And Justice for Some

EXPLORING AMERICAN JUSTICE THROUGH DRAMA AND THEATRE

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Introduction

From an Interview with Walter Cronkite

DICK GORDON: You’ve made it a priority in your life as a public citizen to do whatever you can to help with the education of children, to get children connected to history.

WALTER CRONKITE: It’s almost the only way they can be good citizens. It’s not a question of degree. It’s a question of whether they’re going to be good citizens or not. Unless they understand history, as [George] Santayana said, they “are doomed to repeat it.” I do not think that history is well taught in most of our schools. The history teachers, perhaps, are told to cover so much ground that they don’t get an opportunity to dramatize history the way it should be dramatized in teaching it to young people, to get them caught up in that story. Almost every major decision in history involves a duel of personalities. And that duel of personalities is fascinating stuff. It’s the stuff of which much writing has been done. And if we taught that way, the kids would be caught up in the flow of history, the flow of competition, the flow that even leads to combat. We just don’t get it like that, and I’d like to see it improved.

Why American Justice and Theatre?

As a teenager in the early 1970s, my interest in civics was almost nonexistent. I attended a few antiwar rallies, but to be honest, I was more interested in being part of the action than in understanding the American political system. Even with a cool, long-haired teacher, I digested junior high lessons in American history like bad medicine. All that changed in the summer of 1973, with the airing of the Watergate Hearings. As if hooked on a soap opera, I tuned in each day and was transfixed by the real-life drama that unfolded before me. I was incredulous as H. R. Haldeman claimed time after time that

he did not recall *anything*. I was appalled at John Ehrlichman’s unapologetic defense of the break-in as normal practice. And I was astonished as John Dean implicated Nixon and his top advisors in the cover up. Sam Ervin and Daniel Inouye temporarily replaced rock stars as my idols. There were moments of high drama; I remember holding my breath as one witness conferred with his lawyer for several moments over yet another stinging question from a senator. When he answered “not to the best of my recollection,” my sigh of disgust seemed to echo those in the Congressional chamber. There were also moments of comic relief, like when Senator Inouye mumbled “[expletive] liar” under his breath, unaware that his microphone was turned on. The tension continued to build until the resignation of Richard Nixon provoked a national catharsis.

In the early 1990s, the nation once again was mesmerized by an unfolding legal proceeding—the televised trial of O.J. Simpson. More recently, Winona Ryder and Kobe Bryant’s legal woes have captured our attention. While I find a disturbing voyeuristic element to our society’s fixation with celebrity court cases, I see an important benefit from the media’s attention on trials: U.S. citizens become engaged in their justice system. We learn about the roles of the judge, jury, and lawyers for the defense and prosecution. The nature, reliability, and admissibility of evidence are examined, as is court procedure. Issues of race, gender, and the law are thrust, at least temporarily, back into the national dialogue. We are motivated to learn how our justice system works, or when we disagree with the outcome, why it fails.

Playwrights have capitalized on the dramatic nature of trials since the ancient Greeks; Orestes was tried by the gods for the murder of Clytemnestra in Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*. Portia’s defense of Antonio in *Merchant of Venice* stands as perhaps one of the best-known examples of the convention. Modern plays such as George Bernard Shaw’s *Saint Joan* and Moisés Kaufman’s *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* continue the tradition of using trials as the stuff of drama. Hollywood has long known the dramatic potential of the courtroom with films like *Adam’s Rib*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Twelve Angry Men*, and *The Verdict*. In pop culture, we are inundated with courtroom dramas that are “ripped from the headlines,” and reality shows such as *Judge Judy*.

What is it about hearings and trials that make them inherently dramatic? Anyone who has sat on a jury, or read transcripts of a congressional hearing knows that court proceedings are full of tedious details. At their core, trials are high-stakes events. In death penalty cases such as the Rosenbergs’ trial, actual life or death decisions are made in the courtroom. A person’s liberty, career, reputation, health, and family ties may all be on the line. There
are victims, be it an individual, a family, a community, or—in the case of Watergate—a nation. Overall questions of guilt or innocence and what the verdict will drive the dramatic action. Along the way, conflicting testimony, doubts as to the reliability of evidence, and questions about the motivations and tactics of the defendant(s), the appellant, lawyers, witnesses, even the judge and jury all help to grab and maintain our attention. Public opinion and the historical context provide the given circumstances for the drama, and the press and pundits fulfill the role of a Greek chorus. Tension builds to the crisis point: the decision of the judge, jury, or congressional committee.

