

Japanese Canadians and Internment: The Role of *The New Canadian* as an Agent
of Resistance, 1941-1945

by
Martin Strong

Supervised by
Dr. Jordan Stanger-Ross

A Graduating Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements, in the
Honours Programme.
For the Degree of
Bachelor of Arts
In the
Department
Of
History
The University of Victoria
April 20, 2017

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. Resistance	10
2. Community	24
Conclusion	35
<i>Bibliography</i>	38

Introduction

In the summer of 1941, Takeo Nakano was enjoying his life in the coastal pulp mill town of Woodfibre, British Columbia. He had come to Canada as a sojourner, and despite later bringing his wife and starting a family, he planned to return to Japan one day. In the meantime, he worked hard at his job, putting in overtime shifts when necessary, and generally appreciated the life he had. While he maintained his Japanese identity, he also embraced the Woodfibre community along with other Japanese Canadians by participating in the company baseball team, and attending the yearly Christmas pageant.¹ His life would be forever changed by the events of December 7, 1941, when the Empire of Japan attacked the United States and Great Britain, which also brought Canada into the war. Persistent racist attitudes in British Columbia and an irrational fear of invasion on the west coast resulted in heavy-handed measures being taken against the Japanese-Canadian population. These actions included the forced removal of Japanese Canadians from the coast, the dispossession of their property, and the prohibition against Japanese Canadians returning to their homes, until long after the war was over.

Nakano's experience was typical among Japanese Canadians during the war. Ordered to be removed from Woodfibre, with his family, he was sent to work with a road camp crew in the interior of British Columbia. Although British Columbia Security Commission (BCSC) officials promised him that he would be reunited with his family in Greenwood, they sent him to Slocan, where workers were needed.² At Slocan, Nakano protested his separation from his family by refusing to work, and so he was sent to the

¹ Takeo Ujo Nakano, *Within the Barbed Wire Fence: A Japanese Man's Account of his Internment in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 4-6.

² *Ibid.*, 38.

immigration jail in Vancouver, before being sent to a prisoner of war (POW) camp in Angler, Ontario. Nakano's small act of protest was an example of the resistance of Japanese Canadians to the policies of the internment. Many Japanese Canadians resisted their oppressors during wartime, by opposing government policies, by continuing their culture, and by maintaining their community.

British Columbia had a history of trying to prevent Asian people from settling in the province. Provincial legislation aiming to prevent immigration brought confrontation with the federal government, which was responsible for immigration policy.³ Many in the province believed that Asian immigrants were unable to assimilate into Canadian society, adopted a low standard of living, partook of illegal drugs, and threatened the livelihood of other British Columbians through unfair labour and economic practices.⁴ Japanese Canadians were also assumed to harbor persistent loyalty to Japan, undermining their identity as Canadians.⁵ These long-standing beliefs in British Columbia formed the basis of hostility towards Japanese Canadians.

The violence that erupted during a September 7, 1907 Vancouver rally held by the Asiatic Exclusion League exemplified such racist attitudes. The Vancouver Trades and Labour Council established the Asiatic Exclusion league with the aim of keeping Asian immigrants out of British Columbia.⁶ On this occasion, the inflammatory rhetoric

into an uncontrollable mob, and headed towards Chinatown where they broke windows of businesses and ransacked shops.⁷

Vancouver did not permit most of the ship's 376 passengers to land after the ship arrived in Vancouver Harbour, embodied the intent of the continuous journey requirement.¹³ In this way, the federal government used legislation and regulations to deter Chinese and South Asian immigration.

The Dominion government used diplomacy to reduce immigration from Japan. In 1907, the governments of Canada and Japan signed the Lemieux-Hayashi Agreement which limited the number of Japanese immigrants to Canada each year.¹⁴ The agreement resulted in an immediate reduction in Japanese immigration, which continued to drop as the years went by. The number of Japanese immigrants to Canada was fewer than 100 annually in the years 1935, 1938, and 1939.¹⁵ The percentage of Canadian-born Japanese Canadians increased as a consequence of the strict immigration quota.¹⁶ Thus, the Lemieux-Hayashi Agreement did not completely address the concerns of British Columbians, who wanted to completely exclude Asian people from the province. The days of sojourning had ended, and Japanese-Canadian families saw British Columbia as their home.

