom, like redress and reparations, rely on biopolitical logics like "witness," "truth" and "what really happened" to legitimate Japanese American incarceration. In order to protect life from impending death, Japanese American oral history projects rely on a kind of management of memories where truth and remembering must always be in the service of the United States as a liberal democracy. The students believe it happened and the teachers can easily teach that it happened because these witnesses relive their experiences of trauma right

[214] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[215] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[216] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

there for you on video. To have these stories is to make trauma legible to the law, education, and other state institutions.

In this way, Densho argues that they are not only teaching about Japanese American incarceration but a valuable lesson that comes with it: "anytime we single out a group because of how they look, or what God they pray to, we undermine America's democracy. That happened during World War II and its happening again today."[217] This narration occurs while newspaper headings and footage of 9/11 destruction play on the screen, drawing a direct connection between 12/7 and 9/11. For Ikeda then, "during World War II our country made a terrible mistake" and that "we want people to understand this."[218] However, Densho does this "not because [they] want to dwell on the past, but [because they] want people to make better, more informed decisions."[219] The promotional video then ends with another collage of interviews from a high school student, professor, former incarceree and a Justice who all reiterate this message of taking what Densho has or will teach you about the "mistakes of history" so that one may determine for oneself that "in our lifetime it will never happen again."[220] As former incarceree Gene Akutsu states, "Don't hesitate, but get out and speak up [about] your feelings and let them know that you want justice." Densho resurrects the dead and the dying to ensure a

[217] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[218] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[219] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

[220] Densho, "About Densho" YouTube video, 9:28, February 21, 2007. https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_824558583&feature=iv&src_vid=hq4sBSsuJDQ&v=_lBKndA1vP4

particular kind of future that draws on the temporality of "never again." This temporality must identify Japanese American incarceration as an exceptional moment in history that can help us to speak out against and prevent future injustices. "Never again" is always invoked within Japanese American historical accounts of incarceration and in a post 9/11 world "never again" becomes a mantra repeated in community spaces that aim for solidarity with Arab and Muslim Americans. This slogan works to legitimate the importance of World War II incarceration to the present moment and it states that an injustice like this should never happen again *even* as it happens again and again. The connection between Japanese Americans and Muslim and Arab Americans is often the only one that is identifiable to Japanese Americans (although in a world with Trump this is drastically shifting once again) in public spaces of memory.[221]

Densho is where the residues of Japanese American redress linger, the growing anxiety about Nisei death and disappearance takes formation, and where "never again" takes shape through education. All of these discourses, narratives, and histories converge within the digital archive, it is how it gains legitimacy, its funding, and how it continues to grow. The digital manifestation of all these discourses in the archive demonstrate how intimately twined testimony, proof, and death are and how central they are to Japanese American public memories. In the following section, I trace the way that the discourse of death is an intimate part of the Japanese American community, one that is placed upon us by the state but also one that inherently becomes a part of our narrations and identities. Exposing the way in which death and visibility are often intertwined, I begin by looking at Japanese American incarceration and the disposability of bodies under the guise of security and the Nisei soldier whose death or injured body made Japanese Americans worthy of re-incorporation as citizens and later worthy of redress.

[221] I will explore this more in the conclusion.

Disposable Bodies and the Necropolitical Encounter with the Other

Japanese American incarceration was justified and articulated within a language of national security: a response to the nation's wartime hysteria as a preventative measure against an envisioned invasion while also seen as a means of protecting Japanese Americans against the possibility of violent crimes and riots in reaction to Pearl Harbor. But the War Relocation Authority (WRA) also conceptualized incarceration as an Americanizing project and sought to establish "planned communities" where they thought they could "speed the assimilation of Japanese Americans through democratic self-government, schooling, work, and other rehabilitative activities."[222] Not only could the state see itself as protecting Japanese Americans but it could also position their project as "anti-racist" in its benevolence to help Japanese Americans assimilate. In order to articulate their project in this way, the WRA conflated culture with loyalty and thus disloyalty which allowed the administration to categorize Japanese Americans as always in need of democratic tutelage. In this racial paternalistic discourse, the WRA identified language, kinship structures of leadership, and generational distinctions as markers of "alleged cultural backwardness."[223] For example, those who were seen as particularly prone to practicing "traditional" Japanese culture were notably the Kibei Nisei, the second-generation Japanese Americans who were educated in Japan and thus the most susceptible to disloyalty. Using the figure of the potentially disloyal Japanese American not only interpellates the Japanese American as not a citizen but also implies that they would still be outside the rights of citizenship without the intervention of the government.

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[222] Mae Ngai. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 177.

[223] Mae Ngai. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 179.

This assimilationist argument of the WRA can be seen when official and community histories narrate incarceration experiences as a moment of liberation for Japanese American women.[224] For example, scholars discuss how the traditional roles of men and women were switched because of camp life.[225] Issei men were no longer the breadwinners or the family's main source of income because children and wives were allowed to work. They also argue that the change in roles was affected by the equal pay that both women and men received while incarcerated that allowed women to have more independence because they no longer had to rely on men for their livelihood.[226] However, arguing for cultural patterns that produce gender specific roles inadvertently works to justify the need for incarceration. This discussion of incarceration as a vehicle for improved women's rights implies that Japanese American women would still be subject to "patriarchal Japanese culture" without the intervention of the government. It is in this moment that the production of the Japanese American woman becomes essential to the construction of incarceration as benevolent and necessary for their insertion into modernity and worthiness of reinstated citizenship.

This discourse of democratic tutelage, assimilation, and protection reveal the ways in which citizenship was spectralized. Japanese Americans must encounter a sort of death (a social one) in order to become legitimate citizens. Within the logic of the WRA, a citizen is imagined as always innately performing "Americanness" that can only be embodied in the effacement of

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[224] Wendsor Yamashita, "What She Remembers: Remaking and Unmaking Japanese American Internment, M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 2010.

[225] Please see: Valerie Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women During World War II," in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*, 1984.
Mei Nakano, *Japanese American Women: Three Generations, 1890-1990* (San Francisco: Mina Press Publishing, 1990)

[226] Valerie Matsumoto, "Japanese American Women During World War II," in *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies*, 1984. 3.

specific markers of Japanese "culture." The Japanese American is forced into this violent encounter with oneself (as the identifiable "other') as a means of proving to the state that they are loyal and therefore worthy of citizenship, which as Mae Ngai argues has been nullified due to incarceration. Not only does the WRA mandate appropriate activities for incarcerees but Japanese Americans are under constant surveillance and punished when they refuse or are unable to become the "citizen." Even prior to their forced removal, Japanese Americans prepared for FBI raids and interrogations by literally destroying photographs, documents, and other objects that would link them to Japan. In essence, they were forced to destroy a part of their histories and thus themselves. For example, "loyal" Japanese Americans were selectively relocated to the Midwest or East Coast by the WRA as a means of ensuring their continued "Americanness." Here, their Americanness was ensured by their geographic dislocation from racialized spaces of home. The legacies of such violent encounters linger in the Japanese American community and are imbedded in strategies of resistance that often mimic this spectral quality of belonging and worthiness in the face of social death.

As I discussed in the introduction, by looking at the questionnaire issued by the WRA as a technology to determine the loyalty or disloyalty of Japanese Americans, we can see where social death intersects with the physical death and further deprivation of protection of Japanese Americans. These questions asked incarcerees if they would be willing serve in the US army and would forswear allegiance to the Japanese emperor by swearing qualified allegiance to the United States.[227] By answering "yes" to the first question, Nisei men (of eligible draft age) opened themselves up to the possibility of dying as the ultimate proof of their loyalty. For Issei, who were not eligible for citizenship, answering "yes" to the second question rendered them

[227]Mae Ngai. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 183

stateless. If incarcerees answered "no" to either of the questions, they were classified as disloyal, segregated from those who were deemed loyal, and transferred to Tule Lake. Here, Japanese Americans were made to prove that they are capable of being citizens within the WRA's conflation of culture and loyalty with their literal bodies. They either must die (by going to war), be stateless and have even less access to protection, or be punished with separation from other bodies.

The Nisei Soldier: Death, Heroism, and Redress

Looking at the Nisei soldier specifically, I want to explore the ways in which death and visibility intersect and are mobilized by the state as a means of propagating a disavowal of racism for a particular geopolitical agenda to assert U.S. legitimacy. As historian Takashi Fujitani argues, the Japanese American soldier was needed to visibly prove to the rest of the world that the United States was fighting for freedom and democracy and not for the preservation of Western dominance in the Pacific. In addition, the logic of total war and concept of manpower utilization persuaded the War Department to completely reverse its earlier decision and admit Japanese Americans into the army.[228] The segregation of Japanese American soldiers into separate units and the publicization of their exploits during the war strategically put their bodies (lives and deaths) on display to showcase this disavowal of racism. In this way, America was ostensibly truly democratic because it allowed these young men to die for the nation. According to the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, in its seven campaigns, the 442nd (Japanese American segregated combat team) "took 9, 486 casualties—

[228] Immediately after Pearl Harbor, many already in the army were released except for those in the Hawaii National Guard.
Takashi Fujitani, "Right to Kill and Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans During World War II" *Representations*, 2007; 13.

more than 300 percent of its original infantry strength, including 600 killed."[229] These high casualty rates make visible the ways in which Japanese American bodies were expendable for the war, both in terms of a larger ideological struggle and on the battlefield. As one soldier remarked, "it was a high price to pay," but "it was to prove our loyalty which was by no means an easy task."[230] Ironically, in order to prove they are worthy of life they must at least be willing to die. Pointing out the ways in which these interests converged is not meant to discredit the loss suffered by these men, but rather to highlight the ways in which the inclusion of the Nisei soldier allows for a seemingly complete transformation of the Japanese American from being a "symbol of racial discrimination into a living representation of America's denunciation of racism."[231] As I argued in the introduction, their death (because it is tied up in this geopolitical agenda for U.S. global dominance) allows for the Japanese American to be narrated within a story of heroism that affords a particular kind of belonging—where they are celebrated as America's "model minority" at the expense of other racialized groups of color.

Furthermore, I want to argue that dying gives these men visibility within the nation and that the reason why women's narratives remain peripheral is because they do not experience death in the same way. Sacrifice for the nation is gendered and a part of masculine narratives of loyalty and patriotism. Because women are limited in their ability to prove their loyalty to the United States, their bodies cannot be recuperated within the logic of the nation. However, women do become visible in connection with the Nisei soldier, as mothers whose poignant

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[229] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 258.

[230] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 258.

[231] Takashi Fujitani, "Go For Broke, the Movie: Japanese American Soldiers in the US National, Military, and Racial Discourses," in *Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s),* ed. T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White, and Lisa Yoneyama (Duke, 2001), 244.

stories are told to emphasize the sacrifice made by Japanese Americans. The mother is often portrayed as overly emotional because she has made the ultimate sacrifice, her son. For example, in a letter to Ernest Besig, the Executive Director of the Northern California affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union during World War II, a mother whose son had died as a soldier while she and the rest of her family renounced citizenship asked for his assistance. In seeking advice on how to restore their citizenship she writes, "words [could] not express the agony, the anguish, the utter desolation of my heart" as she struggled to deal with the death of her son (from the war) and her husband (who died while incarcerated).[232] In a WRA promotional still, titled *Another Inmate Gold Star Mother* (1945), a colonel is pictured presenting a mother with a Distinguished Service Cross for the death of her son.[233] The mother is solemnly staring at the medal being transferred into her hands, her quiet grief emanating from the photograph. Death (the absence of her son) and grief make her legible within a narrative of loyalty but only as an appendage of her dead son and what he means for the nation.

This discourse of death is then appropriated by the Japanese American community and figures prominently in the community's narrative of loss in the struggle for redress and reparations. Between July and December 1981, The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians held hearings and took testimony from more than 750 witnesses. Their report was not only important because it provided evidence that Japanese Americans were in fact incarcerated during World War II, but helped organize the community to consider redress as a possibility. The published report devotes an entire section to Japanese American men's participation in the military. Despite the continued detainment of their families and their own

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[232] Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps: Dillion S. Myer and American Racism*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 157.

[233] Richard Drinnon, *Keeper of Concentration Camps: Dillion S. Myer and American Racism*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 158

incarceration, Japanese American men were expected to volunteer for the army. Some of these men were used for intelligence services that required them to interrogate enemy Japanese prisoners, persuade enemy soldiers to surrender, and take part in combat.[234] This particular narrative emphasizes and tallies the heavy casualties suffered by the 100th Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (segregated Japanese American units) who still to this today are the most decorated troop, having been awarded 3,600 Purple Hearts, a medal given to those who were injured or killed while serving.[235] Emphasizing both the casualties and awarded honors is an important strategy for the Japanese American community because this narrative demonstrated how this ultimate loss of human life made them worthy of redress. As Fujitani argues, by literally sacrificing their bodies, militarism "transported the Japanese American male from the outside to the inside of the American population" and gave them a direct avenue to show their patriotism.[236] Redress resurrects the Nisei soldier, whose death functions as a means to gain recognition as Americans who deserve an apology for being treated otherwise.

Yet this narrative of injury and death is problematic for the way that it allows the state its "great moment of national redemption." As Victor Bascara observes, although Japanese Americans were able to obtain an official apology and reparations, this attempt to remedy a wrong committed by the nation coupled with the model-minority discourse justified, amongst other moves, the dismantling of social-welfare programs, which had reached a fever pitch in the 1980s at the exact moment of the redress movement. By highlighting the ways in which

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[234] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 255.

[235] The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, *Personal Justice Denied* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1997), 258.

[236] Takashi Fujitani, "Right to Kill and Right to Make Live: Koreans as Japanese and Japanese as Americans During World War II" *Representations*, 2007; 23.

Japanese Americans achieved "success" despite the racial hardships and incarceration, the United States could demonstrate "how the system [could] correct itself without the need for radical change."[237] Bascara argues, that the "failures of a curiously successful redress movement" reveal the ways in which the United States' interests converged with the Japanese American community's desires. As I argued in the introduction, national conversations and policies concerning welfare dependency racialized and gendered certain groups of color as deviant through a discourse of heteronormativity that criminalizes and punishes them for being poor. Consequently, redress inadvertently gives life to the state at the expense of the welfare of other groups of color. In this moment, Japanese Americans are allowed to live while others are made to die by being racialized as unworthy of life (or resources that sustain life). Although memories of dislocation, property losses, and racial discrimination could now be publicly articulated and acknowledged, the struggle for redress and reparations itself constructed a very specific way of remembering incarceration that continues to structure community strategies against social death (as physical death becomes more and more of a reality). In the next section, I will explore how Nisei death is producing generational anxieties around the Japanese American communities' imagined ability to effectively tell their histories of incarceration.

Death and Dying to be Archived: Densho and the Legacies of Redress

Because of the way that Japanese Americans had to make their experiences of racialized violence legible to the state via a discourse of death, testimony as a genre of speaking becomes a popular form and strategy for addressing their literal absence from mainstream histories and archives. Oral history projects allowed Japanese Americans to give voice to a variety of experiences and have remained an integral part of the community's formation of its past, present,

[237] Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 After9/11" *Asian American Law Journal*, 2003;108.

and future. In this section, I look at the ways in which these strategies of community remembering remain inherently tied up in the bio-political logic of life and death that is central to Densho's mission and continued existence.

Death is a prominent feature of Densho and their websites.[238] And yet despite this prominence, the organization cannot think about death in any other way than that of life. For example, in their archive when a visitor clicks on a particular person's name a summary of each individual along with a picture is featured in the main frame of the webpage. This blurb summarizes this person's life history and always includes whether or not this person has already passed away. This notification of death seems to point not so much to the fact that these people are no longer here but that in spite of their physical absence, they live in this very archive. In addition, when a significant community member passes away, Densho will often post a notice of that person's death with a link to their obituary and oral history video. For example, when Hisaye Yamamoto passed away in 2011, Densho wrote: "Influential writer Hisaye Yamamoto passed away on January 30th. The Densho Digital Archive contains a life history interview with Ms. Yamamoto conducted by Emiko and Chizuko Omori for their 1999 documentary *Rabbit in the Moon*."[239] These announcements of death are sorrowful in their language of loss but they also simultaneously bring that person back to life. By watching the interview, the deceased is resurrected even in the moment one has become aware that they have died. As Densho promises, even when memories begin to fade and people grow old and die, the interview remains.[240] Their fixity in the archive guarantees that their voices will be heard and that they have not died only to

[238] This includes their official website/archive, Facebook page, and blog—a variety of digital technologies to make life/death accessible to the public.

[239] Densho's Facebook page: http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=3314245#!/denshoproject

[240] John Lok, "Saving Densho Memories," *The Seattle Times*: Seattletimes.com. 26 Dec 2006.

disappear entirely. In this way, the archive replaces physical life with social life, and in doing so, situates itself as a repository of life.

