

Field Notes: Free Association

Document ~~64~~-102  
August 6, 1943  
Shibutani

Dick Tanabe (pseun.)

Dick Tanabe was living with Willie Ohara at the Wabash Y Hotel. The two had gone to New York and had returned disappointed, and broke. They were still unemployed and were loafing at the Y.M.C.A. Hotel.

"I think the Nisei are going to pot. They were always with their folks and did anything that papa and mama told them to do. Now they are out here alone and can't depend on their folks anymore. They just don't know how to take care of themselves.

"We sure had a swell drunk in New York. We were drunk all the time, and that's all we did. We had a swell picture of Susan Hayward up there. Ummmmmm. I just looked at her open mouth and it made me water. Wow. Too bad we couldn't bring that along. I couldn't carry that stuff around with me."

Dick showed considerable respect for Willie's judgment in photography. He was also interested in the field but was about two years behind in school. There was a long discussion of techniques and of Salvador Dali. Dali's methods were discussed in seriousness and then the subject of his perversions also came up.

"Sure I'm bitter about this whole thing. It's just discrimination. I don't have any sex urges. I want to eat first. We've got liquor around but even then a guy's got to eat. How can a guy get a decent job around here with people not even giving you a chance just because your parents happened to be Japs. Hell, we couldn't help that.

"I'm from ~~Bogal~~ Heights. Every time Willie introduces me to anybody he tells them I'm from that hell hole. But it's a pretty good little dump. We had all the pretty chicks there.

"I think that most Nisei are thinking of going back to the Coast after the war to go to school or to mooch off their parents. They think it's going to



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be just the same as it was before but they're cracked. They think that way. Not me, though. I'm not going back to that god damn place.

"I was going to the same school that Willie was going to when the war broke out. I was just beginning then. I had to quit to go to Poston.

"That Poston was a hell hole. The wardens used to help us steal the lumber. The worst thing was sleeping. We used to soak the floor wet and then go to sleep on it naked. Hell, it dried up so fast we had to keep soaking it. You couldn't even piss on the floor to get int wet because the piss was too hot.

"I don't think Chicago is so bad. We're better off out here than we were on the Coast. Most of the Nisei spend all their time bitching, but we're a hell of a lot better off now than we were before the war. I think the Nisei are all going to pot for other reasons though.

"We don't want to go look for no apartment. It's expensive as hell living here at the hotel, but I don't want to put up with the sassing of the damn landladies. We went around when we first came here and decided the Japs didn't have much of a chance around here.

"I may go to work next week. I'm not sure. I guess we'd better do something pretty soon.

"After the war I think things are going to be tough so I'm figuring on getting good and drunk and having all the fun I can now while the getting is good. Tax is high but we don't have to pay now since we're not working. I'm going to raise hell so that when I'm starving after the war I can at least feel that I had some fun in my life."



I don't know where in hell Willie's living now. We were bunking together until a couple of months ago and then I pulled out to live here. We get pretty good rates here. The Wabash Y is too expensive. Hell, we had to pay a buck a night; here we get off on about \$3.25 a week. I think you can get Willie if you call the place where he works. I left the Y long time ago.

I'm trying to earn enough dough to go to school in February. I'm working as an ~~ame~~ electrician now in a plant for 75 cents an hour. I can save up some dough this way. Where I was working I couldn't save a damn cent. I'm living with three Nisei fellows now. We make it pretty good.

I hear this Cuneo deal is a lousy one. It's run by a bunch of crooked dagoes. They're the ones who bought up the Insull estate. They used to kill guys who didn't play ball with them. They used to pay off the gangs. They just fuck you from behind that's all.

No musumesan life for me. I'm a good little boy. (At this the others in the room began to hoot and insist that he came in at 3 in the morning on several occasions).



Field Notes: Free Association

Document CH-103AB  
June 3, 1943  
Shibutani

Rose and Suye Inouye (pseud.)