As a playwright, I did not start out to write a series of plays about the American justice system. Often, I was intrigued by the human struggle of those involved in a historical event. With Salem’s Daughters, I wanted to know what drove the girls of Salem Village to make their accusations. There were also personal reasons for choosing topics. With Justice at War, I was outraged both by the existence of the Japanese Internment Camps, and by the fact that I didn’t learn about them until 1983 when I heard a discussion on National Public Radio about reparations. I decided that this was a story that needed to be told. With Voicings, the selection of the Rosenberg case as the focus of Regis College’s oral history and performance project grew out of a discussion with historian Susan Zeiger about my mother who had been politically active in the 1930s and 1940s. In 1953, the FBI approached my mother with questions about the political affiliations of a lawyer for whom she used to work. Susan and I decided to have our students interview radical women (and their daughters) about the Rosenberg case, which was a defining moment in their lives.

As artistic director of Theatre Espresso—a theatre-in-education company that tours to schools, museums, and courthouses—my interest in exploring history through theatre evolved. Theatre-in-Education (TIE) is a form of theatre that involves both scripted material and improvisation with the audience. Generally in TIE, the audience plays an active role in the drama, often making important decisions. There are many forms of TIE; some pieces start with a self-contained play followed by the interactive component, while others involve the audience throughout the performance. These dramas are usually performed in schools, museums, libraries, and historical sites. The performers in TIE are referred to as actor-teachers, as both skills are employed. Theatre Espresso soon discovered that TIE provided a particularly effective framework for teaching the complexities of history.

Two of Theatre Espresso’s early dramas were based on court documents. Once the public became familiar with our work, certain opportunities began
to unfold. In 2000, Discovering Justice: The James D. St.Clair Court Education Project commissioned the company to write a play to be in residence at the John Joseph Moakley Courthouse in Boston. Beth Dunakin, then a graduate student at Emerson College, came on board as a research and playwriting assistant. After reviewing several cases, we selected the trial of Anthony Burns as the topic for our drama. Throughout the development process, we worked with historical and legal scholars, lawyers and judges, all of whom have provided important insights into the material.

It’s tricky business dealing with history in plays, especially if your target audience is young people. There may be substantial pressure from educators and funders to be absolutely “historically accurate.” Even if you attempt this feat, you may have difficulty determining what is true; there are often conflicting interpretations of historical events. Whose truth do you portray? My goal, first and foremost, is to write a dramatically compelling piece of theatre. If I fail in that, I might as well deliver a lecture, or recommend a reading list on the topic. I’m not suggesting that you totally disregard history. Often I do a year of research before I even start to write. But throughout the process you will be faced with choices, and the path you follow should be guided by your goals. In the following chapters, you may notice discrepancies between historical information in the script and that in the study guides. In those cases, assume that the study guides contain a more accurate account of events.

As a playwright, I want to present the messy complexities of real-life situations. I want audiences to be as caught up in the chosen event as I am and to feel the struggles faced by my characters. If I can get across the fundamental conflicts of a situation, I don’t mind sacrificing a few historical facts. I might change the sequence of events, combine several historical figures into one character, or alter a location. If watching a play can motivate students to embark on their own research, I don’t mind if they learn that a few of my facts were inaccurate. That said, in devising a TIE piece the issue of historical accuracy becomes particularly loaded given the importance of both the educational and artistic goals.

Effective plays prompt more questions than they provide answers. If I see a situation as black and white, I need to either find a gray area to explore—something I don’t know—or find a new subject to write about. This was the case with *Justice at War*. It was difficult for our writing team to view the Japanese internment camps as anything but an injustice perpetrated against innocent persons. To merely answer the question, “Was it right or wrong to place American citizens of Japanese ancestry in camps?” would have been too simplistic. By examining the constitutionality of the camps, we
discovered a range of viable viewpoints. Voicings could also have fallen into this trap if we set out to prove that it was wrong for the U.S. government to execute the Rosenbergs. By focusing on how the Rosenbergs’ trial affected the lives of radical women, the students collected a rich tapestry of responses.

