

1:1

Bridges, Noriko (Nikki) Sawada

1978-1984

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# INFORMATION

August 7, 1978

Dear Rosalie Wax,

My memories of you are vivid. The adjectives I, a naive Nisei straight out of the concentration camp, used, were, first, warm, and next, formidable, and somehow the two were not paradoxical. I was awed and happy to be drawn into your circle and considered your friend, along with Nishimoto, the man I worshipped.

I remember you shared an apartment on the Northside with a woman named Lillian, I think. There you economically whipped up magnificent dinners served with Dago Red which we sipped far into the evening in front of the fire, singing "Los Cuatro Generales," "Meadowland" and "The Peatbog Soldiers."

I remember your joie de vivre, your unabashed appreciation of your own abilities, to fix the plumbing, for one thing. How you couldn't afford a Phi Beta Kappa key which you would like to have hung on the toilet chain. How you <sup>also</sup> made Sigma Xi--you were proud of that. And your telling of how you worked to send your siblings (all younger) through college, and when the youngest, Eunice (?) started, so did you.

Eunice used to sleep on your shoulder through the post-lunch lectures, and once, awaking to the sight of a hewn image, commented, "Gawd, my tongue would be hanging out too if I had three penises." (I'm uncertain whether she had remarked on quantity or length.)

I remember your prodigious capacity for life and booze, and your challenging the men to drinking bouts. Although he talked a good game, I suspected that Nishimoto was timid.

I liked best your unjudgmental acceptance of me. I wish I had had the self-confidence and mother-wit to have accorded you the same honor. Did I hurt your feelings? You seemed invulnerable.

**NIKKI**

Page Two

Looking back now, if I hadn't been so uptight and under the prissy influence of Richard, we might have had a relationship of our own, unaffected by the fact of your professional connections with my boyfriend.

I don't know whether you associated Noriko Bridges with Nikki Sawada, but we are one and the same.

With warm good wishes,

*Nikki* BRIDGES

# MEMO

from

NIKKI BRIDGES

Sept. 23, 1978

Dear Rosalie,

The story about Nishimoto is the one entitled "Power: the Name of the Old Shell Game," the last piece.

You don't have to return these.

Love,

Nikki

I would welcome your comments.

a japanese american epic by noriko bridges

# TO BE OR NOT

Sometime in the past

An ancestor of mine paused to consider the  
Morning glory twining round the well rope.  
She borrowed water from a neighbor that day.

Sometime in the past

Temple bells at dusk coincided with a flight of herons,  
And an ancestor of mine captured that moment in haiku  
Sumi ink on rice paper, lacy tracks like a water beetle's,

Sometime in the past

With dirt-cracked fingers my mother wrote her name  
Over and over again on the alien brown soil  
Where strawberries grow, straightened her oft-bent back  
And with faded sleeve wiped her weary forehead.  
Those plowed acres yielded wedge shells of royal purple,  
Rose and pink, shades unbleached by time.  
Fossil treasures from an era when the surf  
Lapped at the place that now is Garden Grove.

Sometime in the past

In the third year of drought and crop failures,  
My father, 26, came to the golden land where  
Nuggets drop from trees. The year was 1901. He never  
Saw his home again.  
His sweat soaked the ties of railroad lines  
From California to Colorado.  
Stranger to light-heartedness, he seeded and irrigated,  
Fertilized, weeded and harvested  
Vegetable farms from Ventura to Costa Mesa.

Sometime in the past

When my mother took me to Japan, I was six.  
I sang "My country 'tis of thee"  
To German tourists at a shrine in Tokyo, for I  
Believed then that all Caucasians were Americans.  
I was hurt and perplexed when they ~~hounded me~~ ~~not~~  
And turned their granite backs.  
All I wanted was to converse with someone in English.

Sometime in the past

Forbidden by law to become citizens,  
Forbidden by law to own land,  
My parents heaped their hopes for the future on their  
Native-born offspring, a mere girl—me.

Sometime in my past

At Pearl Harbor my ancestors and I became enemies.  
The deaf heard me shout that I was I and  
Not my ancestor-enemy, but which was which was hard to  
Tell; we surely looked alike.

Sometime in my past

I chose America but my country rejected me.  
Banished from view my foe-tinted face.  
At gunpoint I and those I resembled went to concentrate.  
We took of our belongings only what we could carry  
Into ten sentry-guarded, barbed-wired camps, 100,000 of  
Us were herded and were  
Concentrated.  
Searchlights raked our dignity.

Sometime in my past

Home was a 25 x 25 foot, unpartitioned space for me,  
My parents and a stranger-bachelor (minimum four bodies  
To a cubicle); straw-stuffed pallets our beds.  
Meals in the mess hall and a communal wash house we  
Shared with two hundred others in our block.  
More than three years I "gave" to my nation's war effort  
As voluntary exile, a choice I created  
When in truth I had none.

Sometime in my past

I met the stares of the stolid, square-shaped Pomo  
Indians on whose barren reservation our  
Concentration camp stood (built by Del Webb who died a  
Multimillionaire). I stared back, and\*  
Three decades later they live there still.

Sometime in my past

In the melting Arizona heat fogged by talcum powder  
Dust that stiffened my hair, lodged in my nose  
And made my voice go hoarse,  
My parents taunted me for taking the side of the  
Country of my birth while it kept me and them  
Imprisoned. They said real Americans are not locked up.  
They called me foolish. I cried.  
How bright the constellations in the crystal desert night.

Sometime in my past

My brothers, volunteers from Hawaii in the 100th Battalion  
Joined with my brothers from the concentration camps  
In the all Japanese American 442nd Combat Unit.  
At Anzio, the Arno, and in the Vosges Mountains  
Like demented warriors they screamed  
"Go for broke!" and  
Assaulted the enemy.  
The bodies of my brothers of the 442nd, the most  
Decorated, the most  
Decimated unit in our nation's history,  
Our stepping stones to freedom.  
Their unprecedented courage that earned them

\* *at the miserable checks they lived in.*

rafu write-off

# TO BE:

Shiny medals, shattered bones and  
Gaping wounds that bled and killed them  
Unlocked the minds of our captors,  
Unlocked the gates of the concentration camps that held us,  
Silenced those who would question our loyalty.  
And in those brutal battles too many of my brothers  
Were silenced forever.  
Who remembers their names engraved in bronze on  
Memorial tablets where sparrows perch?  
I remember their deeds and I salute them.  
And I remember the passionate rage  
That burned inside us all.  
To my surprise it flickers and flames anew  
When I ask: Did my brothers have to die to gain for us the  
Liberty that was our right to begin with?  
What manner of men were our American leaders?  
I will tell you. They were  
Dwarves--dwarfed by the size of my brothers'  
Sacrifice.  
Yes, I remember their deeds.

Sometime in my past

The Supreme Court held that our longer incarceration  
(Without specific charges of wrongdoing and a  
Speedy trial) would besmirch the  
Red-white-and-blueness of America's Constitution.  
We scattered like gale-borne thistledown,  
But not back to the farm, for the  
Santa Ana wind had erased my mother's signature.

Sometime in my past

A Berkeley taxi driver showed me two Mason jars of teeth,  
Gold-inlaid teeth extracted with pliers from the  
Heads of the vanquished at Okinawa and Iwo.  
He watched me closely and was disappointed when  
I suggested he make with them a mosaic  
To hang on his dining room wall.

Sometime in my past

The country of my birth dropped atomic bombs on the  
Land of my parents' origin.  
I saw the mangled tricycle a  
Child had left behind.  
I saw etched on marble steps the outline of a man who  
Disintegrated,  
Consumed by a fireball two million degrees hot.  
I saw the scummy pond where the wounded sought water  
And drowned under the bodies of the seared ones  
Who lay and died atop them like sandbags on a levee.

# There's No Such Option

Sometime in my past

My gentle guide (a woman half my age)  
Sang a lullaby to stanch my noisy sobs.  
Her singing haunts me now.  
And I hear my own anguished protest,  
"But we Americans aren't all like that.  
Why I belong to a women's peace group.  
I work for world peace."  
My pledge of peace tiny solace for the fragmented 75,000  
Whose parts lie buried in one mass grave, and to those  
Dying this week, this month, of radiation sickness,  
Their children and their children's children  
Pariahs because they carry mutant genes.

Sometime in my past

I wondered why in Hiroshima I chose to take the blame.  
Declared myself American when a Japanese identity  
Would have spared me the guilt and the shame.  
I wondered when and where that decision had been made.  
When I was six in Tokyo?  
When challenged by my parents in concentration camp?  
*Why did I* ~~choose to~~ ~~select~~ ~~for myself~~ ~~the guilty face?~~  
To be or not to be: there's no such option.  
One simply is; I simply am.

Sometime in my present

I review the richness of my history,  
I see my life unique.  
I wear as hard-won medals my social, my ethnic,  
My woman's consciousness.  
My parents' hopes for me  
That I marry, bear issue and pay my bills on time  
All realized.  
I marvel anew at my good fortune to have married  
A man who cares, a militant of substance  
In whose glory I long have basked—  
Excuse for doing nothing myself.  
Possessed of hind-wisdom a mother has  
Whose child has fled the nest  
I wish my daughter well.  
It's up to her to fly.

Somewhere in my now

When past and future link, East and West converge.  
And when spring renews its promises,  
I think of lovers who wait so long  
Beneath the cherry trees  
Their laps fill with petals.

oetry winner

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Estelle Jelinek

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REMINISCENCES

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Noriko Bridges

May 17, 1978

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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Introduction

Most of these episodes take place in the Thirties in bucolic Orange County, south of Los Angeles. Unversed in English and lacking marketable skills, my immigrant parents made a living by doing what no worker, given a choice, was willing to do--stoop labor. They produced bunch vegetables, tomatoes and strawberries on land they could never own themselves. The law forbade it because they were Japanese. They were also barred from becoming citizens.

They worked in uneasy partnership with the weather. Intermittent freaky rainstorms could wipe out a fourth of a harvest. To keep going, my parents went in hock to the plant nursery and fertilizer company and depended on next season's crops to pay for this season's supplies. ~~Like~~ *Their life was* ~~sleepwalkers they trod~~ a treadmill that promised ~~nothing~~ *only* ~~but~~ more of the same. Their dreams and future, therefore, centered on their only child--me.

My parents considered it their responsibility to see that I acquired just enough education and skills to enable me to attract a husband and to cope with emergencies. For instance, they suffered the loss of my labor several summers running in order that I might have sewing lessons three times a week at the local Japanese school. My mother's rationale was that if I were left a widow with children to support, I could always take in sewing.

In turn, when my own daughter, also an only child, left home in 1977 at the age of seventeen, I fought down ~~an~~ <sup>my own</sup> atavistic panic because I, not she, wasn't ready for it. I hadn't fulfilled my duty to her. I thought, "She can't go yet. I haven't taught her how to kill, pluck and dress a chicken."

\* \* \*

#### MY MOTHER'S OBSESSION

My mother prepared me for emergencies such as feeding extra guests who remain despite the waning day and conversation. Make lots of rice, she advised, and as much "okazu," the vegetable and meat mixture, as provisions will permit. Oversalt it and serve it in a deep pottery bowl with an undersized serving spoon of tin. The saltiness will quell most appetities, and the teeth-grating "gaza gaza" of the metal spoon against the bowl will keep even the hungriest diner from taking more than two spoonful.

For other emergencies, such as my being struck dumb by shyness, my mother, who spoke only Japanese, was useless. Unproductive of the rapport I yearned to establish with boys whom I attracted by my physical beauty but repelled by my smart-ass remarks, were my gambits: "I know the in-field fly rule," and "I can double clutch on a hill."

An only child of older (by forty and fifty years) parents, I was precocious and accustomed to being the focus of the adults who peopled my world. The same behavior and expectation transferred to school gained me peer resentment and rejection which were intensified as I competed

and won in the only way I could, by scholarship. Congealed in my status as teachers' pet, I grew up isolated, lonely and angry. I dreamed of a time when my brilliant repartee and insouciant personality would win women's admiration and envy and innumerable rich suitors of high intellectual attainment.

Absent was the leavening influence of a warm and supportive home environment because language, cultural and age barriers towered between me and my parents. Communication, along with my Japanese language skills, had atrophied at third-grade level. My mother, born in 1883, held outdated child-rearing notions which she applied to me, born in 1923.

Before her eyes, her Japanese child was transformed into an American, through social and educational processes she could neither control nor counteract. Gamely she dug in her heels and fought. I am the product of that battle, of generational and cultural dualities and of conflicting attitudes and values.

In addition to the responsibilities already enumerated, my mother placed at the top of her priorities, her duty to prevent me from becoming pregnant before marriage. Heedless of my impatience because I had heard it all many times before, my mother often recited a litany of anti-male messages, cursing her femaleness. And curse she might, for her father had been a sexist of incomparable originality.

He had branded her a disappointment by naming her Ura, which means the Opposite, or Reverse; in other words, the wrong gender. She was the third daughter as well as

the third child. The next one, also a girl, remained nameless for two years until her father went to record the birth of his first son. Offhandedly he named her Four, while the boys received more thoughtfully chosen names that were poetic and meaningful. On them their father concentrated his love and concern.

Competition for their father's notice was keen among the five sisters, their chance to succeed doomed by his sexism. But my mother did succeed. She became pregnant by the boy next door. And when she did, her shame radiated beyond herself and encompassed her family, for everyone in her village learned of her deed. She had disgraced her whole family.