I got up at 6:20 and rushed to a telephone to call the Dearborn Station. The train was on time. I got to the Dearborn Station just in time to see Rose and Suye walking out together aimlessly. In spite of the fact that they had not seen me for over 10 years, they seemed to recognize me right away and greeted me very cordially. We went around looking for a restaurant and finally had to settle for a cafeteria. We then went to the Vogue School for Design where Rose had been accepted as a student to ask about housing. The school had apparently promised to give them housing and the girls consequently had no arrangements on their own. Whenever I asked any questions Suye remained very quiet while Rose did all the talking. She also paid all the bills and made all the decisions. After waiting  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours at the school, a very attractive nisei girl, who is attending the school, told us politely that there were no rooms available anyways and then proceeded to tell us about the difficult time she was having in getting her own room. One of the staff members of the school, suggested that the girls try a small hotel on S. Harper St. It was all very disgusting and the girls were very dejected.

We rode home on the ILC; and both girls were quite amazed at the speed with which the train traveled. We went out for lunch to a restaurant and both Rose and Suye had a rather difficult time in eating and seemed to be unaccustomed to eating with knives and forks.



6051 S. Kimbark St.,  
Chicago, Illinois

May 31, 1943

Dear Mr. Inoué,

I was more than pleased to hear from you. I had often wondered how you and your family were getting along. It was indeed good to know that everyone is getting along comfortably--relatively so, anyway.

As you know, I have many friends in Rohwer and was much concerned about the floods in the midwest. It is easy to see how much people in the center would be concerned about their personal safety when they are living such insecure lives. I know how I would have felt if I had heard such rumors in Tule Lake.

How have things been in general with you and Mrs. Iguchi? Are you doing anything in the center? How is Mrs. Iguchi?

The news that ~~Rose~~ and ~~Sue~~ were coming to Chicago was a very pleasant surprise. I haven't seen them for such a long time that I don't know whether I shall recognize them now. Both Tomi and I shall be more than glad to do anything that we can to see that they are settled here. We are living some distance away from the two schools that you mentioned, but because of the convenient transportation system here in Chicago, it will be a simple matter to run down town to see them. I certainly hope that they enjoy their stay here.

I wonder if I may ask a favor of you? Could you ask them to wire me the name of the train on which they are arriving and the exact date and time of their arrival so that I can be at the station to meet them? Chicago being so big, it is difficult to contact people unless special arrangements are made. Also, please specify the name of the railroad company so that we will be at the proper station.

In the event that this letter arrives too late, please notify me of their whereabouts in Chicago. As you can see from the address above, we have moved to another apartment. You can always reach me by writing to:

The Evacuation and Resettlement Study  
Room 502-Social Science Research Building  
University of Chicago.

The telephone number of the University room is:

Midway 0800, Extension 735

As you probably know, I have been working as a sociologist on the staff of the University of California. At the



same time I have been studying for my doctor's degree in sociology. Since we cannot work in Berkeley, I have been assigned to work here at the University of Chicago. In many ways, I think that Chicago is a better university, although I naturally find my attachments to California very strong.

We are rushing off this letter with the pious hope that it will arrive in time. I shall make every effort to meet Sumi and Aster at the train station. If we miss them there, please ask them to phone the University. I certainly hope that some arrangement can be made.

Please give my best regards to Mrs. Inouye and all my friends in the center. We hope to be hearing from you again soon. Please write. We are always glad to hear from our friends whom evacuation made it impossible to see in person.

Wishing you the best of luck and hoping that all works out well, I remain,

Very sincerely yours,



(COPY)

CH-103

WESTERN UNION

CAE100 17 XC-ROHWER ARK 2 1005A

JUN 2 1943

TAMOTSU SHIBUTANI

6051 SOUTH KIMBARK ST

THANKS LETTER. SUYE ROSE LEFT THIS MORNING. WILL  
ARRIVE 740 TOMORROW MORNING DEARBORN STATION VIA  
WABASH TRAIN

INVOICE

SUYE ROSE 740 INVOICE



(C O P Y)

CH-103

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Shibutani:

At this thought I wish to express my sincere appreciation for all you've done to my daughters. Knowing that we have friends like you in Chicago have greatly released our worries, especially, when we are sending our daughters to a strange city and under prevailing condition.

~~Suyeko~~ and ~~Rose~~ repeatedly mentioned in their letters the kind effort extended them by both of you. We are happy to know that they were settled down in such a short time. Both of us here feel it was thru your effort that they were able to obtain such favorable apartment and jobs. And for that we are greatly indebted to you.

