TERRAIN OF
MEMORY

TERRAIN OF MEMORY

A Japanese Canadian Memorial Project

Kirsten Emiko
McAllister

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This book is dedicated to the members of the
Kyowakai Society
of New Denver, British Columbia,
and to my issei grandparents,
Yatsumatsu Nakashima and Miyuke Nakashima
who lived through the hatred and cruelty of wartime society
to transform all into generations of change.

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TERRAIN OF
MEMORY

INTRODUCTION

The Drive to Do Research

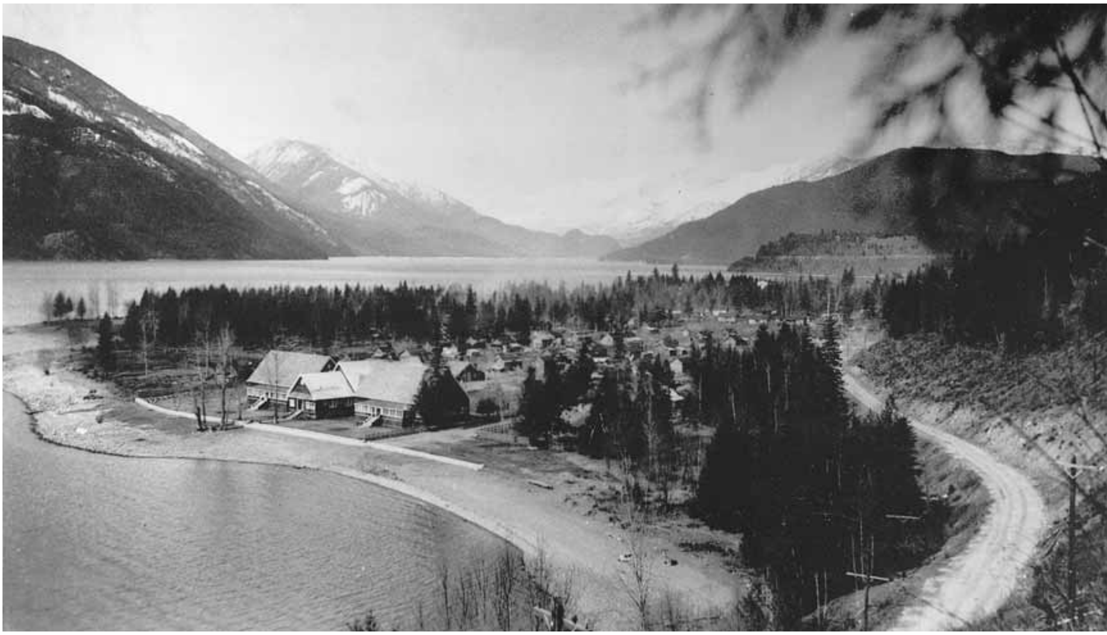
It was a ten-hour drive inland from the Pacific coastline of British Columbia. My destination was a remote, mountainous valley in the interior of the province. I was expected to arrive at dusk, the moment when night swallows the visual world of day. I traced my route from the network of red lines on the road map. It was not the fastest or the most direct route, but it followed the contours of the landscape I would traverse over the next several years.

Tashme, Christina Lake, Greenwood, Lemon Creek, Slocan, Harris Ranch, New Denver, Rosebery, Sandon, Kaslo ... In 1942, these places were part of another map, a field of operation aimed at countering the "quiet insidious penetration" by an "aggressive, unassimilable" race of people (Ward 1990, 107) who had made their homes along the coast. Slowly engulfed by the passing years, today all you see are derelict mining towns, overgrown fields, and serene lakes nestled in mountain valleys.

Highway 3 was the southern route through rugged valleys, over wild mountain ranges with fast, curving descents that unwound unpredictably across rolling savannah. For most travellers it was the slow, scenic route. But for those recollecting the remains of the past, it was a route inscribed with the passage of others, a route in memory of others.

I drove through the heat of the day, stopping only for gas, directions, and coffee. As the light began to fade, I cut north up Highway 6, chasing the setting sun up the Slocan Valley, a valley carved by advancing glaciers thousands of years ago. The mountains were enormous; the lake, a deep inland sea. The narrow highway climbed high, close to the pale twilight sky. Then suddenly it descended to the valley bottom: a cool rush into darkness.

The red lines could take me no further. I had reached my destination. New Denver. Over fifty years before, the bureaucratic machinery of war had transformed the surrounding mountains into "natural prison walls." This is where thousands of women, men, and children of "Japanese racial origin" were interned for four years before the government took the final step to solve the "Japanese problem" and permanently remove them from the province. This was my point of departure. (EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO FRIENDS, 1996)



0.1 New Denver internment camp, views looking north toward the tuberculosis sanatorium, ca. 1943-1945. *Harold Hayashi Family Collection 92/32.019. Courtesy of the Japanese Canadian National Museum.*

In Memory

In 1994, Japanese Canadian elders[1] living in the village of New Denver built the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) to mark the isolated mountainous terrain with their history of persecution. From 1942 to 1946, the Canadian government operated six internment camps in this region. Little evidence of the internment of 7,250 people remains today.[2] When the war ended in 1945, the government dismantled most of the camps and forced most of the internees to leave the province (Miki and Kobayashi 1991, 31). Over time, the landscape has absorbed the physical evidence. A few durable traces remain: water lines, fragments of ceramic plates, the foundations of communal outhouses, grave markers, and service roads. Soon the landscape will reclaim even these vestiges as they are ploughed into farmers' fields, overtaken by vegetation, worn into the earth by heavy winter snow and torrential summer storms, and incorporated into the built environment by local residents and businesses.