Because oral history projects began to emerge in the aftermath of redress, as Ikeda laments, "most of the Issei generation had [already] passed on, the stories we have of them come secondhand through Nisei memories."[241] In this way, the Issei pose a problem for organizations that seek to recuperate life because they are no longer physically alive to give voice to the variety of their experiences. The death of the Issei are the kinds of death that Densho so desperately seeks to prevent. In the face of this social and physical death, Densho instead must stress that it is through these family stories that we can learn about "how hard [the] parents [of Nisei] worked and how they instilled in their children the values of integrity, tradition, and family honor."[242] Densho, is the Japanese word meaning "to pass on to the future" and it is within this mentality of legacy and lineage that the Issei live through the memories of their children. For example, children reminisce about what it was like for their parents as immigrants laboring in a racially hostile environment as well as their very different but devastating struggles after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In these stories, we catch glimpses of the Issei being remembered by their children who attempt to make sense of their parents' reactions, actions, and lives. Densho circumvents death by strategically narrating the Issei into legitimate history that is vividly and respectfully told by their children.[243] Densho never really seems to consider the Issei in any other way---they can only make sense of them if they are brought back to life. In considering what Densho

[241] Densho, "Pioneer Generation: Remembering the Issei" From Densho's Archive Series on *Discover Nikkei*. December 1, 2010. http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2010/12/1/pioneer-generation/

[242] Densho, "Pioneer Generation: Remembering the Issei" From Densho's Archive Series on *Discover Nikkei*. December 1, 2010. http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2010/12/1/pioneer-generation/

[243] Densho, "Pioneer Generation: Remembering the Issei" From Densho's Archive Series on *Discover Nikkei.* December 1, 2010. http://www.discovernikkei.org/en/journal/2010/12/1/pioneer-generation/

refuses to do, I am interested in what would it mean if the Issei were to remain elusive? What would it mean to acknowledge the gaps within these kinds of projects? If we so easily dismiss what we can never really know for the knowable, then how does this foreclose other ways of knowing (such as forgetting) that do not rely upon the factual/truthful? The resurrection of the dead and the dying by Densho makes visible the way that community strategies utilize and enforce a particular relationship to life and death that fails to interrogate the bio-political logic of archiving, knowledge production, and memory.

However, Densho's archive is not the only part of its website that intimately addresses death. On its "Give to Densho" section, they offer several suggestions and reasons for donation that range from pledging a donation to donating stock or volunteering. Densho suggests that one can make a "tribute gift" to "mark a happy occasion such as a birth or commencement" but one can also "honor the life of a friend or family member with a memorial gift." In this way "your contribution will live on to commemorate the person you designate." In addition to the impetus to archive and record living histories on the verge of dying/disappearance, one has the option to donate money because someone has already died. In other words, that person via monetary contribution can "live on" by ensuring the archive will continue to exist. Densho also suggests making a "deferred gift" and asks potential donors to "please consider remembering Densho in your will." This generous donation "will allow us [Densho] to reach upcoming generations of young people." As an organization that relies upon the support of donors and donations, this section of the website is vital to its continued existence. Despite the death of a loved one or even the death of yourself, your money can productively preserve Japanese American histories. The donation exceeds death by extending the life of Densho which in turn prolongs the living histories of the dead and dying for future generations. Here, the combining of the biopolitical

logic of archiving and discourses of generational reproduction with a desire for capital, work to legitimate memory in ways that market the archive as survival—a way of living beyond death. In doing so, Densho unintentionally reifies the relationship between visibility and death, a relationship that was once set up by the very structure of incarceration that was then carried over into Japanese American redress and reparation testimonies. In this way, death is capitalized upon as motive for archiving and for sustaining the archive itself.

Lessons From the Archive Part I: Oral History and Forgetfulness in Memories of Carceral Violence

In this section, I explore Densho's participation in creating curriculum for students from elementary school to high school to think about what lessons Densho and Japanese American incarceration are supposed to be teaching these future generations. Looking specifically at one three-week unit designed for high school students, I examine the narratives that are being taught and how Japanese American incarceration is made accessible, relevant, and legible to high school youth through a series of activities, assignments and lessons. "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" is a seventy-nine page curriculum and resource guide for high school classrooms created by Densho in collaboration with the National Park Service, Minidoka National Historic Site in 2009. The essential question this curriculum asks is: "How can the United States balance the rights of individuals with the common good?"[244] Framing incarceration as an attack on the "rights of the individual" is often how the state via redress frames incarceration. It allows for the state to re-narrate incarceration on the level of the individual that then absolves the state of its racist past. The curriculum is set up in a similar way. This particular unit is designed to fit the "Idaho state standards in social studies and language

[244] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 1.

arts, specifically in geography, U.S. history, and writing."[245] At the end of the course students should not only be able to "develop and carry out a research plan" and have gained other academic skills but should be able to:

> "Demonstrate knowledge of the Constitution and laws of the United States. Relate underlying values to actions taken by individuals and by governments. Identify the tensions between individual rights and the common good. Identify issues of racism and injustice in the United States and connect them with relevant court cases and the Constitution. Understand the gap between Constitutional ideals and actual practice, and identify ways the Constitution has been changed to narrow that gap. Explore how change has taken place in our history, and how we can act to bring about change. Move from research to action."[246]

This unit is interested in establishing what are the "democratic ideals" and "constitutional principles that form the backbone of the U.S. government" that then get disrupted by Japanese American incarceration. During Week 2, the suggested daily classroom activities shift from establishing and critiquing democracy and the Constitution to introducing Japanese American incarceration more thoroughly. The lesson strategically does this in order to ask students: "What happens to our democracy when there is a crisis such as war? How does this affect our relationship to the Constitution, to constitutional principles, and to our democratic ideals?"[247] The first activity asks students to watch and analyze the 1943 government-produced wartime film, "Japanese Relocation" shown before feature films in movie theaters in order to assess the media's role in justifying Japanese American incarceration. The handout asks the students to pay close attention to word choice, music, and images to think critically about the government's narration of "evidence" for incarceration. The next set of handouts and lessons delves into the

[245] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 3

[246] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 6

[247] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 12

history of Japanese immigrants in Hawaii and the West Coast and, unlike the promotional Youtube video "About Densho" that narrated Japanese immigrants as mostly "settled" prior to World War II, this lesson establishes a longer history of anti-Asian racism that draws on immigration laws and discourses of the "yellow peril" in newspapers. However, this history lesson and overview of the Japanese American experience does have a similar narrative that moves from pre-war to the decision to incarcerate with Executive Order 9066 and Korematsu v. United States (1943) to incarcerated life that culminates in redress and reparations. While the unit draws on a variety of historical sources such as camp newspapers, photos, a Supreme Court case, and propaganda, it makes very little use of oral histories.

In this particular unit, Densho only utilizes four oral history interviews, which can be accessed on their YouTube page, so that students do not even have to enter the archive itself. In a critique of history, Densho states that "our knowledge of a historical time period is limited to major events" that gloss over the "everyday experiences or feelings of individuals."[248] As such oral history allows for such an opportunity. However, Densho warns the students that "because of the subjective nature of an oral history interview it should not be used as a substitute for analysis of historical materials like official documents, diaries, letters, newspapers, and books."[249] The oral history testimony then "can help illuminate by placing an individual's experience within a historical period."[250] These interview clips are all under five minutes each and have been carefully selected for the students, who are also provided with transcripts.

[248] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 54

[249] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 13

[250] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 13

Accompanying these videos, students are asked to think about the role of both the interviewer and narrator and thus what kind of story is being constructed throughout the testimony. Importantly, students are asked to think about the differences between official government newsreels on Japanese American incarceration and the oral histories. There is a stark contrast between how Densho identifies their mission and legitimates the archive with this lesson's use of oral history videos. Rather than stressing that oral testimony can tell us "what really happened" this lesson cautiously identifies these voices as "subjective." Although it problematically situates oral history in opposition to "official documents" and thus one as subjective and the other as objective, I argue that the shift from "truth" to the subjective allows for the trauma of carceral violence to be heard and thus visible. The oral history videos register the complexity of "truth"-telling that "official" documents supposedly provide us with. While the selected interviews provide us with particular examples of how four different Japanese Americans experienced their incarceration to supplement historical materials in the unit, I provide an alternative reading for trauma in the archive to illuminate the ways in which these subjects resist biopolitical logics of archiving.

For example, in one of the short excerpts with Frank Yamasaki, a Nisei male born in Seattle, Washington who resisted the draft and was imprisoned at McNeil Island Penitentiary, he is asked about how he felt when he "was moving from 'Camp Harmony' to Minidoka." Yamasaki responds by telling the interviewer that "that's the area, that's the area I kind of blanked out. I don't recall at all. I'm sure there must have been some apprehension there. I try to recall several times, but I don't know why." Even though the interviewers are aware of this "blank" period in Yamasaki's memories, they still try to ask him about the transition from "Camp Harmony" to Minidoka but he is unable to answer them so they must move on to their

next question. In an interview with another Nisei male, Masao Watanabe, he narrates his memories of Puyallup as being "a real traumatic type of living" where he intentionally "forgot a lot of 'Camp Harmony.'"[251] He tells the interviewer that he "hate[s] to use the word 'harmony'" because "it was just not a good experience."[252] While these interview excerpts do provide viewers with the ability to learn about different facets about daily life for incarcerees such as eating sand with one's food because of the dustiness or the degradation of having to live in former pig and cow stalls, these small interjections about forgetting disrupt testimony's function of "truth"-telling. Yamasaki's and Watanabe's inability to remember Camp Harmony is embedded in the archive where his forgetting illuminates the limits of the biopolitical logic of archiving. Here, forgetting is a strategy for surviving racial trauma that Densho's project inherently cannot make sense of.

Even when they are being asked to remember, some former incarcerees are unable to narrate anything other than their forgetting. The interview with George Morihiro, a Nisei male born in Tacoma, Washington, focuses on how he went from his high school graduation to Puyallup Assembly Center from where he was later incarcerated at Minidoka incarceration camp in Idaho before being drafted into the army in 1944. When prompted to describe his reaction to arriving at Puyallup, Morihiro starts by saying "that's hard to say because we forget a lot of things," but then quickly transitions to the trauma of that moment.[253] He says:

> "there are some things in your heart that you can't forget and that is the day you walked through that gate, you know you lost something. Up to that point, it was news or

[251] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 60.

[252] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 60

[253] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 57

> something like that. But when you walk through that gate, you know you lost something. 'Cause, you know, the gate's got guards and barbed wire fence and everything, and you're walking from a free life into a confined life. And I know one thing, it was hard to explain to somebody what was it like in camp, because we never tell them the truth, what it was like in camp. It was horrible."[254]

For Morihiro, we can see the ways in which forgetting, remembering, and trauma are intimately tied up in narrations of carceral violence. In these excerpts about incarcerated living, we are able to see how forgetting is a necessary means for survival. Despite the fact that Densho as an archive and as an educational tool is premised on preventing the forgetting of Japanese American World War II incarceration by pushing both incarcerees to remember and students to learn so that they will never forget, forgetting and forgetfulness make their way into the archive. Densho's reliance upon truth and remembering carceral violence for future generations means that it forecloses the possibility of engaging with other ways of narrating. These moments of memory loss expose how the trauma of carceral violence (one that Densho dismisses often for its mission) is an integral part of Nisei experiences. George Morihiro describes this as unexplainable and something that he never told the truth about. His repetition of the phrase "we lost something" demonstrates his narration of loss, but a simultaneous inability to even name what he has lost. Judith Butler articulates this as the "loss of loss itself" where "somewhere, sometime, something was lost, but no story could be told about it" and "no memory could retrieve it."[255] This "loss of loss" and his articulation that "we never tell the truth" implies not only an inability but unwillingness to speak the trauma. Its horribleness exceeds narration and it is at once something one forgets and cannot forget. The messiness of Nisei memory retrieval is that for some, remembering is wrapped up in a kind of forgetfulness.

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[254] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 57

[255] Judith Butler, "Afterword: After Loss, What Then?" in *Loss: The Politics of Mourning*, Eds. David Eng and David Kazanjian. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Through the example of Densho and its mission, I have traced a discourse of death within the Japanese American community that makes visible the intimate connections between the way the state racializes their bodies as disposable and the way the community struggles against that physical and social death in their projects of remembering. The Japanese American community is continually haunted by the process of death but we continue to banish it from our production of knowledge even as it continues to seep in. In the next section, I explore how Densho's lessons incorporate a comparative race analytic that allows for alternative histories to emerge.

Lessons From the Archive, Part II: What Japanese American Incarceration History Can Tell Us About the Present aka Alternative Histories

While the entire unit does revolve around Japanese American incarceration, introducing and teaching students about this carceral moment in history, the impetus of Densho's education initiative is very much about making this carceral example relevant. I argue that this relevancy through education allows for a meaningful comparative analysis to emerge where students are given the opportunity to critically think about other "issues of injustice." There are two distinct moments in the unit that directly address other historical moments: slavery with a reading of Frederick Douglass's "The Meaning of the July Fourth for the Negro" and a post-9/11 town meeting activity. The section on Frederick Douglass is meant to have students continue their critiques of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution within the "tensions between the real and ideal" as a means to introduce the "Ongoing Injustice" assignment due at the end of the unit. Here, the curriculum suggests that:

> "these issues of injustice, unlike those we looked at the past two days, cannot be simply blamed on a reaction to a crisis. Our study of history leads us to view the incarceration of Japanese Americans as an aberration, an exception to the more typically democratic and fair manner in which we operate our democracy. For many groups within our society,

> unequal or anti-democratic treatment is more the rule than the exception, at least as it pertains to them. What does that mean?"[256]

This lesson simultaneously positions Japanese American incarceration as an aberration while acknowledging that these injustices exist and continue to do so for other marginalized groups. In this way, Japanese American incarceration is exceptional and yet displaced as the exception within a longer history of this critique of democratic ideals. While the lesson only does a reading of Douglass's speech within this vein and does not connect this to Japanese American incarceration explicitly, I argue that the placement of slavery, Douglass, and abolition within the unit opens up the possibility of assessing Japanese American incarceration outside of aberration and within an analysis of what Clyde Wood's theorizes as "racialized social-spatial enclosures" or the space that is used to "establish stable control over specific territories and their populations' which are maintained by a system of militarized regulation, physical boundaries and social, political, and economic traps."[257] In other words, centering the lesson to be learned about the ways in which the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are "deeply flawed" and how "movements over time have struggled to bring us closer to the ideals of equality" which are often led by "oppressed people" shifts the focus to the way in which "never again" is actually: "has always been" and "continues to be." Even though the curriculum never makes an explicit comparison between slavery and Japanese American incarceration, there is a subtle shift away from a discourse of "never again" that forces students to place Japanese American incarceration within this longer lineage of carcerality. As a result, this shift marked by the reading of "The Meaning of July Fourth for the Negro" explicitly is meant to get students to conduct their own

[256] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 15

[257] Clyde Woods, "Les Miserables of New Orleans: Trap Economics and the Asset Stripping Blues, Part 1." *American Quarterly* 61:3 (2009): 774.

research on an "issue of injustice that is enduring and ongoing" and to focus on "those individuals who are working to bring justice to the people involved."[258]

The "Ongoing Justice" assignment requires students to produce a five minute presentation and five page paper that asks them to look at the following: the history of this issue and how it has changed or not, what the issue looks like, who is affected by it (who is both hurt and who benefits from it), what are the different view points, are there any relevant laws or court cases that apply, and what actions "might we take to make things better, to inform others, to bring about change?"[259] The assignment also provides students with some starting point suggestions for picking their topics and links to websites to conduct more research on the following: unequal pay, broken treaties with Native Americans, struggles over water rights and usage, unequal allocation of resources, religious discrimination, discrimination on the basis of sexual preference, death penalty, incarceration rates. It further suggests that students draw on their own experiences of injustice. The purpose of the assignment is to "not have a moan and groan session" but to "sort out the gap between the real and ideal" and "between what we say about our democracy and how it functions."[260] Despite the assignment's efforts to assert that it is really about investigating the reality of American democracy, it also makes visible how racialized social-spatial enclosures" are a part of that reality. In this way, this assignment uses Japanese American incarceration as a way to open up the possibility of seeing how integral carceral landscapes have been to U.S. formation and democracy.

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[258] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 69

[259] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 70

[260] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 70

However, the lesson does inadvertently identify Japanese American incarceration as "over" in contrast to the way that these other instances of injustice are "ongoing." The beginning (Pearl Harbor) and ending (redress) of Japanese American incarceration is what allows for its legibility as a "wrong." Therefore, often state violence like the prison industrial complex can be denied because it is ongoing and confronts the state with racialized violence in the present versus the past. However, while redress seems to have resolved Japanese American experiences of incarceration, the traumas of racial violence continue to linger in the present. In fact, the trauma is most present in the archive itself as interviewees first struggled to *want* to tell their stories and later as they retell their stories for the camera. The carcerally produced trauma cannot be contained by the celebratory logics of redress that only absolves the state of its guilt by proclaiming Japanese American innocence. Assigning students to partake in researching and writing about something that is "ongoing" forces a rethinking of how racial logics transform over time. Slavery, Japanese American incarceration, colonialism, prisons, and other forms of racialized social-spatial enclosures are juxtaposed in this part of the unit. Rather than exceptionalizing Japanese American experiences, a historical trajectory of these racialized social-spatial enclosures is compiled from past to present that challenges linear conceptions of the carceral. The "ongoing" part of the project is meant to engage students with contemporary examples of racial violence and harm that exist in the moment of "right now" but ironically instead the assignment opens up the possibility of understanding Japanese American incarceration history as only one of the many ways the state deals with racialized and sexualized deviancy. Students then research these other methods of dealing with deviancy in the present moment that have historical legacies wrapped up in them.

