

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

A few weeks ago the Texas Board of Education approved a social studies curriculum that made dramatic changes to what was being taught before. The New York Times reported that one of the changes was "an amendment stressing that Germans and Italians as well as Japanese were interned in the United States during World War II, to counter the idea that the internment of Japanese was motivated by racism." This is a dangerous distortion that I commented on in a Densho blog posting because evidence clearly shows that racism was a prime factor in the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II.

Because of the size of Texas and its statewide standardized curriculum, national textbook publishers pay close attention to what happens in Texas and often adapt their social studies textbooks to align with these standards. My hope is that publishers will take the high road and reject this blatant extremist viewpoint. In the event they follow the lead of the Texas Board of Education, Densho is increasing efforts to create an online reference and resource to give teachers a choice. Let me know what you think: tom.ikeda@densho.org



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From the Archive

Bad Meat and Missing Sugar: Food in the Japanese American Camps

*"Americans are being rationed, and these Japs are getting steaks."
-- Frank Kikuchi*

When asked to share their strongest memories of the Japanese American incarceration camps, many survivors talk about the food. Life-sustaining but boring is the consensus. Worse than boring was the food served in the early days of the "assembly centers" in spring and summer 1942. Untrained cooks, unsanitary kitchens, and unreasonable food allowances added up to episodes of food poisoning in various camps and increased the misery of the displaced Japanese Americans. While false reports claimed that detainees were being treated to rich and costly meals, in reality they were fed a dismal diet of wieners, dried fish, pancakes, and other cheap starches. Canned and pickled vegetables replaced the bounty of fresh produce Japanese Americans were accustomed to. As with other aspects of camp, food quality improved only through the efforts of the detainees themselves.

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Densho News

New Staff Positions Filled

Recently we announced the creation of several part- to full-time positions as Densho expands to create and promote our next-generation websites in the next few years. We will



gradually increase staff to meet the goal of upgrading Densho's award-winning educational website into world-class online resources, references, and learning centers that reach millions of people a year. To date, we have made two hires: Janet Hayakawa will become Densho's first Education Specialist, and Marci Shimizu will fill the position of Fundraising Specialist. Janet comes to us with over 20 years experience in educational media, teacher training, and learning standards. Marci has 20 years experience with databases, intellectual property, and legal compliance. We welcome our two newest employees and look forward to the work ahead.

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Archive Spotlight

An Honorary Swedish Daughter: Setsu Tsuboi Tanemura

In a recent interview, Setsu Tanemura tells how her father found an upstanding Swedish family in Portland to care for her after her mother died when Setsu was barely two years old. A loving family, they treated her like the youngest daughter, and her big "sister" Mary taught her proper etiquette. Especially for the little Japanese American girl, the mother cooked rice--and served it with cream and sugar. Setsu ate meals of salted fish and boiled potatoes. She didn't master chopsticks until she went back to live with her father and older sister at the age of eight. Setsu recalls the first time her father and sister came to visit after she moved in with the Swedish family.

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Recommended Resource

C-SPAN Offers a New Online Library of Videos

Last month C-SPAN unveiled their online Video Library, a resource offering 160,000 hours of political events covered by the C-SPAN Networks since 1987. C-SPAN records, indexes, and archives all its programming for historical, educational, research, and archival uses by individuals. Programs are accessible to search and view through the online database. You can view congressional sessions and C-SPAN programs such as *Washington Journal* and *Booknotes*. Included in the video library are the Densho video interviews being broadcast on the C-SPAN American History program.

>> [View the C-SPAN online library](#)



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