In the late 1930's, racialized antagonism in British Columbia focussed increasingly on Japanese Canadians. Japan's attack on China in 1937 generated outrage across Canada, but in the province, the anger was especially intense.¹⁷ In 1940 it increased once more in the context of Canadian involvement in the Second World War and Japan's continued

¹³ Ibid., 241-242.

¹⁴ Ibid., 207.

¹⁵ Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was*, 422.

¹⁶ Patricia E.

militarism in the Far East.¹⁸ The attack by Japan on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor in 1941 caused British Columbian xenophobia to explode once again.¹⁹ The rapid advancement of the Japanese Army in Malaya, the Philippines, and Hong Kong fed the

Department.²⁴ Mona Oikawa argues that any perceived passivity is a consequence of the internment itself, and was not a characteristic of Japanese Canadians:

I would emphasize here that the possibilities for speech for racialized peoples are limited within a liberal framework wherein the ability to speak and be heard is clearly connected to power. That the silence of survivors of the Internment is often associated... with what is perceived as their "cultural/racial difference" further signals that the notion of speech is pinned to relations of power.²⁵

After internment ended, many Japanese Canadians chose to remain silent about their wartime experiences, which contributed to the passive stereotype.²⁶ Postwar narratives that attempted to justify internment as a necessity of war reinforced feelings of confusion and shame among the *Nisei*, many of whom reacted by remaining silent about their experiences.²⁷ Nonetheless, scholars such as Oikawa and Sunahara have emphasized that the stereotype of passivity does not fully reflect Japanese Canadian responses to the policies of the 1940s, while others have argued that the appearance of civility could be deliberately deceiving.²⁸ Since the stereotype of passivity does not accurately describe Japanese Canadians, this thesis seeks out evidence of active behaviour that could be called resistance.

In the context of the Second World War, it is challenging to draw parallels between Japanese-Canadian resistance and contemporary European resistance movements. In seeking out examples, I briefly looked to historical work done on Jim

²⁴ La Violette, *The Canadian Japanese and World War II*, 106.

²⁵ Oikawa, *Cartographies of Violence*, 50.

²⁶ Keibo Oiwa, *Stone Voices: Wartime Writings of Japanese Canadian Issei*, ed. Keibo Oiwa, (Montréal: Véhicule Press, 1991), 17.

²⁷ Ann Sunahara, *The politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War*, (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1981), 149.

²⁸ Jordan Stanger-Ross, "Telling a Difficult Past: Kishizo Kimura's Memoir of Entanglement in Racist Policy," *BC Studies* no. 181 (Spring 2014), 57.

Crow era United States. Robin Kelley includes labour strikes, singing, and silence as examples of "unorganized, evasive, [and] seemingly spontaneous actions," that I would include in my broad definition of resistance.²⁹ Kelley describes such everyday acts of resistance as infrapolitics, less visible than conventional political resistance, and often going unnoticed.³⁰ An employee who leaves work early or steals from his employer is engaged in a type of resistance that can be contrasted with the worker who signs a union card, and takes to the picket line. By expanding our understanding of resistance to include infrapolitics, one can accept that resistance can take on different forms, varying from one situation to another. In Nazi Germany, the Jewish resistance group *Chug Chaluzi* worked to maintain Jewish culture and identity, through organized sports, studying Hebrew, and the observance of Jewish holidays.³¹ Without directly comparing any of these situations, it appears that there are similarities between Japanese Canadians and other victims of racial ersecution. The subtle qualities of African-American resistance and the cultural nature of Jewish resistance suggest areas to research when investigating Japanese-Canadian resistance. Without knowing what exact form resistance will take, we should keep an open mind as we encounter evidence of the everyday action that takes place within oppressed societies.

This thesis builds on important previous work. Forrest La Violette's *The Canadian Japanese and World War II* is the oldest, dating

as a contemporary look at internment from the viewpoint of an outsider.³² *The Enemy That Never Was*, by Ken Adachi, provides more context for the racial discrimination that defined the internment, from the perspective of a victim of the internment. *The Politics of Racism* by Ann Sunahara provides a comprehensive look at the policy of internment from its earliest days up to the 1980s, when Japanese Canadians finally received compensation. It is notable that Sunahara could use official government records, whereas the earlier books by La Violette and Adachi were hampered by wartime censorship and postwar limitations on accessing these records.³³ Finally, Mona Oikawa's recent *Cartographies of Violence* takes a critical look at the social memories of the internment through interviews with Japanese-Canadian women, pairs of mothers and daughters, who are survivors of the internment. She challenges readers to look beyond the traditional narratives and see the long-term impact that internment had on the Japanese-Canadian community. Adachi, Sunahara, and Oikawa, in particular, have laid excellent groundwork, and I consider these authors to be required reading for any research into internment studies. Sunahara and Oikawa also investigate into the varied ways Japanese Canadians resisted internment, which is the topic of my research. Thus, the existing scholarly work provided me with sufficient contextual knowledge to pursue my research, and introduce me to suitable primary sources.