The second assignment that draws on a comparative focus is the last in-class activity: the town meeting as an exercise in democratic practice. Students are put into groups and assigned one of the roles for the town meeting which includes perspectives from the Bush Administration, American Civil Liberties Union perspective, a U.S. soldier who is a patriotic nationalist, a second U.S. soldier from a working-class/poor background who is ambivalent about the war on terror, a Japanese American former incarceree, the ExxonMobil corporation, an Arab immigrant, a victim of 9/11, local law enforcement, an "ordinary man or woman on the street," a member of a veteran group, an anti-war activist, a student from Iraq, a professional from the Middle East working in the U.S., and a Holocaust survivor.[261] They are given the following hypothetical scenario, months after September 11:

> "The specific proposal under consideration today would grant the President the power to detain indefinitely, without a hearing, any individual the administration suspects of aiding terrorist organizations, even if there is no hard evidence to support the suspicion."[262]

Each group, representing a different perspective is then required to make arguments based on that point of view. At the end of the town meeting, students are asked to vote on this hypothetical proposal. According to the guidelines, this assignment is intended to "stimulate dialogue to help students realize the complexities of decisions that individuals, families, local governments, and national governments have to make."[263] In other words, the guidelines share that it is not the "vote that takes place at the conclusion of the meeting, but the critical thinking and communication that happen along the way" as a means of helping students "better

[261] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 37

[262] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 37

[263] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 17

understand the complexity of constitutional questions that require balancing freedom, security, and the many varied rights and interests of those who make up this country."[264] Like the previous assignments, this townhall activity is also couched in an investigation and assessment of American democracy in practice and thus trying to get students to understand the complexities that are involved when balancing democratic values with notions of security. While none of the lessons in the unit really interrogate notions of "security" or explicitly address who gets to be secure and who does not, this particular assignment draws parallels between December 7, 1941, and September 11, 2001. While many Japanese American political leaders (such as then U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta) and organizations have been vocal about the parallels between 12/7 and 9/11, it has been within the discursive framework of "never again." This assignment is confined by these limitations, but, in conjunction with the Frederick Douglass and Ongoing Injustice assignments, it does force students to think about how "never again" keeps happening. While neither assignment is perfect in its delivery, intentions, or even outcomes, it does inadvertently get students to create a different genealogy of American democracy, one that charts the centrality of the carceral. From slavery to a post 9/11 world, the curriculum exposes how Japanese American World War II incarceration is in fact *not* an aberration but part of a larger history of how the United States responds to racialized others with punishment.

Conclusion

And yet, even as this different genealogy is being presented, Japanese Americans are able to be heard and understood while other groups of colors' claims of state violence remain illegible. In other words, Japanese Americans and their World War II incarceration are legible as exemplified by Densho itself. Their memories can be extracted, contained, replayed, and

[264] Densho and National Parks Services, "Constitutional Issues: Civil Liberties, Individuals, and the Common Good" Civil Liberties Curriculum and Resource Guide for High School. 18

translated into teachable units. The legacies of Japanese American redress and reparations as well as the importance of testimony have made Japanese Americans archive-able. As I have argued earlier in the chapter, the state allowed Japanese American memories to move from the private sphere to the public because they converged with U.S. interests to defund the social wage.[265] By examining Densho as a form and forum of Japanese American public memory, we are able to see the intimate connection between truth, memory, and life that fuels its mission by centering the importance of Japanese American incarceration to historical memory. However, death, trauma, and forgetting are unable to be completely banished from the archive and they manage to seep into interviewee's narrations. In addition, Densho's centering of Japanese American incarceration is disrupted in its lessons to compare World War II with other moments of racialized violence. This decentering offers the possibility of seeing and hearing different narratives that reveal a longer history of the carceral to punish racialized deviancy. The archive and its subsequent curriculum is then a site of Japanese Americans' contradictory location within the carceral landscape. As we will see in the next chapter by examining a Japanese American grassroots community organization, the same contradictory location of Japanese Americans emerges as Japanese American activists engage with indigenous communities to fight a longstanding enemy.

[265] It is also important to note that the U.S. can narrate itself as a democratic nation-state on the global stage, to advance itself as empire. Please see: Victor Bascara. Mod*el Minority Imperialism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
Jodi Kim. *Ends of Empire: Asian American Critique and the Cold War*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.
Jodi Melamed. *Represent and Destroy: Rationalizing Violence in the New Racial Capitalism.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011.

CHAPTER THREE: The Colonial and the Carceral Building Relationships Between Japanese Americans and Indigenous Groups in the Owens Valley

What if things changed to obscure what truly happened here so many years ago? What if the injustices perpetrated upon our people cannot fully be understood? Would this not be disrespectful? To us? To our family? To our community? And disrespectful to our country? Would this not be tragic? Today, there is a *danger* that this might happen.
—Bruce Embrey, Co-Chair of the Manzanar Committee, 2014 Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage

The danger that Bruce Embrey, Co-Chair of the Manzanar Committee, references is the proposed Los Angeles Department of Water and Power construction of the Southern Owens Valley Solar Ranch, a 1,200-acre solar energy generating station just east of Manzanar that can be seen from any point at the site. The Owens Valley is located east of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and is about 200 miles north of Los Angeles, California. The proposed solar ranch would be situated on what is already LADWP-owned land in between the cities of Independence and Lone Pine and about four miles from U.S. Highway 395 off of Manzanar Reward Road, the same exit for the Manzanar National Historic Site. The Owens Valley is home to the Big Pine Paiute Tribe, the Bishop Paiute Tribe, the Fort Independence Indian Community of Paiute Indians, and the Lone Pine Paiute-Shoshone Tribe. In this essay, I argue that while the logic of the Manzanar pilgrimage often overlaps with U.S. nationalist memorializations of Japanese American incarceration that narrate racialized state violence as a thing of the past and can replicate settler colonial erasures of contemporary Native dispossession, the fight over the Owens Valley Solar Ranch has provided an opportunity for the Manzanar Committee to contest these erasures. Through analyses of over 11 months of participant observation, program materials from the 2014 Manzanar Pilgrimage, a film on the subject, and by being a member of the Manzanar Committee for the past six months, I explore how new relationships are being formed by fighting the LADWP.

The Manzanar Committee is a non-profit educational organization that currently consists of approximately 21 volunteer members who meet monthly throughout the year to plan the day program at the Manzanar pilgrimage. The members are dedicated to educating and raising public awareness about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II as well as continuing to fight when other people's constitutional rights are endangered. As a result, the preservation of Manzanar's carceral landscape is integral to the preservation of Japanese American history. The disruption to Manzanar's viewshed by the proposed solar ranch project will take away this ability to teach about the fact that Manzanar was chosen as a location for Japanese American incarceration as part of "a carefully calculated plan by the U.S. government to instill a feeling of isolation, desolation, and despair in the minds of those incarcerated as a means to control them."[266] Were the view to be disrupted by large-scale industrial renewable energy facilities, the Manzanar Committee believes it will no longer be able to teach Manzanar's story of what it was "truly" like to be "locked up behind the barbed wire at Manzanar, with nothing but open space and mountains all around the camp."[267] If the solar ranch is built, that feeling will be lost and visitors will not be able to experience it as part of learning about what happened to Japanese Americans at Manzanar, which, according to the Committee, would be "absolutely criminal."[268]

Examining this danger to the Manzanar National Historic Site not only reveals a budding relationship between Manzanar stakeholders and the indigenous groups of the Owens Valley, but a recognition of colonial and carceral violences as distinct but intimately intertwined. This danger has pushed Japanese Americans to stand together with the Big Pine Paiute Tribe, the

[266]Manzanar Committee. "A Memory…A Monument…A Movement" Program. 26 April 2014. 13

[267] Manzanar Committee. "A Memory…A Monument…A Movement" Program. 26 April 2014. 13

[268] Manzanar Committee. "A Memory…A Monument…A Movement" Program. 26 April 2014. 13

Bishop Tribe, the Fort Independence Community of Paiute Indians, the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Tribe, the Owens Valley Committee, and the residents of Inyo County to stop the continued destruction of the valley by the LADWP.

Manzanar National Historic Site: Preserving the Japanese American Experience

Going back to the place where Japanese Americans were once incarcerated is a political act of remembering what the state had chosen to forget and now chooses to remember in very particular ways, being redeemed from its racist past. The Manzanar National Historic Site and the work of the Manzanar Committee (and all those who support its continued existence) provide participants with the opportunity to physically engage with Japanese American history. However, remembering Japanese American incarceration by going back to Manzanar and claiming ownership over it inadvertently must forget histories of colonial violences that occupy the same land. In particular, after redress and reparations, Japanese Americans can remember their incarceration because it also serves the interests of the state.[269] By celebrating Japanese American loyalty and acknowledging state violence via their wrongful incarceration—and resolution through redress—the United States. was able to declare racism officially over. Consequently, redress and reparations make other claims of state violence illegitimate within this logic. Native American claims of dispossession via colonial and settler colonial violences cannot garner legibility or visibility within this structure of remembering because these violences continue into the present. They cannot be narrated solely as part of the past. Manzanar and its pilgrimages thus occupy a contradictory location where memories of Japanese American

[269] Victor Bascara. "The Cultural Politics of Redress: Reassessing the Meaning of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 After9/11" *Asian American Law Journal*, 10 (2) 2003.

dispossession and incarceration remember state violences committed against a racialized enemy alien who, in turn, unintentionally gains from colonial legacies and settler colonial desires.[270]

Looking at a brief history of the Manzanar pilgrimages and their current manifestation, we can see this contradictory position emerge through the ownership of land via the National Parks Services and remembering incarceration. The preservation of Manzanar began with student interest at UCLA in 1969 and was propelled by a number of key figures, such as Sue Kunitomi Embrey and Warren Furutani, who created the Manzanar Project (later named the Manzanar Committee) as an organization dedicated to educating the public about Executive Order 9066 and to earning California State Historic Landmark status for the site.[271] This was how the first pilgrimage began, with a group of 150 (mostly Japanese American) people who drove by car and bus to locate Manzanar.[272] In 1972, Manzanar was designated California State Historic Landmark #850, and in 1992, it was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the National Parks Services, Department of Interior. Throughout this period, the Manzanar Committee joined in the struggle for redress and reparations, and collaborated with the National Council for Japanese American Redress, the Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization, and the National Coalition for Redress/Reparations; the Committee also participated in these efforts by giving testimony before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians,

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[270] This conceptualization of the "contradictory location" comes from Grace Kyungwon Hong's reading of "A Fire in Fontana."
Grace Kyungwon Hong. "'Something Forgotten: Which Should Have Been Rememebered': Private Property and Cross-Racial Solidarity in the Work of Hisaye Yamamoto." *American Literature* 71 (2): 1999.

[271] Abbie Lynn Salyers, *The Internment of Memory: Forgetting and Remembering the Japanese American World War II Experience*. PhD Dissertation, Rice University. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI, 2009. (Publication Number: 3362399) 248

[272] Manzanar Committee Blog. History. http://www.manzanarcommittee.org/manzhistory.html Despite thinking this was their first pilgrimage, they realized later that two Reverends had made the trek every year since the site had been closed, in order to honor the 200 people who had died there.

which provided evidence that Japanese Americans were in fact incarcerated during World War II.[273] When the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 passed, including an official apology from the state and monetary redress of $20,000 to every living incarceree, the work to establish Manzanar as a historic site intensified, leading Congress to pass H.R. 543, a bill that designated Manzanar as a National Historic Site.[274] Although there were initial protests and death threats about the construction of a possible "Jap Museum," the creation of an advisory commission that met with local residents helped build support and understanding about the benefits that the Manzanar National Historic site would bring to the Owens Valley.[275] However, the Manzanar Committee has always struggled with the LADWP and it was not until 1995 that the LADWP finally transferred the land (though they still own the water rights) to the National Parks Services. It was not until 2002 that the Manzanar Committee was able to obtain the funds to begin construction on the site.

Currently, the Manzanar pilgrimage consists of two components, a day and evening program, sponsored by the Manzanar Committee. The pilgrimage program is thoughtfully produced by the Manzanar Committee, and not only seeks to educate the public about Japanese American experiences with personal stories and memories, but also hopes to entertain the audience with the end goal that we remember so this may never happen again. Hinged upon a discourse of personal responsibility, remembering incarceration is about claiming that state violence did happen to us but it is intimately connected to narratives of Japanese American loyalty via our wrongful and unjust imprisonment. These kinds of narratives and ways of

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[273] Manzanar Committee. *About the Manzanar Committee/Contact Us*. http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org/about-the-manzanar-committeecontact-us/

[274] Manzanar Committee. *History*. http://www.manzanarcommittee.org/manzhistory.html

[275] Manzanar Committee. *History*. http://www.manzanarcommittee.org/manzhistory.html

remembering ultimately end up establishing Japanese American innocence that disallow discussions about those who have experienced or are currently experiencing containment in similar ways. This does not mean that these narratives are not important or serving a valuable purpose. However, these narratives do have unintentional consequences.

A typical day begins at noon with various welcomes from different Manzanar stakeholders that include the Manzanar Committee, the National Park Services, and—for the first time in 2014—representation from one of the indigenous groups in the Owens Valley. After welcoming the audience, the program includes awards that honor various people for their work in the Japanese American community, cultural performances (including poetry, *taiko*, and sing-a-longs), and speeches that address what is currently happening in the community as well as the importance of remembering incarceration. Before and after the program, visitors are encouraged to explore the site. The visit to Manzanar consists of an auto tour on which one can see the remains of the site, including orchards, gardens, building foundations, the camp cemetery, and the Interpretive Center that incorporates audiovisual presentations, artifacts, oral histories, and photographs.[276] The Interpretive Center houses a bookstore and gift shop where visitors can continue to educate themselves about Japanese American incarceration long after they have left the site. Adjacent to the Interpretive Center are two newly reconstructed barracks, including a block manager's office that contains exhibits as well as audio and video stations inside each building. These barracks show what it was like to live in these crowded spaces and visually provide visitors with a glimpse of the experience of those incarcerated at Manzanar.

The pilgrimage then transitions to its evening program, held in recent years at the Lone Pine High School. This transition from day to evening is about passing along that discourse of

[276] Abbie Lynn Salyers, *The Internment of Memory: Forgetting and Remembering the Japanese American World War II Experience*. PhD Dissertation, Rice University. Ann Arbor: ProQuest/UMI. (Publication Number: 3362399) 249

personal responsibility from the Manzanar Committee (which consists mainly of second-and-third generation Japanese Americans) to the younger generations (Yonsei, or fourth generation, and beyond). Manzanar at Dusk (MAD) is co-sponsored by the Nikkei Student Unions (NSU) at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; California State University, Long Beach; UCLA; and the University of California, San Diego.[277] Through a creative presentation, small group discussions, and an open mic session in which participants share what they have learned, MAD seeks to provide participants with the opportunity to listen to and share stories and personal experiences with a former incarceree who encourages everyone to talk about the relevance of the Japanese American incarceration experience to contemporary issues.[278] By providing the students with facilities and some guidance and consultation with the program, MAD is meant to empower young people to get involved with Manzanar and the preservation of Japanese American history. Generating a sense of personal responsibility in Nikkei youth via the transmission of personal stories and experiences that places them in leadership roles aims to create a new generation of community activists and leaders. Journeying on these annual pilgrimages to various incarceration sites provides Japanese Americans with a means to remember the past as well as to make younger generations feel connected to a past that they did not experience themselves.

Before exploring how the Manzanar Committee is beginning to forge relationships with the indigenous groups of the Owens Valley, it is important to theorize about the intimate connections between the colonial and carceral violences that do not equate the two. To begin

[277] While this is commonly who participates every year, this sometimes includes CSUF (who unfortunately had to drop out of the planning committee in 2015 and 2016).

[278] Gann Matsuda. *2015 Manzanar at Dusk: Sharing the Japanese American Incarceration Experience Among Different Generations, Diverse Groups.* http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org/2015/04/08/2015-manzanar-at-dusk-040815/

such an analysis, I turn to *Asian Settler Colonialism*, where Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Y. Okamura refute multicultural narratives of Asian economic and political successes in Hawai'i by highlighting Asians as settlers to expose the colonial processes that made Asian settlement possible in the first place.[279] To situate the Asian (and in this case, the Japanese American) as a settler who benefits from U.S. settler colonialism is to look, as Alyosha Goldstein suggests, at these "complex reciprocities, seemingly opaque disjunctures, and tense entanglements" that offer us "new insights for anticolonial struggle."[280] In other words, to identify the Japanese American as a settler via their remembrance of the carceral is an attempt to not only interrogate how the carceral and the colonial often sustain each other, but how to engage in ethical and anticolonial struggle. Furthermore, I draw on Sherene H. Razack and Mona Oikawa's methodology of unmapping, which denaturalizes how a space came to be and the worldviews that rest on it by historicizing what has been rendered invisible. I argue that one needs to place the sites of Japanese American incarceration within a larger history of expulsion and containment in the United States.[281] To find a cartography of Japanese American incarceration means acknowledging that another map has been rendered invisible—that of the indigenous nations from which the United States was founded.[282] To uncover this map would be to uncover the

[279] Candace Fujikane and Jonathan Y. Okamura. Asian Settler Colonialism: From Local Governance to the Habits of Everyday Life in Hawaii. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2008), 6.

[280] Alyosha Goldstein. Formations of United States Colonialism. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 2.

[281] Sherene Razack, Ed, *Race, Space, and the Law: Unmapping a White Settler Society*. (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2002).
Mona Oikawa, *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory, and the Subjects of Internment*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

[282] Mona Oikawa, *Cartographies of Violence: Japanese Canadian Women, Memory, and the Subjects of Internment*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

Asian settler. In doing so, I argue that Manzanar as a case study shows us how the carceral and colonial often sustain each other and, in turn, how to break down these intimacies of power.

Prior to World War II, Japanese immigrants were subject to anti-Asian legislation: they were both barred from immigrating with the passage of the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924/Immigration Act of 1924 and denied naturalization and access to citizenship based on their racial ineligibility. In addition, their increased presence on the West Coast and, in particular, as farmers made them appear as threats to white economic security. In 1913, the first Alien Land Law was passed, making the ownership of agricultural land by "aliens ineligible for citizenship" illegal; nor could they lease land for more than three years, thereby "producing a socioeconomic condition that unilaterally favored white landlords," as Eichiro Azuma explains.[283] Some of the Issei found loopholes and bought land in the name of their Nisei children, or they were able to find citizens willing to be owners of the land on paper only. Historicizing this formal denial of citizenship and property rights demonstrates how Japanese American incarceration was not an anomaly, but rather a function of the racial state. Incarcerating Japanese Americans under the guise of national security was about punishing those on the outside of white national belonging or citizenry.

We can see how the carceral targets a racialized "enemy" for punishment, while the colonial seeks to eliminate indigeneity through containment, frontier homicide, and blood quantum logics.[284] The colonial is about punishment as well as elimination. As Patrick Wolfe explains, the increase of indigenous people obstructed settler access to land that could then be

[283] Eichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 65.

