

The AACCP Newsletter

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Here, in America?

The Assembly on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians

By Grace Shimizu and Elinor Davis

Here, in America?: the Assembly on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians is a grassroots public education event to present and document little known first-person accounts of U.S. government human rights violations during World War II and post-9/11. The two-day event, on April 8th and 9th (2005), will be held at Hastings College of the Law, San Francisco, in the Alumni Reception Center (200 McAllister St. and Hyde).

From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, a distinguished panel of scholars and community leaders will hear testimonies from former internees of Japanese, German and Italian descent who were caught up in the U.S. "enemy alien" program. Several of the individuals that will give testimonies were abducted from Latin America for purposes of hostage exchange with Japan and Germany.

This Assembly will expand on the work of the Congressional commission hearings of 1981 which led to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 and reparations for over 82,000 Japanese American internees. This Assembly will focus on the hidden stories of the immigrants and US citizens of German, Italian and Japanese ancestry who have not yet received proper acknowledgment or redress for the violation of their rights. These little-known stories and those from communities now identified as "the enemy" since 9/11 have relevance for all people in the United States, regardless of race or ethnicity.

This is a wonderful—possibly, the last—opportunity for people across the generations and from diverse communities to collectively bear witness to this hidden history and to draw lessons for today.

There will be several sessions each morning and afternoon, each with a different panel of people offering testimony on various aspects of the WWII enemy alien program. There will also be representatives from the Muslim, Middle Eastern and South Asian communities sharing their experiences in the aftermath of 9/11.

- On Friday, April 8, there will be a media conference at 9:30am, when Congressional Representative Xavier Becerra, former WWII internees, and other witnesses will be present for media interviews.
- Also on Friday, April 8, from 5-7pm, there will be a dinner at the Peruvian restaurant, Fina Estampa (at Van Ness and Geary). \$20 (includes tax and tip).
- On Saturday, April 9, there will be an informal reception at Hastings following the last session after 4pm.

The Assembly is free and open to the public. Since seating is limited to about 150 people at a time, we're asking folks to make reservations (415-921-5007) for the time period they expect to attend.

People can come for as much of the Assembly as they have time for. Whether they can attend the Assembly in its entirety or in part, they will definitely have a memorable and unique experience.

For more information go to campaignforjusticejla.org.

This article continues on Page 3 with an interview with Grace Shimizu

Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at - aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
April 9 10-1:30pm	Hiroshi Kashiwagi Book Signing	JCCCNC San Francisco, CA
April 15-17	Making Waves CTA-PAAC & NEA-APIC 2005 Conference	Holiday Inn 750 Kearny St. San Francisco, CA
April 20-24	Association for Asian American Studies National Conference	Marriott Los Angeles Downtown Los Angeles, CA
May 19-21	NAAPAE Nat. Assoc. for Asian and Pac. Am. Educ.	Marriott Hotel Burlingame, CA
June 2-5	State of CA Conference on the Internment of Japanese Americans Sponsored by CCLPEP	Radisson Miyako Hotel San Francisco, CA
Other Event of Interest that AACP May Not Attend		
April 8 1:30 pm	Suji Kwock Kim poetry reading and book-signing	CCSF Rosenberg Lib. 50 Phelan Ave. San Francisco, CA
April 8-9	Assembly on the War-time Relocation and Internment of Civilians	Hastings College San Francisco, CA
April 8-17	PanAsia '05 Pan Asian Solidarity Coalition	U. Chicago Chicago, IL
April 16-17 & 23-24	N. CA Cherry Blossom Festival	J-Town San Francisco, CA
April 23	US - Japan Taiko Festival	Kabuki Theater San Francisco, CA
April 30	36th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage	Manzanar, CA

Editor's Message

Hello everyone. A reminder for this weekend - please come to our sponsored book signing, on April 9th 10:30 a.m. -1 p.m., of Hiroshi Kashiwagi's new book *Swimming in the American*. The signing will take place at the Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California in the Issei Hall (1840 Sutter St., San Francisco). I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

Thank you Grace Shimizu and Elinor Davis for your help on the article and interview. We wish you success on achieving your goals and we hope to see you at your event after our book signing. For all the rest of you, please go to their event or learn more about the issues that it addresses.