My research led me to primary sources created by Japanese Canadians themselves. Memoirs, such as Takeo Nakano's *Within the Barbed Wire Fence* and Muriel Kitagawa's *This is My Own*, provide a narrative through the authors' own words and

³² Forrest La Violette, *The Canadian Japanese and World War II: a sociological and psychological account*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948).

³³ Ann Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism*, 2.

experiences. The narratives of Japanese Canadians after their forced removal from the coast contain numerous perspectives on the diverse experiences of internment. People moved to the eastern cities of Montreal and Toronto. Some worked on beet farms on the prairies. Some remained in the British Columbia interior until the end of the war. A few hundred were imprisoned in Prisoner of War (POW) camps in Ontario.

I also read *The New Canadian*, the sole Japanese-Canadian newspaper that was permitted to publish throughout the war. *The New Canadian* was, according to the text on the front page of every issue, a newspaper written specifically for the second generation of Japanese Canadians. The fact that it is written in English implies that its target audience was not immigrants from Japan, but those who spoke English well enough to read and understand the newspaper. This focus on the second generation does not necessarily exclude other Japanese Canadians amongst its readership. At the urging of my supervisor, I delved deeper in *The New Canadian* and made it the centre of my research.

This essay investigates Japanese-Canadian resistance by first looking at the role of *The New Canadian* as a community newspaper during the internment. Wherever possible, examples of defiance towards internment policies are highlighted. The newspaper's motive, in reporting and encouraging resistance is also explored. The concern for the well-being of the community forms the basis for the second part of this essay. The maintenance of the community, its unity and cohesion, was itself an example of resistance to internment policies. The study of this form of resistance centers around cultural activities, especially sports, and the typical life events such as weddings and births which were commonly announced in the pages of *The New Canadian*. Contrary to the passive stereotype prevalent in some post-war narratives, Japanese Canadians defied internment

policies, and were active agents in their resistance to the internment. *The New Canadian* was a critical component of Japanese-Canadian resistance to the internment.

Resistance

There is no single narrative of how Japanese Canadians reacted to internment. The stories are so diverse as to make every experience seem unique. What is common to their experiences is the way their reactions were measured in a way that limited widespread backlash. As mentioned in the introduction, the restraint of Japanese Canadians was often confused with acquiescence. In fact, there were numerous examples of Japanese Canadians resisting the internment by challenging policies through legal means, through civil disobedience, and by protesting labour conditions. *The New Canadian* played a role in reporting incidents of Japanese-Canadian resistance to internment policies, either as a warning or an encouragement, depending on the risk to the broader community.

Disruptions in the lives of Japanese Canadians began well before the federal government put internment measures into place. In the spring and summer of 1941, even before Canada was at war with Japan, The Canadian government subjected Japanese Canadians to mandatory registration.³⁴ After the war with Japan began, the RCMP immediately arrested 31 Japanese citizens. The RCMP also obtained an agreement from the Secretary of the Japanese language schools, Tsutae Sato, to close the schools and the Japanese language newspapers.³⁵ The Royal Canadian Navy confiscated the fishing boats

³⁴ Adachi, *The Enemy That Never Was*, 191-192.

³⁵ Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism*, 23-24.

of Japanese-Canadians, leaving many without a livelihood. Apart from registration and the seizure of fishing boats, these early measures affected a small number of people, and the message in *The New Canadian* was for Japanese Canadians to affirm their loyalty "to the country that has given us birth, protection and sustenance."³⁶ For the most part, Japanese Canadians could go about their lives as they had before the war.