[284] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4) 2006: 387-409.

turned into private property, a cornerstone of liberal democracy.[285] The primary motivation to justify eliminating indigenous peoples is not about race, but settler access to territory.[286] Elimination via settler colonial logics persists into the present, as Native Americans are denied rights to their land and access to resources that sustain life. Here, we can see how property functions within the racial state. The state's violent emptying of the land of indigenous peoples allows for that land to become private property. As a result of this violent process, anti-Asian legislation and Japanese American incarceration function as a means to deny Japanese/Japanese Americans access to property. Furthermore, the denial of property rights to Japanese Americans is contingent upon Native dispossession. Seeing how the racial state intimately relies upon the colonial and the carceral to maintain itself allows us to see the parallels between the two. In fact, containment—which in its many forms includes incarceration and reservations—is how the racial state dispossesses different groups of people of color.[287] There is an intimate connection between containment and dispossession, by which the racial state is maintained in order to ultimately sustain and legitimate white supremacy.

But it is also important to think about the ways in which Japanese Americans are in fact settlers themselves, those who can preserve Manzanar on land that settlers took from indigenous groups in the Owens Valley. Acknowledging that Japanese Americans sometimes unwillingly participate in the maintenance of a U.S. settler state is an important part of thinking about the relationship between the colonial and the carceral because it shows us how they are intertwined

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[285] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4) 2006: 388

[286] Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4) 2006: 388

[287] This is not to equate indigenous experiences with those of other groups of color because their dispossession is contingent upon the figure of the settler. The purpose is to consider how containment and dispossession operate together in the racial state.

and can sustain one another. Breaking down the relationship between the two will provide us with ethical ways of remembering our histories. As I argue below, it is this recognition and reckoning with colonial violence made visible by the continued destruction brought on by the LADWP that can shift how stakeholders in the Owens Valley relate to one another.

Stakeholders in the Owens Valley: Recognizing Colonial Violences

While it is clear that the Manzanar Committee and those invested in the preservation of Japanese American history are in fact interested in securing the vitality and legitimacy of their historical narratives, I want to focus on what is emerging from the dangers that the solar ranch construction poses. This fight against the LADWP has pushed Manzanar stakeholders to acknowledge the struggles and histories of other people residing in the Owens Valley.[288] During his closing remarks at the 2014 pilgrimage, Embrey states:

> "And this is why we, the Manzanar Committee, and many organizations within the Japanese American community, as well as our friends and allies here in the Owens Valley, including the Big Pine Paiute tribe, the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone tribe, the Bishop Paiute tribe, and four independent tribes along with friends in the Owens Valley Committee. . .all demand that the DWP withdraw this massive industrial solar facility and not build it. We demand that the DWP finally respect our history and not just our people, but the people of the Owens Valley." [CLAPPING][289]

It is clear that standing in solidarity with other stakeholders in the Owens Valley means Embrey must acknowledge a much longer history of violence—of which Japanese Americans are only a part. He goes on to say that in asking all of us to join the fight against the LADWP, we must remember that

> "There are hundreds, if not thousands, of sacred sites in this valley of the Paiute Shoshone people who have walked this valley for thousands of years. We cannot allow

[288] The Interpretive Center at Manzanar does have a small section devoted to the Owens Valley prior to incarceration that does discuss indigenous experiences with settlers, but this is the first time that Japanese Americans actively acknowledge the colonial.

[289] Bruce Embrey. A Memory…A Monument…A Movement. Closing Remarks Speech. 26 April 2014.

> this to happen. We cannot allow America to forget. We must not stand by and watch our past or the past of other peoples of the Owens Valley be erased."[290]

Although they are using a language of responsibility that serves to legitimize Japanese American history, there is a way in which the Manzanar Committee is acknowledging how colonial violences in the Owens Valley are an integral part of its history—and, significantly, one that persists in the present.

Japanese American incarceration can be nationally acknowledged as a "wrong" committed by the nation precisely because it ideologically and materially serves to position other groups of color as "deserving" of punishment or continued state violence. Furthermore, Japanese American incarceration via redress and reparations can be marked as historically "over" by the state, whereas colonial and settler colonial violences expose how state violence continues to persist. Although it is not precisely within the Manzanar Committee's mission to imagine the relationship between the colonial and the carceral, this fight against the LADWP has opened up a space to begin talking about what that conversation might look like.

Sponsored by the Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples, Inc. and Graven Image Films, LLC, *Saving Payahüüpuü: The Owens Valley Solar Story* is a film produced by Angela Mooney D'arcy and those invested in the Owens Valley[291] to ask those of us living in Los Angeles to question the construction of the solar ranch and the irreparable harm this site will produce. It does this by exploring "the land, people, history, and future of the Owens Valley as its community members work to build broad-based grassroots support at home and in Los

[290] Bruce Embrey. A Memory…A Monument…A Movement. Closing Remarks Speech. 26 April 2014.

[291] This film was a collaboration between: The Owens Valley Committee, Deepest Valley, Manzanar Committee, the Lone Pine Paiute Shoshone Reservation, and the Big Pine Tribe of the Owens Valley. Executive Producer: Angela Mooney D'arcy

Angeles to protect the natural, historic, and cultural resources of their valley."[292] The film begins by describing the solar ranch and debunking its environmental claims, even calling it: "the dirty green project."[293] Many in the film argue that there are more efficient ways to bring energy sustainability, including utilizing rooftop solar energy as the City of Santa Monica does. Historicizing the construction of the solar ranch within a larger history of resource extraction, the film exposes how the LADWP destroyed the Owens Valley by first taking water.

The film also makes connections between the different stakeholder groups as well as across different historical moments. In the film, Gann Matsuda, as one of the representatives of the Manzanar Committee, is featured exposing the solar ranch as a settler colonial project, although he never names it as such. He states that it is another "example of desecrating Native lands," where "whenever someone wanted something, usually natural resources, in this case [the] sun—it's like oh, you can move—you don't matter."[294] He then asks, "When is it going to stop?"[295] Connections are also made by other stakeholders: Harry Williams, a Bishop Paiute elder and environmental activist, talks about Manzanar as a place where "Japanese people that lived in L.A. and around the country" were incarcerated and put "on reservations, hidden away."[296] He goes on to say that "it was no good to steal all their property and take them out of their homes, take their property and put them in captivity and just stole their lives like they did

[292] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[293] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[294] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[295] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[296] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

the tribes."[297] In contrast to Matsuda, Williams explicitly goes on to name this violence as colonialism; in reference to the construction that would have to take place, he states that the LADWP will "ruin it. Just kill it. Like colonialism does. It destroys your history. It rewrites it. And if they destroy it, then you were never there because there's no proof of you ever being there."[298] Here, Williams makes a connection between Japanese Americans and indigenous experiences by misnaming incarceration as "reservations" in an effort to think through how indigenous and racialized dispossession occurs. He also makes visible the ways in which the U.S. acquisition of indigenous lands and the taking of Japanese American properties are linked to a destruction of history that leads to physical and social death. This physical and social death is about erasing indigenous claims to land as well as invalidating Japanese American political acts of memory. The LADWP's continued destruction of the Owens Valley is very much tied up in maintaining a settler state that denies that the colonial and the carceral continue to persist.

The arguments that Matsuda and Williams present to the audience are very important conversations that both acknowledge their own respective histories as well as each other's histories of dispossession and violence. And what they both acknowledge is a much longer history of the LADWP and the Owens Valley. By turning to a discussion of water, many of the film's interviewees identify the connection between resources, land, life, colonialism and the LADWP, beginning with claims to water rights. As Matsuda says, "so they got their water and now they want their sun too? And they want to cover pristine open space with solar panels?

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[297] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[298] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

1,200 acres or more? Enough is enough."[299] Similarly, Alan Bacock, the Big Pine Paiute Tribe Water Coordinator, notes: "water was there and then all of a sudden it was not there."[300]

In other words, the construction of the solar ranch can be situated within a much longer history of colonial violence that manifests itself in settler ownership of land and the destruction of the Owens Valley for the benefit of the settler. Prior to the LADWP, the Paiute called the Owens Valley, *Piyahu-Nadu* or the "place where water flows," because it was a place where water was once plentiful and central to Paiute creation stories and ways of living. However, the Owens Valley Paiutes' relationship to water began to change drastically in 1859 with the permanent settlement of mainly Anglo-American stockmen in the Owens Valley.[301] Conflicts erupted between the Owens Valley Paiute and the white settlers, whose grazing sheep and cattle polluted water being diverted to Paiute irrigation systems. Settler ownership of both water and land made it extremely difficult for the Owens Valley Paiute to have access to clean water and to find sources of food. As Harry Williams states, "we were known as the 'Indian problem'" because "[the settlers] can't make money with [us] in [the] way."[302] Because the conflicts between the Owens Valley Paiute and the white settlers only increased due to a harsh winter and a scarcity of food between 1861 and 1862, the California Volunteers forcibly and temporarily

[299] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[300] Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples and Graven Image Films, LLC. "Saving *Payahuupu*: The Owens Valley Solar Story." 2014 April 25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mTV9Pd6AaNk

[301] Chantal R. Walker. "*Piyahu Nadu*: Land of Flowing Waters: The Water Transfer from Owens Valley to Los Angeles 1913-1939." MA Thesis. University of California, Los Angeles, 2014.

[302] Cavelle Jenna. "A Paiute Perspective on the LA-Owens Valley Water Story: Jenna Cavelle In Conversation with Alan Bacock and Harry Williams." *ARID* (2013). http://aridjournal.com/a-paiute-perspective-owens-valley-water-jenna-cavelle/

removed the Owens Valley Paiute to the El Tejon Reservation.[303] The state also removed the Owens Valley Paiute to Fort Tejon. The removal of the Owens Valley Paiute from the valley was, according to Chantal Walker, meant to "separate them from settlers, who then would have free control over the land and water."[304] Upon their return, white settler ownership and social structures forcefully integrated the Owens Valley Paiute into the labor sector for survival.

Here, we can see how the very existence of "the native" obstructs the settler's access to land and ownership of it, justifying removal. By 1905, the City of Los Angeles began purchasing land in the Owens Valley in order to gain access to water rights due to the city's own shortage because of its population growth. The exportation of water from the Owens River through the Los Angeles Aqueduct in 1913 was rationalized as a "public service" where the water of the Owens Valley would be put to better use in Los Angeles. The Owens Valley Paiute no longer had access to their land or water, with the City of Los Angeles owning 85 percent of all private property in the valley.[305] Roberta Hunter, the Secretary of the Big Pine Paiute Tribal Council, states that the LADWP considers "all the resources to be plentiful without realizing

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[303] Chantal R. Walker. "*Piyahu Nadu*: Land of Flowing Waters: The Water Transfer from Owens Valley to Los Angeles 1913-1939." MA Thesis. University of California, Los Angeles, 2014. 2. The California Volunteers were militia groups who protected territories and thus white settlers under threat by indigenous populations.

[304] Chantal R. Walker. "*Piyahu Nadu*: Land of Flowing Waters: The Water Transfer from Owens Valley to Los Angeles 1913-1939." MA Thesis. University of California, Los Angeles, 2014. 2.

[305] A land exchange in 1937 between the Department of Interior and the City of Los Angeles occurred that established the current land base for the Bishop, Lone Pine and Big Pine Reservations—where water was also supposed to be exchanged. However, an agreement about the water could not be reached because the LA City Charter would not allow the sale of the water without two-thirds of the city's votes. In 1939, the city agreed to provide four acre-feet of water per year to the reservations. The tribes of these reservations feel that federal government did not fulfill its trust responsibilities and ignored the Federally Reserved Indian Water Rights when they entered this agreement on their behalf.
Owens Valley Indian Water Commission. "History of Water Rights."
http://www.oviwc.org/thecrusade.html
Chantal R. Walker. "*Piyahu Nadu*: Land of Flowing Waters: The Water Transfer from Owens Valley to Los Angeles 1913-1939." MA Thesis. University of California, Los Angeles, 2014. 46-48

what they are taking away from other people." *Saving Payahüüpuü* exposes the intimate connection between land, water, life resources, and how in particular indigenous groups in the Owens Valley were made to let die in order for, first, the settlers of the Owens Valley and then the City of Los Angeles to flourish and grow. The settler state can be broken down in discrete entities that often overlap and clash or collude with each other: the white ranchers, who use ancient Paiute irrigation systems for their own economic prosperity; the LADWP, as a municipal utility agency whose ownership of land and water rights in the Owens Valley violently prevent the Owens Valley Paiute from indigenous ways of living; and, finally, Japanese American settlers, whose racialized deviancy marked them for incarceration in the Owens Valley and whose return, in cooperation with the National Parks Services, continues to play a role in the continued dispossession of the indigenous people of the valley.

Re-examining "Isolation" and "Desolation" in the Owens Valley: Settler Colonial Desires and Manzanar

While the Manzanar Committee in its 2014 program highlighted some of the intimate connections between Japanese Americans and Native Americans in the Owens Valley, what was presented was indeed fleeting and for the purpose of garnering support for petitions to send to Mayor Eric Garcetti. A letter drafted by the Manzanar Committee and stuffed into our pilgrimage programs tells the story of Japanese American incarceration that highlights how our civil and constitutional rights were "discarded without due process, freedom of religion or other basic rights afforded to all Americans."[306] With the signing of Executive Order 9066, Japanese Americans were then "exiled to remote, desolate, and harsh environments." As they were

[306] Manzanar Committee. "Letter to Mayor Eric Garcetti." Addition to A Memory…A Monument…A Movement Program.

"forced to endure [these] unforgiving environments, it is clear that these conditions are an "essential part of the story."[307] It goes on to state that

> "The Manzanar National Historic Site and its surrounding environment tell this story, in large part because the region remains largely *untouched*. Visitors to this site can easily appreciate the *isolation* and *despair* the families felt upon arriving to Manzanar."[308]

It is interesting to note that the Manzanar Committee identifies "isolation" and "despair" as being a key way to teach future generations about what happened to Japanese Americans at Manzanar. And yet for indigenous groups in the Owens Valley, this place is their "home." In critically thinking about this contradiction between spaces of desolation and spaces of home, we might be able to get at the relationship between the colonial and the carceral as well as to interrogate Japanese American identity as being hinged on settler colonial logics.

While the Manzanar Committee alludes to colonial violences against indigenous groups in the Owens Valley, they never explicitly state what those violations are. Going back to their usage of the words "isolation" and "despair," these descriptions of the landscape are the traces of colonial projects that were brought on by settler and later LADWP's ownership of land and water rights. The "isolation" and "desolation" was and continues to be created out of colonial violences that deny indigenous peoples access to land, resources, and, thus, life. However, if we further interrogate these terms to describe the Owens Valley, we can see how the carceral—the way in which the forced removal of Japanese Americans to "isolated" and "desolate" places—also relied upon the colonial to violently create such a place. It purposefully and violently emptied the space of indigenous peoples, who were contained on reservations to make room for settlers, and it was emptied of water as the population of Los Angeles grew beyond its own

[307] Manzanar Committee. "Letter to Mayor Eric Garcetti." Addition to A Memory…A Monument…A Movement Program.

[308] Emphasis added. Manzanar Committee. "Letter to Mayor Eric Garcetti." Addition to A Memory…A Monument…A Movement Program. 26 April 2014

supply. It was an "ideal" area to incarcerate Japanese Americans because the state had already made it that way.

It was also already a site of containment that was made invisible by settler logics and could be justified as a location for incarceration. Here, the state's colonial and carceral projects intersect and sustain each other: The colonial created the perfect space for the carceral to exist, and the carceral—with commemorations of its past—continues to allow for settler colonial desires to permeate the Owens Valley future. Naming and identifying colonialism means that we would have to reassess Manzanar as a National Historic Site and how claims to land are often inadvertently settler colonial in their nature through ownership of territory. In other words, to remember the carceral is inherently predicated on the forgetting of indigenous relationships to the land. However, as I have been arguing, we can see the ways in which the possibility for solidarity can occur that disrupt settler colonial desires.

A New Beginning: Coalition Building in the Owens Valley

In a personal interview, Manzanar Committee member Gann Matsuda tells me that what brought Native Americans who live in the Owens Valley and Japanese Americans together was the fight against this solar ranch. Harry Williams, Bishop Paiute tribal member and environmental activist, states that, although he grew up knowing about Japanese American incarceration, the indigenous groups in the Owens Valley had no relationship with Japanese Americans. His knowledge is made up of fragments: He heard about incarceration from his grandparents, his classmate's mother was an assistant cook at Manzanar, and the Indian basketball team would go play games there. "[S]o we always knew about it," as Williams tells me in an interview[309] And yet prior to the proposal of the solar ranch, the stakeholders of the Owens Valley "were all little separate units," in Williams's words; in particular, the Manzanar

[309] Harry Williams. Personal Interview 9 July 2015.

Committee did "their own thing" of "really support[ing] the Manzanar Park and got everything going there."[310]

However, after they began to work together against a common enemy, their relationship changed. Williams tells me that "it's become a lot better because when they fought for what they wanted, you know, they really became better, we became friends." He then goes on to identify the Manzanar Committee as "movers and shakers" who "really jumped on the ball" with this fight, and believes that in the end they had become "allies."[311] Interestingly for Williams, this sense of "becoming allies" stems from the fact that the Manzanar Committee "really started looking at what we [the indigenous peoples of the valley] were talking about [and] what we were fighting for," and vice versa.[312] For Williams, Japanese Americans were finally understanding "why [Native Americans] felt the way [they] did."[313] This understanding of each other's particular histories with state violence—the colonial and the carceral—helped forge, then solidify trust and respect as they collaborated in this fight with LADWP. Matsuda also states that "a byproduct of [the Manzanar Committee's] work had to be building stronger relationships with the locals in the Owens Valley, that included the Native Americans up there."[314]

In 2014, the Manzanar Committee invited Genevieve "Gina" Jones, the Tribal Chairwoman of the Big Pine Paiute Tribe to welcome pilgrimage participants to "our land." Matsuda states, "that's why we had her speaking that day, because we had met her, we

[310] Harry Williams. Personal Interview 9 July 2015.