The boy's family said she was wanton and unfit for their son to marry. At sixteen my mother bore a boy, on whose behalf she filed suit to force a marriage, or at least to have him acknowledged by his father. It was all for nothing. The case dragged on, and at two her child died.

Embittered, shunned by the villagers, and tortured most of all by the reproach in her father's eyes, my mother resigned herself to a pariah's life. By a miracle of events too complicated to chronicle here, my father married my mother and sponsored her move to America.

Everything here was foreign--the terrain, the house she lived in, her clothing, the food, the language. Strange even was her husband. She was grateful to him, however, for he had given her an opportunity to seek fulfillment in a community ignorant of her past. Because to him she had

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confided her story, swearing him to secrecy, he became an incipient traitor whom she could never fully trust. Back and forth, back and forth, she paced the confines of her cage and decided that no place was a refuge, no one her friend. She was alone in hostile territory where she had to stay because she was unwelcome at home.

Engaged in backbreaking labor in order to survive, my mother plodded through each day, far away from kin, her loneliness like a chill in the bones. And, being her only child, I was a hapless target. Whenever I did something wrong, admitted it and asked forgiveness, I set off a tirade. My mother allowed the circumstances of my misdeeds to cling like a burr to her memory, and whenever I provoked her, she reviewed them each afresh, reliving her agonies as a miser fingers his coins. The list increased as I grew older, so that my "bawling out" became an hour-long diatribe.

While I was still a compliant child, my mother examined me regularly to determine that my hymen was intact. As I grew older, inspection required my acquiescence. At thirteen I balked. Already filled with dread, she read my refusal as proof that I had been violated. She announced that as my mother she had a right to see my private parts. I disagreed. She pleaded, she wheedled, she shouted. I was adamant. Then, on one condition I relented: "Only if I can look at you in return." Wild with the urgency made frantic by her obsession, she assented. We disrobed and then spent ten minutes in "You first," "No, you first," interspersed with long, uncomfortable silences. Feeling foolish, I finally allowed her the first look. After five minutes I grew restless.

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When her turn came, my mother refused. I was furious. I argued that she had promised; a promise was sacred. She offered to let me see her rear and got on her hands and knees. After peering at her anus a minute, I decided that her compromise was worse than outright refusal. I again challenged her and reminded her of the importance of keeping her word. She did not answer. Abstractedly, she put on her clothes and turned away, unable to meet my eyes.

For me, a curtain rang down. I never thereafter shared anything that mattered. Many times, sensing that I was troubled, my mother declared that she was my best friend and urged me to confide in her. I nodded, not wanting to arouse her ire, but was mute, for I no longer believed or trusted her. Though I felt sorry for her, I could not pretend to be the loving daughter she longed to have.

After her funeral, after all the company had gone, my father, relieved at last to share his burden, told me about my mother's first baby, their agreement to tell no one, and the ways my mother's father had rejected her. I protested that they should have told me sooner--after all I was twenty-six, no longer a child. But of course they couldn't. My parents' pact was inviolable while my mother lived.

Another twenty years passed before I was able to forgive my mother the agonies I underwent because of her skewed notions about the purpose of her life. Only now can I feel compassion for her and mourn the alienated, guilt-ridden, hostile life she had lived, armored against chance discovery of her shameful transgression, an armor so thick

it filtered her perceptions of other's good will and through which she could neither give nor receive love.

\* \* \*

My remembrances of my mother are fraught with pain. Yet, I feel certain that she loved me when I was malleable and dependent. A tender quality, possibly love, would creep into her voice in later years when she told of my cute sayings when I was three. Only when I began to question her authority and wisdom did the picture change. The air became filled with conflict, accusations, recriminations, and angry silences. As late as when I was twelve, though, I remember that my mother and I laughed together. I'm sure we did.

#### MAMA AND THE MOCKINGBIRD

Although we were absorbed in sorting and packing tomatoes, when the mockingbird repeated my name, "Noriko, Noriko, Noriko," we recognized the tone and cadence as exact mimicry of my mother's. We lifted our heads, my mother and I, and as incredulity turned to certainty, we burst out laughing and laughed until we cried. My mother remarked that that creature had no respect for age, and we laughed some more.

Hidden by the thick mulberry leaves that shaded our work area, the mockingbird continued to trill and chirp. It imitated the meadowlark, the quail, the blackbird, the whip-poorwill, and the prolonged squeak of our screen door hinge. If it had chortled and gasped with helpless glee as we had

done, I would not have thought it exceptional. When it sang my name again, I noticed it lacked the urgency my mother packed into her ~~my~~ call, a summons that ordinarily made me cringe.

In crowded department stores in downtown Santa Ana, at picnics in Irvine Park, on the streets of Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, if she could not see me, my mother yelled my name. She wasted neither time looking for me, nor concern for my possible death by embarrassment. I always answered promptly, usually loping soundlessly to where she was, for to answer out loud would draw additional unwanted attention to myself, and to remain silent wouldn't work. It would only cause her to holler again.

Attention. To get the kind I wanted and from whom I desired it, and to repel all other, was for me a recurring, childhood dilemma, over which I had no control. Adults were so unpredictable. I had mixed feelings about the attention I would get at the school festival where I was scheduled to dance. We Japanese girls were never asked to do the minuet, the Highland fling or the Virginia reel; it was always the Japanese odori, performed to the wail of a phonograph in a minor key. The music alone aroused giggles that mocked me.

I remember my mother arrived at least an hour before the program to dress me. She was ill at ease in her best black dress and polished Enna Jetticks. That morning she had applied black dye to her wispy hair, and her scalp too, I observed.

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I suffered the layering on my skinny, twelve-year old frame of the soft undershirt with embroidered collar, the pink sarong, and the crimson under-kimono which flickered when I took a step. And finally I slipped my arms through the sleeves of the purple outer kimono, pebbly with clusters of yellow and orange French knots, centers of the chrysanthemums outlining the long, wide sleeves and hem.

I dreaded it when my mother used all her strength to tighten the obi, satin-stitched in red and gold, and arranged it in an elaborate bow on my back. I could hardly breathe. For my feet she produced white sateen, split-toed socks and red velvet thong sandals. Everything reeked of camphor.

Deftly my mother covered my face with chalky powder, rouged my cheeks and combed my black Dutchbob. In the mirror my face was solemn and unfamiliar, my mouth made tiny by an inch-wide dab of scarlet on my thin lips.

My parents could not easily afford the complete costume I now wore, my mother told me, nor the dancing lessons I had annually, once a week for six weeks, taught by a former geisha at the Stanton Japanese School, nor the daily Japanese schooling after public school. But they represented culture, and without them I was a peasant. It was important that I possess a modicum of grace and polish, for which my parents willingly sacrificed. Otherwise, no one would marry me. And, after all, marriage was the glorious fate for which I was being groomed.

As for the present, I felt no welling up of pleasure

at the prospect of dancing. On top of the actual weight of my attire, I felt the burden of my responsibility as a representative of the Japanese race to make a good impression on the "hakuji," the white folks who automatically were better than we. Nobody ever told me that. It was communicated in the way my father whipped off his hat and bobbed up and down a half dozen times. He sucked in his breath and showed his tobacco-stained teeth, repeating "machi braiji, machi braiji," (much obliged). Only toward whites, including women, did my father exhibit this odd behavior. Other cues I got from my mother, who also manifested an attitude of subservience.

She turned to greet my teacher, a brown-haired woman with a long, rabbit upper lip and receding chin. My teacher looked past her capacious bosom at my mother, who stood four feet nine, extended her hand and said, "How do you do, Mrs. Sawada, how very nice to see you."

Suppressing her instinctive reaction to step back and bow, my mother ran her palm down the side of her dress and tentatively placed her hand in my teacher's, who shook it a definite three times. This caused my mother to clap her free hand over her mouth and giggle.

My teacher said, "Noriko is a fine student, very bright."

Her sun-darkened face creased in a smile, my mother lowered her head twice, bowing. Little he-he sounds escaped between her fingers. In Japanese fashion, my mother wanted to reply that, on the contrary, her daughter was frequently inattentive, a day-dreamer, but the words wouldn't

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come.

"You must be very proud of Noriko," evoked more he-hes, for my mother spoke no English. Her stocky body swayed as she threw back her head in false merriment.

\* \* \*

Although our house, toolshed and barn were separated from our neighbors by acres of furrowed vegetable plats and orange groves, I was under my mother's surveillance most of the time. She could not, however, stop me from observing what went on about me. I feel fortunate that she did not observe me undergoing my first sex experience.

### THE DANCING BACHELORS

I knew better than to ask my father what it meant. He had acted so strangely when I told him about John and me. Besides, he may have missed it.

Carrying their bundles, the field hands had arrived at harvest time, delivered like cattle in open trucks by the labor contractor. From three weeks to a month they joined us at mealtime, ate swiftly and retired immediately. And then they were gone, silent shuffling men with no roots and few possessions. Sometimes one or two showed up the following year, but that was rare. Usually it was an entirely new crew.

Their presence delayed the time my mother and I bathed, for after my father, the laborers next had their

turn. Housed in a corner of a separate shack a few steps from our house, the bath was an oval, four by five feet galvanized iron tub four feet deep. The water was not changed between bathers and was heated by a gas ring which my father lit from outside. When it ran low, the water and gas were turned on for awhile.

A cemented area on two sides sloped toward a drain that directed the waste water into our garden. We did all our soaping and rinsing on the cement before we stepped into the tub to soak in steamy water up to our necks. It was my job to drain, scrub and fill the bathtub. Occasionally I forgot the last two steps, and I remember my father dragging me into the bathhouse to show me the hot, crackling tub and scold me.

Unlike the Mexicans who lived nearby in paint-hungry shanties and corrugated iron lean-tos, and who laughed and sang at work, these Asian workers seldom smiled and had little to say to us or to each other. I knew their faces but not their names and treated them with respect, for like us, they were Japanese, and because they were adults while I was a girl of eight.

I was sitting beside my father on the seat of our 1925 Graham truck with its perpendicular windshield and isinglass panes when I saw them, the two who had stayed behind on the day of rest. The others had taken their pay and the Greyhound bus to Los Angeles. It was only a glimpse through the uncurtained window of their quarters near the outhouse as we drove by, lurching along the pocked road past the orange orchard in pungent blossom.

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A movement caught my eye. The laborers were gyrating slowly like ballroom dancers, holding each other firmly, their shadows distorted on the wall behind them. They were naked. Their faces flushed, their shoulders glistened with sweat, and their chests adhered and rubbed together as they swayed. I heard no music. And if they noticed the rumble of our truck, they gave no sign. They were absorbed in each other and in the up and down motion of their clasped hands.

I saw them no more as our truck lumbered on. I shot a glance at my father. Had he seen what I had seen? His eyes looked straight ahead and betrayed nothing.

I was puzzled. The men's behavior did not fit my notion of proper Japanese conduct. Traditionally undemonstrative in greeting even relatives or close friends, Japanese step back and bow from the waist rather than rush forward to embrace and kiss. Except when they self-consciously burlesqued what white people did in train stations, I had never seen my parents kiss. As for dancing, it was done strictly by women or by highly trained kabuki actors impersonating women. Both were stylized, formal exhibitions. Then there was harvest dancing by country folks, but two dancers never touched. And they always wore clothes.

I was disturbed by the workmen but I spoke of them to no one. My stomach felt funny, queasy, the same way it felt when I had seen dogs coupling or a stray cat giving birth in the manger. About to fork some hay into the trough, I noticed the cat. "Shoo," I said, "that's no place to nap. This is where I feed the horses. Get out of here!"

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I prodded her with the pitchfork. Helpless, she looked at me with baleful eyes. She writhed but emitted no sound while a large, damp, grey turd emerged from her lower aperture. The grey thing moved and the cat licked it all over. She rested a bit and resumed her writhing. Again that odd sensation gripped my stomach. I could watch no longer. Hours later I went back but the cat and kitten had disappeared.

I was witnessing fearsome things which did not fit my understanding of the world. I could not bring myself to ask my parents about them, about what they had to do with me. I felt uneasy, as though perhaps what I had observed were "bad," and that I was perpetuating that "badness" by knowing that they had occurred.

I didn't ask my father about the bachelors because he had turned purple when I told him about John and me. As far as I was concerned, we had done nothing wicked.

Panties off, my dress bunched up around my neck, the sun was warm on my spread legs as I lay on John's shirt. At thirteen he was the second oldest of our neighbor's three children. He had paid me scant notice until that afternoon when I had agreed to go exploring with him.

We had gotten as far as the pumphouse. It roofed the water pump and protected it on three sides from the weather. It offered meager additional space and held no interest for any of us children. In the middle of our ten-acre farm a short walk from our homes, it was perfect for what John had in mind.

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Feverishly he pushed his member again and again against my vagina. His nose was running. He sniveled and huffed and puffed but failed; his penis remained limp. When I asked, John said that this game was called "fuck-ing." It was not unpleasant; I tolerated it for the attention I enjoyed from John, an older boy.

Gradually I became aware that my father was calling me and that he had been calling for some time, his voice changing from a halloo to an exasperated shout. I slipped into my panties and ran between the strawberry plats to our backdoor. Halfway there I stopped to empty my shoes of sand. I hollered that I was coming.

Relieved to see me but angry for having had to yell for so long, my father told me in Japanese that it was lunchtime and asked what I had been doing that had prevented me from responding at once. Since I knew that he spoke no English, I felt safe in replying, "fucking with John."

My father's face turned the color of a bruise. "What did you <sup>say?</sup> Say it again!" His demand was ominous.