As the year 1942 began, *The New Canadian* was less concerned with how to resist these disruptions than with the uncertainty which hung over the future. An editorial stated that "minor restrictions such as those dealing with cameras, radios and the sale of gas can be cheerfully accepted without bitterness."³⁷ The broader concern in *The New Canadian* was for the complete disruption of life that would ensue if they were forcibly removed from the British Columbia coast.³⁸ Not everyone was comfortable with the immediate effects of government policies, though. Japanese-Canadian fishermen were troubled by the damage to their vessels caused by the Navy, and the rampant theft of Japanese

students felt bound to the obligation of Canadian citizenship, which included a mandatory six hours of military training as part of the Canadian Officers' Training Corp (COTC).⁴⁰ In January 1942, the university senate prohibited Japanese Canadian students from participating in military training. The protest was mild, and the students aimed to have their grievance on record, rather than to affect change.⁴¹ Public opinion was strongly against Japanese Canadians, and the students were caught in a difficult situation, wanting to defend their rights as citizens and participate in their country's defence. Conversely,

The newspaper was published three times in as many days between February 24 and 26, with news that the government was confiscating radios, cameras and firearms⁴⁵, and enforcing a curfew⁴⁶. After the government issued an order-in-council ordering the removal of all Japanese Canadians from the British Columbia coast, *The New Canadian* declared that "[n]o reasonable individual can deny that there are grounds enough here for several thousand people, whose only crime is their race, to feel bitter and betrayed."⁴⁷ The newspaper fulfilled a responsibility to its readers by passing on information on internment measures as it became available, but it also performed a secondary duty of arguing against these same measures on behalf of the community. According to *The New Canadian*, there was no justification in the measures taken against Japanese Canadians. The decision to forcibly remove them from the coast was the catalyst for the change in the editorial tone of the newspaper. To be clear, *The New Canadian* did not incite its readers to act against internment measures, but it clearly stated its opposition to Canadian government policy, a stance that contrasted with the message of loyalty that it had espoused just two months prior.

During the first few months of the internment, *The New Canadian*

the internment, the newspaper examined court cases brought against the U.S. government challenging the authority of military officials to forcibly remove Japanese Americans from the west coast.⁴⁹ News articles from the United States reprinted in *The New Canadian* reported that Japanese Americans were enlisting in the United States Army, and that they had formed their own combat unit for deployment in the war against Germany.⁵⁰ *The New Canadian* advocated challenging the internment through the courts, as was happening in the United States. Japanese Canadians could emulate the American experience and resist the policies of internment through the institutions which provided constitutional safeguards for Canadians.

In fact, Japanese Canadians did attempt to use to legal measures to resist internment policies. After the government ordered the liquidation of their property, Japanese-Canadian property owners in Kaslo responded by forming a committee to investigate whether they could take legal action to prevent this dispossession of property.⁵¹ The test case on behalf of three property owners first had to petition Secretary of State Norman McLarty before they could advance to the Exchequer Court.⁵² This turned out to be a long process, and it is not until October that *The New Canadian* announced that the property owners had the right to sue the federal government.⁵³ In December 1943, the property owners requested that the Custodian of Enemy Property suspend the sale of property pending the outcome of the court case, since the next sitting

⁴⁹ "Court Suit Tests U.S. Evacuation," *New Canadian*, June 13, 1942, 3.

⁵⁰ "U.S. to Form Nisei Combat Unit," *New Canadian*, Feb 6, 1943.

⁵¹ "United Action of Evacuees Sought To Aid Test Case," *New Canadian*, April 10, 1943, 1.

⁵² "Owners Must Prepare For Highest Court: Three Petitions Forwarded," *New Canadian*, July 24, 1943, 1.

⁵³ "Property Owners Win Right To Sue Ottawa in Exchequer Court," *New Canadian*, October 23, 1943, 1.

of the Exchequer Court in Vancouver was scheduled for September 1944.⁵⁴ After the case was heard, Justice J.T. Thorson delayed three years before deciding in the government's favour, and meanwhile the sale of Japanese-Canadian properties continued unabated.⁵⁵ While Japanese Canadians used the legal framework available to resist internment policy, they limited their resistance to challenging the dispossession of their property, rather than their forced removal from the coast. Considering the time that it took to get their case heard before the Exchequer Court, and the delay in getting a decision, there is little reason to conclude that additional legal challenges to internment measures would have been more successful.