Even as the hard evidence erodes, the experiences of internment continue to resonate in the lives of those who still live in the valley. Although the government forced most Japanese Canadian internees to leave the province in 1945, some were permitted to remain. In addition to approximately two thousand "self-supporting" Japanese Canadians scattered throughout the province, government advisors calculated that there were two thousand "persons who could not be rehabilitated to other parts of Canada ... [including] TB patients, incurables, derelict single old men, and women and old couples who [had] no younger members of their families living in Canada, people in mental homes and those serving in penal institutions" (Eastwood 1944). Concluding that they were unable to support themselves, the government gathered "the incurables," "derelicts," and "old couples" from other camps throughout the province and "congregated" them in New Denver. New Denver was chosen in part because the British Columbia Security Commission had built a tuberculosis sanatorium there for internees.[3] The government provided support payments for the "incurables," though advisors suggested that they would eventually cease to be a "problem" because they "would gradually die off over a period of the next fifteen years to twenty years" (Desbrisay 1944).

But the "incurables" did not die off. By 1947, the administrator responsible for Japanese Canadians in New Denver claimed there were 936 who were

> likely to be a Government charge for some years to come. [Three hundred] are those that would leave here if housing with their children in the east was available. In this group we must realize that a number of the daughters and children that went east are very young and unless the parents had money they would not be in a position to procure housing for their parents ... They are anxious to go when housing is obtainable ... [Another three hundred] have made definite plans for relocation ... certain areas [in British Columbia] have asked us to defer sending them until the Japanese problem is more or less definitely clarified with the Province. (Mackinnon 1947)

Poverty, illness, and uncertainty about their prospects in other regions made it difficult for some to leave New Denver. Others left as soon as they had secured employment and accommodations elsewhere and had saved enough to cover the costs of moving. Others decided to stay in New Denver, and some who left gravitated back after 1949, when the government lifted restrictions and permitted Japanese Canadians to return to British Columbia. These elders spoke about feeling adrift in other regions of Canada, at a loss without the communal bonds of their pre-war communities in a radically transformed postwar society. In 1957, when the government agency responsible for administrating "the Japanese problem" was required to dispose of its holdings, the Japanese Canadian leaders in New Denver proposed that the government deed the internment shacks and the accompanying lots to the remaining Japanese Canadians. The government agreed. Half the land was donated to the Village of New Denver for the creation of Centennial Park along the lakefront. The shacks were rearranged into a grid system. When the former internees were confident that the government would not uproot them again, they began to make small improvements to their shacks and lots (Matsushita, History Preservation Meeting, 20 August 1996).

Over the years, the lives of Japanese Canadians became integrated with other residents. They worked alongside one another as loggers, cooks, nurses' aids, and seamstresses. Some ran for political office in the village – for example, Mr. Senya Mori was elected as mayor for several terms – and others set up New Denver's first kindergarten. Their children went to the village school, married the locals, and participated in May Day celebrations and Remembrance Day ceremonies. They transformed what had been an internment camp into their home community.

When I first visited in 1995, fifteen Japanese Canadians elders remained in New Denver. Most were original members of the Kyowakai Society of New Denver. In Japanese, *Kyo* means peacefully, *wa* means together, and *kai* means society: thus, *Kyowakai* can be translated as "working together peacefully" (Kamegaya in Truly 1995). The society was established in 1943 to represent the interests of the 1,500 Japanese Canadians interned in the New Denver camp. As one of the elders wrote to me, "The Society was an important influence for the confused and stressed days of our internment years. The Kyowa Kai ... meant moral support and strength (I'm sure [like] any society, during the war years) (Mrs. Pauli Inose, Interview, 6 August 2006).

The elders were conscious that they would soon die and that there would be few left with living memories of the internment camps. And so they built the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC) for future generations. They built it so those unable to find resolution to the disturbing forces haunting their lives would always have a place to return. They built it so future generations would not forget the history of internment camps in Canada. As Mrs. Inose explained, the memorial reminds us how quickly "discriminatory" attitudes can be transformed into government measures targeting "minorities" (Inose, Interview, 16 August 1996).

The memorial centre occupies almost one full block in the residential area of New Denver on the river flats south of Carpenter Creek, the site of the original internment camp. It is a prominent public statement marking the sleepy village with a painful history that some residents would have preferred to have left buried. Inside the cedar post fence enclosing the grounds are four buildings dating back to the internment camp, all set within a traditional landscaped Japanese garden. Three cramped shacks show the living conditions endured by the internees, and in the Kyowakai Hall artifacts and documents tell the history of Japanese Canadians. In its first summer of operation, the NIMC received over two thousand visitors.

