

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

During this last month I've heard of several organizations examining the terminology they will use when discussing the mass removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. For example, the Tule Lake Committee is examining terminology for the National Monument for the Tule Lake Segregation Camp, the Manzanar Committee made terminology a key topic at their pilgrimage over the past weekend, and the JACL is working on a handbook about terminology for its members. With all of this discussion going on, I went back and reread a few articles about this topic. We've included these articles in this edition of the Densho eNews. Drop me a line at tom.ikeda@densho.org and let me know what words you think should be used.



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From the Archive

Frontier Colonies or Concentration Camps? Euphemisms for the Incarceration

"Minidoka is not a concentration camp. But we remember the words of one young colonist as we left the relocation center: 'I'm a free-born American, accused of no crime. Why must I remain here?'"

-- *"Minidoka: Preliminary Report in a New Frontier Community," WRA report, c. 1942*

Anyone who speaks about the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II faces a linguistic predicament. Do you use the benign terminology adopted by the U.S. government at the time? Were over 110,000 individuals of Japanese descent "evacuated" from their homes and businesses, as would be said of people saved from a natural disaster? Is "assembly center" an apt term for the compounds of barracks ringed by barbed wire and guard towers that held these displaced people for months? Were the permanent camps built further inland, also secured by barbed wire and sentries, accurately called "relocation centers"? Or do you choose blunter language that might court confusion and controversy?

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Featured Articles

Words Do Matter by Roger Daniels

This paper is a chapter in the book, *Nikkei in the Pacific Northwest: Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians in the Twentieth Century*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, pp. 183-207. It is republished with permission from the author.

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Words Can Lie or Clarify by Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga

This essay is the evolution of a list of euphemisms that Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga compiled over the years. It also includes her brief personal history from former detainee and naive housewife to concerned citizen and researcher for the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). This essay is republished with permission from the author.

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Archive Spotlight

Toshi Nagamori Ito: A Shelter for 'Picture Brides'

Before World War II, Toshi Nagamori Ito's issei mother was the director for the Jane Couch Home in Los Angeles, a shelter for Japanese "picture brides." The shelter was established by the Methodist Foreign Missionary Society, and Ms. Ito's mother took the position partly as a way to escape her own arranged marriage.

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Densho News

English and Hiragana added to Japanese Website about Japanese Americans

Last fall we created a Japanese Website about Japanese Americans to coincide with the airing of *Love for 99 years - Japanese Americans*, a Tokyo Broadcasting system miniseries about a Japanese American family. Approximately 35,000 people visited this site. Recently we added both Hiragana and English to this popular website. This website was made possible by a generous grant from the United States-Japan Foundation. Also, a DVD version of the mini-series, with English subtitles is now available for \$195 from the Kinokuniya Book Store in Seattle, phone number (206) 587-2477.

>> [View the website](#)

>> [Learn more about the United States-Japan Foundation](#)



Thanks to You - Mariners reach their \$100,000 Japanese Relief Goal

The Mariners announced this week that their supporters donated over \$100,000 for the Japanese relief effort and they will be matching this amount. Densho supporters contributed over \$23,000 towards this successful campaign. Thank you for your generosity!



Thank You to the City of Seattle

The City of Seattle Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs is generously providing funding to help produce this month's eNews and for other core programs during the month of May. Thank you Seattle.



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