Two and a half years after it encouraged resistance through the courts, *The New Canadian* critiqued the inaction of Japanese Canadians. In 1944, *The New Canadian* commented on the U.S. test cases that went before the Supreme Court by declaring that "[i]t is rather curiously tragic and noteworthy that in Canada no question or doubt whatsoever is raised on the legal validity of parallel order... without due process of law to establish individually... guilt or innocence."⁵⁶ This appraisal was unfair, given the differences in the experiences between Japanese Americans and Japanese Canadians. As previously mentioned, the students at UBC protested their removal from military training. Property owners joined together to bring a test case against the confiscation of their property. These are measured responses, to be sure, but they indicate an opposition to internment policies, as well as action taken to resist them. The court case challenging the forced sale of property was a test case, and it was not successful. The U.S. court cases

⁵⁴ "Property Owners Review Situation," *New Canadian*, December 18, 1943, 2.

⁵⁵ Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism*, 95.

⁵⁶ "Is Detention Legal?" *New Canadian*, October 28, 1944, 2.

that the rule forbidding visitors was an injustice. The separation of families was a significant catalyst of early resistance to internment.

The resentment surrounding the separation of families extended to those already in the work camps. Japanese-Canadian workers at two road camps went on strike after a fight occurred between the workers and camp staff. The fight released an outpouring of grievances including the frequent delay in receiving pay, and the separation of families.

but Ottawa refused to give them a raise. Instead, the workers were given assurances that they could move elsewhere and take on other employment if it was available.⁷² These protests, which were about quality of life issues such as stability and pay, contrasted with the resistance which had occurred the year before, which was focused on the separation of men from their families. There were certainly strong parallels, since both circumstances affected the welfare of families, but the strikes by workers acquired more immediate material concessions, rather than sentimental ones.

Japanese-Canadian labour would continue to assert its agency throughout the war. In Alberta, workers employed on beet farms successfully opposed their work conditions and benefits. Early in 1945, they asked the government to remove the restrictions on their movement so that they could seek out better-paying employment elsewhere.⁷³ Two months later they requested a wage increase, which they received.⁷⁴ Ultimately, *The New Canadian* recognized the agency and solidarity of Japanese-Canadian beet farm workers in Alberta, and used it as an model that workers across Canada could follow:

On the record, it should be obvious to organized labor in Alberta that Japanese Canadian evacuees will not willingly accept a lower standard of wages or conditions of slave labor. The steady rise in wages paid to sugar beet workers... is the indisputable proof of this fact.⁷⁵

⁷² "Princeton Road Workers Assured Of Freedom to Move to Other Jobs," *New Canadian*, March 18, 1944, 1.

⁷³ "Albertans Seek Squarer Deal," *New Canadian*, February 24, 1945, 1.

⁷⁴ "Alberta Resettlers Seek Increased Wage Rates For Sugar Beet Work," *New Canadian*, April 28, 1945, 1.

⁷⁵ "Organized Labor in Alberta," *New Canadian*, April 28, 1945, 8.

Beet farm workers were not as vulnerable as the road crew workers, who were not onl

any complaints of work conditions on the part of the men. This contrasted with the situation with the road crew and beet farm workers, who protested the material conditions of their labour and living conditions, without directly challenging the policies of internment. *The New Canadian* focused on the consequences of these actions. The men were punished by the state for their acts of resistance, and their punishment was material in the sense they had to pay monetary fines.

As mentioned earlier, the federal government sent any resisters to POW camps in Ontario. The most tenacious resisters in the POW camps were known as the *gambariya*⁷⁹, whom *The New Canadian* criticised as being old-fashioned and stubborn.⁸⁰ Even towards the end of the war, the *gambariya* still held out hope that Japan's ultimate victory would be even greater due to the setbacks Japan had faced. Furthermore, they believed that a defeated Canada would be forced to compensate them for the hardships they had endured.⁸¹ For the *gambariya*, Japan was their homeland, and they were reluctant to turn their backs even when defeat was imminent.⁸² The POW camps represented the limit of the power of the state to persecute individuals. Resistance in British Columbian work camps could get a person sent to Angler Ontario, but the POW camp was the limit of official punishment during the internment.

Generally, inmates were well behaved and the experience in the POW camps was not characterized by violence. A typical violation of the rules included the manufacture

⁷⁹ *gambariya* is sometimes spelt *Ganbari*, *ganbari-ya*, and *Ganbaru*. I elected to use this spelling as it was the most consistent. The term refers to one's tenacity during tough times, but here it was applied to persistent loyalty to the Empire of Japan during the war.

⁸⁰ "Nisei's Only Course," *New Canadian*, Apr 15, 1942, 2.

⁸¹ Nakano, *Within the Barbed Wire Fence*, 66.