"I, I made a mistake--that's not what I meant. Finding, father, we were finding things," I blurted in a mixture of English and Japanese. He was supposed to understand no English. I felt betrayed. He looked at me in silence and then turned away. His shoulders slumped. His mottled color and rage gradually subsided. He never mentioned John or fucking again. Certain that I had not fooled my father, however, I lived in fear that at any moment my mother would speak to me about it. She never did.

## Bridges

Years later, I spent most of World War II in one of ten concentration camps where Japanese, aliens and American citizens alike, were incarcerated. I thought about the dancing bachelors when I saw two rows of cots in a cavernous, unpartitioned barrack a hundred feet long. ~~This was housing for approximately~~ fifty single men, an unusually high number compared to the two hundred others in the block who belonged to a family.

Most of them had been prevented from mail ordering a bride from Japan by the Oriental Exclusion Act of 1924. Some had been separated from their families by the war. The majority had led partnerless, nomadic existences like the contract laborers I had encountered in my childhood.

Their average age well over sixty years, a number of them died in camp. And for their funerals the women stayed up all night to fashion wreaths of citrus fruit wrappings and toilet tissue that rustled in the dry, desert air.

\* \* \*

Next to ~~my~~ birth, the greatest catalyst in my life was World War II. President Roosevelt's evacuation order yanked me from our isolated farm into the concentration camp and eventually out from under the domination of my mother to a white collar job in San Francisco.

Those were times of enormous personal and interpersonal conflict and stress, which coincided with the age when rebellion is normal. Japanese families of my acquaintance, however, brooked no such revolt by a daughter. I note that mine took the form of <sup>attempted</sup> suicide, a culturally

acceptable method of shouting that life is intolerable.

\* \* \*

FAREWELL, CRUEL WORLD

After we'd been in camp for three months, the idle men too old to be assigned jobs (my father, at seventy, was one) found ways to take up their time. For one project, they caught five carp in the Colorado River and put them in a cement-lined pond they had dug between ours and the next barrack. Invited, I admired their handiwork and the grace of the fish, iridescent in the sun-warmed water.

Next morning they were dead, poisoned by the chemicals leached from the fresh cement. The sight of the carp, immune to hurt, their swollen bellies turned to the Arizona sky, may have stirred my numb brain to act, to achieve in one blow freedom from my mother's tyranny, and ~~simultaneously~~ ~~revenge~~ revenge for her maltreatment of me.

The reason for my mother's behavior originated in Japan when at sixteen she had borne an illegitimate son. So profound had been her humiliation she swore that no daughter of hers would suffer the same fate. Hence, the guarding of my virginity became her reason for being. I have already described my mother's obsession and its impact on my life. It continued to plague me long after her death.

At thirteen I had turned my back on my mother for having failed to keep her word in a mutual "show" session, which also I have already described. She showed no remorse

and continued to demand that I respond to her needs. I did respond, insofar as I could without compromising my integrity. By the time I graduated from high school in 1940, my mother had developed high blood pressure, an outgrowth of accumulated stress over barely making a living in a foreign country where she and my father always felt themselves to be intruders, and her pre-existing anxieties, intensified by mounting tension between the United States and Japan.

When war did come with the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japanese planes in December of 1941, we were relieved to have the inevitable occur. It was like hearing the second shoe drop. As public clamor increased that we Japanese, indistinguishable from the enemy and therefore the enemy, be put away "for our own protection," we knew that we were powerless to prevent our imprisonment.

One day in May, 1942, we gathered at the Huntington Beach High School ~~where we boarded~~ <sup>to</sup> buses which transported us to the concentration camp in Arizona. Its capacity was 20,000 evacuees. Innocuously named the Colorado River War Relocation Project, it was set in the desert, in a sun-baked, windswept corner of the Parker Indian Reservation near the California border. In equally inhospitable locations were nine other such camps, in California, Utah, Arizona, Idaho, Colorado, Arkansas, and Wyoming.

We took up residence in one of a row upon row of double-roofed, tar-papered barracks in blocks of fourteen, encircled by barbed wire with watchtowers at regular intervals like exclamation points. Searchlights raked our dignity; behind them stood rifle-bearing MP's. Each block had

a messhall and a communal men's and women's toilets and showers and a laundry room.

In May the desert was hot, ninety to a hundred degrees at three o'clock. We were perspiring when we transferred from the bus onto the truck which deposited us and the belongings we had been allowed to bring--only what my father and I could carry--clothing, linens, and my father's carpentry tools. We stared at the bare 25 x 25 foot space with no partitions or water, the "apartment" our family of three were to share with a stranger-bachelor (four to a cubicle) for the duration of the war.

For the folding cots, mattresses were canvas bags into which we stuffed straw from bales alongside the road. During the ensuing week my father partitioned off our sleeping area from the bachelor's with a bedspread. Also, from scrap lumber left by the builders of the camp, my father made a crude table and stools. I sifted through the sand for nails that could be straightened.

Uncertainty about our future, although we were all in the same "stew," served to separate, rather than to bring our family together. We quarreled about the war. Prohibited from owning land or acquiring citizenship, my parents' allegiance lay with Japan. And I remained loyal to America despite the fact that my government had put me in a concentration camp through no wrongdoing on my part, merely because I shared an ancestry in common with the enemy. That our imprisonment was the culmination of a half century of anti-Asian sentiment was apparent in the fact that no wholesale round-up of citizens of Italian and German ancestry had taken place. Italy and Germany too were America's

enemies in this war. My arguments with my parents always ended with me in tears, my father taunting, "Real Americans aren't locked up. Land of the free! Ha!" After awhile, we stopped discussing the war.

I was nineteen and had been delighted to leave the isolation of our vegetable farm near Garden Grove for the excitement and adventure promised in a densely-populated concentration camp. My mother, on the other hand, lived in terror that I would be violated.

Despite my mother and before the net closed around me, I did have a few dates to movies and to dances held in messhalls a half mile away. The young man would knock. Invited in, he would greet my mother in Japanese, "Good evening, Mrs. Sawada," very respectful. She would look through and beyond him and not reply. Yet, when we walked out into the street, my mother would follow us, wait until the dance or film ended, sometimes at midnight, and silently follow us home again. The same boy never asked me out twice. My mother and I were the laughingstock of ~~all~~ my peers. I was infuriated at her and embarrassed because I had done nothing to warrant her lack of trust. But she could not help herself, so immersed was she in the role of bodyguard.

In her panic my mother drew me closer and closer. She could not spare me to work because she needed a nurse and handmaiden. Robot-like, I complied. When my mother told me to, I woke up, took my meals, fetched <sup>her</sup> ~~my mother's~~ food and returned the trays, did the laundry, the ironing, the cleaning, I showered, washed my hair and hers, and went

to sleep. She controlled every aspect of my life. While she napped I frequented the library two blocks away. She soon plugged that fissure. "You mustn't read. It will ruin your eyes."

My mother's distrust of men spread like a stain to include anyone of either sex who attracted even my passing interest. She hated the librarian, for surely I was using the library as a cover for meeting boyfriends. None of my girl friends was good enough. As though their physical defects were contagious, my mother complained that their teeth were crooked or their eyesight bad. They were untrustworthy because their parents came from a prefecture other than my mother's.

My mother needed to know who had sent the letters I received and what they said. She asked me what I had written in reply and dictated what my letters should contain. If I were tardy in responding, she nagged until I took up my pen.

Tighter and tighter my mother drew my tether until I gave up. I no longer struggled to have friends, to go to the library, to write letters, to reach out. Once in awhile I laughed, a dry, hollow cackle that sounded like sobs. They were meant to make my mother's hair stand on end, but she seemed not to notice. I was cracking up in my prison within a prison. I had become a spineless, unresisting creature, with no will of my own except to die.

The sun was shining the morning the carp floated belly up in the brackish water, the day of my escape. I

wanted to make sure that after I was gone, my mother would have no picture of me (and certainly none smiling) with which to measure her loss. I wanted to erase all evidence that I had ever been born. Screened from view by a clump of feathery tamarisk, I tore the photos into bits and scattered them in the garbage cans behind the messhall.

I swallowed<sup>w</sup> twenty of my mother's sleeping pills and expected the end to come swiftly. I had not counted on getting hungry or on my lunch diluting the pills' effect. Like a condemned prisoner, I planned to make my exit on a full stomach. I was saved by a girl friend who came to visit in spite of my mother's repellent demeanor. I apologized that I could not converse because I expected to be dead in a few hours. She ran for the doctor.

My mother was jubilant; I had proved her right. She announced to the doctor that I was pregnant--the only reason a woman my age would want to take her life. I protested my innocence. Nevertheless, the doctor implored me to reveal the name of my lover. Dimly I saw that everyone, a stock character, was reciting captions from a parody of a silent movie, cliché. Two divergent points of view about my suicide: mine (a strike to escape my bonds), and that of the others (I could not bear the shame of my condition), reduced to ridiculousness and low comedy this very serious moment in my life. So when I laughed until I cried, no one understood. They stood by and exchanged looks that agreed that I was crazy.

The doctor forced me to drink diluted ammonia and instructed my weeping father to jab my foot with a needle

## Bridges

each time I dozed. Meantime, unmoved by the prospect of my death, my mother ascribed no guilt to herself and took no part in the rescue operations. Enraged that I had usurped her place as the member of our family with license to be sick, she pouted because I instead of she had received the doctor's ministrations.

Periodically stabbed awake, I groggily realized that to my mother I was not a real human being. I was instead a vehicle through whom, were I to die by my own hand, she could receive the commiseration she yearned for, the pity to match her own self-pity. It was futile for me to offer up my life as a way of getting even with her or of making her sorry. She was beyond my reach.

\* \* \*

## Commentary

In the last episode I was nineteen, so this paper constitutes only a fraction of an autobiography for me, now fifty-five years old. The last two sketches for class did carry me into 1954, but they are too lengthy to include here.

The leitmotif of my reminiscences is that because I am Japanese, horrible things happened to me. The most hurtful was when my country could not distinguish me from the enemy and put me in<sup>a</sup> concentration camp for three years.

Other forms of feedback that affect self-esteem also were negative. I had watched my father and mother act like inferiors because of their inability to speak English.

Being their child, I presumed that I was inferior too. The poor and angry Okies (whom I knew our <sup>other</sup> white neighbors detested) in front of whose house I caught the bus to high school, called me "Jap." Their language and hostility were mirrored by their children four and six years old. I consoled myself that things would be different when I grew up.

Laws reinforced that negative message. In addition to the bars against my parents becoming citizens or owning land, in Santa Ana we could not swim in the public pool, except for the day before the water was changed.

We Japanese attended church services in English on Friday evenings only, when the Baptist Church let us use one of their Sunday school bungalows. We were not welcomed at the main church or by other denominations.

I've already described World War II and incarceration, family conflict and economic losses. Then, on December 31, 1944, the Supreme Court ruled that unless we were charged with and tried for specific acts of wrongdoing, we had to be freed. Before we scattered, the relocation officer warned us:

Don't speak Japanese in public.

Don't congregate in groups of more than four.

Don't be conspicuous.

I was determined to follow those rules and make a successful adjustment to outside life. The war was still on, and the front pages featured stories of casualties and heroism in the battles for the Pacific.

A taxi driver in Berkeley showed me two Mason jars

## Bridges

of gold-inlaid teeth he had taken from dead "Japs" in Okinawa. I was immobilized. Was he associating me with those enemy "Japs"? The relocation officer hadn't anticipated this. He hadn't told me what to say.

From his caveats though, I drew a further conclusion: don't admit to being Japanese; it's safer that way. The next summer, en route by train to Chicago from San Francisco, a group of American soldiers spoke to me in Japanese. What they said was friendly enough, but panic made an instant mask of my face.

"Oh," they asked, "aren't you Japanese?"

"No," I replied.

"Korean?"

"No."

"Chinese?"

"No."

"Filipino?"

"Filipino! Do I look Filipino?"

"Well, what are you then?"

"I don't know. My mother was a lesbian," I said.

It shut them up and made me guilty of denying myself, of denying my own rich heritage.

In 1945 I resettled in San Francisco. On my stenographer's salary, I supported my parents, grown too old to operate a farm, their life's savings too meager to start over with. My mother died in 1949; my father in 1953.

After the war many of the discriminatory laws were rescinded, such as those denying access to swimming pools, and in 1952 the McCarran Act enabled Japanese to apply for citizenship. California's prohibition against Japanese

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owning land was repealed in 1956. However, in 1958 when I sought to become the third wife of a fifty-eight year old labor leader, a naturalized Australian, the State of Nevada denied us a marriage license. The same old message: you are inferior. But this time it was different. I had an ally. I could put up a fight.

We challenged the law against mixed marriages and won. We had planned a quiet ceremony without fuss and expense. While waiting four days for the hearing on our petition, the media followed us everywhere and reported everything we did, including that I had breakfasted on French toast and had had my nails manicured. Our lawyer's bill ~~for services rendered~~ was \$2000.

After the birth of our daughter, for twelve years I was a full-time mother. Who I ~~really~~ was was obscured by the roles I had played as daughter, breadwinner, wife and mother. When it became necessary for me to uncover who I really was in order to survive, I resisted, because years of denigration by others and society had accustomed me to belittling my own worth. I didn't want to find out. I was afraid that after I had peeled away the layers of protection, the witty parries <sup>like spikes on a cactus,</sup> the essence of who I was would be hideous.