The Terrain of Memory

To build the Nikkei Internment Centre, people in New Denver went through a process of excavation, looking for the remains of the camp. The elders searched their memories for details about the camp's operation and their daily life as internees. They looked through their homes for wartime dishes, homemade furniture, photographs, and government documents. Many other residents joined the search, combing through photograph albums, personal records, attics, and cupboards. To determine the location of the camp, they remapped their neighbourhoods, tracing the outlines of the camp's service roads and the long-gone rows of internment shacks along the lakeshore.

Not everyone was comfortable about making this unpleasant chapter of New Denver's history public. Yet, despite the tensions in the village, the Kyowakai Society remained committed to building the memorial. When it opened, the NIMC placed New Denver on a new map, a map of return. Large numbers of visitors began to arrive from across Canada and even Japan. Some came on pilgrimage-like journeys to the site where their families had been incarcerated; others hoped to find clues about lost childhood friends. Some argued that the government's actions were justified. Others drew parallels with their own histories of persecution.

I was first introduced to the memorial by one of my mentors at the time, Teresa Takana,[4] a *sansei*[5] living in the Slocan Valley whom the elders had recently designated as the chair of their History Preservation Committee. In 1995, she asked me to travel to New Denver to assist with two projects at the memorial, and the following summer she invited me to return to help complete them. This is when I arranged to conduct research on the memorial. Thus, this study focuses on the memorial two years after it opened. Living in the Slocan Valley for just under a month in 1995 and for another three months in 1996, I worked closely with members of the Kyowakai Society on their projects, and I also socialized with them as a guest in their homes and at community events. My time in the valley provided a basis for understanding the significance of the memorial for the elders. During the course of my stay, some elders shared their astute criticisms of the NIMC with me. They warned that it threatened to "museumify" their Buddhist otera, which was now housed in the NIMC. Others spoke about the small-scale memory projects the memorial made possible. Without this time, my understanding would have been limited to a formal analysis of interview material and the memorial's layout and educational exhibits.

In writing *Terrain of Memory*, my intention was to honour the contributions of the elders from New Denver. Rather than focusing on their individual life stories, the book examines the memorial as a collective form of memory.[6] This memorial was one of many projects they have initiated over the years to unearth memories that have haunted the valley long after the internment camps closed. When they built the memorial, the members of the Kyowakai Society acted out of a sense of responsibility to a larger community living across Canada. Yet, in building it, they also transformed their own terrain of memory. Here, the term "terrain" indicates not only a tract of land but also a field of knowledge and a sphere of influence or action (*Oxford Modern Dictionary* 1996). How the elders remember the past has been profoundly transformed by the thousands of people who visit the river flats of New Denver each year, each with her or his own reason for remembering the internment camps. The elders have learned that there is a need not only for Japanese Canadians but also for everyone affected by the removal of all people "of Japanese racial origin" from British Columbia to have a place to grieve, recall, and question the past.

Not a Recovery

Unlike historical studies of Japanese Canadians that are aimed at recovering details of pre-war and wartime life, this book examines how memory shapes contemporary communities. I approach memory as a collective cultural activity. As Mieke Bal, Jonathan Crewe, and Leo Spitzer claim, "cultural memorization as an activity occurring in the present, in which the past is continuously modified and redescribed even as it continues to shape the future ... [is] the product of collective agency rather than the result of psychic or historical accident" (1999a, vii). Thus, this study examines how the practices of memory can both change and create new understandings of and relations to the past while shaping the manner in which members of cultural communities live in the present and approach the future. Using methods from the academic discipline of cultural studies, and more specifically memory studies, this book explores different practices, relations, and understandings of the New Denver internment camp through an examination of the discourses at play in the NIMC's historical displays (Chapter 2), the memorial's space of mourning (Chapter 3), the elders' oral accounts (Chapter 4), their memory projects (Chapter 5), and the responses and practices of tourists (Chapter 6).

My previous research on Japanese Canadians has entailed extensive archival research, interviewing, and fieldwork (McAllister 1994, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006a, 2006b). While recognizing the value of historical research, my work belongs to the field of cultural studies and, more specifically, memory studies. Historical research on the past and research on cultural memory are two different enterprises. The former aims to accurately recover factual details – whether about the working class, for instance, or immigration legislation – cultural memory projects begin with the premise that recollection, which includes not only oral accounts and photographic practices but also the activity of research itself, both occurs in and affects the present (Bal, Crew, and Spitzer 1999a; Hirsch 1997a; Kuhn 1995). Memory, as well as the act of writing about memory, operates in a political field of power, desire, denial, and struggle, something that not all historical scholars recognize as a valid area of inquiry.[8]

My approach to writing and research has been influenced by Asian Canadian researchers such as Audrey Kobayashi (1994b) and Roy Miki (1998a) who, rather than "studying" Asian Canadian communities, recognize that their scholarly activities contribute to the very production of these communities (Said 1979), whether by building intergenerational relations through their interview activities or by contesting exclusionary national discourses (McAllister and Oikawa 1996). It could be argued that the difference between the two approaches can be summed up by the difference between Foucault's (1979) disciplinary knowledge and Marx's praxis (1963 [1844]).