⁸² Okazaki, *POW Camp 101*, 115.

prisoners who were outside their huts after curfew.⁸⁷ The situation escalated to the point where inmates refused to fall in for roll call without receiving an explanation of the guards' actions that evening.⁸⁸ The inmates inferred that some of them would be shot for refusing to obey orders, but one of their number, a Mr. Tanaka, reminded the camp commander that prisoners could not be executed without some sort of a trial. The camp commander finally relented, which defused the situation, and the prisoners resumed roll call three days later.⁸⁹ A compromise was not reached, causing prisoner Koichiro Miyazaki to later reflect that "people are not very strong when threatened with direct action."⁹⁰ The inmates had pushed the soldiers about as far as they dared, but the soldiers demonstrated their hegemony by firing warning shots.

The two examples above demonstrate that there were limits to state persecution of individuals. On both these two occasions when the inmates refused to cooperate with camp authorities, they stood their ground against the threat of physical violence, and succeeded. These were very real threats, with uncertain outcomes, and probable retaliation, yet Japanese Canadians stood up against the power of state authority and won a minor victory. They gained neither freedom, nor any meaningful benefit, but their resistance helped define how far the state could go. What is noteworthy is that the two narratives by Robert Okazaki and Koichiro Miyazaki are quite consistent in their details. These events never appear in the pages of *The New Canadian*. It is difficult to say why they are absent, except that overt resistance in a POW camp could have been censo

In the weeks ahead of the removal, young Japanese-Canadian couples continued their journey along their life course by getting married. There were 13 wedding announcements in April 1942, two in May, and none in June. The April 2 edition alone had seven announcements.⁹⁵ These numbers compare favourably with 1941, which claimed ten announcements in April, four in May, and two in June. This period in 1942 was a time when *The New Canadian* not under their direct control, but Japanese

occurred due to the dispersal, there was a community in existence that allowed for people to pursue normal social relationships with one another. *The New Canadian* filled a vital role as a central link to dispersed members of the community by publishing these announcements. These marriages and their announcements supported the stability and integrity between Japanese Canadians by continuing to normalize the social conditions that existed before the war.

The frequent birth notices in *The New Canadian* reinforced the bonds within the Japanese-Canadian community. Oikawa notes that Japanese Canadians gave birth to approximately 2,500 babies during the internment.¹⁰⁰ The steady stream of announcements during this time demonstrated the desire of new parents to share the news with the broader community, even while that community was being uprooted. What was notable was the number of births which occurred during the winter of 1942. *The New Canadian* had eight birth announcements for December 1942, although these did not appear in the newspaper until early January.¹⁰¹ Couples conceived these children during a time when it would have been apparent that an uncertain future lay ahead. Regardless, the children were conceived and born, and this is evidence of a community where couples were starting families. Birth notices tended to be more abbreviated than the examples of wedding announcements:

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Mickey Maikawa of Blind Bay, B.C. on July 27th at the Salmon Arm Hospital, a daughter, Bonnie Akiko.

The first Nisei birth at McGillivray Falls, B.C. was recoded as Mr. and Mrs. Genichi Konodo became the proud parents of a baby boy, Masaru.

¹⁰⁰ Oikawa, *Cartographies of Violence*, 132.

¹⁰¹ *New Canadian*, January 9, 1943, 3.

Born July 13 to Mr. and Mrs. T Miyagawa (nee Joyce Kudu, formerly of Mission) of Diamond City, Alta, a daughter, Jo Ann.¹⁰²

Birth notices occasionally included small flourishes such as "a bouncing 8 pound baby boy," and "[t]he stork paid a visit," but generally they were succinct.¹⁰³ Similar to the previously mentioned wedding announcements, the birth notices indicate a progression of dispersal throughout the internment. The notices indicating where the babies were born sometimes contrasted with where the parents had been relocated from. It should not be inferred that the simple act of having children was an act of resistance, but within the context of the internment, these public announcements tied a community together and preserved links to a common past. The preservation of the community, in the face of government efforts to dismantle and disperse it, was an act of resistance. The announcements were a way of publicly declaring the community's determination during difficult times.