I have noticed thru your paper (news) that Chicago and its residents are suffering a heat spell. We are just about getting over with heat initiation here. The Arkansas heat is something to talk about. Although it does not register much on thermometer it surely drains out our energy. Perhaps this sultry heat has lot to do with the characteristic of these Arkansas here (laziness).

In the early part of this fall my wife and I are expecting to leave this center on a short term leave. We hope to be in Chicago, then, and meet both of you.

Meantime any advices given to my girls in regards to their behaviors and schooling will be greatly appreciated.

In closing I wish to thank you again for your timely and kind letter and your kind efforts.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ M. Inouye



(COPY)

CH-103

502 Social Science Building  
University of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois  
July 16, 1943

Mr. M. Inouye  
26-6-F  
Rohwer Relocation Center  
McGehee, Arkansas

Dear Mr. Inouye,

Thank you ever so much for your kind letter and for the vegetables which you so kindly sent. We certainly appreciate everything that you have done and can hardly think of anything that we may have done to deserve such kindness. Thank you ever so much.

So far as I can say, both Sumi and Rose are getting along very well. The least that we can say is that it has been a very great pleasure for us to see them and to discuss various problems. I might add that neither Tomi nor I had much to do with their fine adjustment, since both of them have done their own work. It is very good to see the young Nisei who can live up to their responsibilities, and who can adjust themselves even to the most trying situation.

They have told me on several occasions that you have a great interest in political science and that you were contemplating a possibility of going to school. I was very glad indeed to hear of this, particularly since I likewise am very much interested in current world events. If there are any publications, recent or old, that we can get for you in Chicago, we shall be more than glad to send them with the exception of a few books which are in great demand. Several of the large bookstores publish catalogs, and if you would like to have any of these, I shall be glad to ask for them for you.

I don't know how to thank you for all the things you have sent. Please give my best regards to Mrs. Iguchi. Sumi is now working with us, and she is doing very well. At the end of her work here, I hope that we may in some way work out some more satisfactory arrangement for her. I shall write again in the near future, and I hope that I may hear from you.

Very sincerely,



Field Notes: Free Association

Document CH-103AB  
June 7, 1943  
Shibutani

Rose and Suze Inouye (pseud.)

"We came over the other night (June 4), but you weren't home. We want to thank your wife for getting us fixed up at the Mayflower Hotel. We went down to the hotel at Harper St. which the lady at the school suggested but it was a very dirty place and so we didn't go. We brought this candy for you.

"We've been spending most of our days shopping and know the Loop pretty well by now. (Rose does practically all the talking.) We went to several shows to catch up for lost time, although we did have some movies in Rohwer. We had our China-meshi too. Yesterday, after we got all rested up, we went to look for a room. It was the first time and we found one. Gee, it was nice, and the lady there is nice too. Gee, she's so nice, that sometimes I don't know what to do. All the references that the Vogue School gave us were filled.

"I think that there are too many Japanese in this part of town. They are too conspicuous and have bad manners."

Throughout the evening Rose talked on and on while Suze sat beside, smiling in agreement but not saying anything in particular. The two girls giggled a great deal and seemed to be ill-at-ease.

"Gee, the first day of the war was terrible. We didn't know what to do. The next day we went to high school and we felt very uncomfortable. I hear that one teacher in commercial just told the nisei off and said, 'You have a lot of nerve to show your face here after what happened yesterday.' Nothing else happened in Stockton though.



"Did you know that Mary Fujita got married to Lincoln Shimidzu? She's a terribly girl, isn't she? I think she was one of the worst nisei girls in Stockton. I heard that they were coming out pretty soon too. There are a lot of people from Stockton here in Chicago. Kiyo Shimazaki, Tamio Kenmotsu, Ed Yoshikawa and Jiro Okinaga are living here together.

"Gee, the evacuation was sure bad. I felt terrible when the men came and jeeps to put up the evacuation posters. When we moved from Stockton to Rohwer, we had a bad time because of one man. Do you remember that young Fujimoto fellow who used to run a gasoline station on El Dorado St.? Gee, he was a nice fellow, but when he got in the center he just turned bad. He became a block manager and went on ahead on the advance crew and had all the bachelors moved into one block. After that he kicked all the other people out and let only bachelors come in. They had lots of scandal in that block. The only trouble we had in Rohwer was when the Hawaiians tried to steal some pork chops. The chief cook got sore at them and they ~~almost~~ almost had a strike. Gee, the hakujin in the camp were so dumb. The schools in California are so good that we're used to decent education. The hakujin people sent their children to the Rohwer schools because they said that the standard in the center were so much better than the Arkansas schools.