Thank you Melissa Eng for your submission of a follow up article in your Sheros Interview series. We hope to have it up on our website or in a future newsletter some time soon.

Lastly, with all the recent deaths in the news, let's not lose track of Fred Korematsu's passing. As I was flipping the TV channels recently, I saw the beginning of an old *West Wing* episode. What a coincidence, the characters were sitting around talking about a fictitious Supreme Court case saying that it was another Korematsu type of situation. The Korematsu case had made its way to popular culture. This was a victory for all of us that hope to keep the Korematsu story and other internment stories alive and working towards the prevention of future civil injustices.

If you are unaware of Fred Korematsu, please read some of the obituaries that have come out. Here's one Seattle Times - http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/nationworld/2002229322_korematsuobit03.html.

You can also read our related articles and links in our July 2004 newsletter - <http://asianamericanbooks.com/newslets/nl0704.htm>

Fred Korematsu, long may your memory live.

Leonard Chan
Executive Editor

The Little Told World War II Internment Story

An Interview with Grace Shimizu

By Leonard Chan and Philip Chin

With Answer Contributions by Elinor Davis

Grace Shimizu and Elinor Davis are two of the organizers for the "Here, in America?" event. Here is our interview with Grace Shimizu.

Tell us about who you are and about the organization you work for.

I am director of the *Japanese Peruvian Oral History Project* (JPOHP). The Project was established in 1991 to preserve the family experiences of Japanese Peruvian internees during WWII through oral history interviews and to educate the public with the hopes that such violations of human rights would not be repeated by governments whether during times of war or peace.

I am also coordinator of the *Campaign For Justice: Redress Now For Japanese Latin Americans!* (CFJ), which was formed in 1996 to secure redress from the US government for the human rights violations that were perpetrated against the Japanese Latin American internees during WWII.

I am also project director of the groundbreaking traveling exhibit, "*The Enemy Alien Files: Hidden Stories of World War II*," which is a unique collaborative effort by the German, Italian, Japanese American and Japanese Latin American communities to educate the public about the experiences of immigrants labeled "enemy aliens" during World War II and the parallels with current day concerns.

How did you become involved in this area? Do you have any direct connection with Japanese Latin American internees?

My father and several other family members were among the 2264 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry who were kidnapped from 13 Latin American countries and interned in the US for the purpose of hostage exchange.

My father was born in Hiroshima, Japan and immigrated to Peru when he was a teenager in the 1920s. During World War II, he was apprehended, transported to a US military base in Panama and put to hard labor and then incarcerated at a Department of Justice internment camp in Crystal City, Texas. His first wife passed away in the camp. One cousin was used in the second hostage exchange. After the war, my uncle and his family were deported to war-devastated Japan with the destination of Hiroshima. My father fought deportation and remained in the US with the hope of returning to Peru. My father passed away last year at the age of 97.

Will there be a session where debates and discussion will go on and where the audience will be allowed to participate?

We'll encourage the audience to ask questions and discuss during the lunch breaks and afterward, informally, at dinner on Friday, April 8 and an informal reception on Saturday, April 9.

We want to give all the participants their full allotted time slot to present their testimony uninterrupted. Some of these people have never spoken publicly about their experiences before and this may be our last chance to document these WWII stories from firsthand, living memory.

What are your goals?

Our main goals are public education and preservation of these little-known stories. We also hope it will promote healing and lead to closure for those whose rights were violated 60 years ago and provide moral support for people affected by the post-9/11 policies.

Your flyer mentions that the testimonies will be submitted to the US Congress and the Inter-American

Commission on Human Rights (IACHR is a body of the Organization of American States). What would you like to see these organizations do with this historical record?

I would like the US Congress and the IACHR to both give serious consideration of this historical record as they consider pending and future legislation and litigation.