To proclaim that I was Japanese threatened my survival. Yet, as a matter of integrity, before I could believe in my intrinsic worth as a human being, I had to do it. I did do it. I "found myself" in a long and painful process that involved psychotherapy and est. I relived all my anger and tore the scabs off my wounds, often lashing

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out at family members, those closest to me. But the result was worth it. At the other end of that tortuous tunnel waited a positive me, an intelligent, sensitive, mature woman of potential and talent, whose Japanese background is precisely what makes me unique and attractive.

The End.

Bridges

5

POWER, THE NAME OF THE OLD SHELL GAME

Like marching units, a procession of people have passed through my life, touched it briefly or for longer stretches, and moved on. Some departed with my acquiescence; others over my protests. My parents, for example, have appeared again and again, occasionally in disguise, to cast shadows shaped like question marks on my diorama.

Was it in obeisance to a perverse aspect of my pun-loving nature that the first four men with whom I was intimate were named Dick or Peter? Were they actors I craftily drew into a tragi-comedy written by me? Why were three of them inextricably married? Could one reason have been that as I reached puberty, my mother grew more frenzied in competing with me for my father's love? Had I risen to her challenge and lost? Was my father's ambivalence unacceptable to me? Why then did I repeatedly arrange to become joined in a similar power struggle if not but to crush my mother? Was I playing out an atavistic ritual for survival, decisively to obliterate my rival, but one that was weighted against me? When I finally did marry at thirty-five, had I outgrown that need?

Or, as a guarantee against lifelong commitment, did I require my lovers to be married? Did my losing my lovers to their wives prove how unworthy I was to be loved in the

first place? What pleasure did I derive from the pain of being<sup>a</sup>/cuckolded mistress? As I look back now with a more densely packed sense of my own worth and<sup>imagine</sup>/my acrobatic abilities transcending normal limits, I bend over while I deliver a thwacking kick to my own backside.

Meantime, identified with my first love which lasted for nine years is the memory of an incident that demonstrates the devastating effect of humor on sex. We were making love, Peter and I, on a clammy bed in a dingy, uninsulated shack on stilts in the outskirts of Albany when Albany still had outskirts. The bed was clammy because one sheet was not fresh. It never was, for Peter refused to deviate from his ~~boardi-~~boarding school training of transferring the soiled top sheet to the bottom and placing the clean one on top. A week of rain had mildewed the walls. A chicken had crawled under the shack and died beneath the bedroom.

During a lull, my glance swept the dusty-heavy, once-yellow curtains, the fungus-coated walls, the chairs with missing rungs and the table whose peacock blue enamel had bubbled and now revealed patches of its former colors, black and yellow. The decomposing animal was pungent. My observation, "Poor Peter, stuck in this godforsaken hole," broke our mood, possibly forever.

I giggled intermittently all weekend, so that by Sunday Pete welcomed my leavetaking. Afterwards, I wonderd what I was doing there. Why did I need to continue to

underpin this once-proud, defiant man who had chosen to retreat from society? Why did I accede to his demand that I spend my every weekend with him, serving as his conduit to the outside world? Why had my adoration deteriorated to pity?

I may never know the answers to the questions I pose about the theme of the ballet my father and ~~father~~<sup>mo</sup> and I have danced. The answers float about like milkweed pods and drop on indifferent soil, for it is untimely for them <sup>yet</sup> to take root. However, why I threw myself at Peter can be explained in one word--power. Henry Kissinger spoke the truth when he said power is the greatest aphrodisiac. Pete, it seemed to me, had it all, and I had none. Convinced of my own impotence, I believed its cure was to associate myself with one who was strong.

My own lack had been drummed into me by my parents during the first two decades of my life. I was never consulted, only told, when our family moved, always in search of a better piece of farmland to lease, from Gardena to Ventura, to Santa Barbara, to Inglewood, to Garden Grove, and even though I was thirteen by the time we moved once again, to Santa Ana.

By then I had watched my father relate to Caucasians as a servile supplicant and my mother as a dumb mendicant (she spoke no English and therefore only giggled), which

demonstrated to me that they thought of themselves as inferior and that I, being their child, was presumed to be likewise inferior.

Denied me also were two main decisions Americans expect to, and are encouraged to make for themselves: their vocation and whom they will marry. I wanted to go to college but I was allowed only a year at junior college to study home economics. It seemed to me home economics teachers and majors were exceedingly dull, ~~of personalities.~~ I wanted to study something else, something exciting. I was torn by my desire to be someone, to make something of myself, the route to which lay via college, and my parents' obvious poverty. They needed my labor on the farm. They dreamed of my marrying a young farmer with whom we would all work ~~together~~, my parents eventually retiring to babysit the grandchildren. That dream did not include college for me, where I would acquire lofty notions no self-respecting Japanese farmer should be asked to deal with. I also knew that I would have little say in who that self-respecting Japanese farmer would be.

I was nineteen when World War II created enormous conflicts, <sup>in</sup> addition to the pre-existing generational and cultural ones, between me and my parents, and new and different ones between me and my country. My parents' country was winning in a shooting war against my own country, which

was going to, and eventually did, imprison me, an American, in a concentration camp with my alien parents.

Every Sunday I used to hear Walter Winchell broadcast the need to protect the "Japs," to remove them for their own good. He urged his listeners to write their Congressmen and suggest that the potential saboteurs in their midst be locked away. That he was referring to me as dangerous and evil was inconceivable, and its full import struck me only later when I sought to adjust myself to concentration camp life for an unspecified time. Who could say then how long the war would last? Again I had been moved, this time by political-economic forces which also had given me no choice.

Finally, I was in thrall to my hypochondriacal mother, to whose whim of iron I bent. I sensed her own feeling of powerlessness in her angry rejection of her role as the inferior, less intelligent partner in her relationship with my father. It was a role I could look forward to duplicating as the wife of a husband they would select for me.

I was a nonperson with no druthers. Hopelessness and helplessness were my daily companions. My only out was death. I have already written about my suicide attempt and the perspective I gained when I saw it as ridiculous. Until then life was heavy, like swimming in a sweatshirt dipped in cement, hardly worth the effort.

Thereafter, relieved of attending to my mother's needs,

I went to work as a secretary in the construction department, working a forty-four hour week for \$16 a month. In the administration building I met Peter, a skinny, high-strung, ordinary-looking man with glasses <sup>whose</sup> ~~whose~~ arrogant manner and high-pitched, accented voice were abrasive. At forty he was the most powerful Japanese man in our camp. He came by his power as supervisor of block managers, elected by them, who in turn each represented the nearly two hundred residents of the block that he managed.

When Pete spoke, the Camp Director and all the lesser administrators, white civil servants, listened, while treating the rest of us Japanese politely and patronizingly. He was the first Japanese person I had ever met who neither believed nor acted as though he were inferior. He was respected and even feared by the white administrators, for their effective job performance depended on Peter's cooperation, which he granted or withheld like a regent. Pete exerted his grass roots strength in behalf of the inmates to correct wrongs and to defy the administration and to wrest from it compromises we considered wins.

I was flattered to have Pete's attention, even though he was married and the father of two daughters. While I agonized over the morality of attaching myself to a married man, I needed desperately to be associated with the power that he wielded and his go-to-hell recklessness.

After the war, Pete's family moved to Los Angeles while he lived in Berkeley and wrote (with a white sociologist) a socio- and politico-scientific treatise about camp life and the uprisings that he had led. A scholarly work studded with footnotes, it was published by the University of California Press.

When the book was completed, Pete said he had insufficient credentials (a BS in electrical engineering from Stanford) to seek a job in sociology. Defeated by his fear of rejection, he didn't even try. Pete found work tending a boiler all night in a small flower nursery. Because he had agreed to forgo nights off, the nursery had provided him the shack he lived in. True to his word, he worked at that job every night for three years without a single day of rest.

Released from concentration camp, a puddle, Pete moved into the whole of society, a lake, where he made no ripples at all. His power gone, he clung to me (and I allowed it) as sediment from a heady time when his utterances had had significance. His personality changed. The flabbiness of his ego made me both hate and pity him. He related to white persons in a self-effacing manner, no different from the toadying way my father had acted. He had also begun to lean on me out of his own need, just as my father was doing. He had become my father in disguise.

I offered to support Pete while he got his doctorate in sociology but he angrily refused. He said he was too old, approaching fifty. In violation of my sense of loyalty and duty which was overcome by my desire to survive, I decided to sever my relations with Peter. By that decision I stopped being a victim. I realized I could say, "No, that's not what I want," or "Yes, that is what I want," and the sky would not fall down. I didn't need to suffer the demon-ridden anguish I used to undergo when I believed that everyone else's desires and wishes should take precedence over mine. I, standing by myself, possessed an identity worthy of notice, separate from that of the man with whom I was linked.

Peter and I made a clean break, minus the moony, telephoned come-ons, letters and attempts to meet accidentally. Three years later I received a note from Pete's daughter. She had found my address among her father's papers and wanted me to know that he had died peacefully in his sleep.

Peter had been ~~ch~~arking in a run-down San Francisco hotel that catered to Japanese. The man who answered the telephone told me that Pete had quit his job and moved to Los Angeles, had returned to the hotel to pick up his effects and had succumbed in that room. When guests began to complain of the smell, my informant had investigated and found Pete's cadaver.

My occasional thoughts about Peter are without rancor though tinged with sorrow. While a prisoner, he displayed his remarkable leadership ability and experienced his finest moments. His life lost its purpose when his arena disappeared, his army dribbled away, and he was deprived of an adversary to fight and occasionally prevail over.

I felt no sense of loss and claimed no responsibility for either <sup>failing</sup> ~~stopping~~ to stop or accelerating Pete's toboggan ride to self-destruction. He imagined himself pitted against a malevolent and omnipotent society that would surely strike him down. All his decisions thereafter validated his dismal construct of the world and his fatalistic inability to see himself other than as a victim of its hostile racism brought on his death at the age of fifty-two, all alone in an impersonal hotel room. For days no one missed him; no one had looked for him.

By the time Pete died, <sup>redivivistically</sup> I was hooked into another relationship with a new and different married man, who also seemed possessed of power and a militant determination to use it to alleviate the sufferings of the downtrodden, the poor and the dispossessed. I said to myself, at last through this man I will rise from among the faceless, unrepresented multitude and discover an identity I can call my own.

o o o

These are an articles of faith as a samurai, its a kind of proverb or form (lesson) for samurai. These are a general thought of old Japanese on feudal times let alone a samurai.

They are one of expression of their loyalty for one's master (or duty), these ideas are still living in many of Japanese, but it's changing little by little.

### Meaning of each sentence

1. A very loyal samurai serves his master whole his life.

忠臣ニ君に<sup>ま</sup>えす (忠誠な武士は人の君主に仕える)

2. Duty is most important (or weighty) things <sup>in</sup> for one's living.

義務は山の様に重いものである。

3. Samurai (people) are die in the pursuit of one's duty, it seems that people don't have any worry about their death.

身をこうもり(鶴毛)の軽きに置く。

自分の義務又は信念をつらぬくためには死をも恐れぬ (羽毛の様に軽く思う)

# INFO

September 22, 1978

Dear Rosalie,

My desire to say thanks for Doing Fieldwork was delayed by my equally strong desire to reciprocate, to tell you more about myself, at best a time-consuming, neurosis-hatching process of selection that, in order to span the more than thirty years we haven't seen each other, calls for at least one book and dredged up a horde of pulsating memories.

For starters I thought I would send you a piece describing my relationship with Nishimoto. I'd done it for Women's Auto-biographies last semester at SFSU. However, I had made changes each time I reread it, and I decided it was in no shape to send. So, my simple note of thanks crumbled under the burden of a lifetime passing in review.

As you know, my husband had retired in July 1977 and relinquished the power he enjoyed for forty-five years as president of the ILWU. He was continuing to suffer the identity crisis retirement brings, which I understood yet resisted. (It's a pain in the ass!) It was strongly reminiscent of Nishimoto's agony when Dorothy no longer had any use for him. (I'll send you the piece as soon as I retype it.) ~~The wording of the foregoing sounds as though I blame Dorothy for Richard's deterioration.~~ I don't mean that.

MP  
Harry and I had agreed to collaborate on his autobiography, but it was stalled by our own ignorance about the ways of publishers and our entanglement with an inept book agent. The chief bottleneck was Harry's reluctance, his depression-induced immobility. A month ago the logjam broke and we started taping. So I concentrated on that. I intend to get as much raw data as possible and fashion a book from them, in Harry's own voice. His speech patterns are so different from mine, his expressions rooted in the thirties; e.g. scram, hit the hay, on the fritz, alibi and relief (instead of welfare). Right now I see it as a challenge, not as painstaking work. I may change my mind.

I'd already experienced and overcome the qualms of my losing my own identity in a project where I subjugated my importance to his. I felt my ego was sufficiently developed to view the job as the same as that of writing any other book about any other

# NIKKI

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subject. I wanted terribly to write a book about a momentous life that could establish me as a craftsman. That I had never written before I resumed college three years ago seemed inconsequential. For instance, I wrote "To Be or Not To Be" for Fundamentals of Creative Writing. The assignment was "a few stanzas of poetry that tell me a little about yourself." I'd never written a poem before, or, for that matter, since. However, I know Harry has misgivings about entrusting the chronicling of his life to a woman and an amateur at that.

So, these are some of the reasons why I failed to send you a timely, warm thank you for Doing Fieldwork. It's a humdinger (not rooted in the thirties?)--fascinating reading. I enjoyed it very much. I had just read Carobeth Laird's Encounter... I don't mean to compare the two, only that you both had contact with Indians.