American-trained and Canadian-trained researchers concerned with establishing a field of Japanese (and Asian) Canadian studies in many ways subscribe to the disciplinary approach.[9] This approach is especially evident in the United States, where a number of expatriate Canadians trained at American universities are trying to establish their research on Asian Canadians as a credible, recognized field of study.[10] The interest in Canada as an area of academic expansion reflects the more general nationalist-imperial drive of Asian American scholarship criticized by Canadian scholars such as Miki (1998d), Kamboureli (2005), and Oikawa (forthcoming). For instance, Miki (1998d) argues that the inclusion of Asian Canadian texts such as *Obasan* (Kogawa 1983) in the American canon "results in the erasure of the difference that 'nationalisms' make; in an act of institutional appropriation by US academics of Asian Canadian texts, the site-specific formation of the Japanese Canadian subject ... tends to become another version of the 'Asian American' example" (Miki 1998d, 155).

In contrast to research aimed at producing knowledge that fits the criteria of an established discipline, the research conducted by Japanese Canadian activists in the 1970s and 1980s was an example of praxis (Adachi 1991 [1976]); Sunahara 1981; National Association of Japanese Canadians 1984, 1985, 1988). They conducted research to provide evidence that proved the government had violated the rights of thousands of its citizens and that its use of the War Measures Act to incarcerate Japanese Canadians, liquidate their properties, and force them to leave the province of British Columbia and, in many cases, Canada had no justification.[11] Their research also laid the grounds for making a case to repeal the War Measures Act, though the Emergencies Act continues to give the federal cabinet discretionary power to target whatever segment of the population it deems to be a threat to national security (Kobayashi and Miki 1989). Thus, while their research could be categorized as "recovery work" insofar as it recovered historical facts, it was overtly political (Kobayashi 1992a). Redress activists, including lawyers such as Ann Sunahara and academics such as Roy Miki and Audrey Kobayashi, produced studies to contest established historical "truths" reproduced by the federal government and scholars, upsetting many academics who were working in ethnic studies and other fields of social science research (Miki 2004; Kobayashi 1992a, 1994a).

In contrast, disciplinary "recovery scholars" are dedicated to "objectively" increasing accurate knowledge about the past. Many such scholars dismiss research on cultural memory as postmodern and subjective and political recovery work as biased.[12] Positivist in orientation, these historians do not critically reflect on their own investments in producing knowledge that reifies the past as facts waiting to be discovered. They do not examine how their own research and writing not only constructs "the past" but also produces social, political, and psychological (after)effects. In contrast, studies of cultural memory are concerned with the *process* of recollecting, revising, and repressing past events and with how this process socially, politically, and psychologically configures contemporary communities and subjects (Langer 1991; Young 1993; Bennett 1995; Kuhn 1995; Hirsch 1997a; Spitzer 1998; Bal, Crew, and Spitzer 1999b; Radstone 2000a; Winter and Sivan 2000; Huyssen 2003; Lansberg 2004).

Investments

I have my own investments in remembering the past. My work at the NIMC made me question these investments, especially my need for a stable identity within British Columbia's fluid racial discourses. I am a sansei whose mother's family prospered in the fishing industry before they were interned during the Second World War and whose father's family were Scottish socialists who circulated as freely among White Russian fishermen, secular Sikhs, and Jewish furniture-shop owners as they did among anti-establishment writers and artists of Scottish and English ancestry. Much of the pre-war and wartime social landscape of British Columbia remains alive in their stories. Although my world has always been a confluence of these stories, the wartime landscape of internment camps has had a stronger hold on me. Whatever it was that first compelled me to reach toward the fading contours of my mother's family's past, it has never been about simply recovering what had been destroyed, reconstructing the details of a lost world. Like the work of Mona Oikawa (2002), my research has very much been concerned with the living community of Japanese Canadians.

Like many sansei, I have my own story of "return" that secures my identity as Japanese Canadian. It was the Vancouver community that literally swept me into its arms when I graduated from university. When I first walked into the Japanese Canadian Citizens' Association (JCCA) on Powell Street to ask about volunteer work, I was recognized by people I had never met before. Despite my own ambivalence as a "double" (someone of mixed heritage), they claimed me as a member of the community. Although for my mother's family there was no question that I was part of the Nakashima clan, it was not until I began to work in the Japanese Canadian community that I learned about the anxieties about the more than 95 percent "intermarriage" rate. But, at the same time, I learned that most sansei and *yonsei*[13] were double (Kobayashi 1989; McAllister 1991; McAllister and Medenwaldt 1992; *Nikkei Voice* Staff 1997, 1).

Members of Vancouver's Japanese Canadian community knew my mother's family and shared details from over the last seventy years about people I never knew and places I had never visited. I was inspired by people like Tatsuo Kage and Judy Hanazawa, who worked on the JCCA human rights committee as well as activists, writers, and artists such as Fumiko Greenaway, Mona Oikawa, Roy Miki, Slavia Miki, Tony Tamiyose, Randy Enomoto, Naomi Shikaze, Ken Shikaze, Gordon Kayahara, Mary Seki, Michael Fukushima, and Leslie Komori. I discovered that many of my mannerisms, especially those that others considered peculiar, were part of a cultural language shared with this community. Drawn by this uncanny sense of familiarity, I soon learned that I had been recruited by Frank Kameya to run the JCCA oral history project. Before I knew it, I had over fifty volunteers and was organizing community events and forums and writing articles for local and national Japanese Canadian newspapers, Vancouver's *JCCA Bulletin* and *Nikkei Voice*.