I hope the House Judiciary Committee of the US Congress would review these personal testimonies and organize a Congressional hearing of "The War-time Parity and Justice Act" (HR 893), introduced by Rep. Xavier Becerra (CA-31). This bill would grant proper redress to an estimated 1200 Japanese Americans and Japanese Latin Americans who have been excluded from the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (CLA). It would also fulfill the educational mandate of the CLA by reestablishing the public education fund with the \$45 million which was promised to the Japanese American community and the American people.

Another bill, the Wartime Treatment Study Act, would establish two commissions: one to review the U.S. government policies regarding resident aliens and U.S. citizens as well as Latin Americans of German and Italian descent, and the other to review the government's refusal to allow Jewish refugees fleeing persecution to enter the U.S. during WWII.

I also understand that the "Wartime Violation of Italian American Civil Liberties Act" was signed into law in November 2000, acknowledging the fundamental injustices suffered by Italian Americans during World War II. However, the mandate for a proper apology and public education about these events has yet to be implemented.

As for litigation, the Japanese Latin Americans have gone through the US

court system and are now appealing to the international community for justice. Art Shibayama, his two brothers, and the Japanese Peruvian Oral History Project have submitted a petition to the IACHR, seeking to hold the US government accountable for the ongoing failure to provide redress for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Documentation of the hidden history of WWII and the lessons for present day concerns is important and significant not only for the people of the US but for all people around the world who uphold truth and justice.

Are you also hoping that the Latin American countries that turned over Japanese to the US provide some sort of apology and restitution too?

The personal testimonies that will be revealed at the Assembly are a part of history that is hidden both in the US and Latin America. Of course, it is important that the people of Latin American countries also revisit this unfortunate chapter in their history and that their efforts to hold their governments for such wrongdoing be supported. But for us here in the US, it is our responsibility to get our government to "do the right thing". With full acknowledgment, sincere apology, and proper redress for constitutional and human rights violations—some at the level of war crimes—the US government now has the opportunity to set an example upholding truth, justice and democracy for the rest of the world of which we can truly be proud.

Does the OAS have any pull with our government in trying to get them to provide for restitution?

The US is one of the founding members of the OAS and is bound by the OAS Charter to allow itself to be taken to the IACHR when charged with human rights violations. Unfortunately, the US has defied rulings by the IACHR in the past, because the IACHR does not have enforcement powers.

It is truly a disgrace that the US government continues to use tax-payers' money to fight the Japanese Latin American internees. If the IACHR determines that it has jurisdiction over our petition, there is no guarantee that the US government will honor the decision by this international commission. A ruling by the IACHR in favor of our internees would be an important legal precedent and moral victory. Regardless of the outcome, we hope to inform the people of the US and the world about this shameful hidden history. And we urge our elected officials to provide proper acknowledgment and redress—and to do it before all our former internees have passed away.

Tell us about the people addressed by your conference and how many were there?

The U.S. incarcerated 3 categories of people on U.S. soil during & after WWII.

- 1) Japanese American civilians (War Relocation Authority-WRA, 10 camps)
- 2) German & Italian prisoners of war (POWs—captured soldiers transported on Liberty ships from Europe & kept at various military bases)
- 3) "Enemy aliens" (civilian immigrants of Japanese, German & Italian descent legally residing in the U.S. or one of 15 Latin American countries that cooperated with the U.S. detentions)

Note that Japanese were brought from 13 different Latin countries. Germans were brought from 15 countries (the same 13 plus 2 more that didn't send any Japanese). None came from the largest Latin countries like Brazil, because they had their own internal programs for aliens. The smaller countries "outsourced" their internment to the U.S.