I notice there's considerable interest now in the concentration camps and the Government's methods for determining, and its effect upon, who was loyal or disloyal. Doing Fieldwork belongs in the syllabi of Asian studies courses as well as those of sociology and anthropology. I'll see what I can do about getting for Doing Fieldwork the attention from Japanese-Americans that it warrants.

Meantime, keep in touch. Should your travels draw you hither, give a yell (415) 648-8476.

Love,

*Nikki*

# INFORMATION

November 9, 1978

Dear Rosalie,

What I failed to say about Doing Fieldwork is that the eager sociologists and anthropologists following in your steps should bless you for writing it. Your caveat is that each situation is different and none will approximate our preconceived notions of how it's going to be.

Moreover, it's impossible to please some people, be it Dorothy Thomas or Dorothy Miller. Do you know Dorothy Miller? She's part Indian, razor sharp, and heads the Institute for Scientific Analysis here, in Berkeley and Los Angeles. During the time I was associated with it, it turned out a flurry of studies, from a comparison of the accountability of accountants and social workers and one other professional group to their clients (by Arlene Kaplan Daniels) to wives and children of alcoholics, runaways and battered children, and the evaluation of the efficacy of the Berkeley School System's plan for eliminating institutional racism. I think Berkeley got a million dollars to put the plan into effect and the Institute \$200,000 to measure it over three years.

When I was administratively assisting Arlene, she and Jim Benet wrote a proposal (rejected) for observing elementary school children to determine why, although poor whites, Blacks, Chicanos and Orientals in the inner city start out turned on to education, by the fifth grade only the Orientals remain committed. Their hypothesis was that attitudes toward learning was culturally determined, that proper white, middle-class behavior was expected by the ditto teachers while the confused children could not conform to those standards. For instance, Native American children are taught not to speak in the presence of adults and never assert themselves.

Your husband's and your finding that peer group pressure militates against scholarship is tremendously significant.

Add to that the lack of role models for Native Americans. Buffy Ste. Marie? Sasheen Littlefeather? The snufflers at the public trough in Canada you describe so well?

Incidentally, it is a theory of mine that our government's

billion dollar give-away grant system is to keep college graduates off the streets and from agitating for a system other than capitalism.

The highest paid person in the City of Berkeley is a man who writes superb grant proposals. The LEAA keeps the Los Angeles Police Department's research arm of 123 persons well fed ~~an~~ and fringed.

John and Sylvia Powell, publishers of a paper in China, wrote that the United States had used germ warfare during the Korean conflict. They were hauled home and indicted for treason. The case never went to trial because much of the Powell's charge was documented. However, they have lived under a cloud. John now has new evidence from Japanese <sup>during WWII</sup> sources about the laboratories they maintained <sup>subsequently</sup> which were taken over by the Americans, and for whom the Japanese worked. John has been funded by the US Government to document the US role in germ warfare during Korea. John suspects that Leionnaire's disease is really caused by escaped germs (accidental or otherwise). Shudder.

Dorothy Miller discovered I was Harry's wife while I worked for Arlene as Managing Editor of Social Problems. Since Dorothy had once organized for the Farm Equipment Workers and had her teeth knocked out by the police during a labor fracas in Moline, Illinois, she had a soft spot for Harry. She offered me the directorship of the Center for Employment Studies. We were going to study the effects of the 1973 slump on the Auto Workers, we thought, but the Auto Workers had a scam of their own going, and while they did not want to openly snub Harry's wife, did so anyway.

What emerged from that experience was my decision to go to college. I had had one year of junior college. I was going to study sociology, but when this wide-eyed child saw what was available in that candy store, I took all sorts of yummy courses--Geography and World Affairs, Creative Problem Solving in Engineering, Holistic Health, Essay Writing, Women's Short Stories, etc. I truly loved school. When I finish Harry's book, I expect to return. Maybe, if the book's any good, the Creative Writing Department will give me a degree.

STrangely enough, Dorothy and I parted friends, she muttering that while she was trying to make a sociologist out of me, I actually was a writer.

I just had a call from Tillie Olson (Tell me a Riddle) that Alice Walker (Meridian and In Love and Trouble) an editor of Ms., would like to persuade Ms. to publish one of my stories, or it and the poem too. I think Ms. is a frigging bore,

humorless and grim. <sup>other</sup> However, I am willing for it to carry my writing because my option is the Amerasia Journal (UCLA) read by only a select few, or the Holiday edition of the JACL's Pacific Citizen. The material therein is grammatical.

About Harry's book, Simon & Schuster offered \$35,000 for it, based solely on chapter headings, but we rejected it. However, our agent did tell us something about the book business. All publishing houses, except Bantam, are a part of a conglomerate. Only Bantam is independent. All the conglomerate wants is to make money; that they would prefer to produce Jaws than great or pithy literature (yeth indeed). One comforting thought for not pulling punches. After Watergate, they're willing to publish anything critical of our government, shocking or left wing, whatever ~~that~~ will make money.

The reasons our agent gave for his failure to get a better offer were 1) the editorial boards being very young, in their thirties, had never heard of Harry Bridges and hence were unwilling to come up with a sizeable proposal; and 2) no book by or about a labor leader had ever made money. Well, if our own agent buys those rationales, we're dead.

I was laughing to myself the other day because I have lived long enough to hire a white gardener--didn't even have to go to Australia to do so.

Another cyclical phenomenon I've thought about is that first we homo sapiens were nomadic tribes. Then we developed agriculture and worked on the distribution, or hoarding, of surpluses. For a number of centuries, our society's stability has depended on the tribe's matriarch and patriarch staying in one place so their progeny ~~could~~ seek succor in time of emotional <sup>or</sup> economic disaster. Now, with multiple marriages and constant moving about, it has become the vogue for married couples who retire to buy a Winnebago and resume the nomad's life. The kids have one hell of a time knowing where the family manse is, and maybe that's the way the parents want it.

No one stays put. It's hard to keep track of who your relatives are or were. In our family, for instance, there is the Australian branch, who periodically visit, and those associated with Harry's two previous marriages. His first

new on  
Jaws  
put.

# NIKKI

Page 4  
November 9, 1978

wife was Irish, from Coos Bay. He has a 54-year old daughter who lives in a halfway house for the emotionally unable to cope. She met Lucky there, whom she took to her fifth lawful wedded husband about three months ago. Lucky asked me what Harry did in retirement, and I responded that he frequently spoke at conventions and seminars, at law schools and universities. He looked puzzled. "What about?" he wanted to know, "whatever about?"

That daughter, Jackie, bore three children by her second husband, a Mormon, whom she divorced and married again. Because of the divorce, they were not permitted into the sacristy at the Salt Lake City Temple. This so offended Jackie, she announced one day that she had taken to drinking coffee. Harry and I didn't dare look at each other, for fear we'd explode.

three

All Jackie's offspring, including the grandchildren, are redheads.

Then there are a 35-year old daughter and a 30-year old son, both unmarried, from Harry's Jewish second wife, and all her relatives in New York and Chicago.

I have no relatives here, but my Japanese cousins visit rather frequently. During the last visit I accompanied one of them who purchased enormously expensive bags (Gucci, Yves St. Laurent) and scarves (\$60 for a silk square). ~~In reporting to another~~ <sup>in this to a</sup> Nisei friend, a loan officer in a bank, <sup>who</sup> she advised me that the modern Japanese were very name conscious and were considered ~~successors to~~ American JAP's (Jewish American Princesses). This too I find hilarious.

*↳ the lesbian counterparts of*

I'm glad you remembered about Dick's exquisite awareness of his being of the "shizoku" class, for undoubtedly his point of view differed from that of us raggedy-assed pea pickers. I also remember his telling me about having found his mother and his adult but younger brother in bed together, with all the questionable implications that that stirred up.

Not one of Dorothy's hirelings was around (Dick was the last) whom we can ask about what happened between him and her. If he told me, it left no impression. Because of Dick's anomalous position (read dependent) and he was a Gibraltar of foam rubber outside of camp, I suspect he made compromises in the hope of a post in sociology which Dorothy may have dangled before him. She was a sly one, that Dorothy, to have

# NIKKI

Page 5  
November 9, 1978

promised you co-authorship to inspire you to produce the book, which she cold-bloodedly pirated. The Groves of Academe, a jungle.

Our offspring, Kathy, turned 19 recently. At that time she was working three jobs and taking six units at City College. She got there at sixteen because she refused to go to high school after her sophomore year, took and passed an equivalency exam. She called up and asked for \$100 as a birthday present because she wanted to give herself a birthday party featuring three rock bands. Damned if she didn't bring it off, at a warehouse (available to her through one of her jobs) complete with security guard, beer, ham, turkey, salami, cheeses, celery and carrot sticks, bread and soft drinks (at wholesale through the UC Housing Co-op where she's the payroll clerk for 200 employees). She xeroxed 150 invitations, planned food for 200, 400 showed up, and she made a profit. During the five minutes we were there, she asked us three times how long we intended to stay.

I ponder the scale of her thinking and compare it with mine. I couldn't think of fifty persons to invite without going out of state.

Having just read a report that owners of Volvos are more liberal political thinkers than are owners of other makes, I asked a young woman who had just gotten into her Volvo, "Are you liberal?" She assiduously avoided eye contact, did not reply, quickly rolled up her window and drove off.

Cheers,

I promise to write no more than one page next time, so please reply when you can. I know your life must be terribly busy. We're going to Los Angeles for a week starting tomorrow and Harry to London around the 23d, and the both of us to Cuba early December, *god willing ~~to~~ and the creek don't rise.*

Dec. 4. 1978

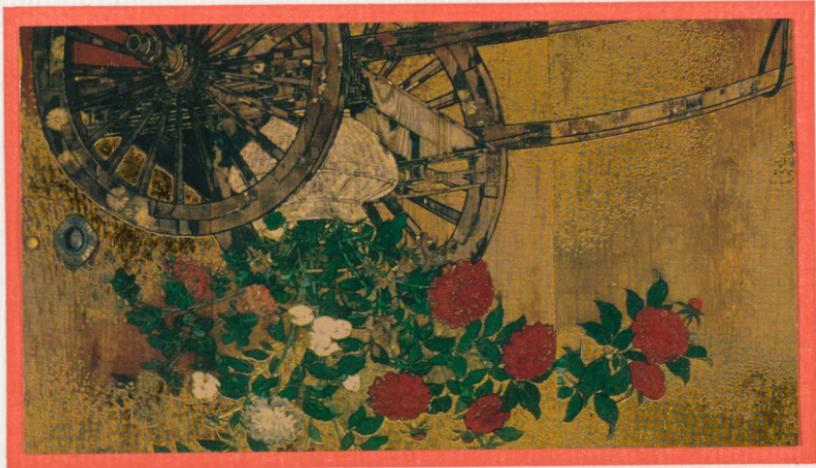
Dear Rosalin,

First, I need to correct that version of the funding that Bill Powell got on documenting germ warfare in Korea. His study was funded by the Stern Fund, not the US govt.

We're off for Cuba in a few days. Meantime, our best to Murray and you for the holidays and the ensuing year. I heard via a Medical Anthro. Sanserri friend that Murray's presentation at the LA meeting mid-November was sensational.

Love,

Nikki



花車図  
国宝17世紀  
狩野探幽筆  
名古屋城蔵

**Cart with Peonies and  
Chrysanthemums**

National Treasure. 17C.  
By Tanyu Kano.  
Nagoya Castle.



FGT-129

# NOTICE

February 28, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

You're on for Tuesday evening, April 10, most likely at 8:00 p.m. And natch, we would like you to talk about the topics you find most worthy. Qvick, qvick, send me a catchy title for same and a brief explanation of what your talk will cover for our newsletter. I have about a week in which to prepare the copy.

I don't know how many will come. The audience in the past, depending on the extent of publicity and how attractive the presentation is made out to be, has ranged from as few as twenty to as many as two hundred. I can issue some press releases that will attract several hundred, or confine the notice to just Center members, whichever is your pleasure.

So what I need from you are

1. Title of your talk. If you like, we can simply call it "An Evening with Rosalie Wax," and you can talk about anything you like. Plan to talk from 45 minutes to an hour with a question and answer period afterwards.
2. What you would like our newsletter to say about your talk and about you.
3. What size audience you would like to address.

The just-launched JACL campaign for redress (\$25,000 for everyone who was incarcerated who is now alive) should interest anthropologists and sociologists because it's an example of group assertiveness. Rather like coming out of the closet and screwing up our courage to say it was a scandal that ought to be acknowledged and its victims recompensed. There's tremendous infighting between the fearful ones who still cannot bring themselves to affront the dominant group (whose approval they associate with survival) and the ones with more sturdy egos who are willing to risk censure. Harry says there is no nice way to ask for money.

Visible minorities always have suffered from the Willie Loman syndrome--it's important to be well liked. Come to think of it, it's an American value that's effectively kept all oppressed groups from speaking up.

Write right away.

Love, *Kikki*

**35 Kronquist Court San Francisco, CA. 94131** 

Wila Beland Center + True Lake -  
July 1943 - March 1944 - Segregation  
visited - almost two year Center,  
lived in + studied -

---

Don Fieldman =



## ACCURATE TERMINOLOGY

by Raymond Okamura

A crucial factor in the forthcoming reparations campaign will be the ability to accurately and clearly document the internment experience for the American public. People must be able to understand exactly what happened before they can be expected to support redress payments.

One problem hindering effective communications is the continued usage of terms imposed by the government 36 years ago. Realizing that a summary mass incarceration without evidence of wrongdoing was contrary to constitutional principles, government officials devised numerous euphemisms to obscure the truth.