I was introduced to the community in 1989, just after the National Association of Japanese Canadians negotiated a settlement for redress with the Canadian government. I met those who feared that, without redress as a common and unifying goal, the end of the community was near. Some lived in their memories of the pre-war community. Interviewing Japanese Canadians about life in the early 1900s to the 1930s, I learned that despite the restrictive racist legislation and impoverished living conditions that many (although not all) endured, they believed that the future was full of promise. The war threw that future into question and destroyed it for some. When the internment camps were closed, little was left of their pre-war world, a world many felt they had to repudiate if they were to be accepted by other Canadians and spare their children from the racial hatred that had torn their lives apart.

Newly embraced by the Japanese Canadian community in Vancouver, I defiantly argued against "the end of the community." For me, this fear echoed what psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton described as one of the symbolizations of death that characterized the late twentieth century. In general, death represents the annihilation of life, whether psychic or organic. It threatens what Lifton refers to as our sense of immortality, in which immortality is the symbolization of continuity, "an individual's experience in some form of collective life-continuity" (Lifton 1979, 17). For traumatized individuals, their

> individual death cannot be separated from the sense that (as Hiroshima survivors put it) "the whole world is dying." This perception is truly unnatural. It is partly a product of our holocaust-dominated age ... [connected to] imagery of extinction that haunts contemporary man ... But even in the absence of holocaust, people can equate the end of the self with the end of everything ... [Here] one's own death is anticipated, irrespective of age and circumstances, as premature, absurd, unacceptable. (Ibid. 47)

I was adamant that this apocalyptic view failed to recognize the possibilities of a post-redress community. Surely, if Japanese Canadians could mobilize across Canada in a movement for redress, they could embrace a post-redress community with its intercultural families and postwar immigrants (McAllister 1991; McAllister 1992b; and McAllister and Medenwaldt 1992)?

Renditions of the past filled with images of a cohesive pre-war community, embellished with swirls of nostalgia, gave the history of Japanese Canadians a mythic quality. But the past did not circulate simply as stories of a golden era (Lifton 1979). Some described their family's prosperity before the war to express the enormity of what they had lost when the government liquidated their property and forced them out of British Columbia. In families and community forums, there were also silences that slammed shut conversations. There were those who adamantly denied their families had suffered during the war, despite the fact that the government had liquidated their properties and sent members of their families to different camps. Some could not acknowledge the existence of racism and insisted they were no different from other Canadians.

There are researchers who uncritically support this position. For example, in *The Canadian Sansei* (1998), Tomoko Makabe dismisses "the hypothesis that the evacuation-internment experience may be a central component of the distinctive Japanese-Canadian identity." She rejects the idea that the "evacuation-internment" had any impact, in particular, on sansei identity (Makabe 1998, 164). According to Makabe, the damaging impact of the internment and forced assimilation stopped with the *nisei*. For proof, she takes the statements of her interviewees at face value and claims they are "completely free from negative 'minority feelings'"(ibid. 165). She concludes that "overall the sansei have a positive, self-imposed [identity] of so-called ethnic pride" because "they became aware of the advantage of being a member of a 'respectable' minority" (ibid. 167).[14] Yet she does not explain why her interviewees insist that they do not experience racism and cannot identify with "the plight of others who have been subjected to racism." She does not examine some of her interviewees' racist attitudes toward other groups (ibid. 140-142). According to sociologist Donna Nagata (1993) and psychologist Amy Iwasaki Mass (1986), if victims have racist attitudes or show no empathy toward other victims, this can be a sign of pathologies such as disassociation and identification with one's aggressor.[15]

In addition to the denial of racism, there is also what I can describe only as a slow paralysis. It is as if those afflicted are unable to live in their bodies, retreating from the world around them, pulled elsewhere by an unseen struggle or undefined anguish in an unreachable place. It was this haunting presence of loss that also underlay my own ambivalent history growing up in British Columbia, struggling against what I slowly realized were the ways in which I was mapped within its racialized terrain. Attempts to avoid the disturbing presence of the past were impossible; it suffused my everyday world. Avoidance was possible only through retreat, by confining the self to a smaller and smaller space of existence, a slow suffocation, which amounted to a refusal to live in the world as it was constituted (Manganyi 1977; Herman 1992).

I began my exploration of the powerful strategies people used to make sense of the past in the 1990s. In this period, the West Coast literary and arts scene was alive with projects by racialized communities working collaboratively across their different histories.[16] Artists and writers, filmmakers and video artists launched critiques against institutions and discourses that contained histories of violence in the distant past while experimenting with new forms of representation. For me, the poet, scholar, and activist Roy Miki[17] was a key figure in this scene. He set up public venues to gather emerging and established artists and writers to discuss and debate cultural production as well as to publish work that established presses and journals had refused. Writing and research were approached as catalytic engagements with the world rather than as disciplinary studies that objectified and commodified culture. In this milieu, where artists and writers were mapping the topos of race in the everyday world of British Columbia, there was also space to explore my own ambivalent relation to the past. I became interested in forms of representation and cultural practices that transformed rather than reproduced the damaging aftermath of political violence. The present work is shaped by this milieu, which I see as the West Coast School of Cultural Studies.[18] It has shaped my approach to critically investigating how the past is remembered, revised, and forgotten.