[311] Harry Williams. Personal Interview 9 July 2015.

[312] Harry Williams. Personal Interview 9 July 2015.

[313] Harry Williams. Personal Interview 9 July 2015.

[314] Gann Matsuda. Personal Interview. 1 October 2014.

developed a relationship *finally*, something we'd always wanted to do" but were never able to.[315] This was the first time that the Manzanar Committee had invited a tribal representative to welcome pilgrimage participants and is something that has continued and will continue in the future. Working in coalition with other stakeholders in the Owens Valley against a common enemy, the LADWP, has provided the Manzanar Committee with the means to develop meaningful relationships with those who call the valley their home. Logistically, the pilgrimage lasts for only the duration of one weekend a year. This temporariness of the pilgrimage, and also of Japanese American incarceration (that forced incarcerees to call Manzanar their home for three-and-a-half years), is what has prevented a coalition from occurring in the past. Japanese Americans were thus connected to the carceral landscape, but not necessarily the community surrounding them, who they were closed off from by barbed wire.

Not only have stakeholders of Manzanar learned to work collaboratively, but they are learning to support one another. Despite the fact that the LADWP's solar ranch project has been tabled, a tribal representative will continue to welcome participants to the land, as well as talk about a few significant issues affecting the indigenous communities of the Owens Valley. In 2015, the Big Pine Paiute tribe newsletter makes mention of the annual pilgrimage, urging their readers to attend the weekend events[316] while the Owens Valley Committee, an organization dedicated to the sustainable management of Owens Valley water and resources, invited Manzanar Committee Co-Chair Bruce Embrey as their guest speaker at their annual fundraiser event. Having begun these conversations about how the colonial and the carceral intersect and even sustain each other have been important to the growth of these budding relationships. As

[315] Gann Matsuda. Personal Interview. 1 October 2014.

[316] Sally Manning. Earth Day is April 22. *Twa Gwa Tu Zu Way (We All Count…Everybody)*. Big Pine Paiute Newsletter. April 2015. http://www.bigpinepaiute.org/img/April2015Newsletter.pdf

Matsuda contends, "we developed the relationships we needed to develop, so we're hoping that continues for a long, long time."[317]

Conclusion: Lessons from Harry Williams

I want to end this chapter by exploring Harry Williams' articulation of settler colonial dispossession in relationship to capitalism to think about how struggles over water and land need to confront not only colonial violences but indigenous strategies of resistance. He begins our interview by situating himself within the context of the work he does; he tells me: " I like my valley. I'm willing to get up and fight for it, because LA's like a big bully." He states, "this is my homeland, and it needs to be fought for and taken care of." Throughout the interview, he constantly refers to the Owens Valley as "home" and therefore something that is "his" or "ours." He very strategically highlights indigenous claims to land that are continually denied in the face of constant dispossession via the settler state. For Williams, this denial materially manifests itself in the dispossession of water—a necessary resource for life. By reasserting his claims to land and its resources, he very carefully constructs a critique of capitalism. When I ask him what he thinks allows Los Angeles to take the valley's resources he says:

> " I just think its arrogance, like we're the big city, we have the power, it's the principle of capitalism. They believe they own this entire valley and they will stick to it, they will really fight for it…and the water gets dragged out of here" as fast as they can take it."[318]

In a later part of the interview, he theorizes that "capitalism doesn't care, it just uses it up. And when you use it up what do you have left? You have nothing left."[319] He positions the dangers of capitalism and the ownership of water and land via the LADWP to not only contrast indigenous worldviews with settler colonial logics but to highlight how these differences mean

[317] Gann Matsuda. Personal Interview. 1 October 2014.

[318] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

[319] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

that they "are still the enemy as a tribal people."[320] He states, "we want to protect Mother Earth, we are always being destroyed."[321] In contrast to Japanese Americans who are no longer racialized as the enemy in a post-redress era, Williams asserts that indigenous peoples continue to be the enemy (of settlers, private property, capitalism) and thus subject to death.

Although I intended my interview to be an interrogation of the budding relationship between the Manzanar Committee and Native American activists in the Owens Valley, there were many times throughout the interview where Williams purposefully steered the conversation back to the struggles of his valley. Williams' activist work takes the form of education: he gives talks in different cities and colleges throughout California, takes water rights classes, and participates in films like *Paya*, a documentary about the politics of water. Williams is very clear that the LADWP is the enemy and the one who has "dried and killed the valley," but he also holds local politicians and organizations responsible.[322] Sometimes they fold to LADWP pressures or LADWP infiltrates their committees and for Williams, this kind of work is "tough." However, what he wants people to think most about (especially those in Los Angeles) is where their water comes from. That process is often a violent one. He sees the Owens Valley as a "microcosm of the rest of the world."[323] The valley is always being watched—studied by those who want to emulate the LADWP's takeover of the water or those who want to know how to fight against the theft of water. Examining Williams' understanding of his home provides further lessons about how to maintain relationships between Japanese Americans and Native

[320] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

[321] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

[322] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

[323] Harry Williams. Personal Interview. 9 July 2015.

Americans, but it also provides insights into the daily activism and work that many do to fight against the destruction caused by colonial and settler colonial violences.

Drawing on the Manzanar pilgrimage as a case study to examine the relationship between the colonial and the carceral provides us with the opportunity to rethink Japanese American memory practices. While settler colonial desires are inherently a part of Japanese Americans' relationship to Manzanar and the Owens Valley, these desires can be disrupted. The fight against the LADWP's proposed solar ranch put Japanese Americans and the indigenous tribes of the Owens Valley in conversation with each other for the first time. In collaborating together, they formed relationships with each other based upon the layers of racialized and colonial violences that were a part of the valley's history. Highlighting the contradictory location of Japanese Americans, in particular the Manzanar Committee, reveals how the colonial and the carceral often sustain each other. Reexamining the way we remember Japanese American incarceration in this way forces us to be ethical to more than just ourselves.

CHAPTER FOUR: NSU Culture Night and Generational Transmissions of Memory: Performative Disruptions and Other Futures

In an article published by the Los Angeles based Japanese American newspaper, *Rafu Shimpo* in July of 2011, the author's first line asks: "Where are the youth?"[324] It states that if you have ever been involved with the Japanese American community, then you've heard this question before. As I have argued, this anxiety about Nikkei youth involvement in the face of Nisei death not only grows with every passing year but is in fact central to gendered discourses of generational transmission of memory and thus responsibility. This anxiety relies upon and is entrenched in a Japanese American history that is generationally determined by the categories of Issei, Nisei, Sansei and so on. These histories also produce very particular generational identities that many organizations rely on to engage with and serve the community. The article then goes on to talk about the importance of community engagement within the Japanese American community, arguing that:

> "It was that engagement in community organizations that built up the community and its leadership, history and memories, and created the bonds that hold us together today. Where would we be without our churches, temples, basketball teams, community centers, museums, festivals, and so on?"[325]

This anxiety, while not necessarily new, has resulted in the emergence of youth-oriented organizations in the Japanese American community such as the Japanese American National Museum's Young Professional's Network, the Manzanar Committee's emphasis on their student led and run Manzanar at Dusk program, to Kizuna—a Little Tokyo based organization "founded

[324] Uknown contributer, "Uniting Nikkei for the Future." *Rafu Shimpo,* July 8, 2011. http://www.rafu.com/2011/07/uniting-nikkei-for-the-future/

[325] Uknown contributer, "Uniting Nikkei for the Future." *Rafu Shimpo,* July 8, 2011. http://www.rafu.com/2011/07/uniting-nikkei-for-the-future/

for and by the next generation."[326] This chapter takes seriously these questions about the future of Japanese American community, history, memory and the responsibility that Nikkei youth are charged with within this language of debt and loss. Looking specifically at the Nikkei Student Union (NSU) at the University of California Los Angeles, I explore how these college students are simultaneously reifying and challenging generational transmissions of memory through the medium of performance. NSU's annual Culture Night consists of a student-written drama aimed to deliver a cultural message, that also features performances by NSU's dance groups, both traditional Japanese *odori* and hip hop as well as their a-capella vocal and *taiko* (Japanese drumming) groups. If Japanese American youth are our "future," this chapter explores both the limitations and the possibilities of such a "future" and in particular how these students are engaging with, disrupting, and building such a "future."

History of UCLA's NSU: From Then to Now

UCLA's NSU was founded in 1981 and its objectives were to "promote Asian Pacific American awareness in the pursuit of [a] better understanding of the Japanese American identity, to encourage student involvement in the Los Angeles Japanese American community and its issues and also to promote service activities within said community" as well as to "act as a medium for the members social, cultural and political objectives" both on and off-campus.[327] As an alternative to Asian fraternities and sororities of the time, UCLA's NSU articulates itself as more than just a social organization, recounting its history of development as being in response to the need to address cultural awareness on campus and as being intimately connected to the struggles for redress. In fact, it is the redress movement itself that began to increase

[326] "Kizuna" Kizuna. Accessed on March 4, 2017.

[327] Gann Matsuda, "The Constitution of the University of California, Los Angeles Nikkei Student Union" Authored March 17, 1984, reprinted April 2, 1989.

NSU's presence in the Japanese American community as they became involved with the National Coalition for Redress and Reparations (now called Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress) by not only "generating campus and community support" for redress but also their lobbying efforts, their thousand letters of support, organization of educational programs and rallies in support of redress legislation. According to Alan Nishio, founder and co-chair of NCRR, "NSU was a critical factor in the considerable involvement of students in the struggle for redress."[328] Redress was also how the first iteration of Culture Night was born. NSU's annual Culture Night originally began as a week long on-campus event called "Week of Remembrance" which served to commemorate the signing of Executive Order 9066 with panels, guest speakers and presentations.[329] It is this tradition that the current manifestation of culture night strives to maintain through a variety of performances—a play, dance, and taiko.

In addition to being involved with the redress movement, in 1986, NSU played a crucial role in the three-year battle of Professor Don Nakanishi's tenure case, organizing walk-outs, pickets and marches in order to highlight the racism of UCLA's administration. The NSU president even gave a presentation on "Racism and the Glass Ceiling" before the U.S. Senate Committee. In 1987, NSU established a scholarship program for incoming Japanese American high school students that emphasized community involvement over academic achievements. These examples of NSU activities from the 1980s are meant to demonstrate that the organization was founded as a space for Japanese Americans not only to educate others about their particular "ethnic experience" but was also always meant to be a space of political action and organizing. Its history and emergence are intimately intertwined with that of Japanese American redress and thus its visions of community are often wrapped up in the gendered discourse of post-redress

[328] Alan Nishio "Awards Nomination UCLA Nikkei Student Union." Date Unknown.

[329] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2001. 3.

memorializations. Even as NSU organizations across Southern California are currently struggling to interest their members in these kinds of political and community events rather than merely social ones—the Culture Night has persisted.

Culture Night is a very important part of a larger tradition of ethnic and minority student organizations on college campuses, in particular,[330] Asian American specific groups. Pilipino Culture Nights, which began in the 1970s and emerged as a genre in the 1980s, have been widely documented.[331] Many of these works, analyze the use of cultural performances to highlight the colonial relationship between the United States and the Philippines as Filipino American youth try to make sense of what it means to be Filipino American. Culture has historically been a marker of difference and "foreignness" for Asian American groups, but it is through these nights of performances that Asian American cultural organizations make claim to "traditional" Asian culture: dances, song, music, etc. within a celebratory fashion. The Culture Night is a vehicle for Asian American students to play with "culture" as well as showcase it to the rest of campus.

For NSU, the Culture Night ranges from topics such as Japanese Americans' World War II incarceration experiences ("Walking Against the Wind", 1992) and those of the Japanese American segregated army units (" A Hero's Welcome Home", 1996) to Saving Little Tokyo ("Always Welcome, Never For Sale", 2009) and Issei farmers ("Brothers Miyazaki", 2010), these student written, run, and performed plays signal what Nikkei youth find important and

[330] At UCLA there are a variety of Culture Nights such as: Vietnamese Student Union, Chinese American Student Association, Hanoolim (Korean American), Samahang Pilipino, Taiwanese Culture Night, and United Khmer Students. But also such groups as: The East African Student Association and in 2017 there was the first Queer Culture Night.

[331] Please see: Theodore S. Gonzalves, *The Day the Dancers Stayed: Performing in the Filipino/American Diaspora*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010.
Barbara Gaerlan, "In the Court of the Sultan: Orientalism, Nationalism, and Modernity in Philippine and Filipino American Dance." *Journal of Asian American Studies* 2.3 (1999) 251-287.
Neal Matherine, "Bayan Nila: Pilipino Culture Nights and Student Performance at Home in Southern California." *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia*. Volume 49:1 (2013): 105-127.

moving for them. In this chapter, I explore three plays to interrogate how these NSU productions are negotiating generational responsibility and students' own concerns about history, memory, and community.

Performance: A Sense of Memory

In her book, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*, Diana Taylor articulates performance as vital acts of transfer or the transmission of social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated or "twice-behaved behavior."[332] Placing performance within this analysis of memory, Taylor forces a consideration of embodied knowledge that challenges traditional conceptualizations of memory and the archivable. I begin with an exploration of the ways in which Nikkei college students are utilizing the genre of performance as a way of expressing their histories but also as a means of teaching while entertaining their audience (mostly other students) about the particularities of the Japanese American experience.

In 2011, UCLA NSU's Culture Night entitled, *The Last Generation: Every Generation Needs a Regeneration,*[333] revolved around the story of Cate Kitamura (a fourth-generation Japanese American) whose life perspective is challenged after the death of her grandmother, Mizuki.[334] I begin by analyzing this play because it exemplifies how the community rhetoric of generational responsibility impacts these college students. In particular, it shows how they are frustrated by it and also confined by its narratives of belonging that have stitched their way into understandings of what it means to be Japanese American. These narratives are so intertwined

[332] Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) 2,3.

[333] I attended the 2011 NSU Culture Night and received a copy of *The Last Generation* script.
[334] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 6.

with history and memory, as I will explore in my analysis of the play, that it becomes difficult to disentangle oneself from them.

The play begins with three unidentified cast members' reading of Janice Mirikitani's "Who is Singing This Song"—where each person takes up different sections of the poem almost in conversation with each other, shouting out their lines that are heavy with emotions—anger, concern, hope, and love. In addition, these three cast members move across the stage in many different directions, constellating around each other and working together to create constant movement and formations. Shifting from this prologue, the scene opens to the Kitamura family mourning the loss of Mizuki, with Cate's grandfather presenting her with a box of mementos that include: a locket, diary, a stack of letters, and dog tags. Each object prompts Cate to have a conversation with different people: her grandmother's friend, her dead great-grandmother through the medium of the diary, her grandfather, and her father. Through each conversation we see a shift in Cate from the disinterested Yonsei (the very Yonsei that the Japanese American community fears) to someone who understands not only her family's history but her community's as well. This transformation through an immersion in the past changes Cate's mind about her previous decision to not attend a Little Tokyo rally because she believed she could not really make a difference. In the end, she learns that she needs to support her community and discovers how to do so. She becomes the model responsible Japanese American Yonsei. The play ends with a final scene that is another rendition of Mirikitani's poem; this time all of the cast members participate in its telling. Like the prologue, the poem is shouted as if everyone is in conversation with each other but this time there is no movement except for the growing number of people who walk out onstage. This recitation is triumphant in the way that the cast is united and strong in its stance. Cate stands up at the front as if she is leading us all to

her own realization that we are all a part of this community—that we (including those in the audience) are all singing this song.

This particular year's performance revolved around the NSU's growing concern with "generations" and how in particular the Yonsei fit into the larger history of the Japanese American experience and how they figure into the future. The title, *The Last Generation*, was stressed as having a double meaning—to remember and understand the generations that have come before us while also questioning the construction of "generation" itself. The culture night producers introduced this theme of "generation" by critically musing on the ways in which they are always asked to "look to the future, to the next generation" by passing on their stories and heritage as a means of preservation. They then ask the audience a series of questions: "But what about the last generation? The generations that have come before us? What about our generation? How do we define when a generation ends? Or does it?"[335] By asking the audience these questions the producers not only situate their performance within a critical rethinking of knowledge production but they also create a dialogue with the audience that asks for their participation as well. These questions prompt the audience to complicate their conceptualizations of "generation" or how this category of belonging utilized by the nation and the Japanese American community may no longer be useful (and possibly has never been sufficient to encompass the variety of experiences). These questions illuminate the way each "generation" is categorized within a notion of linear time and progress that differentiates each group as having a particular set of experiences, feelings, and thus narratives. Recent shifts in immigration and community formation expose the ways in which these categories are not concrete, stable, or pre-determined. This interrogation of the way in which the Japanese

[335] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011, 1.

American experience is organized forces the audience to rethink the ways in which we have come to know ourselves before we decide how we will move into the future.[336]

And yet, even as the producers ask these questions at the very beginning of the performance, they also reinforce the very "generations" they seek to destabilize throughout the play. Articulating memory as a means of never forgetting "that our privileges today are a result of the sacrifices made by those who came before us," NSU constructs a history reliant upon generational categories of difference.[337] In the attempt to discuss the Japanese American experience as not just synonymous with World War II incarceration, NSU desires to provide a more complete view of history through a tracing of generations that ultimately intends to unite us. And yet, this use of generational narratives serves to naturalize a particular lineage in which Japanese American incarceration is its center. For example, in the program there is an entire page devoted to what this history looks like, divided into four sections: Issei, Nisei, Sansei, Yonsei. The Issei are identified as immigrants and laborers who fought against discriminatory policies (like the Alien Land Law). The Nisei or second generation are categorized as being born in the United States, citizens who are characterized by their experiences of internment and whose "perseverance and strength" allowed them to "rebuild their lives."[338] The Sansei or third generation are classified as those who pushed and fought for redress and reparations as young college-aged students. And finally, NSU writes that the Yonsei are "well-assimilated into American culture" where "ideas such as overt discrimination and internment are no longer

[336] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 1.