Our event deals with the 3rd category, the Enemy Alien Program operated by the Dept. of Justice (DOJ). DOJ records indicate 32,000 people were processed through DOJ detention/internment camps: over 11,000

Germans (4,058 of whom were brought from Latin American), about 4,000 Italians (288 from Latin American) & about 16,000 Japanese (2,264 from Latin American). "Enemy alien" Japanese, German & Italian immigrants living in the U.S. were picked up starting on Dec 7, 1941, based on FBI lists & INS registration records. When the whole west coast Japanese community was ordered to relocate (Executive Order 9066, Feb 19, 1942), most of the Japanese American enemy aliens were moved into one of the 10 WRA camps where their families were & thus got redress in 1988. The German & Italian aliens living in the U.S. & the Latin American Japanese, Germans & Italians remained in DOJ camps & were excluded from the redress legislation.

Altogether, about a million immigrants of German, Italian and Japanese descent were affected by "alien enemy" policies like registration, relocation, curfews, travel restrictions, confiscation of property, freezing of bank accounts and loss of employment. The FBI raided people's homes and seized "contraband" like cameras, flashlights and shortwave radios. Joe DiMaggio's father's fishing boat was taken over by the Coast Guard and he wasn't able to fish to support his family.

Where were they interned?

The Department of Justice [DOJ] used about 55 different sites all over the country—Army camps, INS detention centers, converted prisons.

Crystal City Internment Camp, originally a former migrant farm workers' camp, was the largest family camp which officially closed in February 1948.

1948? Why were the internment camps closed so long after the end of the war?

Many internees were held years after the war ended because they were fighting deportation to Germany or Japan. (The last Germans were released from Ellis Island in 1949!) The U.S. apparently wasn't comfortable releasing especially the Latin Americans since

they didn't have any legal status to be here, the U.S. Army having confiscated their passports & other ID documents en route. Eventually, the Latin countries allowed some Germans to return on a case-by-case basis, but Peru & others wouldn't let the Japanese return home, so the ones who did not want to go to Japan were stuck in limbo for many years trying to get legal residency here. Some Nisei in WRA camps who were coerced into renouncing their U.S. citizenship were in a similar predicament.

Were some of people incarcerated at the DOJ camps US citizens and roughly what percentage?

The US citizen spouses and children of aliens were taken, or in some cases, "voluntarily" chose to enter camp, to keep their family together. The government froze immigrants' bank accounts, so if the family breadwinner was interned, a wife and children had no means of support and were often socially ostracized. If both parents were interned, the minor children were put in orphanages or foster care or just left to fend for themselves. In such cases, families chose internment together rather than being separated.

It's been hard to find out exactly how many internees were actually U.S. citizens, or citizens of Peru or one of the other Latin countries, but it was a sizeable number. This is an area for more research. Some of them will be testifying at the Assembly and their stories are pretty harrowing.

There were also a few naturalized U.S. citizens of German and Italian descent who were "de-naturalized" and then interned.

Some people may have a sense or belief that anyone that was incarcerated was there for a legitimate purposes - like now, some people think that all the people taken away post 9/11 were in some way connected with terrorism. The term "Enemy Alien" even has a guilty connotation. Authors such as Michelle Malkin, for

example, are even stating that the Internment was justified.

What's the real story with these people that were interned? Was there any evidence to the extent of their collaboration or non-collaboration with the axis countries?

The real story is that **none** of the U.S. resident internees and only one German from a Latin American country was ever charged with anything at all. The few people on whom the government had any actual evidence of sabotage or espionage were not "interned." They were arrested, tried and in some cases executed. Of the 4,058 Germans taken from Latin America, the FBI believed that no more than ten might be connected to any espionage activities. The Japanese and German Latin Americans were clearly taken for purposes of hostage exchange or economic profiteering, not because there was any evidence of wrong-doing on their part, and there is ample documentation of that in government records.

The internees in the US and from Latin America were rounded up because their names had been put on lists of "potentially dangerous persons" by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI during the 1930s. People on the lists were priests, language teachers, newspaper editors and reporters, business owners who had business dealings with their country of origin and other community leaders who might have financial or political influence in their respective communities. Some were reported by neighbors or acquaintances who simply thought them "suspicious" because of their accents or religious and cultural activities. None were accused of any crimes. 81 of the Germans interned were actually Jewish refugees who had fled Nazi persecution to Latin America, only to be seized and interned in the US for the purpose of being sent back to Germany in the exchange.