Mining legal documents as source material for theatre also offers an ideal opportunity to explore the evolutionary nature of the law. In my youth, I tended to see the law as fixed. But I’ve learned that people can affect change and that court cases often serve as a catalyst for transforming the law. For example, as the Salem witch hysteria grew in scope, public opinion turned against the trials. Governor Phips eventually caved to public pressure and outlawed the admission of spectral evidence in court; the seeing of specters and spirits had been used to convict those accused of witchcraft. Once the law was changed, the trials ceased. In another case, the arrest and subsequent trial of Anthony Burns prompted the Massachusetts State Legislature to enact laws to counteract the Fugitive Slave Law, and Burns’ return to slavery turned average citizens into militant abolitionists and helped propel the Republican Party into power.

I wish I could claim that every young person who sees these plays will vote in every election once they turn eighteen, will attend town meetings, and will always fight for their beliefs. Of course, I can’t. What I can say is that these plays prompt students to ask questions, to look at historical events in new and deeper ways, and to view historical figures as real people faced with difficult decisions. Following performances, I’ve often heard students say, “that’s still going on, you know,” as they draw connections between the fate of Japanese Americans during World War II and attitudes toward Arab Americans today, or they compare the Salem witch trials to modern day witch hunts.

And Justice for Some is meant to provide teachers and artists with a variety of ways to explore American justice though drama and theatre. Salem’s Daughters is a traditional play for family audiences. The Trial of Anthony Burns and Justice at War are both TIE pieces, devised for school groups. Voicings is an example of a musical based on oral histories. These plays can be staged as full productions, presented as readings, or divided into selected scenes and performed in the classroom. The accompanying study guides offer ideas to extend the learning process. The exercises in these sections should be adapted to your students’ needs, rather than followed verbatim. In the final chapter, Beth and I share the processes used to develop each script and offer advice to help you create your own plays.

Developing plays based on court documents offers writers, teachers, and theatre companies opportunities for interesting collaborations. The
partnership between Theatre Espresso and Discovering Justice is just one of many possibilities. In November 2003, a chapter of the Inns of Court brought me to Denver to direct judges and lawyers in a staged reading of *Justice at War*. They performed for eighty-five fellow judges and lawyers who, like our traditional school groups, participated in the drama in role as Supreme Court judges. It is our hope that this book will inspire readers to create new plays, discover new venues for performance, and develop new partnerships between artists, educators, and civic institutions.

In closing, I’d like to share the following story. Twenty years ago, when I lived in Denver, Colorado, a friend called me from Durango. Her seven-year-old son, John, had been treated for leukemia and needed to be picked up from a Denver hospital. She asked if he could spend the night at my apartment—she would pick him up the next day. Retrieving him from the hospital wasn’t a problem, but I had a technical rehearsal for the musical *1776* that night. I offered to try and get out of the rehearsal, but she insisted that I bring her son with me. “He’ll love it,” she said. As the clock approached midnight, I watched John sitting in the dark watching the play and felt pangs of guilt. I should have just called the director and told him I couldn’t make it. Over the next few years, each time I remembered that night, I kicked myself for dragging an ailing seven year old to the theatre for a late night rehearsal.

John died at age twelve, about four years past his life expectancy. After his death, I visited his parents in Durango. One night his mother said, “John used to talk about that rehearsal you took him all the time.” I was stunned. She went on to explain: He identified with the character of Caesar Rodney, who suffered both from asthma and a cancerous growth on his face. Despite his illness, Rodney made the trip from Delaware to vote on the Declaration of Independence, saving it from defeat. Watching the character of Rodney fight his illness to make a vital contribution to his country and alter the course of history had a profound effect on John. It gave him strength. For me, it was an unexpected lesson in the power of theatre and its ability to help us connect with history.