[337] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 1.

[338] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 4

directly linked to their daily existence."[339] As a result, their greatest struggle lies in "maintaining a connection to their cultural heritage."[340] By identifying and featuring these generational struggles prominently in the program as an index of Japanese American history, NSU reestablishes the generational narrative that ultimately determines the way the performance will take form.

These particular experiences are reiterated throughout the performance and by tracing Cate's character development, we can see the ways in which each story and person embodies a different generation's specific struggle. In the second scene, Cate runs into her childhood friend Rachel and in attempting to find a time to reconnect, Rachel suggests that Cate come to a rally with her in Little Tokyo. But this suggestion turns into a heated argument in which Rachel angrily raises her voice at Cate's disinterest in community by telling her that she should care because it does and will matter. But Cate will not budge and Rachel, clearly irritated and disappointed, abruptly leaves. Cate is representative of those college students that the culture night articulates as struggling to maintain a connection to their community and she is also the person that these performances seek to reach and speak to. Her journey through the past is emblematic of the journey many Yonsei need to take, one that is necessary for the vitality of the community itself. For example, when reading a diary written by her great-grandmother, Cate stumbles upon a passage describing a family portrait being taken. The scene then shifts to a reenactment of this written memory, where her great-grandparents not only talk to the photographer about their struggles as non-citizens unable to legally own land but how their hopes for their children reassure them of the future. The photographer does not quite believe in their hopeful future but as they hold their baby daughter they argue that even if things do not change,

[339] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 4

[340] Nikkei Student Union, *The Last Generation*. Culture Night Program. 21 Feb. 2011. 4.

then at least she will be able to fight for it. Within this reenactment of memory, the writers cleverly insert a "shout-out" to the previous year's culture night.[341] Not only is the performance articulating generation in terms of Issei, Nisei, Sansei, but they are also acknowledging the generations of NSU culture nights. I want to think about the ways in which NSU, by paying tribute to and incorporating their own organization's past, creates a different relationship to generation that is not always based on lineage per se but a construction of family that situates the performance at the center. This centering of the performance and the producer's initial questions of "generation" are small disruptions to the logic organizing Japanese American histories and identities that may not operate outside the discourse of generation and lineage but they make visible the ways in which this way of knowing is not always adequate.

As Cate sorts through her grandmother's mementos and is prompted to have conversations with different family members and friends, the play provides visual reenactments of the story-telling to which Cate finally becomes a witness. The right side of the stage features the present with Cate and her subject of inquiry conversing about the past while the left half of the stage displays that memory as it is being told. This visuality of memory and the interplay between the reenactment and the story-telling serve multiple functions throughout the performance. First, it provides a moment of both humor and a sense of anxiety to know what will happen next. For example, when Cate's grandfather is recounting his memories of war—this memory plays out on the left side of the stage where two men are talking about their fear of dying as explosions go off all around them. Cate's grandfather is trying to convince his friend to stop hiding and get back into the fight. Just when a grenade lands next to the two men, our attention is abruptly brought back to the right side of the stage where Cate's grandfather

[341] This was something that I did not catch myself, but only realized when I heard an audience member get excited about this acknowledgement that validated the previous year's culture night which focused on the struggles of the Issei in Brothers Miyazaki, 2010.

interrupts his story to tell us that he has to use the restroom because he drank too much tea. Because he has stopped narrating his story, the soldiers on the left, immediately freeze in mid air as they attempt to get away from the soon-to-be-exploding grenade. The audience laughs at this awkward moment and must acknowledge the grandfather's bodily function as they are left waiting in anticipation, wondering what will happen to the two men on the left. When the grandfather comes back to the stage and resumes his story, we discover that his friend rejoins the battle only to die while saving Cate's grandfather's life. But this interaction between the present and the past also comments upon the assumptions of story-telling that are not necessarily about "fulfilling the melodramatic fantasy" that comes when a "trauma survivor finally tells all and receives [the] solace of being heard by a willing and supportive listener."[342] Although this does happen between Cate and those with whom she journeys through the past, this journey is interrupted by the daily business of living. By interrupting the "melodramatic fantasy" of story-telling or witnessing with humor, the performance strategically catches the audience off guard and even demonstrates the way in which the audience is complicit in this desire for solace and resolution.

In another example, when Cate finally asks her father to tell her about his redress days, he excitedly recounts the day he made a speech at an important rally. On the left side of the stage a younger version of her father powerfully delivers a speech about the need for justice in their community and at the end of it the crowd cheers and picks him up in their excitement. As soon as they pick him up, the left side of the stage freezes as the audience is brought back to the present as Cate comments upon her dad's involvement and investment in the community. And then Cate asks, did they really pick you up and carry you off, and her dad sheepishly replies,

[342] Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003) 22.

"Umm, no." Shifting our attention back to the left side of the stage, the crowd immediately drops him as another speaker comes to the stage. Once again, the audience laughs at the father's embellishments within his story-telling as we are made aware of the dynamic between the presents' constant interaction with the past and the way in which memory does not simply revolve around truth.

This illumination of story-telling is also a constant concern of the writers and producers of the culture night. When talking to one of the culture night producers about the use of the reenactments, she tells me that part of their desire to have these visuals on stage was to avoid the misinterpretation of those memories. By visually providing the images for the audience, she argues that they can accurately portray what they wanted the audience to know. This need for the performance of memory exposes the way in which the NSU producers are aware of the ways in which they are constantly under surveillance for the type of narratives they portray. In particular, she was concerned about discussing the experiences of "No-No" boys who have a long history of stigmatization within the Japanese American community for their inability to fit within the narrative of redress. In response to such a history, NSU carefully dramatizes the experiences of both the soldier and the "No-No" boy as courageous men, only doing what they each thought was right. In this way, the "No-No" boy cannot be morphed into someone to be looked down upon. The placement of the dramatization of memory right next to the moment of story-telling guides the audience through a particular narrative of the Japanese American experience. Despite the way it comments upon the relationship between the past and present with the interplay of the performance and audience, NSU's use of this dramaturgy essentially leads us on an all-too-familiar path of remembering.

Another way NSU seeks to remember is through the death of the grandmother. The first scene opens to the family grieving over the loss of Mizuki in the living room of their home after the funeral. Later that night, Cate's grandfather brings out a box of full of mementos that belonged to her grandmother. Similar to the way testimonies function within community, the box serves as a literal archive of her grandmother's life—each object tells a story that Cate did not know about when Mizuki was living. It is only because of the death of her grandmother that Cate begins to understand and appreciate her family history while also connecting that history to her own life and the contemporary struggles of Japanese American communities. But what is interesting in this use of death is the fact that it never gives life to the dead grandmother. Instead, her death regenerates the lives of the living and in particular allows for male narratives to become visible to Cate. For example, when her grandmother's friend visits to pay her respects, she tells Cate about the photo she has just found in her grandmother's locket. The photo is of her grandfather as a soldier and it allows her grandmother's friend to remember a conversation she had with Mizuki about the absence of their husbands. While Cate's grandfather is absent because he is a soldier, the friend's husband is gone because he is a draft resister. As previously mentioned, this scene seeks to validate both the soldier and the draft resister as loyal Americans who, as Cate's grandmother argues, are both doing what they think needs to be done for the nation. In addition, when Cate begins to read through letters that her grandmother saved—we realize that these letters are not about Mizuki, instead they allow her father to reminisce about his days fighting for redress. Despite the fact that these objects belong to the grandmother, she is resurrected momentarily but only to bring life to others. In this way, death performs a very particular function—to reiterate a narrative of masculinity and loyalty that is reliant upon the absence of the grandmother. This narrative of masculinity and loyalty is then

taken up by Cate who is regenerated by the stories she hears in relation to these objects. By immersing herself (and even finding herself) within these stories, Cate is transformed from the unconcerned Yonsei girl to a community member dedicated to the preservation of life. Mizuki remains elusive and unknowable to us throughout the entire performance even if her death is at the center of the script and is what propels the story. And yet this elusivity illuminates the way in which knowledge production requires the silencing and death of Mizuki in exchange for lessons of nation and community belonging. In this way, death is still intertwined with the logic of life over death that allows for the continued silencing of others who only appear for a moment, as a ghostly shadow lingering in what needs to be forgotten.[343] Regenerations cleverly shows us the complicated ways the generational narrative incorporates Nikkei youth

***It's More Than Blood*: How the Shin-Nisei Disrupt Generational Narratives**

In 2012, the NSU culture night entitled, *Our [I]dentity: It's more Than Blood*, chose to showcase the struggles of the Shin-Nisei, or the "new" second generation, because of the way "the Japanese American community is diversifying with a more mixed and new immigrant population."[344] I argue that, unlike the Japanese American National Museum's gala dinner from Chapter One, the Nikkei college students are making this shift to critically assess how community functions as a complicated space of identification and violence rather than incorporating the Shin-Issei and Shin-Nisei into the already existing narratives via a discourse of family. Identifying the way in which the Nikkei youth "consists of two different generations--the Yonsei [fourth-generation] and the Shin Nisei," this play muses about how the Yonsei are

[343] In other words, death can only ever mean something if brought back to life or regenerated. How can we conceptualize death differently?

[344] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Program. 20 Feb. 2012. 2

unknowingly implicated in the continuing exclusion of Shin-Nisei from the community.[345] Following the lives of college students Mark and Maki as they struggle with their Shin-Nisei identity and grapple with what it means to be Japanese American, the play not only problematizes the generational narrative but also opens up a space for intimately connecting our histories to those of other marginalized groups.

The performance begins with four high school aged boys on the stage discussing the recent revelation that Cameron, a female classmate of theirs, is an undocumented immigrant. Utilizing an anti-immigrant discourse they discuss how they are "glad that Arizona finally passed that bill, SB 1070" because now they can "finally tell the difference between us and them."[346] Another student chimes in saying "I'm glad we have one less immigrant to worry about. They're just here trying to take our seats in school."[347] Cameron and her boyfriend Mark (the play's main character) walk into this discussion that erupts in Mark's anger at their anti-immigrant rhetoric where he finds himself defending Cameron and himself as a "citizen" who was "born here." But suddenly the scene changes and Cameron starts accusing Mark of abandoning her, saying, "You already have your citizenship, so you don't have to worry."[348] Mark's peers plus Cameron circle around Mark and begin to close in on him as he shouts "no, no" repeatedly. The scene immediately fades to black, coming to a jarring close and in the next scene we find Mark asleep on the couch being woken up from a nightmare by his friends.

Unwilling to talk to his roommates about Cameron, it is only when his current girlfriend Maki is struggling to understand her Japanese American identity that he opens up about

[345] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Program. 20 Feb. 2012. 6

[346] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

[347] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

[348] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

Cameron's deportation. In the retelling of his past, we learn that Cameron was deported because of Arizona's SB 1070 that profiles and criminalizes undocumented immigrants. This experience ultimately influences how Mark clearly identifies himself as "American" and emphasizes his citizenship because "looking like an immigrant" is dangerous.[349] It is why he cannot understand Maki's insistence on identifying as Japanese when she struggles to deal with how she cannot identify with other Yonsei. The seemingly recurring nightmare that opens the entire play situates Japanese Americans within a history of immigration that allows us to acknowledge state violence as ongoing and unresolved. In the Japanese American community, we often narrate our stories as "occupying a special place in history" that ultimately establishes a hierarchy of oppression that problematically never allows a discussion of other forms of state violence.[350] The logic of the "unique position" of incarceration and the Japanese American experience in general is that it allows the Japanese American community to re-legitimize itself as always relevant and necessary as a guarantor of civil liberties, justice and equality. However, the play which opens with Mark's intimate relationship with Cameron and her deportation and also the way her absence continues to haunt him forces Japanese Americans to consider the ways in which the surveillance and carcerality of World War II incarceration continues to impact other marginalized groups in the present.

Turning our attention to Maki, the play also centers on the way she struggles with not being like the other Japanese American college students around her who play in Japanese American youth basketball leagues, do not speak Japanese, and eat spam *musubi*. Ironically,

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[349] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

[350] Manzanar Committee. *Future of the Nikkei, Community, Not just the Manzanr and Tule Lake Pilgrimages, was the topic of JANM event* (blog post). http://blog.manzanarcommittee.org/2011/10/12/future-of-the-nikkei-community-not-just-the-manzanar-and-tule-lake-pilgrimages-was-the-topic-of-janm-event/

when she is frustratingly studying for an Asian American Studies class on the Japanese American experience and cannot fit herself into canonical Japanese American history, Maki realizes that because she cannot identify with other Japanese Americans then she must identify as Japanese. While the other Japanese Americans have no trouble studying for the exam because this history is "theirs", Maki cannot identify with any of the historical narratives she must learn. As she tries to regurgitate the information she has learned she hesitantly tries to recap Issei history by discussing the Alien Land Laws which were put in place to prevent Japanese immigrants from owning land by "*hakujins*" which Mark and another friend quickly correct her by saying "white people."[351] Then Mark humorously recaps the rest of the Japanese American experience by saying "they were discriminated against, sent to concentration camps, had more children, fought for the injustice of the incarceration, civil rights movement, more children…"[352] Maki's uneasiness with learning and remembering this history for her test exposes how this sense of ownership is something that Maki does not have and it continues to frustrate her. While this conceptualization of identity seems simplistic, I argue that her thought-process is actually a critique of the way Japanese American community and knowledge production collude in her marginalization. Japanese American experience is often articulated through a tracing of generations where generational narratives serve to naturalize a particular lineage in which World War II incarceration is its center. Even Mark's humorous repetition of the line "more children," which garners loud laughter from the audience, makes fun of this lineage and its relationship to Japanese American historical memory.

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[351] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

[352] Nikkei Student Union, *Our [I]dentity*. Culture Night Performance. 20 Feb. 2012.

The subtitle of the play, "it's more than just blood" reconsiders the way in which Japanese American history is problematically narrated within this language of family and legacy. This interrogation of the way in which the Japanese American experience is organized challenges the audience to rethink the ways in which we have come to know ourselves before we decide how we will move into the future. In the end, Maki realizes that her unbelonging does not necessarily mean she is not Japanese American but rather that as a community we need to seriously reconsider the way identity is policed.

While the play has these moments where the Japanese American community is forced to reckon with the consequences of their knowledge production, it is limited by the parameters of the culture night itself. The purpose of the culture night is to educate the UCLA community about the Japanese American experience in a celebratory fashion that ultimately seeks to re-solidify who we are and thus who we are not. Problematically, the play never returns to the character of Cameron, who only momentarily appears in Mark's nightmare as a vehicle to discuss his conceptualization of identity. How does her disappearance from not only Mark's life but the entire play itself expose the way in which our freedoms are reliant upon the unfreedoms of others? This kind of question is beyond the scope of the culture night and is evident in the way the play attempts to address our relationship to other groups of color but is unable to interrogate what kind of relationship that is. And yet, even in a space of celebratory remembrance the playwrights found a way to make a very important critique of community itself. The way in which both celebration and critique co-existed in the same space demonstrates the possibility of performance in making legible a critique of community memory, identity, and thus history. Both Mark and Maki's struggles highlight the very real damages that these generational narratives have done and expose their limitations.

Senbazuru: Our Almost Future and a Warning to Apathetic Youth

In 2016, NSU performed the play "*Senbazuru,"* which translates to the tradition of folding one thousand paper cranes which is meant to "symbolize wishfulness and longevity" that "acts as a perfect representation of what [NSU] hopes for Japanese American communities such as Little Tokyo."[353] In her welcome to the audience, cultural night producer Emiko Kranz tells us that "it is with this night of celebration of our culture, talent, and concerns that we hope to inspire the activism necessary for the further prosperity of the Japanese American community."[354] Addressing generational responsibility head on, this play opens to a newswoman standing in front of a wall of caution tape reporting on the demolition of the Japanese Village Plaza, which is "located at the gateway to the Little Tokyo District" in Downtown Los Angeles that offers a variety of shopping and restaurants.[355] A tour guide with a group of students come by commenting on the missing iconic red *yagura* tower, a replica of a Japanese fire tower built in 1983. Soon our main character, Kevin, comes to the stage and in his opening monologue he laments what has happened:

> "This all happened because of me. I should have acted, I should have cared. I could have prevented this. Or at least tried. Soon everyone is going to forget. Or they just won't even care. Why is it that only now do I realize that I should have given back to the people who were always there for me? I was so selfish. And now it's too late. For whatever it's worth, I'm sorry." Scene fades to black.[356]

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[353] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

[354] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

[355]" Japanese Village Plaza." Japanese Village Plaza. http://japanesevillageplaza.net/ Accessed March 4, 2017.

[356] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

It's a somber opening scene, one that centers on destruction and an apology that we don't quite understand yet. However, it is clear that the yellow caution tape along with Kevin's monologue serve as a warning. A warning that must be taken seriously, otherwise we might end up in this dystopian Japanese Village plaza and *yagura* less future. We are then transported to the past that led us to this future.