Yes, the term "enemy alien" sounds negative, but unfortunately it's the legal term for them and it's shorter than "immigrants from countries upon which the U.S. has declared war."

As we see today with the post 9/11 people being locked up - is it even harder to defend the civil liberties of non-citizens and is this why apologies and restitution is so hard to win for the people addressed by your conference?

Our US Constitution guarantees rights for all persons in the US, both citizens and non-citizens alike. The Supreme Court recently reaffirmed this when it said we can't just lock up people indefinitely without charges or access to lawyers, without any due process. Even people suspected of terrorist acts have legal rights in this country. It's the principle of innocent until proven guilty. If you or I or our family members were wrongly accused of something, we'd want those protections in place! But our constitutional rights continue to be eroded. It is precisely during times of crisis and war that we must stand firm to defend our constitutional rights and to apply international human rights here in the US.

What about the individuals that were sent back to Japan, Germany, or Italy and never came back - is there an effort being made to record their stories?

Yes, we've gone to Japan and Okinawa several times to conduct oral history interviews and work with filmmakers who produced documentaries about the Japanese Latin American story, such as "Hidden Internment: The Art Shibayama Story" produced by Progressive Films (www.progressivefilms.org) and "Stolen Lives". While there, we've also met with former Japanese Latin American deportees and updated them on the ongoing redress efforts being organized in the US.

As the public awareness is growing about the US internment of German and Italians during WWII, there is more interest in preserving their stories. Slowly we are learning more about the Germans and Italians who were deported. Many of them eventually were able to come back to the U.S. after the war, but their lives were never the same. After all these years, there is

still a sense of shame and fear that has kept them from talking about all this.

Tell us about the interned Japanese Americans that were not redressed? Explain about the erroneous cut off date?

While the majority of Japanese Americans have received redress, hundreds of Japanese Americans whose civil liberties were violated are still being denied redress based on technical shortcomings or narrow interpretations of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988. Such individuals include:

- US citizens born in camp after June 30, 1946: The CLA's time restriction was based on an erroneous internment camp closing date. The ending date of the Japanese American internment period was February 28, 1948.
- Residents who were improperly denied redress: The CLA's eligibility requirement should be broadened to include those who were interned but were prevented from becoming citizens or permanent residents due to discriminatory immigration laws.
- US citizens born outside of camp after January 20, 1945 whose civil liberties were violated: Redress should be extended to those JAs who were prevented from returning to the Military Exclusion Zone after 01/20/45 due to the existence of effective barriers by the federal government.
- Internees used in prisoner exchange: At least 1540 US citizens or residents

of Japanese ancestry were used in the prisoner exchange with Japan. Rather than using an irrefutable presumption of voluntary repatriation, those who were forced, coerced or otherwise involuntarily relocated should be given redress.

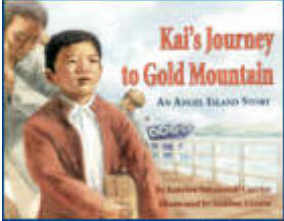
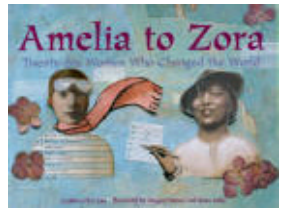
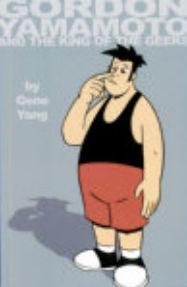

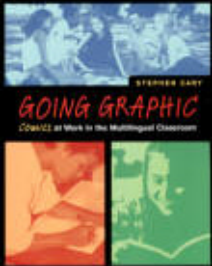
- Dependent children of railroad and mine workers: In 1997 the government acknowledged their responsibility in the firing of persons of Japanese ancestry from private railroad and mine companies during WWII. Expanded notice and review of files should be conducted to assure that all those eligible, including dependent children, have received redress.
- Late applicants: Expanded notification should be given so that Japanese Americans whose civil rights were violated can apply due to changes in government policy granting redress eligibility and a right to appeals process should be implemented to ensure proper processing of claims.