Collective Forms of Remembering Political Violence

This study belongs to a growing body of literature on cultural memory (Langer 1991; Young 1993; Bennett 1995; Kuhn 1995; Hirsch 1997a; Spitzer 1998; Bal, Crew, and Spitzer 1999b; Radstone 2000a; Winter and Sivan 2000; Huyssen 2003; Lansberg 2004). It has its roots in Halbwachs' classic study on collective memory (1980) and Connerton's work on social memory (1989). Both of these studies investigate the role of the practices and institutions of remembering in the reproduction of society. The act of remembering provides continuity for members of a society. Rituals and social practices – whether funerals, commemorations of the war dead, or looking through family photograph albums – affirm a shared origin; they gather us together to enact our communal ties. These events, practices, and institutions selectively identify historical figures and events that shape our collective identities, symbolize the values and goals we share, and form the basis for imagining and planning for a future together.

For groups such as Japanese Canadians who have been the target of political violence, the past is not easily recollected. Their organizations have been disbanded, their rituals and practices banned, and their cultural and material resources confiscated or destroyed. If members have not been killed, they are scattered and forced to go into actual or psychological hiding. Although political violence can include acts ranging from genocide to political torture, my definition is broader: the systematic deployment of measures that damage or destroy the capacity of a community to continue to function as a social collective. This differs from, although assumes, the pathological hostilities that compel dominant groups to devalue and vilify segments of a population they view with disgust and fear, who they conclude must be controlled or destroyed (Memmi 1965; Fanon 1967; Jordan 1968; Achebe 1988; Gilman 1989; Lee 1999; Eng 2001). Political violence is organized at the level of institutions and legal apparatuses and can include programs that restrict human rights and either inadvertently or intentionally dismantle a group's socio-cultural, economic, and/or political institutions. But even "inadvertent" damage is not innocent. It typically occurs when administrators do not foresee the destructive impact of their programs. The very inability to foresee the destructive impact on another group indicates a failure to meaningfully consult with them, which points to a more fundamental failure: the inability to recognize the group's autonomy. Moreover, it demonstrates the inability to recognize and value vital elements of others' cultural-material life systems. These failures typically occur through large disparities in power, by which one group is granted the capacity to make changes that threaten the ability of another group to reproduce itself culturally, socially, and materially. Destructive measures can include uprooting a group from their settlements or forcing them to physically disperse and assimilate into the dominant population; such actions have had devastating results for indigenous peoples among others (Canada 1996; Haig-Brown 1988).

The relation that survivors of political violence have to the past is damaged. The past is marked by aggressive and hostile measures to socially or physically annihilate them as peoples. Many persecuted groups, whether survivors of the Holocaust, Palestinians, or indigenous peoples in Canada, recognize that remembering political violence collectively is a necessary aspect of rebuilding their communal life and of healing from the long-term damage that can plague survivors and subsequent generations. To collectively remember the past, whether by building memorials and archives, transmitting oral histories, producing novels and films, or pursuing human rights cases, requires members of the community to rebuild institutions and social networks, to find records, and to reconstitute rituals and public places where they can gather and create new languages, imagery, and cultural practices.[19] Remembering can also offer a means to collectively mourn what has been lost and destroyed. In recognizing the damaging effects, there is the possibility of identifying ways to transform debilitating intergenerational effects and thus assert (a new form of) continuity over time (Herman 1992, 70-71; Lifton 1967, 534-535).

In deciding to build the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre, the Kyowakai Society of New Denver committed itself to a form of remembering that was collective, regathering and rebuilding relationships among Japanese Canadians locally and nationally. It has been a challenge to build as well as run the memorial. Everyone has had different emotional investments in recollecting and, in some cases, forgetting or revising Japanese Canadian history. This study explores the challenges of building memorials as public spaces that link together people with differing and sometimes conflicting views and emotional investments.

Here, the literature on public memorials is particularly useful. Like studies that examine memorials commemorating widely recognized events such as the Holocaust (Young 1993), the Vietnam War (Sturken 1997), and the two world wars (Winter 1996; Winter and Sivan 1999), this study examines the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre as a public site of mourning and remembrance that contributes to the formation and reconfiguration of contemporary communities (Creef 2004). Unlike much of the literature in this field, this book does not focus on an event that has international currency, such as the Holocaust and the First and Second World Wars (Young 1993; Brandt 1994; Winter 1996). The dates, key figures, and killing technologies of the Holocaust and the world wars have all become part of world history (Bischoping and Fingerhut 1996);

their events have become iconic in the moral order of contemporary societies (Geddes 2001).

This study examines the memorialization of a smaller-scale act of political violence. Although during the 1980s Japanese Canadians activists turned their history of persecution into a national issue, today this history has drifted from public memory. Despite readily available documentary films, books, and fiction about Japanese Canadian history, the violation of their rights is no longer a national issue, and it is not unusual for Canadian university students to know nothing about the internment camps.