"Evacuation" and "relocation" normally means moving people away from a disaster area and providing them with equivalent homes in a new locations, usually for their benefit or safety, and with their consent.

Perhaps because it was psychologically difficult to admit they were locked up in concentration camps, most Japanese Americans got in the habit of using government euphemisms. Former internees understand among themselves that "evacuation" and "relocation" were really code words for expulsion and incarceration.

But the general public does not interpret "evacuation" and "relocation" in the same way. Under the commonly-known definitions for these words, reparations cannot be justified.

For an unequivocal presentation of the facts, Japanese Americans should discard the old terminology and start using direct and honest terms. If Japanese Americans consistently use accurate words, the euphemisms eventually become archaic.

"Relocation" should be replaced with words like detention, imprisonment, incarceration or internment; "evacuation" with eviction, exclusion, exile or expulsion; "evacuee" with inmate, internee, detainee or prisoner; "assembly or reception center" with interim or temporary detention camp; "relocation center" with concentration, detention, internment or prison camp.

Words are a primary tool in the education process. A more precise and self-determined terminology will greatly aid the reparations effort.

+ + + + +

Pacific Citizen  
April 28, 1978

Nikki Bridges

35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, Ca. 94131  
January 9, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

I have succeeded in getting the JACP to carry Doing Field-work. I saw Florence Yoshiwara at a mochitsuki in Japan-town just before New Year's and spoke to her about it. She was delighted to have the listing. The annotated catalog is quite interesting. I'm sending you a copy via slow mail.

I'm doing a report (so I can take my expenses off income tax) on Cuba and plan to send you a copy. Therefore, I will not go into detail about the trip, except to say it's an exciting place. Do you remember how it was after the New Deal and the down and outers had organized into labor unions and the people had a sense of purpose, of sitting in the driver's seat of their own destiny? Well, that's what they've got in Cuba, a revolution that requires the cooperation of everyone to expand and maintain, and proof positive within the past twenty years of how they, individually and collectively, can grow and make a positive contribution to society, to the betterment of their own and their neighbors' lives. They care about themselves and about each other, and they love and trust their national leaders. No, we did not meet Fidel.

I'm sorry about Murray's pneumonia, but I gather he's recovered without event by now. Ole Harry has emphysema, so every chest cold is cause for concern. I am in spanking good health though recovering from a cold--my first in six years.

It's time to get back in harness; that is, back to the taping. However, Harry's senior citizen activity and his Port Commissioner duties do intervene. I make sporadic meetings too, though not during the day.

About famous Indians: Chief Dan George is a member of the International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union. As a matter of fact, there's an entire local in British Columbia of Native Americans (Canadian). Harry and I were made members of the Snohomish Tribe. While the dancing was going on with the spotlight on Harry and me, seated in chairs in the center of a large circle of about 400 ILWU delegates, wives and groupies, I saw Harry's adam's apple

move up and down three or four times, and he whispered to me, "I think I'm going to be sick."

I said, "Go to the bathroom."

"I can't. I'll just have to hold it."

Well, I don't know how he did, but we were invited to join in the dancing, so we made like birds a couple of times around the floor, and the third time Harry ducked into the men's room, keening all the while.

We have a chief's headdress and a carved staff someplace in our bulging closet. I would rather have had a soapstone walrus, or musk ox. Harry says he can't get his mouth to say the latter.

On that trip I bought a box of cigars from Cuba at the Hudson's Bay Company (such a romantic name) in Vancouver, left them in the store's bag on top of all my clothes in the suitcase. The box was not confiscated. I explained to Harry that a middle-aged Japanese-American woman is the least likely person to break the law and the customs people know that. He seemed impressed with my sociological explanation and now kids me about "middle-aged, Japanese women doing or not doing such and so."

Anthropologists and the like seem to be concerned about the rate of out-marriages among the Japanese population in the United States leading to genocide. That's their term for it. I suspect that by the fifth generation things will be different economically, racially (dilution of blood) and we will be less drawn to digging for our roots and identities. I remember reading one of those stories about mixed marriage and asking, "Hey, Harry, do you feel like a mixed couple?"

His reply was, "Hell no," so now I don't know how a mixed couple should feel.

I do like the story about Senator Dan Inouye his first time in the Senate being invited by Sam Rayburn to join his for drinks in his Office. There he met all the Southern gentlemen, chairmen of this and that powerful committee. Then they all drifted away, whereupon Rayburn said, "You know, you're a rarity in the Senate."

"What do you mean?" asked Dan warily.

"Wal," said Rayburn, "there ain't too many one-armed Japs in the Senate."

It's late; I'm rambling, and I remembered guiltily that I promised to confine my letters to one page. Next time.

May you and Murray have a splendid 1979.

*Nikki*

*P.S. Yes, please do send me a copy of your article, Indians and White People.*

# NIKKI

35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, Ca. 94131

March 11, 1979

314-921-6848.

Dear Rosalie,

My phone number: 415/648-8476.

Dr. Rosalie Wax will speak about her Tule Lake experiences (a more detailed blurb will follow) on Tuesday, April 10, 8:00 p.m. at Pine United Methodist Church, 426 - 33rd Avenue, San Francisco.

Less than a month before your arrival; I'm getting all "crenked up."

During the 60's to refer to Blacks as Negroes was to betray one's ignorance of what the civil rights struggles were all about. (I never went so far as to believe that the ~~study of Swahili~~ eliminated the poll tax or racial discrimination.) A Jewish member of Harry's union remarked that he and his siblings worked awfully hard in the 30's and 40's, without success, to persuade mama to say "Negro" instead of "schwartzza." But now, he said triumphantly, it turns out that mama was right all along.

This is by way of introducing the enclosed essay about terminology. I am sending it because I noticed you referred to Tule Lake as a "center." Now, in this period when we are gearing up to putting the hard words on Congress (and Harry says there is no nice way to ask for money) it would be more fitting and helpful if you were to say "camp" or "concentration camp."

See ya soon.

Love,

*Nikki*

P.S. Would you prefer that I send mail to your home address?

30 mins - 1hr.

6pm

#8 bus Market transfer  
trolley bus

25¢  
5¢

until onto Castro (lots get off)

#35 bus (same direction) - long stretch on Diamond  
to 27th st. <sup>Arms St</sup> "quit before"

off, cross st, down blk 1/2 blk.

# INFO

June 28, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

Fret not. I remembered I had handed a copy of my Cuba report to someone right here in San Francisco, and it has been retrieved.

I had a long talk yesterday with Clifford Uyeda, national president of the JACL, about funding for you and about funding generally. He said Asian stuff interests few. He did suggest the National Endowment for the Humanities, though. And the Japan-United States Friendship Fund, headquartered back East someplace. He says its moneys go to mostly academic endeavors preferably by non-Asian scholars. You would fit.

My telephone inquiry to the California Historical Society, 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco, Ca. 94109, elicited the information that they too have their hands outstretched. However, the Society did publish Executive Order 9066, currently out of print, and I was strongly encouraged to have my friend write to Marilyn Ziebarth, Executive Editor, at the CHS, who might have some ideas. It's worth a letter.

Clifford sputtered about the Japanese in Japan who cater to hakujins and turn their backs on Japanese-Americans whose access to funds for good works is more limited than the hakujins'. Toyota last year gave a million dollars to groups fostering friendship. One board member told Clifford that they had agreed in advance to give no moneys to Japanese-Americans.

I met the June 1<sup>st</sup> to enter a short story contest sponsored by James Clavell. Its contestants were restricted to persons of Japanese or half-Japanese parentage. A copy, together with a copy of the one Ms. Magazine wants, are being dispatched by slow mail.

*Will let you know by July 14 what happened. Hayakawa is one of the judges.*

I understand Japanese firms with branches here honored Clavell last month at a luncheon and donated enormous sums to Clavell's favorite charities. Clifford remarked that had an American Japanese written the potboilers Clavell had authored, the Japanese would not have noticed.

Love,

*Wible*

35 Kronquist Court San Francisco, CA. 94131



July 8, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

Before I file away your earlier letters, I want to tie off the danglers. Wow, how I would love to have taken your World View, Magic and Religion course. Pardon while I drool.

And about your notes, I will see about an endorsement - at least ask, and also what the J/A's would like to have written up. I'm enclosing a xerox of an article by Yuzuru Takeshita. You may want to write to him.

Okay everything's metered up at this end until I get the answers I've volunteered to seek out.

Love to Murray too.

Cheers,

Wickie

MARIGOLDS AND GRAPE HYACINTH

Detail from the painting *Bouquet in a Chinese Vase* by Odilon Redon (1840–1916)  
French, painted about 1912–1914

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The Mr. and Mrs. Henry Irtelson, Jr., Purchase Fund, 1964

Printed in Switzerland



# INDEX

February 20, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

With the cherry blossoms transforming trees to clouds of pink alive with bees, can spring be far behind?

You no doubt have in hand my report on Cuba. It's neither entrancing nor electrifying--just informational. I was handicapped by not knowing for whom it was being written, so a lot of the background data is simple-minded.

What a fine surprise, and how I will look forward to seeing you again and to meeting Murray. Sunday evening we will have a good get together. So mark your calendars for the evening of Sunday, the 8th of April to spend with us, and possibly some scintillating, but non-competitive types. I'm torn between wanting to show you off and wanting to be selfish.

Would you be willing to speak for about an hour on your Tule Lake experiences one evening? That would be for the San Francisco Center for Japanese American Studies, a non-profit cultural group with whom I'm associated. We're very informal and non-demanding. I suspect you could just deal it off the cuff, if you are willing. This is down-soft sell, and I'm sure you'll have no trouble saying no if you don't want to speak, or if you consider it too much like work. Since whatever evening you choose will be an off meeting night for us (we ordinarily meet the third Friday of each month), and we will want to make hall arrangements, would you let me know as soon as you can?

Oh, and we can't pay you a blessed dime--only offer dinner to you and Murray.

Perhaps we can get together during the daytime, wander through a museum or the park if it's a nice day.

I emceed the Day of Remembrance at Tanforan yesterday. Because I'd never done such duties before, I went to the library the day before to find out what they consisted of. Apparently George Jessel's book gave no bum steers because

# NIKKI

Page 2  
February 20, 1979

everyone complimented me on a job well done. I smiled my chessy cat smile and tried to look modest.

For the first time in the San Francisco press I was identified as Noriko Bridges, a poet, and the name "Harry Bridges" was not associated with me. I've got to think that's good.

Speaking of associations, Harry and I were in an elevator at the San Franciscan Hotel several days ago, and a suave looking man got on. I said, "I know you." He looked at me and said, "Oh, Mrs. Takahashi, I didn't recognize you." I replied, "No, I'm Nikki Bridges and this is my husband Harry." Oh, he said, "I've known you, Mr. Bridges, all my life. I'm Orville Pratt." They stopped shaking hands when the door opened on our floor, so as soon as we were out of earshot, Harry said, "Who was that?"

Also, once in the Emporium Harry and I got on separate elevators going to the second floor. When we met, Harry complained that there was a crazy woman in his elevator who kept insisting that he was Norman Rockwell.

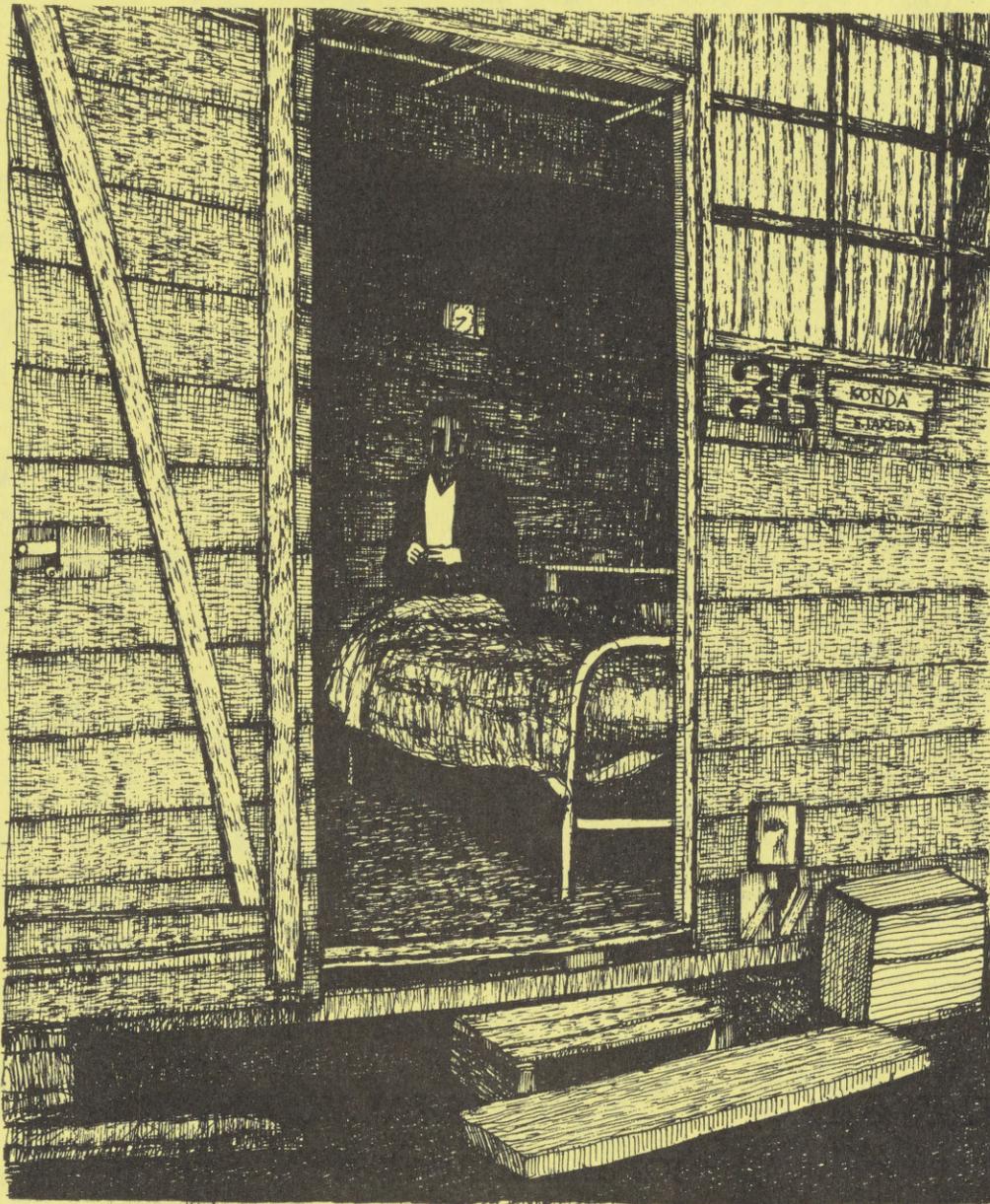
I had lunch last week with a woman whom I had hired at one time to work as a secretary in the law office I managed. We had daughters about the same time; now both have flown the nest. Ours, by the way, is now fulltime at San Francisco State as a junior, taking five units each of physics and biological chemistry, and two swimming classes. She was accepted as a transfer from City as a biology major, preparatory to her being coming a forest ranger.