For individuals that cannot attend, where can they read the testimonies that will be given? The Assembly proceedings will be documented and deposited at the National Japanese American Historical Society Archives. Assembly materials will be accessible to the public. A Summary Report will be written by Helen Zia, award-winning journalist and author. A video clip with excerpts of Assembly testimonies will also be created. Do you plan to have any of it available online?

Depending on funds available, we hope to put excerpts of the Assembly testimony up on the Campaign for Justice website. We'll let you know! What can we do to help you achieve your goals? You're already doing it, by listing the Assembly on your calendar and publishing this interview! Thanks for your interest and support—we really appreciate it. Other ways folks can help:

- The WWII "enemy alien" experience, including the hidden stories of the Japanese Latin Americans, is not included in our history books. You can keep our story alive by sharing it with a family member, your friend, co-worker, anyone who will listen.
- We have a variety of educational materials for your use: handouts, videos, books, displays. Check out our website at campaignforjustice-ja.org for more information and order forms.
- We can always benefit from your financial support of our educational and redress efforts. All donations are appreciated.
- Contact us to find out how you can help out with tasks at our events, translation, transcribing interviews, developing educational materials, joining us on redress delegations to visit Congress representatives in your hometown and Washington, D.C., and more!

The following books are discounted an additional 20% from the listed price for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end May 5, 2005.

	<p>Kai's Journey to Gold Mountain An Angel Island Story</p> <p>By Katrina Saltonstall Currier Illustrator Gabhor Utomo 2005, 39 pages, Hardback and Paperback.</p> <p>In 1934, twelve year-old Kai leaves China to join his father in America, but he must take a long sea voyage, then endure weeks of crowded conditions and harsh examinations on Angel Island, fearing that he or his new friend will be sent home.</p> <p>Item #3290, Price \$16.95 - for newsletter subscribers \$13.56 Hardback Item #3291, Price \$10.95 - for newsletter subscribers \$8.76 Paperback</p>
	<p>Amelia to Zora Twenty-six Women Who Changed the World</p> <p>By Cynthia Chin-Lee Illustrated by Megan Halsey and Sean Addy 2005, 32 pages, hardback.</p> <p>Amelia to Zora is a wonder short biography book on 26 women that helped change the world. It includes such notables as Eleanor Roosevelt, Grace Hopper, Maya Lin, Yoshiko Uchida, and 22 other well know individuals. Their lives will help stimulate young minds to achieve great things.</p> <p>Item #3279, Price \$15.95 - for newsletter subscribers \$12.76</p>
	<p>Gordon Yamamoto and the King of the Geeks</p> <p>By Gene Yang 2004, 100 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>Follow the fanciful comic book life of the bully Gordon Yamamoto as his life changes when alien technology imparts to him the mind of the reigning King of Geeks.</p> <p>This story helped win Gene Yang a prestigious comic arts grant award.</p> <p>Item #3292, Price \$9.95 - for newsletter subscribers \$7.96</p>
	<p>Loyola Chin and the San Peligran Order</p> <p>By Gene Yang 2004, 100 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>In this whimsical comic book Loyola Chin discovers other realms through her dreams. In one of these journeys she meets a mysterious otherworldly man who has strange plans to save the world.</p> <p>Item #3293, Price \$9.95 - for newsletter subscribers \$7.96</p>
	<p>Going Graphic Comics at Work in the Multilingual Classroom</p> <p>By Stephen Cary 2004, 218 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>In this book, teachers will find a comprehensive guide to embracing comics and effectively using them in any multilingual classroom. The book includes a great Internet comics resources section that is divided into many sub-categories including by subject of interest and by language.</p> <p>Item #3294, Price \$22.00 - for newsletter subscribers \$17.60</p>

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