

Lesson 7: Japanese Americans Look Back and Post 9-11 Issues

Timeline of Japanese American History

Date	Seattle and West Coast	United States and World
1700s		1780s: Early Hawaiian sailors navigate ships to Pacific Coast. 1790: U.S. Congress restricts the right of naturalized citizenship to whites only.
1800s	1811: First Hawaiian laborers settle in the Pacific Northwest.	1849: Hawaiians barred from becoming U.S. citizens.
1860	First Chinese laborers come to Washington Territory.	Abraham Lincoln elected president.
1861	University of Washington is founded.	Civil War begins in the United States.
1869	Japanese immigrants start Wakamatsu Colony in Gold Hill, (Coloma), California.	End of the Civil War.
1868/ 1869	1869: Seattle incorporates as a city.	1868: Burlingame Treaty affirms the right of Chinese to come to America and the right of Americans to go to China. 1869: First Transcontinental Railroad in the U.S. is completed.
1880s	The first Japanese laborers arrive in the Northwest.	
1882		Congress passes the Chinese Exclusion Act, barring the entry of Chinese laborers and denying Chinese the right to citizenship through naturalization.
1886	White rioters evict Chinese residents from their homes in Seattle. Alien Land Law is passed, barring aliens from owning land.	
1889	Washington achieves statehood.	
1889	Most of the business district is destroyed in the Great Seattle Fire of 1889. After the fire, Chinese laborers return to help rebuild.	
1892		Congress passes the Geary Act, extending the Chinese Exclusion Act for 10 years. Extended again in 1904, it is the precedent for other anti-Asian immigration laws.
1894		Results of <i>Nishimura vs. U.S.</i> ensures civil liberties to Japanese Americans.
1896		Klondike Gold Rush begins.

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1907/1908	Japanese “picture brides” begin coming to America.	Gentlemen’s Agreement restricts immigration of Japanese laborers.
1903	Japanese and Mexican workers strike in California.	
1905		Asiatic Exclusion League formed to oust Japanese.
1907	Anti-Japanese riots in California	
1914		World War I begins.
1916	Japanese American students in San Francisco schools are segregated.	
1920	Under pressure from U.S., Japan stops issuing passports for picture brides.	
1921	Washington Legislature passes another alien land law to prevent Asians from owning or leasing land.	
1922		Japanese aliens are denied right to naturalization in Supreme Court ruling.
1924		1924: Immigration Act of 1924 excludes all Asian immigrants except Filipinos and prevents Chinese women from rejoining husbands in America.
1920s-1930s	1930: Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) holds its first national meeting in Seattle.	1929: The Great Depression begins.
1941	Dec. 8: The FBI begins to arrest Issei leaders in several West Coast cities. Issei bank accounts are frozen and business licenses revoked.	Dec. 7: Japan’s military attacks a Pearl Harbor, a U.S. military base in the territory of Hawaii. The U.S. declares war on Japan.
1942	March 30: Nikkei from Bainbridge Island are the first group to be “evacuated.” April 21: “Evacuation” notices go up in Nikkei neighborhoods in Seattle. April 28, 30 & May 1: Seattle Nikkei are removed to “Camp Harmony”.	Feb. 19 –President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066 and sets in motion the forced removal of Nikkei from the West Coast. By the spring of 1942, the U.S. government has removed over 120,000 from their homes.

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1943		Congress repeals all Chinese exclusion laws and gives Chinese the right to become naturalized citizens. (China is part of the Allied Forces in World War II).
1944		U.S. Supreme Court rules in <i>Korematsu vs. U.S.</i> that the “evacuation” is constitutional.
1945		U.S. drop atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima (Aug. 6) and Nagasaki (Aug. 9). It is the end of World War II.
1952		The Walter-McCarran Act cancels the 1924 Immigration Act and repeals the racial restrictions of the 1790 Naturalization Law. Issei are now allowed to become U.S. citizens through naturalization.
1955		Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. leads Montgomery bus boycott. U.S. begins aid to South Vietnam against North Vietnam in the form of military expertise and equipment.
1962	Wing Luke is elected to Seattle City Council as the first Asian American elected official in Pacific Northwest.	President Kennedy permits immigration of thousands of refugees from Hong Kong.
1965		The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 abolishes the national origin quota system, opening the doors to increased immigration from Asia. U.S. troops land in Vietnam.
1969		Neil Armstrong is the first man on the moon.
1973 – 1975		The last U.S. troops are withdrawn from Vietnam, and final evacuation of civilian Americans from Vietnam occur in 1975 just before the South Vietnam is overtaken by North Vietnam.
1976		President Gerald Ford formally terminates Executive Order 9066.
1978	Nikkei pilgrimage planned by Seattle and Portland area activists is well attended by Issei, Nisei and their children.	
1980		President Jimmy Carter creates the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians to document the experience of Nikkei during WWII.

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1983		The Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians issues its final report, concluding that Executive Order 9066 was not justified by military necessity but rather was the result of "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership."
1988		President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, also known as the Redress Bill.
1989		President George Bush signs Entitlement Bill to commit federal money for redress payments to Nikkei who were in camps during WWII.
1990 – present	October 1990: The Nikkei community in Seattle witnesses the presentation of a letter of apology and redress payments to the five oldest surviving Japanese Americans who were in camp.	Pilgrimages continue annually to several incarceration sites as Nikkei remember, heal and teach others in hopes that it never happen again.