My girlfriend's daughter lives with a man 28 years older than she and is a stepmother, at 19, to a girl 15 and a boy 13. When Vera informed her cousin who lives in France about this arrangement, her cousin threw her apron over her head and shook with helpless laughter. She stopped long enough to say, "Serves them right, don't it? After all the years they talked back and made life miserable for us, now they're getting a dose of the same stuff." Then she guffawed some more.

Leaving you laughing,

*Nikki*

TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY & FRIENDS  
Please join us for



A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE  
FEBRUARY 19, 1979

REVISIT THE SITE OF THE  
**TANFORAN**  
DETENTION CENTER

A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE  
TANFORAN DETENTION CENTER  
February 19, 1979

Tanforan Racetrack in San Bruno was the makeshift home for over 8,000 persons of Japanese ancestry for six months at the outbreak of World War II. Horse stalls were hastily converted into barracks for the victims of Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. This was the beginning of Japanese America's three-and-a-half years in American concentration camps.

February 19, 1979 is being observed as a Day of Remembrance by Japanese Americans in Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. It is a day for all Japanese Americans and friends to join in tribute to this chapter of Japanese American history.

The Tanforan Committee (representing individuals and organizations in the Bay Area) has planned car caravans from San Francisco, East Bay and Peninsula cities --- the areas from which residents were sent to the old Tanforan Racetrack. The program of speakers and entertainment will take place at the site of the Tanforan Detention Center, now a parking area for the Tanforan Shopping Center. A photo exhibit will also be displayed at the outside ceremony.

We invite you to join us on February 19th, a Day of Remembrance.

Car Caravan: 10:00 am  
San Francisco Fort Mason  
Laguna and Marina Streets

Program : 12:00 noon  
Tanforan Shopping Center  
San Bruno

For further information, please call:  
Mr. George Kondo - 921-5225  
Ms. Carole Hayashino -922-2144

TANFORAN RACETRACK/DETENTION CAMP  
San Bruno, California  
April 25 - October 13, 1942

Tanforan was one of the fifteen temporary detention camps established pursuant to Executive Order 9066 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. Detainees were held at these locations until the more permanent mass detention camps could be built in the interior regions of the United States.

The Wartime Civil Control Administration of the Western Defense Command/Fourth Army expropriated the Tanforan horse racetrack and converted it into a detention camp. The compound was bounded by: Noor Avenue (North), Forest Lane (South), El Camino Real (West), and the Southern Pacific Railroad (East).

8,033 persons of Japanese ancestry (United States citizens and legal permanent residents) were incarcerated at Tanforan. 64% were native-born Americans.

Detainees generally came from Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, and San Francisco counties; and arrived between April 25 and May 20, 1942.

Tanforan was surrounded by a barbed wire fence, and was guarded by armed military police in watchtowers. Detainees were forbidden from going beyond the camp boundaries under Civilian Restrictive Order #1 signed by General John L. DeWitt on May 19, 1942.

The grandstand and horse-stalls were used as living quarters.

64 persons were born, and 22 persons died at Tanforan.

7,673 detainees were moved to the Central Utah (Topaz) mass detention camp between September 9 and October 13, 1942. Remaining detainees were sent to the other nine mass detention camps located in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, and Wyoming.

Books on Tanforan by former detainees include: The Kikuchi Diary: Chronicle from an American Concentration Camp by Charles Kikuchi, edited by John Modell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), Citizen 13660 by Mine Okubo (New York: Arno Press, 1979), and Journey to Topaz by Yoshiko Uchida (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971).

ORIGINS OF TANFORAN DETAINEES

<u>Detention Order</u>	<u>Reporting Dates</u>	<u>Reporting Location</u>	<u>Area Covered</u>	<u>Persons Incarcerated</u>
#19	April 25-26	2345 Channing Way Berkeley	Northwest Alameda County and West Contra Costa County	1,182
#20	April 25-26	2031 Bush Street San Francisco	North Fillmore district of San Francisco	1,892
#27	May 1-2	530 - 18th Street Oakland	Northwest section of Oakland	832
#28	May 1-2	1117 Oak Street Oakland	Southeast section of Oakland and City of Alameda	662
#34	May 4-5	920 "C" Street Hayward	Southwest Alameda County	1,211
#35	May 4-5	100 North Ellsworth Street, San Mateo	San Mateo County	891
#41	May 6-7	1530 Buchanan Street San Francisco	South Fillmore district of San Francisco	848
#81	May 16-17	1501 O'Farrell Street San Francisco	Southeast section of San Francisco	279
		All other origins, including births		236

TANFORAN COMMITTEE  
1765 Sutter Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Do not use after: 2/19/79

Press conacts:  
Mr. George Kondo - 921-5225  
Carole Hayashino - 922-2144

On behalf of 125,313 persons of Japanese ancestry, the Tanforan Committee invites you to join in a pilgrimage to the site of the Tanforan Detention Center for a Day of Remembrance on February 19, 1979.

February 19 marks the 37th anniversary of Executive Order 9066, issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942, which led to the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans. The old Tanforan Racetrack in San Bruno became the "home" for the 8,033 Bay Area residents of Japanese ancestry. It was the beginning of their three-and-a-half years in American concentration camps.

The Tanforan Committee has planned car caravans from East Bay, Palo Alto and San Francisco, the areas from which residents were evacuated. The San Francisco caravan will assemble at 10:00 a.m. at Fort Mason, near Laguna and Marina Streets.

The caravans will proceed to the site of the Tanforan Detention Center, now a parking area for the Tanforan Park Shopping Center. The outdoor program of speakers and entertainment will begin at 12:00 noon. An exhibit of photographs will also be displayed.

February 19, 1979 is being observed by communities in Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles and Sacramento. We hope you join us in the San Francisco Bay Area Day of Remembrance.

A partial list of participating organizations include: S.F. State University, Asian American Studies Department, San Francisco Center for Japanese American Studies, J.A.C.L. National Committee on Redress, Sequoia J.A.C.L. Chapter, Berkeley J.A.C.L. Chapter.

For more information contact Mr. George Kondo at 921-5225 or Carole Hayashino at 922-2144.

# NOTES

August 6, 1979

Dear Rosalie,

I'm a reborn American Japanese, having spent the interim years being Jewish. I'm responsible for the phrase, "shiksa hit the fan," and one-liners like "Bella Abzug won election by a 'lanslite'."

<sup>u</sup> Somone I do not know won the Clavell award. I must be growing up. I felt no twinge of pain and winced not when I learned of it. I should not have spent so much time pissing on Shogun and condemning the judge. I had just met Dick Tuck, the Democratic Party prankster (responsible for the fortune cookies distributed by Goldwater pushers which said Goldwater is a bum; also responsible for the train pulling out as Rockefeller prepared to address a crowd from the rear platform). And we had agreed to hire a group of Asians wearing tam o' shanters to sleep noisily through the entire proceedings.

Thanks for your encouragement regarding my writing anyway. I still have a story which is mine to peddle.

The conference at Asilomar was satisfying. It provided a place for us to express our conflicts and bewilderment over who we are and (classic marginality) to confront our self-loathing so we can get past it.

Did I tell you Clifford Uyeda said he would be happy to have the JACL endorse your Tule Lake endeavor? So, as the Brits say, keddy on with a stiff upper. I'll do the same.

Love,  
To Murray too,

*Wick*

35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, Ca. 94131

March 4, 1980

Dear Friends,

"The New York Times is responsible for the death of my parents. I want revenge," said the man.

"Why are you calling my husband?" I asked.

"He can arrange it," said the man.

"Tell me who's calling," I said.

"Bob Jonas."

"Oh," I'd never heard of him. I convinced him that I heard the grievance in his story but that Harry was unable to help him.

Bob Jonas called again, left his number with our cleaning woman, admonishing her that if we did not call back, he would go to jail.

The third time: "You and your husband are responsible for the death of my parents. I want revenge," said Bob Jonas.

\*\*\*\*\*

Saturday, beginning at midnight, the phone rang five times, always the same man (not Bob Jonas) asking to speak to Vincent Hallinan, person to person. "Is n't this the home of Harry Bridges?" demanded the caller.

The fourth time I threatened the operator--I would report her to the company as an incompetent.

The fifth time I yelled that Vincent Hallinan was not at this number, was not expected, and I wouldn't give out his unlisted number to anyone at midnight, so forget it.

So, dear friends, our new number is (415) 648-9038. We will trust you to use your good judgment in giving it out. And when in doubt that you won't.

Love,

*Nikki*

Nikki and Harry Bridges

*Appl Ms. for "Mother"  
by Koiko Sawada.*

# INDOOR

March 16, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

Thanks for sending the article on Lincoln and the Jews. Most enlightening.

If you have other material that would aid our redress putsch, besides the stuff already contained in widely circulated publications, please ship it (or their citations) post haste, because we're compiling the data within the next month.

My "Papa" story appears condensed in the current Reader's Digest, in the US and in Canada, while the Japanese translation will see publication soon--possibly April or May. I know, I said Ugh too, but the pay was great.

Hi to Murray.

Love,

*Tikka*

# INDOOR

March 18, 1980

Dear Rosalie,

Thanks for your March 11 letter with its good and bad news. I like that Murray's work on ethics is receiving the attention it deserves, say I stoutly, confident that it says what I feel and a whole lot I haven't even thought about.

About ethics, I've been thinking that one of the greatest myths perpetrated on Americans (and all the other capitalists <sup>people</sup>) is that we should consider everything we see on television as entertainment. That's why we have actors as serious presidential aspirants. That's why President Carter blathers on and on and seems not to have to account for what he says, either as promises, analyses, or rationalizations. We're divided into a nation of entertainers and entertainees, and politics is <sup>nations)</sup> apart of that industry. Is anything real?

I'm sorry about the bad news and more regretful of the misinformation that led to the one No vote on your funding proposal. It's preposterous, but there is it, and you have to deal with it. I will keep my ear peeled for charges against you, Rosalie, and even ask Clifford Uyeda, who really gets around, to do the same. If you learn the source, let me know.

Today weatherwise was glorious--sharp, clear sky, clean air, the colors out the window so crisp and sharp. Lovely after all the rain.

Harry's 36-year old daughter has never grown up. Two years ago she was determined to marry a schizophrenic who sat and looked at the walls, claimed he was saner than all of us. This time it's a man with ten children by three wives and that's the good part. The bad part is that he's spent ten years for manslaughter in Attica. Oy way! Oy Gewalt! Attica, schmattica, abi geshundt! She moved in with him last month, and it's possible they married this week. I'm not certain my maidel is any better--only younger. That's Harry's tsooras.

Love and gechachtaleber,

mit (wiz) Schmatz,

*Neil*

# INFO

April 11, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

Last night at a rally for Redress and Reparations (R & R) sponsored by a number of East Bay groups, I spoke with Ben Takeshita, 6626 Richmond Avenue, Richmond, Ca. 94805. (Telephone 415/235-8182).

First of all, he agreed that you should be asked to testify before the National Commission on Redress and Reparations. Testimony will be taken in Washington, D.C., Chicago and several West Coast cities. You should be hearing from the National Committee of the JACL concerning this matter, because I gave them your address.

Congratulations, happy friend, on getting even a half-ass\* fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation for the Humanities in these times of closing purses. I'm happy for you too.

Ben said he would be happy to talk with you, in person or over the telephone and would be willing to give you names and addresses of others who had been in Tule Lake. Did you ever contact his brother, Yuzuru, who's at Michigan? He taught Japanese language at Tule Lake and strongly urged renunciation. Ben is a well-known gansa macher among the Nisei. I believe him to be a contact well worth your time to cultivate.

I suspect the R & R campaign will still be going on in 1982 because after the Commission's report to Congress, our elected representatives will have to be convinced that reparations is the only way to redress the concentration campers. So your material definitely will be useful.