What is the relevance of this particular case? The violation of Japanese Canadians' rights commands less moral urgency than large-scale violence such as genocide in former Rwanda, the Sudan, or East Timor or the ongoing struggles in Palestine (see Khalili 2005). Since the Canadian government has publicly acknowledged that it violated the rights of Japanese Canadians, their wartime experiences seem even less urgent to revisit. But I would argue that it is imperative to avoid delineating acts of political violence into a checklist of solved and unsolved cases of greater and lesser import. All measures to physically eradicate, expel, or culturally erase people constructed as deviant, whether racially or sexually undesirable or biological inferior, point to the legacy of modern population management programs (Green 1984; McLaren 1990; Semujanga 2003). The alarming frequency of the smaller-scale acts of political violence within the memories of our families and the borders of our home territories show that extermination, expulsion, and assimilation as political practices are part of our "heritage." Moreover, it is these smaller-scale acts that feed into the structural violence of everyday life (Farmer 1996), making the removal of biologically and culturally undesirable people a feasible solution within the public imagination.

Although the project of remembering acts of political violence at home within the boundaries of our worlds offers the possibility of another future, at the same time, groups seeking to overcome violent pasts are not immune from reproducing reactionary forms of commemoration (Ben-Amos 1993). Historical accounts of persecution can end up constructing the survivors as helpless victims. Victimhood can be mobilized in a number of ways. Rather than being the basis for movements to seek redress or reconciliation, historical wrongs can be used to grant survivors a sense of moral righteousness that justifies imperialistic nation-building projects, as many have argued has been the case with Israel's Zionist policies against Palestine (Brunner 1997; Ram 1995). With the fear that their community is under constant threat, members can be pressured into following reactionary practices and norms, advocating a return to a mythical community based on oppressive gender roles, racial purity, and authoritarian leadership. Under these regimes, critical thought, social difference, and change are often construed as threats to the integrity of the community (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Parker et al. 1992).

This study considers the extent to which the construction and operation of the NIMC positions Japanese Canadians as fixed subjects in static configurations of community life that automatically construct others as threats and social change as the death of tradition. As the elders intended to contribute to building a just society, this book considers whether the memorial makes possible a form of community that is inclusive rather than hostile to others.

The Political Starting Point

The NIMC is one of many memory projects initiated by Japanese Canadians in the 1990s. These projects followed in the wake of the successful conclusion of the Japanese Canadian movement to seek redress from the Canadian government. I will briefly describe the redress movement because it created the social and material conditions that made projects like the NIMC and this study possible.

Throughout the 1940s and the 1950s community activists made a series of attempts to seek compensation for Japanese Canadians (Miki and Kobayashi 1991). They found little support from other Japanese Canadians, who were immersed in the struggle to rebuild their lives in unfamiliar and, in some cases, hostile environments outside of British Columbia without the support of prewar institutions such as farming cooperatives, Japanese language schools, and women's associations (Adachi 1991 [1976]; Oikawa 1986; Kobayashi 1987; Miki and Kobayashi 1991). During the 1950s through to the 1970s, many Japanese Canadians, especially the nisei, had little contact with other Japanese Canadians now scattered across Canada. There were some who avoided other Japanese Canadians, not wanting to be reminded about their humiliating and painful wartime experiences. Having learned the perils of being marked as racially "other," some tried to protect their children, the sansei, by encouraging them to assimilate into mainstream Canadian society. Few sansei were encouraged to learn Japanese Canadian cultural and aesthetic practices, such as the Japanese language, an appreciation for the salty and pungent tastes of Japanese cuisine, or the respectful bodily comportment implicit in the etiquette practised by their grandparents, the *issei* (Adachi 1991 [1976]; Sunahara 1981; Takata 1983).

Mobilizing Japanese Canadians to seek redress was a formidable task. Activists brought Japanese Canadians together in private meetings and public forums. They published pamphlets and articles on the case for redress (Miki 2004). It was also necessary to "write" Japanese Canadians into Canadian history as citizens (McAllister 1999). Faced with the destruction of most of the community's records, activists turned to the recollections of issei and nisei, who gave accounts demonstrating that they were loyal citizens who had contributed to the economic development of Canada in fishing, farming, mining, and forestry and willingly served Canada during the world wars (Adachi 1991 [1976]; Ito 1984; Takata 1983). Activists also extensively used government records in the national archives to prove that the cabinet of Prime Minister Mackenzie King had violated their rights (Sunahara 1981; Ketelaar 2002).

As Roy Miki explains in *Redress: Inside the Japanese Canadian Call for Justice* (2004), the movement to seek redress was complex. Different factions vied to represent the community, and public support depended on local and national media coverage. Although support and guidance were given by First Nations leaders and civil organizations, there was also opposition from, for example, a number of war veterans groups. In 1988, after eight years of political struggle, the National Association of Japanese Canadians negotiated a settlement for redress with the Canadian government. The settlement included a public apology, financial compensation for individuals, and funds for community development.[20]

The movement can also be credited with laying the foundation for a postwar community. But the postwar community is fundamentally different from the pre-war community, which had political, economic, and socio-cultural institutions that interconnected the lives of Japanese Canadians from geographically bound settlements along the coast of British Columbia (Kobayashi 1994b, 1992b; Adachi 1991 [1976]; Takata 1983). Racist legislation and social attitudes, on the one hand, forced Japanese Canadians to form close networks of support and, on the other hand, became the impetus for activists to challenge discriminatory laws in court and through lobbying (Adachi 1991 [1976]; Sunahara 1983; Takata 1983).[21]

