Japanese American Incarceration and Internment During WWII

UCLA Film & Television Archive holds a selection of materials about the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. From Hearst newsreels to documentaries and motion pictures, the collection offers points of view from the American news media of the 1940s, the U.S. War Department and the testimony of camp inmates.

Moving Image Resources


*L.A. This Week. Neighbor to Neighbor* (2001-11-26). Television documentary compares racial profiling in the post-9/11 era to the treatment of Japanese Americans during WWII. Study Copy: VA21844 T

*Conscience and the Constitution* (2000). Director, Writer, Frank Abe. Narrator, Lawson Fusao Inada. In World War II, a handful of young Americans refused to be drafted from the War Relocation Authority camp in Wyoming, popularly known as Heart Mountain. They were ready to fight for their country, but not before the government restored their rights as U.S. citizens and released their families from camp. It was a classic example of civil disobedience—but the government prosecuted them as criminals and Japanese American leaders and veterans ostracized them as traitors. Inventory Number: T129719

*Interactions* (2000). Director, Justin Lin. Chronicles four high school students who find out what life was like for Japanese American teenagers incarcerated in U.S. concentration camps during World War II. Study Copy: VA15372 M

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*Bracelet* (2000). Producer, Jennifer Kim. Director, John Esaki. Based on a book by Yoshiko Uchida, this adaptation tells the story of young Emi, a girl in the second grade. When her family is removed from their home during World War II, Emi loses a bracelet given to her by her best friend, but realizes that it is friendship and not jewelry that really matters. Both the film and the book draw from Uchida’s own childhood experiences being sent to the Wartime Civil Control Administration camp known as Tanforan, located just south of San Francisco. Study Copy: VA15371 M


*Snow Falling on Cedars* (1999). Director, Scott Hicks. Cast, Ethan Hawke, Youki Kudoh. Feature film about an interracial romantic couple parted by the incarceration of Japanese Americans. Portrays the tensions leading up to the incarceration, life in the camps, and the process of resettlement back into the larger society. Study Copy: VA17061 M

*Women of Vision Oral History Interview. Eve Oishi* (1995-06-17). Interviewer, Alexandra Juhasz. Eve Oishi discusses her scholarly work concerned with authenticating the histories of contemporary Asian American women. She speaks about what she considers a key film text, Rea Tajiri’s *History and Memory* (1992), which is a re-creation of Tajiri’s mother’s experience being incarcerated as a Japanese American during World War II. Study Copy: VA22685 M

*Legacy of the Barracks* (1994-11-20). KABC. Producer, Mark Mohr. Near Heart Mountain, Wyoming, volunteers carefully dismantle two original barracks and drive them back to Los Angeles where they rebuild one of the barracks as the centerpiece for a major exhibit at the Japanese American National Museum. Study Copy: VA19861 T


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*Color of Honor* (1989). Director, Loni Ding. PBS documentary about Japanese Americans who fought during WWII while their families were sent to American-style concentration camps. NAPA Number: 25582

*Topaz* (1988). KUED. Filmmaker Ken Verdola’s documentary explores the history of the “Central Utah Relocation Center,” a camp for Japanese Americans during World War II, which was run by the War Relocation Authority, and which was popularly known as Topaz. Study Copy: VA19858 T


*Manzanar* (1971). Director, Robert Nakamura. Nakamura recounts his childhood experience in Los Angeles during WWII while he tours the Manzanar National Historic Site in California. Study Copy: VA9055 M


*Japanese Relocation* (1942). Office of War Information, Bureau of Motion Pictures. Government information film intended to influence public opinion characterizes Japanese Americans as ‘cheerfully’ assisting in processing the paperwork to facilitate their incarceration in U.S. concentration camps. Study Copy: VA2727 M


*Hearst Newsreel Footage* (1941-1942). Original description states, “Attorney General Biddle speaks on alien problem. Attention aliens! Here is an order you must obey, a warning to enemy aliens issued by Uncle Sam! Protecting the West! Moving day for U.S. Japs [sic]! Japs in great migration as army acts to protect west! Alien concentration camp.” Study Copy: VA7588 M
News of the Day (1940). Includes the following: “Charles Boyer and Merle Oberon co-star in special appeal to all foreigners in U.S.A. to register as required by law.” Study copy: VA8325

RELATED MOVING IMAGE RESOURCES

Pilgrimage (2008). Director, Tadashi Nakamura. A tribute to the small group of Japanese Americans in the late 1960s who transformed the War Relocation Authority’s camp, popularly known as Manzanar, into a symbol of retrospection and solidarity for people of all ages, races, and nations. Inventory Number: M143309

KABC News. A Generation Lost – Excerpt (2004-11-30). KABC. Reporter, David Ono. “A Generation Lost is about a unique study taking place at California State University, Northridge. Study attempts to gather as much information as possible about Japanese Americans who played a large part in the settlement of the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles. Due to cultural attitudes and the history of incarceration during WWII, very little is known or documented about this generation.” Inventory Number: T08822


INTERNET RESOURCES

The Densho Encyclopedia is a free and publicly accessible website that provides concise, accurate, and balanced information on many aspects of the Japanese American story during World War II. It is designed and written for a non-specialist audience that includes high school and college students and instructors, multiple generations of Nikkei community members, confinement sites preservation groups, amateur and professional historians, librarians, journalists, documentarians, and the general public.

http://encyclopedia.densho.org/

Japanese American Evacuation and Resettlement Study Digital Archive. Beginning in 1942, University of California, Berkeley researchers sought to document the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans by embedding Nisei social science students recruited from the Berkeley
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campus into selected camps. This online resource features original manuscript items including daily journals, field reports, life histories and extensive correspondence between staff, evacuees and other individuals.

http://bancroft.berkeley.edu/collections/jais/

**Japanese American Relocation Digital Archives (JARDA).** JARDA is a digital “thematic collection” within the California Digital Library’s Online Archive of California, documenting the experience of Japanese Americans in World War II incarceration camps. Curators, archivists, and librarians from ten participating OAC contributing institutions selected a broad range of primary sources to be digitized, including photographs, documents, manuscripts, paintings, drawings, letters, and oral histories. The site also features an extensive list of links to additional resources.

http://jarda.cdlib.org/index.html

**Prelinger Archives.** The following two U.S. government films are available for viewing or download online via the Prelinger collection available through the Internet Archive—Movie Archive:

http://www.archive.org/details/movies


Government-produced film attempting to defend the massive incarceration of Japanese Americans in concentration camps during World War II.

**PRINT RESOURCES**
(for more information consult the UCLA Library)


**RELATED RESOURCES**

The UCLA Library Special Collections department holds various materials related to the mass incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II. For more information, please contact Special Collections: (310) 825-4988.

**A NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY**

The National Park Service (NPS) has produced a website to promote a better understanding of the way language and official terminology, including words such as, "internment" and "evacuation" have been used to represent, or misrepresent, the wartime experience of Japanese Americans. The NPS site offers links to scholarly texts and formal findings by the
Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) that examine what words accurately describe the experience of Japanese Americans and persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II.
http://home.nps.gov/tule/forteachers/suggestedreading.htm