As the community was dispersed, *The New Canadian* assisted its readers who were trying to reconnect with one another. Authorities sometimes gave only a few hours' notice to people to pack their belongings and leave their homes.¹⁰⁴ Throughout internment, notices in the paper called out to lost friends:

Calling Mrs. TOSHIO SHUTO and daughter KAZUKO, formerly of E. Georgia Street, Vancouver! Anxious that you, or anyone knowing your whereabouts, write to her immediately is MRS. K SUZUKI, R.R. No. 1, Box 50, Marquette, Manitoba.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² "Blessed Events...", *New Canadian*, September 4, 1943, 7.

¹⁰³ "Something New Has Been Added...", *New Canadian*, May 12, 1945, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Sunahara, *The Politics of Racism*, 51.

¹⁰⁵ *New Canadian*, July 15, 1942, 2.

As was the case with the wedding announcements, these notices continued to be published during the Spring of 1942, when *The New Canadian* was under the control of the BCSC, indicating that Japanese Canadians still used the newspaper to connect with one another during this time.¹⁰⁶ As the internment continued, the community members relocated further eastward, with Ontario and Quebec receiving increasing numbers of Japanese Canadians. *The New Canadian* published the names of these people *en masse* including both the name of the receiving city, and the name of the interior B.C. town from which they had departed.¹⁰⁷ The messages ensured that people could be kept aware of where their friends and family had been relocated. *The New Canadian* published these notices as part of the broader goal of maintaining community links during internment.

The messages of greeting in the Christmas issues of *The New Canadian* dominated those editions, which sometimes ran as high as 28 pages, whereas most regular editions had only four or eight pages. Even before the war with Japan, prominent

The sports pages of *The New Canadian* linked Japanese Canadians who were geographically separated through the shared appreciation of sport. By mentioning star players by name, the newspaper created a personal connection between the reader and the athlete. As was the case before the war, upbeat sports coverage contributed to the morale of Japanese Canadians. The details of baseball tournaments, and their results, may not have directly affected the lives of Japanese Canadians far removed from the event, but this reporting reminded people that they still held a connection with one another.

A newspaper can hold a special role within the community it serves. This was the case with *The New Canadian*. Throughout the internment, the newspaper became a hub for Japanese Canadians to stay in contact with their community. No one imposed this role of community leader on to *The New Canadian*, and it seemed to be more of a spontaneous reaction to internment that developed as internment measures became more grievous. Through the simple act of living came a

internment, reminding Japanese Canadians of life before the war, and maintaining the bonds between scattered community members.

Conclusion

The stereotype of Japanese Canadians was they were passive victims of the internment. This is sometimes reflected in the writing of Japanese Canadians themselves, as evident in Adachi's book *The Enemy That Never Was*. Later scholarship by Sugiman and Oikawa, however, reveals a spirit of defiance that exemplified Japanese-Canadian resistance. Other authors contribute to the discussion of resistance by expanding its definition beyond its violent implications to include the everyday, unorganized, and spontaneous responses to injustice by victims. Primary sources written by victims of the internment also provide historians with models of Japanese-Canadian agency which repudiated the passivity myth. *The New Canadian* highlighted examples of resistance to internment policies that threatened the Japanese-Canadian community and was itself an agent of resistance during the internment.

At the beginning of the internment, *The New Canadian* strongly discouraged resistance as a response. In the issues following the attack by Japan on Pearl Harbor, the newspaper counselled that the only viable option was for Japanese Canadians to affirm their loyalty to Canada. As the forced removal of Japanese Canadians commenced, the newspaper recommended that people cooperate with authorities, both to demonstrate their acquiescence to lawful authority and to prevent further measures from being taken against

the community.

Bibliography

- Roy, Patricia E. "Educating the 'East': British Columbia and the Oriental Question in the Interwar Years." *BC Studies* no. 18 (Summer 1973), 50-69.
- Roy, Patricia E. *The Oriental Question: Consolidating a White Man's Province, 1914-41*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003.
- Roy, Patricia E. *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989.
- Roy, Patricia E. *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941-67*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007.
- Roy, Patricia E. and John Herd Thomson. *British Columbia: Land of Promises*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Stanger-Ross, Jordan. "Telling a Difficult Past: Kishizo Kimura's Memoir of Entanglement in Racist Policy." *BC Studies* no. 181 (Spring 2014), 39-62.
- Sunahara, Ann Gomer. *The politics of Racism: The Uprooting of Japanese Canadians During the Second World War*. Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1981.
- Ward, Peter W. "British Columbia and the Japanese Evacuation." *The Canadian Historical Review* 57 no. 3 (September 1976), 289-308.