—Wendy Lement

2. The Inns of Court is a national organization, based on the tradition from England. The primary purpose of the Inns is mentorship; established judges and lawyers serve as mentors to young attorneys. To learn more, visit their website: www.innsofcourt.org.
Justice at War Study Guide

Learning Goals

1. to explore the meaning of democracy through the eyes of those who had their freedom taken away
2. to learn tolerance and respect for all ethnic groups
3. to vocalize thoughts and feelings toward injustice
4. to examine the root causes of prejudice against Japanese Americans before, during, and after World War II
5. to explore the plight of 110,000 Japanese Americans who were sent to internment camps following the bombing of Pearl Harbor

What Happened in History

On 7 December 1941, the day that the Japanese bombed the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt issued Proclamation No. 2525 restricting travel for Japanese Americans, and authorizing the detention of any alien enemy who appeared dangerous. Two months later, the President issued Executive Order 9066, establishing military zones along the West Coast. The order set the stage for the exclusion of Japanese Americans from the zones, but it did not authorize the detention of those who were forced to leave. General John L. Dewitt, Commander of the Western Defense, used Executive Order 9066 to justify the evacuation and internment of over 110,000 Japanese Americans in ten permanent camps. No Japanese American was ever convicted of sabotage or espionage against the United States. Still, men, women, and children were forced from their homes and kept in harsh conditions for the remainder of the war. Mitsuye Endo’s case against the government was the fourth such case to be brought before the Supreme Court, and the first to be decided in favor of the plaintiff. The narrow decision in Endo v. Milton-Eisenhower led to the eventual closing of the camps.

Historical Timeline

1869: The first Japanese to settle on the U.S. mainland arrive at Gold Hill near Sacramento, California.
1870: The U.S. Congress grants naturalization rights to free whites and people of African descent, omitting mention of Asian races.
1886: The Japanese government lifts its ban on emigration, allowing its citizens for the first time to make permanent moves to other countries.
1911: The U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization orders that declarations of intent to file for citizenship can only be received from whites and from people of African descent, thus allowing courts to refuse naturalization to the Japanese.

1913: The Alien Land Bill prevents Japanese aliens from owning land in California.

1924: Congress passes an Immigration Act stating that no alien ineligible for citizenship shall be admitted to the United States. This stops all immigration from Japan.

7 December 1941: Japan launches a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor.

19 February 1942: President Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, giving the War Department authority to define military areas in the western states and to exclude from them anyone who might threaten the war effort.

12 August 1942: The evacuation is completed; 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry are removed from the West Coast and placed in ten inland camps.

18 December 1944: The U.S. Supreme Court rules that loyal citizens cannot be held in detention camps against their will—the first major step toward closing the camps.

14 August 1945: Japan surrenders, ending World War II.

20 March 1946: The last remaining detention center closes.

June 1952: Congress passes Public Law 414, granting Japanese aliens the right to become naturalized citizens.

**Vocabulary**

**U.S.S. Arizona:** U.S. battleship that sank after being bombed by Japanese forces in Pearl Harbor killing 1102 crewmen

**Relocation Camps:** temporary homes in remote areas of the United States administered by the War Relocation Authority for the Japanese Americans who were evacuated from their homes on the West Coast

**Pearl Harbor:** U.S. naval base bombed by Japanese forces on 7 December 1941, inciting the United States to join World War II
War Relocation Authority (WRA): government agency created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in March 1942 to oversee the orderly evacuation of Japanese Americans from the West Coast.

Internment Camp: another term for the relocation camps previously defined, particularly used by those who consider the term relocation inaccurate as it implies that Japanese Americans moved there voluntarily.

Fifth Amendment: guarantees that no American citizen may be “deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process.”

Executive Order 9066: Signed by President Roosevelt on 19 February 1942, it gave the Secretary of War the authority to designate certain areas of the United States as “military areas . . . from which any or all persons may be excluded.”

Public Law 503: In March 1942, President Roosevelt signed this law, making it a federal offense to violate any order issued by a designated military commander under authority of Executive Order No. 9066.

Prison Camp: a camp for prisoners of war, or a low-security prison where prisoners are put to work.

Dual Citizen: a person who holds citizenship in two countries.

Relocation Center: a temporary processing center for Japanese Americans who were being moved to relocation camps.

Tanforan: a race track taken over by the U.S. Army and used as an assembly center for Japanese and other people who were evacuated from the Pacific Coast.