"I think Chicago is a dirty town. The weather here is as uncertain and as bad as in Arkansas.



Field Notes: Free Association

Document CH-103AB  
June 11, 1948  
Shibutani

Rose and Suye Inouye (pseud.)

"We came here last night but you weren't in. I don't know what we're going to do, but we are having trouble with<sup>L</sup>out housing. The lady we are living with is very nice and she was crying when the real estate agent came to tell us that we had to leave. He said that some old cranky woman in the neighborhood objected and he said that the lease for the apartment says that no non-Caucasians can live in the house. The real estate man is very nice and said that he was very sorry but all this was in the lease so there was nothing he could do but to tell us to look for another room. He said we could stay until we found another place. The lady we were renting our room from was renting the whole apartment and she was sub-renting one room to us. That's why we only have a bedroom and had to share the kitchen and bathroom with her. The apartment is really run by McKee and Poague. We wouldn't mind so much, only we had just unpacked all our freight and had pressed all our clothes and had even unpacked our sewing machine when this happened. I guess we'll just have to look for a new place.

"We don't want to raise an issue about this because we don't want to cause any trouble. The expense in moving is all right. We can pay that, but what makes me mad is that we are all unpacked. It's all right to call the WRA but we don't want to cause the nice lady who took us in any trouble. She was so nice and she cried when she found out we had to go. "



Field Notes: Free Association

Document CH-103AB  
July 2, 1943  
Shibutani

Rose and Suye Inouye (pseud.)

"Sometimes we get very homesick for our parents, but it's not so bad. This is the first time that we have been away from them. We were thinking of going home during the Fourth of July holiday but decided that it was no use just to be there for one day. School has started for both of us and we are in school most of the day. Rose does most of the work around the house and I want to work.

"We like the three feature shows around here because we have a swell chance to catch up with the old ones that we missed. Otherwise we just stay home. We don't know very many people around here. Here is some tea that my mother sent."



(COPY)

CH-103

May 22, 1943

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Shibutani:

About a month ago we received a letter from your dad saying that you have gone out to Chicago. How are you getting along out there?

Our family is all in the best of health and getting along pretty well out here. But everybody seems to be worried about the flood condition out here. There haven't been any report of any danger, but still people talk and worry about it. To think that yearly we read about the floods in the newspaper, but this year we're right in the midst of it. Unbelievable.

This camp is slowly depreciating with so many people especially Nisei going outside for either employment or school. We have decided to send my two daughters, Sumi and Aster, to school in Chicago. Sumi to Gregg's Business College and Aster to Vogue School of Fashion Arts--both in Chicago. Since they're not familiar with a large city I hope you will give them some advice. They're leaving sometime next week.

'Til we hear from you really soon, take good care of your self and the best of luck to you.

Sincerely,

/s/ M. Inoué



Field Notes:  
Oct. 23, 1943  
Document CH-103B  
Shibutani

Suye Inouye

I met Suye on the way to school and asked her if Frank had given her any typing. She said that he had not and that she had just come down to thank us for everything. I couldn't help but notice that she was crying. I tried to reassure her but she kept on crying and everything I said seemed to make it worse so I left her. I gathered from what she said that she thinks that she was fired because of incompetence. This was partially true but not the crucial reason why she was asked to stop.

When I got in the office Frank remarked that Suye had come in and had asked for me. He said that she talked about Dr. Tashiro and then out of the blue sky said "Thank You" and left. He said that by then he sensed that something had gone wrong and that she was crying but since he was not sure what we had told her he did not do anything.

For many reasons Suye has a terrific inferiority complex. Like the other girls in the Stockton Japanese community she has been brought up in the anticipation of eventually playing the role of a housewife. However, because of her small stature, her mother has constantly telling her that unless she grows (which is impossible) she will never marry. Her younger sister has always been given the responsibility of looking after her even though she is perfectly normal. She has never been treated as normal and because of her inferiority complex she expects failure before she even starts. Furthermore, this was the first job that she ever had and there was much prestige attached to working for the University of California. She was completely broken hearted.