We're off to Hawaii end of this month.

Love to you and Murray,

*Willie*

\* reminds me of the Latino who built a duplex and lived in a half-hacienda.

# INFO

June 21, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

Man, it's hot! The eighth day of a heat wave.

It's good to know you're getting your follow-up interviews and feeling elated about the beauty of the human spirit ~~shining~~ in the life stories you've elicited. More power to you.

Last week Jim Hirabayashi said material like SUzuki's rarely circulates beyond the circle of social scientists who read that stuff. He seemed little affected by Suzuki's charges.

However, shit occasionally does fly up and hit the fan. You may remember Karl Yoneda, who after a few months in MANzanar, left his hakujin wife and three-year old son there and volunteered for service in the CBI theatre. Karl was suspected as an inu. The red hots were planning retribution by harming his son when the administration removed Elaine and Tommy. The Yonedas came to your talk here and commented on what a terror Kurihara had been in Manzanar.

Elaine has been a long-time stalwart, headed the women's auxiliary during the '34 strike. She and Karl, a retired member of ILWU, were in Hawaii when I made my pitch to the convention in April that it pass a resolution for redress and reparations and was given \$1000 contribution towards the campaign.

Karl said, "make sure it goes to the right group." H E said that William Hohri of the National Council for Japanese American REDress, had called him an agent. Well Hohri's group is planning to file a class action suit for reparations. In plowing through some of my material last week I find Hohri worked in the Army archives in 1951 where data about who was informing on whom was stored.

The National Director of the JACL is Ron Wakabayashi, at 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, 94115. I'm not aware that it has information about the current whereabouts of former Tule Lake inmates, but you can try.

This sounds familiar: we're scheduled to ~~go~~ to Moscow for Harry's 80th birthday, July 28. I'll go only if I can testify beforehand; otherwise I'll wait.

Take care; stay well; a buss for Murray and you too. *For,*

*Nikki*

# MEMO

from

NIKKI BRIDGES

May 13, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

I find the enclosure distressing. Yet I recall your justifying your decision by "the killings did stop." Or am I putting the wrong construction on it?

Love,

Nikki

Hawaii was lovely.

Department of Anthropology



WASHINGTON  
UNIVERSITY  
IN ST. LOUIS

May 21, 1981

Nikki Bridges  
35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, CA 94131

Dear Nikki:

Thank you for the paper on the role of social scientists in the community studies of evacuation. My first reaction is, "Wow! Here I'm included in the company of some of the most distinguished social scientists of the last generation!" Even more interesting is the fact that virtually all of the great social scientists have been attacked on the grounds of their personal morality: Marx, Freud, Boas, Malinowski, and Margaret Mead. So I guess I can relax and join the club.

On the other hand, I'm distressed by the fact that the article is an unfair and immature smear. Most of the accused anthropologists are dead or very infirm. They cannot respond. Moreover, most of them were hard working, honorable persons who tried to do their best to help the evacuees. A constant complaint I heard from the community analysts I knew was that the administration would not listen to their suggestions. I remember that Gordon Brown was so upset about one incident that he cried when he told me about it.

The citations from my book (pp. 168-9) are quoted out of context. Prof. Suzuki does not quote my statement: "During the internments I did two very unprofessional deeds." One of these was to approach the Department of Justice and try to keep a Japanese school teacher from being interned. The other was to tell them that "Kira" had been a high rank resegregationist leader. Nor does he quote the WRA accusation that I was an "anarchist".

As for "communicating the Department of Justice" -- during the tragic and agonizing period when many Nisei were renouncing their citizenship out of panic, I had frequent conversations with Mr. Noyes, the WRA Project Attorney, and with John Burling of the Dept. of Justice. Talking to people was my job -- and, when I could, I tried to communicate to Noyes and Burling how terrible the situation was. But my field notes tell this story in great detail -- and I hope to have them typed and ready for study by the end of the year.

I myself have no interest in responding to these accusations. To find all the items listed and to evaluate their ethical and political morality would take an enormous amount of time and work. Right now I prefer to put my energies into doing my job for the Rockefeller Foundation and doing what I can to help

Nikki Bridges  
May 21, 1981  
Page 2

the Japanese Americans in their attempt to get redress and reparations. Writers like Suzuki can have the effect of totally misdirecting attention from real and significant problems. It is well to keep in mind that a handful of anthropologists were not responsible for the evacuation and the years of detention.

I would value your advice about how seriously the the Japanese Americans are taking this paper. Do you think it will handicap me in my attempts to talk to them about the evaucation and Tule Lake?

Thank you again for sending me the paper, and I'm so happy to hear that you enjoyed Hawaii.

Love,

Rosalie H. Wax  
Professor of Anthropology, Emerita

RHW:sc

[May 1981]

Dear Nikki:

I have really been overworking myself - doing the longitudinal oral case histories of what people told me when I visited them in Tule Lake.

I have found and talked to three of my old friends and interviewed them by phone and what they told me was wonderful. I've also had a superb and moving talk with Ben Takeshita.

But now I'm up a tree. Murray and I hope to come to California in late December - and I have not as yet been able to get my respondents to tell me the names and addresses of any Japanese Americans who were segregated at Tule Lake who now live in the Bay region of in Los Angeles. I figure that if I come to California to interview, I shave to have somebody to interview.

If you could find any other people in the Bay region who are in their fifties or sixties who were in Tule Lake, I'd be very grateful. Or perhaps you could tell me of someone else who could advise me.

Last night I tried to phone you, at 648-8476, but the person who answered had never heard of you. Have you a new phone number or did I misdial?

Could you instruct me about the number, because I'd love to have a good talk with you - about my work and my visit.

Love,



NORIKO SAWADA BRIDGES

35 Kronquist Court • San Francisco, California 94131 • (415) 648-9038

September 29, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

-day

I leave at noon October 2 for an eleven/trip to New York, six of which I will be en route to and fro--via train of course, because Harry says I can't be caught traveling by plane, because of the Air Traffic Controllers' Strike.

The purpose of my visit is to receive an award, funded by J.C. Penney, selected by a bunch of people through the University of Missouri Journalism Department. It's for excellence in magazine writing in the personal lifestyle category.\* There are six awards of \$1000 each in various categories.

When Ms. Magazine called to tell me how prestigious this award was, I had never heard of it. I became suspicious when neither had the literature department of the San Francisco Library. However, it's really legit.

I'll be back October 13, so call me after that.

Love,

*Noriko*

\* for "Memoir of a Japanese Daughter" in Ms. April 1980.

November 11, 1981

Noriko Sawada Bridges  
35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, CA 94131

Dear Nikki:

Words cannot express my gratitude for your role in getting Mrs. Okamura to send me her testimony before the commission. It is an immensely moving story, eloquently and beautifully told. She has answered all of the questions I might have asked her in an interview.

Please tell Raymond Okamura that I have already learned from interviews with Japanese Americans in St. Louis, that he is absolutely right. I not only will but must include "the failures". I talked to one man a few weeks ago who told me what he and his family had gone through in Japan. What he had to say was so terrible that after the interview I went to my office, sat down, and cried. He also warned me, by the way, that none of the people who repatriated in their late teens and early twenties will talk to me. Nor, said he, will "farmers and other non-professionals" want to be interviewed.

I assure you that I will take account of all of this information in my final report. And I'll do my best to talk to people who are not "enormous successes".

My letter to the Hokubei helped me to find six of the people whom I talked to regularly at Tule Lake. Wow!

Thank you for your help and both Murray and I send our love,

Rosalie



NORIKO SAWADA BRIDGES

35 Kronquist Court • San Francisco, California 94131 • (415) 648-9038

November 1, 1981

Dear Rosalie,

I had a call last week from Raymond Okamura,\* a thoughtful, feisty man whom I respect. He had read your letter to the Hokubei and hoped that you will find ways of balancing your study to include the failures who survived Tule Lake as well as those who've overcome their anger and guilt. He says of course the real failures are dead. Ray says the ones who are not enormous successes will not come forward.

I promised to write you ~~and~~ of his concern. The antique Clifford did tell me among those names he sent you are ordinary people, such as his barber.

Love,  
Nikki

\* He wrote the article about Racism and Terminology I sent you earlier - why we must cease using "relocation center" as an euphemism for conc. camp. He is sending you his wife's, Tokio's,

testimony about her ordeal.

November 11, 1981

B. Teko Sakai Okamura  
1150 Park Hills Road  
Berkeley, CA 94708

Dear Mrs. Okamura:

d

Words cannot express my gratitude to you for sending me a copy of your testimony for the "Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians." It is an immensely moving story, eloquently and beautifully told. Indeed, you have answered in detail all of the questions I might have asked you in an interview.

I have also received a letter from Nikki Sawada Bridges, telling me of your husband's concern. Please tell your husband that I have already obtained interviews from Japanese Americans in St. Louis, telling me how terrible the Tule Lake and post Tule Lake experience had been for them. When the interview was over I went to my office, sat down, and cried. So far my study indicates that no one who was at Tule Lake has really overcome their anger and guilt. One woman told me she still has nightmares.

Nikki also told me that your husband said that "the ones who are not enormous successes will not come forward." Other Japanese Americans have told me this and I will take account of it in my study.

Sincerely, yours,

Rosalie Hankey Wax  
Professor Emerita, Anthropology and Sociology

cj



NORIKO SAWADA BRIDGES

35 Kronquist Court • San Francisco, California 94131 • (415) 648-9038

December 23, 1981

*Sunday  
home  
at 5:00  
m*  
*Morgan Yamada*  
*→ Hinata*  
*Koshiwoji* mention name -  
*664-7230.*

Dear Rosalie,

Thanks for sending me "Response to Suzuki's Criticism of DOING FIELDWORK," Spicer's Comments on Suzuki's Testimony, together with Spicer's "Anthropologists and the War Relocation Authority." Are these for general distribution? For instance, I feel I should send a copy to Michi Weglyn and to Jim Hirabayashi, also to Ray Okamura, Taeko's husband.

Perhaps you would send a batch to Ray yourself. That's Raymond Okamura, 1150 Park Hills Road, Berkeley, 94708.

The date of our dinner and subsequent meeting has been changed to January 7, a Thursday. I forgot I had a date at Stanford to hear the New York Ensemble perform the Brandenburgs.

See you soon. *on the 6th*

Love,

*Nikko*

May 24, 1984

Noriko Sawada Bridges  
35 Kronquist Court  
San Francisco, California 94131

Dear Niki:

When I began to talk to the people who had survived Tule Lake, I thought that these excruciating experiences would best be presented in an article or essay which, hopefully, might be printed in a popular journal or magazine rather than in an academic journal. (I continue to be amazed and distressed at the number of well educated people who tell me that they never heard of the evacuation.) But the University of Tennessee Press demanded a book, which I dutifully wrote. Four presses (including those you suggested) have now rejected the book. So I have doggedly returned to the essay and it is turning out quite well.

Murray asked me to request your advice on another matter. I think I've told you that Dorothy Thomas did not give my fieldnotes on Tule Lake to the Bancroft library and that I discovered this only a few years ago. So I enriched my carbon copy of the notes by adding explanatory material that would help the reader link the actors to the other events in their lives, and by adding a number of important events and statements that I had been afraid to include in 1944-45. Then, since my forty year old copy was falling apart, I had the notes typed and in 1983 I gave them to the Bancroft Library. (The original typescript amounted to almost five hundred singlespaced pages in elite type.) The head of the manuscripts edition sent me a letter saying that the notes "will be invaluable to scholars, and the care with which they were edited was most impressive." She also told me that to protect the identity of the evacuees they would restrict access until 2008. Until then, "permission of the Director of the Bancroft Library necessary for use." About Christmas time the library sent me a formal letter, thanking me for my gift.

While preparing our income tax statement, Murray began to wonder if we might be able to categorize this gift to Bancroft Library as a donation against our personal income taxes. He wrote to the Bancroft Library, but, he tells me, they were "uncooperative". What we would need may be unobtainable, namely, some person who is qualified as an authority to place a financial value upon the notes. He asked me to ask you for advice. If you can help us we'd be grateful. If not, we will understand, because the situation is very complicated. (I myself have inner doubts, because I prepared the notes I feel deeply obligated to the Americans of Japanese descent. I did not do it for profit.)

I hope all has been going well for you and Harry and the family. Murray is still working in Minnesota, but we have hopes that he may be able to return to St. Louis in the fall. I miss him a great deal but, as you know, I've kept busy and I am a tough old lady.

Must love,

Rosalie H. Wax

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI  
SEP 27 1954  
COTTON CLOTHING

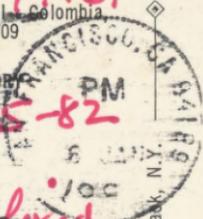


35 KRONQUIST CT. SF 94131

Votive Figure. Cast gold. Musica style. Central Colombia  
13th-16th centuries A.D. Height 8 cm. AMNH B/7709

Gold of the Americas

THE AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



Ni!

Had my mouth all fixed  
to break sushi with you  
and let fly a torrent of  
sociability. Come soon.  
Morgan Yamataka, youngest  
man to be in stockade,  
teacher at SFSU, was plan-  
ning to come to meeting,  
so he's interested. Lives  
at 415/383-2507.

Love + busses,  
Nikki



Post Card

Dr. ROSALIE WAX

7106 Westmouland Dr.

University City, Mo

63130

# NOOK

35 Kronquist Court San Francisco, CA. 94131

1-415-235-8182

Takeshi  
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1-~~415~~

415-676-4000

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