Topaz Detention Center: a camp in Utah for Japanese American detainees that opened in September 1942.

Concentration Camp: a prison camp in which political dissidents, members of the minority, ethnic groups, or prisoners of war are confined—usually under harsh conditions.

Espionage: spying or a government’s use of spies to learn another government’s military plans.

Sabotage: the willful destruction of property or obstruction of public services.


Key Players in the Japanese American Internment Camps

JOHN L. DEWITT, a lifelong army man, was commander of the Western Defense during World War II. In March 1942, General Dewitt ordered the evacuation of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans from the Pacific Coast and southern areas of Arizona. Throughout the War, he affirmed his mistrust of, and hatred toward, Japanese Americans.

MITSUYE ENDO was ordered to leave her home in Sacramento and sent to the Tule Lake Assembly Center in Modoc County, California, and later to the Topaz Relocation Center in Utah. (Note: In Justice at War, Endo reports that she was sent to the Tanforan Assembly Center, which processed more detainees than Tule Lake.) Because of her status as a model American citizen—she had worked for the State of California prior to the war and her brother was fighting in the U.S. Army in Europe—Endo was recruited by the American Civil Liberties Union to be the appellant in a test case against the Government. She filed a Writ of Habeas Corpus in July 1942. Her case was forwarded to the U.S. Supreme Court by the Ninth Court of Appeals. In December 1944, the Supreme Court decided by a five to four majority that the War Relocation Authority could not detain loyal citizens. The decision in her case led to the closing of the camps in 1945.

CHARLES FAHEY, Solicitor General of Washington D.C., defended the War Relocation Authority in the Endo case.

GORDON K. HIRABAYASHI was convicted of knowingly disregarding a curfew in California imposed by a military commander as authorized by an Executive Order of the President. His conviction was reaffirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court, which refused to address the issue of constitutionality raised in the case.

TOYOSABURO (FRED) KOREMATSU was arrested and convicted for failing to report to an assembly center and for remaining in San Leandro, California, a military area, contrary to the Civilian Exclusion Order No. 34 of the Western Defense Command. In December 1944, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Executive Order 9066 and the evacuation in his case.

JAMES PURCELL was a young American Civil Liberties attorney who recruited Mitsuye Endo as the appellant, and took her case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT was the thirty-second U.S. President (1933–1945). Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing Secretary of War Stimson to define military areas from which any and all persons could be excluded.

HARLAN FISKE STONE was the U.S. Attorney General under President Calvin Coolidge. In 1925, he resigned to serve as an Associate Justice of
the Supreme Court. Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1941. He held that office until his death in 1946.

MINORI YASUI, like Hirabayashi, was convicted of knowingly disregarding a curfew order in California. The U.S. Supreme Court reaffirmed his conviction.

**Preperformance Lesson Plans**

**Picturing Pearl Harbor**

*Goal:* to help students understand the circumstances that led to the internment of Japanese Americans

*Objectives*

1. to review the facts surrounding the bombing of Pearl Harbor
2. to re-create and reflect on the terror felt by Americans during and immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor

*Method*

1. Ask students to read a brief historical account of the bombing of Pearl Harbor. If photos of the attack are available, they can be included in this activity (see the Resources section at the end of this chapter).
2. Discuss the reading in class. Which moments make strong impressions on the students?
3. Split the class into small groups of four or five. Ask students to choose a moment that is described in the reading and re-create it as a tableau.
4. Each group shares their tableau with the class. After each group presents, ask the rest of the students to share their observations. What do they think is happening in each tableau?
5. Discuss the activity with the class. What emotions were represented in these tableaux? Can the students recall a moment in their own lives when they felt similar emotions?

*Follow-up:* Explain to students that in the 1940s news did not travel as quickly as it does today. It took weeks for people across the country to learn details of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Ask each student to imagine that they are relative of an American who is stationed at Pearl Harbor. Several days
have passed since the bombing, and they have not heard from their loved one. Ask them to write a letter to their relative expressing their concern.