The play centers on two friends, Nicole Hashimoto who is the president of the imaginary Japanese American Student Association (JASA) on campus and Kevin who serves as her vice president. We quickly learn that Nicole and Kevin are complete opposites. Nicole is very invested in community and community spaces and when she learns that the Japanese Village Plaza is going to be destroyed she immediately goes into organizing mode. Sometimes her enthusiasm is met with resistance or reluctance, especially when it comes to Kevin. Nicole sees the possible loss of the plaza for an upscale mall as a devastating loss to the community. In a confrontation with Kevin, she angrily tells him that "Little Tokyo is our home….we are losing our home." [357] On the other hand, Kevin is only involved in JASA because he wanted to meet new people and make friends and stayed because he met Nicole. We also learn that he is vice president because Nicole asked him to be. He has no political investment. As Nicole plans a benefit concert to save the plaza and later a protest, Kevin tells Nicole that "We're just a bunch of kids, why would anyone listen to us? We don't have the power to change anything."[358] Throughout the play, Nicole's optimism and Kevin's pessimism are constantly at odds, and when the plaza is ultimately destroyed, we are fearful that Nicole and Kevin will never be friends again. Hurling us back to the present for a moment, Kevin tells the audience in another

[357] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

[358] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

apologetic and reflective monologue that "I didn't show up to the protest and I didn't help Nicole with any plans she had to help save the plaza. Maybe if I did there wouldn't be caution tape all over little Tokyo by the end of the month."[359] It is only when the plaza has already been destroyed that Kevin has any remorse for his lack of action and it is only when he feels this remorse that he and Nicole can resolve their friendship. Kevin is a representation of the youth that the Japanese American community is fearful of: apathetic, uncaring, and ignorant about the histories that came before them. On the other hand, Nicole is the youth the Japanese American community desires and hopes for. She is invested in the past as a means to ensure the future. And yet ironically, Nicole is unable to save the Japanese Village Plaza. Her activism, her enthusiastic care work, her generational responsibility ultimately fail. Throughout this dissertation, the involved youth have been positioned to be the ideal solution to Nisei death and loss, the Japanese American community's singular hope of surviving into the future, but in Senbazuru, the future is much more complicated. In the sections below, I will explore how these two positions (apathetic vs. involved) will not save the Japanese American community even if the overall moral of the story is that we learn to care.

The Benefit Concert: Nikkei Youth and The Ties That Bind Us

At the benefit concert organized by Nicole to garner donations from the community via student performances spoken word piece is performed. This performance within a performance is the only serious one in the imaginary benefit concert and this particular piece contemplates the ways in which memory, place, and future collide. While the spoken word artist begins by discussing his favorite childhood dessert, red bean *mochi* (a Japanese sweet rice dessert), he identifies it as something he greedily enjoys. However, this consumption is not just about

[359] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

dessert but is wrapped up in the generations that have come before him. *Mochi* serves as a metaphor for the greedy consumption of all that those previous generations have worked for. The spoken word artist goes on to explore exactly what those generations have done for us. He tells the audience:

> "We don't talk about memories much but when our grandparents pound rice they are giving us an alternative explanation to the world that we live in. They are the museums that showcase our histories to the public. They are the ethnic studies programs that translate experiences into knowledge. They are the political minds that compelled the US government to apologize and pay for its atrocities. They are the human barricades that protected American Muslims during prayer after 9/11 so when our grandparents pound rice (pounding of his fists) I can't help but apologize because we've forgotten why we're here."[360]

In this part of his poem, the character lays out exactly what those previous generations have done through the tradition of pounding rice. A cultural ritual that is laborious as steamed sweet rice is pounded with a wooden mallet into sticky rice that is later cut and shaped into a round ball of *mochi* ready to be consumed. Using the metaphor of pounding rice, he lists the ways in which the blood, sweat, and tears of a previous generation's struggle are what gave us not only these spaces of community, but a history to know, one that we are intimately wrapped up in. It is a living history, one that does not stay in the past but one that continues to struggle for social justice for the Japanese American community and others who are also affected by war and the carceral, like American Muslims. Generational responsibility is about acknowledging this kind of debt to our living histories that have paved the way for current generations. And then it is about feeling guilt for not caring for and about those living histories.

The poet then moves on to explicitly name the destruction of the plaza as gentrification, telling us that these "dessert shops mean nothing if Walmarts destroy our uncles' and aunts'

[360] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

businesses" in reference to the "dynamite of gentrifiers" looming in the future.[361] Using the language of family to establish a kinship with those businesses that will be destroyed affirms a familial affiliation with the plaza to intimately tie oneself to it. It is no longer about eating *mochi* but about family, personal relationships, and connections that are established and solidified in these community spaces. As the poem comes to an end, the poet concludes with a countdown of what he has learned, saying:

> "Very slowly I understand that
> 5. These reparations can't repair our unfulfilled promises
> 4. that we as young people must fight for
> 3. That we wasted gifts of pounded rice freely
> 2. I know I'm not perfect but I should be responsible too
> 1. Mom, I just want you to be proud of your son.
> 0. Time's up. And this mochi doesn't seem so sweet anymore."[362]

The language of generational responsibility is very much reliant upon the familial relation but it is also instills the debt-obligation. To continue his *mochi* metaphor, the poet reminds us that we have "wasted gifts." Gifts that were given to us "freely." In other words, intergenerational conflict occurs when the youth are "bad" at remembering the things that have come before them. In order for the poet to be a son that his mother would be proud of, he must assume his responsibility for the debt and therefore do his part in the maintenance of community livelihood and vitality. He must do what he can to save the plaza as he urges other to do the same with his artful expression. Here, (and throughout the poem), the familial is intimately connected to public memory of Japanese American history and culture. Again, the reprosexuality of Japanese American memory and community finds "its proper temporality and fulfillment in [these] generational transmissions" that are meant to guilt Nikkei youth into action as proper subjects

[361] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

[362] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

who must pay back their debt by remembering that they are inheritors of cultural nationalist rememberings of Japanese American incarceration, redress and thus responsibilities for justice. Creating a genealogy through the metaphor of *mochi*, allows the poet to make visible why JASA and more specifically Nikkei youth need to take action. Their action is crucial to Japanese American community survival.

The Temporality of Maybe If I Did

After the benefit concert, Nicole continues to push JASA to fight the impending destruction of the plaza. While the scene opens with Nicole dreaming of a successful protest with many JASA members holding signs and chanting about saving Little Tokyo, her daydream is disrupted by another member asking if she thinks more people will show up. The idyllic marching and chanting is then broken up by the reality of the situation. On the stage, there are very few members protesting. And those who pass by the protest remain uninterested and uncaring as JASA members attempt to pass out informational flyers on the destruction. After Nicole decides to give in for the day, the scene transitions to another Kevin monologue where he tells us that not only did he not show up to the protest but he also stopped helping Nicole with anything related to saving the plaza. He ends by saying, "Maybe if I did, there wouldn't be caution tape all over Little Tokyo by the end of the month."[363] His articulation of "maybe if I did" is an important temporality of the play and is expressed most often in Kevin's monologues that are commenting back on the past few months. These temporal disruptions to the linear timeline of pre and post plaza destruction are about expressing a lesson to the audience. Kevin's regretful monologues and his character serve as a warning about what happens when you do not care about history, memory, family, and community. That lesson is that this is our almost future.

[363] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

Even if this destruction of the Little Tokyo Plaza is merely an imaginary one, we are always on the verge of this possible future. "Maybe if I did" acknowledges the debt-obligation that was not fulfilled and this is what the crises of community centers upon. Kevin's interruptions to the scenes that play out in front of us, serve as a disruptive affective guide meant to make the audience feel a sense of guilt--a feeling that Nikkei youth are all too familiar with.

However, as the play ends, these lessons about "maybe I did" shift as the play finally catches up with the present and we are without Kevin's narrations about the past. The plaza is now officially gone and both Kevin and Nicole are devastated by the destruction and the seemingly irreparable damage to their friendship. In the final scene of the play, Kevin and Nicole's friends arrange for the two to accidentally run into each other in Little Tokyo, in front of the destroyed plaza signified to us by the return of the yellow caution tape. In this scene, Kevin is hopeful, telling her that "we might have lost our space but we still have our community."[364] On the other hand, Nicole's community/political spirit has been defeated with the loss of the plaza and she confronts Kevin's new hopeful attitude with his own words about apathetic youth being unable to make changes in the world. But Kevin's change in attitude isn't swayed by Nicole's newfound pessimism and he tells her that:

> Kevin: We might have lost those things (the plaza) but we still have our culture, our traditions, our history. And most importantly we have people like you who treasure it and share it with everyone. As long as we have people like you around, the community never really dies.
> Nicole: Well, that's oddly thoughtful of you Kevin. Thanks. I guess it was a little early to give up hope. But what can we do now?
> Kevin: (Standing up) Well our work doesn't have to end with JASA. Some do amazing things after they graduate from college. We'll fight and we'll rebuild. We'll get our

[364] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

> space back and strengthen our community so they never have to face these problems ever again. So it's not too late."[365]

Offering her a crane he made, symbolizing his hope, wishfulness, and longevity for both their friendship and their community, Kevin then offers her his hand and says, "Come on, we got a lot of work to do."[366] She takes it and the scene fades to black. While the play does end on a hopeful note and with the same theme of generational responsibility that is stressed throughout, the play does not end in any sort of resolution. Despite Nicole's activism and hard work in supporting the community and Kevin's transition from the ungrateful, apathetic Japanese American youth to his political consciousness, the plaza ultimately still gets destroyed. In an interview with the 2016 cultural night producer, Emiko Kranz, she stated that the writers and all those involved in the script wanted to have this less "cheesy" ending because they felt like it was more realistic. She tells me that culture nights often end with the message that "everything is going to be okay" but she said recently many in NSU have been feeling that "No, everything is not going to be okay if things continue like this." She says, "You can't expect for it to all magically get better." In this way, the plaza had to be destroyed. It serves both as a warning of what our future will look like: a bleak tomorrow of disappearing racial space but it also functions as a moment of crisis for Japanese American youth. When the Nisei and Sansei ask: Where are the youth? UCLA NSU's 2016 Culture Night chose to answer with this drama. Senbazuru says: we are here but our community, spaces, identities, and thus futures are changing.

A Conversation with Emiko Kranz

[365] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

[366] Nikkei Student Union, "Senbazaru" Nikkei Student Union Culture Night. Video Recording. February 15, 2016.

Emiko Kranz is a UCLA senior and the 2016-2017 UCLA NSU President. In her sophomore year, she served as NSU's External Vice President where she worked exclusively with other NSU's on different college campuses, with Japanese American community organizations, and business sponsors. She has also participated in NSU Drama and performed in two Cultural Night productions as well as serving as the Cultural Night producer for Senbazuru. As the current president her overall vision is to bring back a political and historical consciousness to the club. She tells me that it is "dangerous" to be a cultural club while lacking this kind of consciousness and being unable to serve your community. As a Nikkei college student with NSU leadership experience and community involvement, Kranz candidly shares what generational responsibility means to her and other college students as well as the limitations of such a discourse that is placed upon her.

When I ask Kranz how she feels about generational responsibility she tells me that there is a truth to it, that the accusations are in some ways "valid" even if she is "irked" by them. As a result, she has several critiques about the Japanese American community's expectations of Nikkei youth. The first is the pressures of being a college student who "…struggle with like these generations telling us to like: oh study hard become like a doctor or lawyer and all that stuff and it is not very easy, especially at institutions like UCLA that are very highly competitive and people spend a lot of their time just studying."[367] For Kranz, it's difficult to "tear people away from their studies" and "force those priorities onto people" but she believes that as long as one person attends a community event and is "in the know," then they can easily disseminate information to the rest of the group. But Kranz is also critical of these very organizations that do not necessarily make space for the youth and their leadership. She tells me that she has attended multigenerational community events where she has been "criticized on behalf of all Yonsei" for

[367] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

wanting to use Google Docs and Google Calendar to organize. While she saw it as making organizing easier, the older generations "yelled" at her for expecting them to learn how to use these applications. However, she cites the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) and Kizuna as being organizations that are receptive to college student involvement "with leadership that is more relatable." They not only engage and cater to this "millennial" generation, but they take the time to get to know the student volunteers and participants fostering mentorship and opportunities to develop and lead projects. With the JACCC, Kranz says that NSU developed children's games for the Fiesta Matsuri event while Kizuna holds summer classes and workshops that fit better with college student schedules. It is clear that while older generations accuse the youth of not caring, Kranz responds that "we're really busy" but "people still care" and if they "didn't care [then] we wouldn't have an NSU anymore and we wouldn't have community involvement."[368] For Kranz, "care" is not the issue at all, and instead she identifies responsibility as a different kind of debt obligation, one that is not about the youth's relationship to older generations but about the Japanese American community's responsibility to other communities of color.

While Kranz tells me that past culture nights have rarely addressed other groups of color, she says that UCLA NSU does collaborate with other groups both on and off campus. Because NSU was born out of a mother organization, the Asian Pacific Coalition (APC), they do work closely with other Asian American groups on campus by holding general meetings together and attending other culture nights. In 2016, Kranz also created a support group for cultural night producers in the API community on campus so that they could help one another with questions about staging, advertising, or anything else they needed help with because culture night is "one of the most important events that happen throughout the year." Despite these coalitions, Kranz

[368] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

tells me that they have mostly been "more social" and "not so much programming." Additionally, NSU works closely with the JACCC on two multicultural celebration events: Fiesta Matsuri and FandangObon. Fiesta Matsuri is held in the month of May and combines the Children's Day celebrations of Japan's *Kodomo no Hi* and Mexico's *Dia de los Ninos*. On the other hand, FandangObon is described as an annual festival "that brings together Japanese, Mexican and African American communities into one circle to share participatory music and dance traditions to Celebrate Mother Earth."[369] Kranz articulates these events as sharing space, where "although we are the Japanese American community we're very much surrounded and in contact with other cultural communities around Los Angeles." She goes on to say that it is really important to have solidarity with these communities, where these events are:

> "…really giving those communities more of a space as well because we're lucky enough that again, America likes Japanese culture pretty much so we are given these spaces and our community is also *wealthy* enough we're able to maintain these spaces. So, I think that the JACCC has a certain, or they feel a certain *responsibility* for being able to help those communities out as well and also help the Japanese American community why its important to have cross-cultural programming" (emphasis added).[370]

While the Japanese American community often utilizes notions of familial responsibility to produce feelings of guilt within the youth to get them to prove that they care, this care work is wrapped up in narratives that ignore Japanese American privilege by highlighting their World War II incarceration as an anomaly. Kranz makes this comment about Japanese American privilege again in our interview, saying that one of the proposed scripts for the 2017 culture night was set to look at "the motivations behind Japanese Americans getting involved in the

[369] "Encuentro and FandangObon" Japanese American Cultural and Community Center. Accessed March 4, 2017.

[370] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

community because we are such a *wealthy* and *complacent* community" (emphasis added).[371] The script also asks "why [then] do we still feel the need to organize?"[372] For Kranz, Japanese American privilege often means that we are a politically complacent community and this complacency she identifies is in relation to other groups of color. She argues that Japanese Americans (because they have privilege) should be responsible to other groups of color. Here, responsibility is not necessarily about Japanese American legitimacy or visibility per se, but instead how do we use what we've gained from redress—the protections of legitimacy and visibility to care for more vulnerable populations. This kind of care work can then be about abolitionist and decolonial projects wherein Japanese Americans are able to acknowledge both their relationship to incarceration and their privilege within neoliberal race relations. This care work asks a different kind of question: how can Japanese Americans be better allies to vulnerable groups of color?

The Future: NSU and the Post 2016 Presidential Election

Although an NSU member initially proposed having a Muslim American parallel script for Culture Night 2017, NSU was advised to pick a different topic because logistically there would need to be a lot of research done for the script and not enough time. NSU then switched gears and began focusing on another gentrification message. However, after the election of Donald Trump to the presidency, Kranz tells me that she plans to talk to their club's advisor immediately to change the script again. She believes that "the JA community has a much greater responsibility to say something in these times."[373] Drawing on a Japanese American incarcerated

[371] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

[372] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

[373] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

past, she tells me that Japanese American people were affected by the outcomes of the election because "What is really stopping another internment experience from happening to another community?"[374] Because of this, UCLA NSU feels that they have a responsibility to say something about the election and its consequences. She tells me:

> "So it would be a lot more focused on like the JA experience and understanding like perspectives from different marginalized groups currently. And how our experiences relate to theirs. So it's not going to be focused on like only the Muslim American experience. I would love for it to happen. But it's just like we need to get approval for it. And be able to pull it off. But I think it's something that we need to do."[375]

Trying to show their culture night audience how the election has affected the UCLA community and NSU, Kranz tells me that that would be "the dream" even if she ends by saying, "We'll see what happens."[376] Despite not knowing if the 2017 Culture Night will be able to move forward with this idea about comparative carceral experiences, the fact that the idea exists shows how some Nikkei youth have not only been affected by the 2016 presidential election but that their understanding of the future does not necessarily lie in generational reproduction of history and memory. So while Nikkei youth feel a sense of guilt to the generations that have come before them, they also feel a sense of responsibility to other marginalized communities. This does not mean they are not invested in Japanese American history and community but that they utilize these memories a little bit differently. Drawing on historical memory, Nikkei youth envision a future that is cognizant of the contradictory location of Japanese Americans. This relationship to Japanese American history allows for the possibility of a different kind of future, one that has

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[374] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

[375] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016

[376] Emiko Kranz. Personal Interview. 11 Nov. 2016
The 2017 Culture Night ultimately was unable to address the political climate or the relationship between Japanese American and Muslim American experiences. "Chirashi" addressed a shifting Japanese American community through spatial changes as a family owned restaurant comes into conflict with a contracting firm.

always existed but became overshadowed by the successes of redress. As we move forward into an uncertain future, UCLA NSU provides us with an alternative envisioning of our pasts to build up alliances and solidarities that were unimaginable before.