**The Shell Collection**

*Goal:* to put a human face on the plight of Japanese Americans during World War II

*Objectives*

1. to imagine what it was like to be a young Japanese American facing internment
2. to create scenes based on the ordeal of a fictional Japanese American girl

*Method*

1. Hand out handwritten copies of Ikuko’s letter (follows). Tell students that the letter was found in the former home of a Japanese American girl named Ikuko, who was interned during World War II. Ask for a volunteer to read the letter to the class.

Dear Janice,
My mother says we have to leave tomorrow. I wasn’t going to write because of what you said, but Mrs. Powell told me to. She promised to give this to you in class. I don’t know if you can write to me where I’m going.

I can only take one suitcase, so I have to leave my photo album with the Halls. I took out the picture of you and me at the beach, the one where we are both buried in sand up to our necks. I laugh every time I look at it. I’m taking it with me.

Anyway, I’m not trying to start a war and I hope you are still my friend. I’m giving Mrs. Powell my shell collection. I told her you can keep it till I come back.

Ikuko

2. Ask students what they know about Ikuko from the letter. Next, ask students what they think might be true about Ikuko. Finally, ask students what questions they have about Ikuko and her situation. Write these questions on the board.

3. Divide the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to select a question to explore. It’s okay to have more than one group exploring the same question.

4. Ask students to make a list of characters they would like to interview in order to help answer their questions. From the list, select
the top three or four choices (depending on how many students are in that group).

5. Each member of the group selects a character to play. The remaining members of the group interview each character, rotating until all characters have had an opportunity to speak. If a group finishes early, they can interview additional characters from the list.

6. Each group shares what they discovered with the rest of the class.

7. Based on the information learned in the interviews, students create a short scene that explores the question.

8. Students perform their scenes for the class.

9. Discuss what has been discovered about Ikuko from the scenes.

Follow-up

1. Tell students that Ikuko and her family were ordered to go to a bus station. There, they were given tags to put on themselves and their luggage. The tags read “Tanforan,” which was the name of the detention center where they and other Japanese Americans were being sent.

2. In a large open space, ask students to stand in a semicircle. Ask students what Ikuko might have seen when she arrived at the train station. Ask if anyone has an idea for a tableau of the scene. The student may use as many people as she needs to create the tableau. Once the scene is set, ask the student to stand back and look at it, and make any adjustments to the picture.

3. Now ask the student to place Ikuko into the picture. Tell students to relax.

4. Repeat the previous sequence with another student sculpting the tableau. This time, after the students relax, tell them that in a moment you will ask them to re-create that tableau. But this time, you will walk around the room and tap each of them on the shoulder. When they are tapped, they should speak one or two lines of their character’s thoughts.

5. Discuss what occurred.

Postperformance Lesson Plans

Redress for Japanese Americans

Goal: to explore the controversial subject of compensation to groups who suffered economic loss because of actions taken by the U.S. government
Objectives

1. to examine different sides of the debate over redress for Japanese Americans
2. to develop arguments for or against redress
3. to debate the issues around redress in a clear and constructive manner

Method

1. Set up the following situation for the students. The year is 1983, almost forty years since the internment camps closed. The following proposal will be submitted to Congress for redress for Japanese American survivors of the internment camps during World War II.

Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians Proposal for Redress Presented to the Congress of the United States June 1983

Recommendations

• Congressional acknowledgment and public apology for wrongs done in 1942
• Presidential pardon for those who resisted relocation
• Benefits and status change for Japanese Americans who were dishonorably discharged after the bombing of Pearl Harbor because of wartime prejudice
• Establishment of a foundation to sponsor research and education about the internment camps so that similar events can be prevented in the future
• A one-time, tax-free compensation of twenty thousand dollars to each survivor of the camps.

2. Divide the students into four groups. Each group is given one of the following identities:

a. a Japanese American who is presenting the proposal to Congress (Her aging grandmother was in the camps.)

b. a woman whose grandfather died in the attack on Pearl Harbor (Her grandmother suffered emotional and financial hardship. She wonders why Japanese Americans should be awarded compensation, when her grandmother didn’t receive anything. She suggests that the Japanese government pay them, as Japan started the war. As a taxpayer, she doesn’t want her money going to reimburse Japanese Americans.)
c. a member of the House Budget Committee (He is concerned that if the Japanese Americans receive redress, then the door will be open to African Americans, American Indians, Chinese Americans who worked on the railroads, and so on. Paying sixty thousand Japanese American survivors twenty thousand dollars each would cost U.S. taxpayers $1.2 billion. If other groups start asking for redress, the country would go bankrupt. Who is to say who deserves it more?)

d. a Rabbi from the World Jewish Congress (He helped Jews in Germany obtain redress after World War II, and believes that the Japanese Americans deserve more than the twenty thousand dollars proposed.)

3. Provide each group with background materials and ask them to prepare their arguments. Their goal is to convince a Congressional committee to vote according to the views of their character. They should prepare a brief opening statement and a list of arguments. Ask each group to select a representative to present the opening statement.

4. Invite another class or colleagues to play the Congressional committee. Direct each of the groups in a, b, c, and d as listed in step two to stand in one corner of the room. The teacher, in role as the chair of the Congressional committee, invites representatives from each group to make their opening statement.

5. Under the supervision of the chairperson, students participate in an open forum debate on the proposal. Any group member playing a character can ask another character a question. The question can be answered by any member of the group playing that character. Colored dots on the floor will mark where each character should stand when they speak.

6. The chairperson then encourages members of the Congressional committee to ask questions of the characters. Again, any member of a group can respond as that character.

7. The chairperson then leads the committee in a vote and the decision is announced.

8. Postdrama questions:
   a. Are we responsible for wrongs done in the past?
   b. Can we compensate a group who has been wronged in the past? How?
c. How does what happened to the Japanese Americans compare with what happened to Native American Indians, African-Americans, or other groups?
d. Should these groups be redressed? If so, how? Who is going to pay for it?
e. Why was one group of people suddenly denied their constitutional rights?
f. Could this kind of thing happen again? If so, what steps could be taken to prevent it?

Follow-up: In role as Japanese Americans recently released from the camps, students write a letter to President Roosevelt expressing their feelings and opinions about what happened to them. If students wish to be compensated for their losses, they must give reasons to support their claim.

Write an Essay

Goal: to explore modern-day parallels to the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II

Objectives

1. to utilize and strengthen research skills
2. to write a persuasive essay

Method

1. Ask students if they can remember a modern-day incident when ethnic or racial groups claimed that they had been subjected to civil liberties violations (see number 6 in the next section, Topics for Further Research and Discussion, below). Make a list on the board.
2. Ask students to choose one of these examples and conduct further research into the background of the alleged civil rights violation, if it was challenged, and the end result.
3. Ask students to write a persuasive essay that addresses whether the civil rights of the ethnic or racial group were indeed violated.

Topics for Further Research and Discussion

1. conditions in the relocation camps
2. scope of the wartime relocation camps (number, location, and capacity of U.S. camps and those in Mexico and Canada)
3. 442nd division of Japanese American soldiers fighting in Europe
4. root causes of prejudice against Japanese Americans before, during, and after World War II
5. fate of Japanese Americans after the camps were closed
   a. economic hardships
   b. loss of property and possessions
   c. those who returned to the West Coast
   d. those who remained in the camps
   e. those who settled in other parts of the United States
   f. those who repatriated to Japan
   g. continued prejudice
   h. establishment of societies to help Japanese Americans return to civilian life
   i. fight for redress
6. other times in history when ethnic or racial groups have been subjected to civil liberties violations
   a. Palmer Raids after World War I
   b. Korean War (the McCarran Act)
   c. Vietnam War Era (repression of Civil Rights activists)
   d. Oklahoma City bombing
   e. attack on the World Trade Center (11 September 2001)
7. process by which a court case reaches the U.S. Supreme Court
8. U.S. Supreme Court cases (other than Mitsuye Endo’s) that dealt with the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II
   a. Hirabayashi
   b. Yasui
   c. Korematsu

Resources


*Come See the Paradise.* 1990. Directed by Alan Parker. 139 min. Fox Studios. Videocassette.


Websites

www.askasia.org/teachers/Instructional_Resources/Lesson_Plans/
Asian_American/LP_asianam_1.htm
www.parentseyes.arizona.edu/wracamps/index.html
www.topazmuseum.org/
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