CONCLUSION: The Haunting of the Executive Order and Feminist Re-imaginings of "Never Again"

Since September 11, 2001, Japanese Americans have utilized their memories of World War II incarceration to rally against the racial profiling of Muslim Americans and worked on building relationships between the two groups. The relationship between 9/11 and 12/7, and thus Muslim Americans and Japanese Americans respectively, is the most nationally visible comparison in the contemporary moment. Drawing out the parallels between 9/11 and 12/7 has commonly relied upon a discourse of "never again" that often problematically centers Japanese American personal experiences of incarceration as an exceptional moment in history. For example, Norman Mineta, as the former Secretary of Transportation during 9/11, his memories and visibility as a political figure often gets mobilized in the service of a neoliberal racial order that this dissertation critiques. In a *Densho* interview, Mineta recalled what happened the day after 9/11. He states that in a cabinet meeting a Congressman from Michigan said: "Mr. President, we have a very large Arab American population in Michigan and they're very concerned about what's happening and they're very concerned about what they're hearing on the radio, television, and reading in the paper about some of the security measures that might be taken relating to transportation."[377] Former President Bush responds that "we are also concerned about this and we want to make sure, what happened to Norm in 1942, *doesn't happen today*."[378] In the immediate aftermath of 9/11 Mineta becomes a physical representation of the lessons of incarceration. His body reminds the room about what could happen so that it "doesn't happen

[377] Densho, "A Cabinet Meeting the Day After 9/11-Norman Mineta," Youtube Video, 2:00, April 9, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VH7rGPXGicM

[378] Emphasis Added. Densho, "A Cabinet Meeting the Day After 9/11-Norman Mineta," Youtube Video, 2:00, April 9, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VH7rGPXGicM

today." As I have argued in this dissertation, Japanese Americans are representative of state redemption. In other words, Bush's reassurance to the Congressman are less about Arab and Muslim American safety and more about the state's desire to reassure itself that it is not racist.

Issued on January 27, 2017, Executive Order 13769, "Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States" sought to restrict refugee admission and deny visas to immigrants from seven Muslim majority countries under the guise of national security. The election of Donald Trump and the Executive Order coincided with the 75th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 and the organizations featured in this dissertation sought to strengthen their relationships to Muslim Americans by reinforcing the lessons of the Japanese American incarceration through calls to action.[379] In a co-written *TIME* Magazine article, Norman Mineta and Ann Burroughs (the current President of the Japanese American National Museum) wrote a response to the election of Donald Trump that worried about a dangerous return of "hatred and fear" that promises to "punish people based on race and religion."[380] In March 2017, *Densho* issued a statement that narrated the United States' long history of immigration exclusion while urging its readers to "speak out, protest, support refugee legal defenses, use whatever skills you have to fight the fight, and mean it when you say 'Never Again.'"[381] The Manzanar Committee's 2017 pilgrimage entitled "Never Again, To Anyone, Anywhere!" stated that the Japanese American community "has a moral responsibility to speak out now" and "stand with those civil rights and civil liberties groups speaking out against Islamophobia and the persecution of

[379] UCLA NSU did not participate, although as mentioned in Chapter 4, NSU President wanted to address it via their 2017 Culture Night but she was unable to do so due to time constraints.

[380] Norman Y. Mineta and Ann Burroughs, "I Was Imprisoned in a U.S. Internment Camp. Bigotry Put Me There." *TIME*. November 21, 2017. http://time.com/4579182/japanese-internment-bigotry/

[381] Tom Ikeda, "This is Not a Test." *Densho* Blog Post. January 28, 2017. https://densho.org/this-is-not-a-test/

Muslim people."[382] The executive order instilled a renewed sense of urgency within the memory work of these community organizations that simultaneously relied on a discourse of "never again" but also pushed to critique the United States as a carceral state.

As I have argued throughout this dissertation, a discourse of "never again" that mobilizes Japanese American memories of World War II in the contemporary moment is reliant upon a progressive, linear temporality. This temporality and the use of Japanese Americans as living proof and physical evidence is employed to think about the relationship between 9/11 and 12/7 as well as Executive Order 13769 and Executive Order 9066. And as I have shown, this way of narrating Japanese American incarceration did not necessarily emerge out of a post-9/11 moment, but has its roots in the movement for Japanese American redress that resulted in the passing of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. My dissertation has argued that Japanese American redress significantly changed the way Japanese Americans remembered their wartime incarceration. Through the act of giving testimony before the state, Japanese Americans for the first time could voice their racialized violence on a national stage. Transforming racialized trauma into calculable losses via narratives of worth and value, Japanese American memory practices inherited these narratives and ways of speaking into community spaces of memory. Consequently, masculinist, patriotic narratives of worth and success become strategies of visibility that are passed down through heteronormative transfers of memory via generations. The discourse of "never again" establishes a progressive temporality, which presumes that state violence is not happening in the current moment but is in fact always on the cusp of occurring.

However, the 2016 presidential election and Trump's executive orders have shifted this temporality from "on the cusp of occurring" to "it is happening right now." Japanese American

[382] Manzanar Committee, "Presidential Election and its Aftermath" *Never Again, To Anyone, Anywhere!* Manzanar Committee Program, 18.

memories are being mobilized to "ensure that the most tragic civil rights chapters in our history remain where they belong—in history books and museums, and not part of our future."[383] The Manzanar Committee characterizes the aftermath of the presidential election as "unleash[ing] thoughts, feelings, and acts that are antithetical to our democracy" where "blatant racism and xenophobia are on the rise."[384] In a post 2016 election moment, the progressive temporality of "never again" collides with this rise in "blatant" racism. In 2017, Executive Order 13769 produces a particular kind of haunting for Japanese Americans who are simultaneously commemorating 75 years of Executive Order 9066 in which their memories gain new life. Memories of World War II incarceration are resurrected and recentered to challenge what feels like a return to a racist past that had already been redressed three decades ago. However, as *Densho* reminds us:

> "We have not been entirely successful in weeding out America's xenophobic and racist tendencies. Shades of our wartime suffering persist: from the systemic profiling and mass incarceration of African Americans and Latinx men, women, and youth, to the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), to the detention of immigrant families."[385]

Highlighting the unfinished business of "never again" through a comparative carceral lens, *Densho* makes visible the contradictory location of Japanese Americans that recognizes both the privilege of Japanese Americans in a post redress era and their lingering carceral experiences. As I have argued, the contradictory location becomes an important point of interrogation and critique of Japanese American privilege established through masculinist, patriotic narratives of worth that sustain carceral and settler colonial logics. In the era of Donald Trump, "never again"

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[383] Norman Y. Mineta and Ann Burroughs, "I Was Imprisoned in a U.S. Internment Camp. Bigotry Put Me There." *TIME*. November 21, 2017. http://time.com/4579182/japanese-internment-bigotry/

[384] Manzanar Committee, "Presidential Election and its Aftermath" *Never Again, To Anyone, Anywhere!* Manzanar Committee Program, 18.

[385] Tom Ikeda, "This is Not a Test." *Densho* Blog Post. January 28, 2017. https://densho.org/this-is-not-a-test/

is transforming or at the very least, existing alongside other ways of remembering and thus organizing. To conclude, I want to feature the organization, #VigilantLove for its feminist organizing model that prioritizes solidarity over privileging Japanese American memories in the name of community safety. This organization inherently challenges the masculinist, patriotic narratives of worth that often sustain Japanese American community memories and instead offers another way to form meaningful and ethical solidarities.

#VigilantLove is a Los Angeles based "solidarity community" that "actively creates spaces for connection and grassroots movement to ensure safety and justice of communities impacted by Islamophobia and violence."[386] The organization formed in the aftermath of the San Bernardino, California mass shooting in 2015 in response to the growing wave of Islamophobic backlash in Southern California. Although the organization situates itself within the legacies of Muslim American and Japanese American solidarity since 9/11, it departs from it in many ways. First, the organization's vision identifies "the embodiment of vigilant love amongst generations of multi-ethnic and inter-spiritual community who create pathways to liberation and healing together" in the face of "cyclical violence."[387] In order to do this, they employ a "creative organizing model that integrates grassroots organizing, policy advocacy, political education, the arts, and healing practices within the culture of everything [they] do."[388] #Vigilant Love is not about Japanese American incarceration as an exception to United States democracy, nor is it centered in its vision or projects. Instead, the organization prioritizes partnership over the kind of national and community memories exemplified by Norman Mineta.

[386] #Vigilant Love Website. "Who We Are."https://www.vigilantlove.org/who-we-are/

[387] #Vigilant Love Website. "Who We Are."https://www.vigilantlove.org/who-we-are/

[388] #Vigilant Love Website. "Who We Are."https://www.vigilantlove.org/who-we-are/

In response to the first Muslim Ban, #Vigilant Love and South Asians for Justice-Los Angeles utilized the space of the candlelight vigil as an active space of solidarity and resistance. #Vigilant Love argues that "racialized and gendered Islamophobia creates a hostile environment where Muslim Americans, Sikh, South Asian, Black and Arab American communities are harassed, targeted, and abused."[389] Therefore, the purpose of the vigil is to create alternative spaces of community safety and resistance in times of crisis, drawing from diverse communities in the Los Angeles area. In the face of Trump's Executive Orders to restrict, ban, and create walls in the name of national security, the vigil seeks to "redefine security as care, support, and protection for each other."[390] This redefinition is significant because it poses a community definition of safety that points to the ways in which national security rests on racialized and gendered harm and punishment. This redefinition then demands "the city of Los Angeles and the state of California to remain a sanctuary space for all immigrants, refugees, and DACA-mented young people" and demands that "California, its cities, and law enforcement agencies refuse collaboration with ICE."[391]

At the #NoBanNoWall Vigil held on January 26, 2017 there were a variety of speakers that included: a former Japanese American incarceree, an Iraqi refugee, an immigrant rights advocate from the ICE out of LA Coalition, a tenants' rights advocate, and cultural performances that included a hip hop artist and poetry performances. Japanese American incarceration as one of the historical precedents for the current political climate exists to fuel the work of #Vigilant

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[389] Vigilant Love Website, "What We Do." https://www.vigilantlove.org/what-we-do/

[390] Angry Asian Man (Phil Yu), "No Ban, No Wall: A Resistance and Solidarity Vigil" Advertisement. *Angry Asian Man Blog*. January 25, 2017. http://blog.angryasianman.com/2017/01/no-ban-no-wall-resistance-solidarity.html

[391] Angry Asian Man (Phil Yu), "No Ban, No Wall: A Resistance and Solidarity Vigil" Advertisement. *Angry Asian Man Blog*. January 25, 2017. http://blog.angryasianman.com/2017/01/no-ban-no-wall-resistance-solidarity.html

Love but it is not central to its organizing, its strategies, or tactics. This is important because Japanese American incarceration and organizing are no longer exemplary or a model to be followed. #Vigilant Love recognizes the limitations of utilizing Japanese American memories in this way and their decentering of Japanese American incarceration is rooted in feminist approaches to organizing and relating to one another that inherently challenge masculinist and patriarchal narratives that unintentionally uphold the neoliberal racial order.

#Vigilant Love[392] is organized by four women: Traci Kato-Kiriyama, a queer, third generation Nikkei writer and performer; Sahar Pirzada, a Pakistani-American Muslim community organizer and a Masters in Social Welfare candidate; Traci Ishigo, a Nikkei, Buddhist, non-binary femme, community organizer, a trauma informed yoga teacher, and Masters in Social Welfare candidate specializing in mental health; and Kathy Masaoka, a community activist since the 1970s who has organized around issues related to youth, workers, housing in Little Tokyo, and redress.[393] #Vigilant Love, while about continuing to build relationships between Japanese Americans and Muslim Americans, is also centrally about the solidarities that are formed around female relationships based in their shared experiences as women of color. Pirzada notes that #Vigilant Love's leaders are "all women" which for her

[392] #Vigilant Love also consists of 14 leaders and advisors as well as partnering organizations such as: Asian American Advancing Justice, Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress (NCRR), the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), California Immigrant Policy Center, Tuesday Night Project, Jewish Voice for Peace Los Angeles, Af3irm: A Transnational Feminist Organization, Kabataang Maka-Bayan: Pro-People Youth, the Natioanl Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA), Aware-LA, Muslim Anti-Racism Collaborative (ARC), Sila Consulting: Connecting people, ideas, and resources, Bend the arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Muslim Student Association West, Southwest Asian And North Afrikan-Los Angeles, 18 Million Rising, White People 4 Black Lives, Uplift, American Friends Service Committee, Heart, Mpower Change: Muslim Grassroots Movement, Nikkei Democracy Project, Justice Warriors for Black Lives, Harness, and Social Venture Partners (SVP).

[393] #Vigilant Love Website. "Who We Are."https://www.vigilantlove.org/who-we-are/

means that women are "here and we will lead the resistance."[394] Traci Ishigo agrees with her and extends this analysis to think about how "women from a lot of communities of color have different, but shared experiences."[395] She then comments that, while "there are so many experiences to talk about it [which] makes it hard to break it down," we "need to consider all experiences and not just those that fit into cookie-cutter narratives."[396] Ishigo argues that "we need to resist the patriarchy in all its forms."[397]

This linking of patriarchy to the security state thinks about the way that gendered discipline and violence are central to systems of oppression. Unlike the masculinist narratives of worth that come out of redress in order to make oneself visible to the state, #Vigilant Love's intersectional approach to organizing and understanding history opens up the possibility for these meaningful relationships to persist. The organization recognizes intersectionality as a strength of their movement and states that "there is no future without intersectionality."[398] In this

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[394] Massoud Hayoum, "Muslim Ban: Japanese and Muslim Americans Join Forces" *Al Jazeera*. Feb 1, 2017. https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/02/muslim-ban-japanese-muslim-americans-join-forces-170201055155362.html

[395] Massoud Hayoum, ""Japanese-Americans Unite with Muslims Against Trump's Immigration Plans" *The New Arab*. January 27, 2017. https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/1/27/japanese-americans-unite-with-muslims-against-trumps-immigration-plans

[396] Massoud Hayoum, ""Japanese-Americans Unite with Muslims Against Trump's Immigration Plans" *The New Arab*. January 27, 2017. https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/1/27/japanese-americans-unite-with-muslims-against-trumps-immigration-plans

[397] Massoud Hayoum, ""Japanese-Americans Unite with Muslims Against Trump's Immigration Plans" *The New Arab*. January 27, 2017. https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/1/27/japanese-americans-unite-with-muslims-against-trumps-immigration-plans

[398] Massoud Hayoum, ""Japanese-Americans Unite with Muslims Against Trump's Immigration Plans" *The New Arab*. January 27, 2017. https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/1/27/japanese-americans-unite-with-muslims-against-trumps-immigration-plans

formulation of solidarity, Japanese Americans understand that it is "the responsibility of those who have privilege to center those who do not."[399] Here decentering Japanese American narratives are about understanding Japanese American privilege as an important strategy of maintaining cross-racial alliances. The relationality of women of color experiences and histories allows #Vigilant Love to open up spaces of safety for those who do not possess it in their everyday lives. I argue then, that a vigilant love is a feminist love that is constantly keeping watch for possible danger that happens in and to marginalized communities. It has its eyes turned to the state (as a perpetrator of violence) and seeks to hold it accountable. This kind of radical feminist care work in movement building is not always visible or at the forefront of organizing models within the Japanese American community. I believe that #Vigilant Love is actively working to change how Japanese Americans to relate to other communities of color.

On January 29, 2017, #Vigilant Love coordinated a nonviolent sit-in and rally at the Los Angeles International Airport where thousands of protestors showed up. #Vigilant Love made calls to Customs and Border Patrol, organized safety teams for protestors, and held an unapologetic healing group prayer in the airport. In a short film entitled "A Vigilant Love" directed by filmmaker and activist Tani Ikeda, we are given a glimpse into Pirzada and Ishigo's thoughts, fears, hopes, and friendship as they were preparing for the direct action.[400] In an interview with Ishigo, she tells the camera about Japanese American World War II incarceration as it relates to the current moment, but rather than establishing a progressive temporality Ishigo states, "How can that be in this country? And at the same time makes total sense. And that's

[399] Massoud Hayoum, ""Japanese-Americans Unite with Muslims Against Trump's Immigration Plans" *The New Arab*. January 27, 2017. https://www.alaraby.co.uk/english/society/2017/1/27/japanese-americans-unite-with-muslims-against-trumps-immigration-plans

[400] The film is produced for the Nikkei Democracy Project, "a multi-media collective that uses the power of the Japanese American imprisonment story to expose current threats to Constitutional rights."

exactly why we Japanese Americans need to show up."[401] Ishigo articulates a temporality of no surprise, one that can acknowledge multiple forms of violence that happen at different historical moments. The emotional juxtaposition of "how can that be" and "at the same time" opens up a comparative space that allows Japanese Americans to provide support rather than take up space. The duty of Japanese American memories is to "show up." At the end of the film, Ishigo and Pirzada are in the car on the way home and in an emotionally tender moment, Pirzada tears up and tells Ishigo: "What is going to happen if that happens, what is going to happen to me?"[402] She pauses and then says: "But then I'm like, but it won't because I have you. And I have others."[403] For Pirzada it was comforting and "healing to know that if anything goes down, Traci will have my back."[404] The emphasis on community building and healing that #Vigilant Love incorporates demonstrates how this organization challenges state violence past, present, and future. Its efforts to reconceptualize safety in the face of bans and walls offers a model that reveals how Japanese American memories can be mobilized for ethical and meaningful cross-racial solidarities. It provides us with a hopeful future as we continue to "show up" in the era of Trump.

[401] Tani Ikeda, "A Vigilant Love" Tadashi Nakamura and Renee Tajima-Pena. Nikkei Democracy Project. https://vimeo.com/254789121

[402] Tani Ikeda, "A Vigilant Love" Tadashi Nakamura and Renee Tajima-Pena. Nikkei Democracy Project. https://vimeo.com/254789121

[403] Tani Ikeda, "A Vigilant Love" Tadashi Nakamura and Renee Tajima-Pena. Nikkei Democracy Project. https://vimeo.com/254789121

[404] Tani Ikeda, "A Vigilant Love" Tadashi Nakamura and Renee Tajima-Pena. Nikkei Democracy Project. https://vimeo.com/254789121

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