For Japanese Canadians, forming a collective identity based on the violation of their rights was a powerful method to mobilize individuals dispersed across Canada (Laclau and Mouffe 1992; Boggs 1986; Carroll 1992). But, as I have argued elsewhere (McAllister 1999), political movements can also homogenize a group's history, obscuring internal political conflicts, hierarchies of power, and social differences. While recognizing the importance of mobilizing people to demand changes to repressive political structures, it is important to also recognize that reconciliation requires more than this (Mamdani 2004; Scheper-Hughes 2004; Soyinka 2004). Moreover, once a movement has accomplished its goals, as many nisei had feared, it is possible for individuals to lose their purpose for working together, especially if they are dispersed across a country and share very few cultural, economic, and social institutions. A new purpose as well as affinities and relations of interdependence are needed if a group is going to sustain itself as a collective. This is how a community differs from a single-issue social movement: a community has the capacity to reproduce itself over generations.[22]

But, more to the point, in the case of historically persecuted groups, framing political violence primarily in terms of human rights violations overlooks the need to develop *multiple* cultural narratives and practices to explore the meaning and impact of past events on contemporary communities.[23] This multiplicity is needed because political violence does not have a uniform effect on any one community.[24]

If communities do not develop new narratives and practices – new forms to rework what happened in the past – their accounts can become repetitive. Repetition can produce a static conception of the past. It can drain events of complexity and give them a mythic quality by turning persecution and victimhood into fate and destiny and by overlooking the more subtle and insidious dynamics of power and politics. Repetition can also trap individuals in one account of what happened, making it difficult to perceive the effects of violence from other vantage points (Lifton 1979; Herman 1992; Caruth 1995; McAllister 2001).

I am not arguing that the human rights narrative developed by redress activists is no longer relevant. My point is that their studies were never intended to explore the range of social, cultural, and psychological effects of the government's actions on different groups within the community. Although their studies drew on personal accounts that described the social and psychological impact of the government's actions, they were used primarily to provide evidence to demonstrate that the government had violated their rights as Canadian citizens.

The government's apology for this violation of rights was essential for redressing the past, but it did not and could not fully resolve the damaging impact. Twenty years after the settlement for redress was secured, Japanese Canadians continue to initiate memory projects to resolve the impact of wartime events on their lives today. As one of these memory projects, the NIMC shows the need to recollect the internment camps as part of an ongoing process in the formation and transformation of the Japanese Canadian community.

The Road Ahead

This project underwent profound changes during my stay in New Denver and again as I attempted to write up my results. The topic, however, did not change, nor did the research question. I had identified four clear research tasks: to reconstruct the phases of the NIMC's development, to describe the administrative structure and daily operation of the NIMC, to document its physical layout and historical displays, and to interview members of the Kyowakai Society and the contractors who had been hired to construct the NIMC. However, soon after I arrived in New Denver, I realized that the sociological methods at my disposal were hopelessly inadequate for observing, documenting, analyzing, and reporting what I faced in the field. Conscious of my own internalized sociological gaze, I underwent a "dissolution of identity" (Kondo 1986) or what I call a "necessary crisis" in identity. Although emotionally confusing, this crisis made it possible for me to begin to prise open not only my reductive social scientific methods but also my defensive stance as a cultural activist. At the same time, writing an account of my experiences in the Slocan Valley was terrifying, for it required me to move into a space of trauma that continues to haunt my family and the Japanese Canadian community. The entire process of writing this account has been shaped by tensions that arose at a methodological level, by what at times seemed to be an impossible movement between academic knowledge and the knowledge of a living community, a movement between the flat maps of my theoretical framework and the complex, temporally layered landscapes of experience, a movement between my own prescriptive political position and the infinitely more nuanced and caring ways of transformation practised by the elders. I was confronted with my inability to see the NIMC as anything other than the appropriation of a community project by contractors who turned it into a tourist site. The elders, with infinite patience, gently pulled me into their world and presented me with something much more astonishing, an "other" field of activity in which they had transformed a site of racial erasure into a constantly changing valley of remembrance.

As I attempted to write this manuscript, I strove awkwardly to create a narrative that showed readers the difficulty of shedding one's disciplinary training, without reducing my project to a self-indulgent self-exploration. Even more challenging was the task of creating a language to present what the elders shared with me, to find ways of writing that did not reduce their accounts into evidence for my own arguments. I had to let go of the need to legitimize their accounts by drawing on theory and sociological studies and instead try to generate another universe of meaning, one in which the power of their accounts could touch the readers as they had touched me. Likewise, when I described the so-called tourists, I had to resist the urge to present them as annoying camera-toting caricatures who exoticized Japanese Canadians as Orientals. I had to question my own rigid narratives of self and other and open myself to acknowledging that visitors moved in complex ways within their own memories and histories. As I discovered over the summer of 1996, for many who travelled to New Denver, including myself, the memorial was not only a space to commemorate the past, it was also a space where the irresolvable after-effects of political violence could surface unpredictably, a space where individuals sought encounters, whether conflicts or happy reunions, and a place to work through deeply embedded feelings of guilt, no matter how distanced individuals were from the historical events of the persecution of Japanese Canadians during the 1940s.

CHAPTER ONE

A Necessary Crisis

> On the second floor there is a room with a small window facing north. Each evening, this is where I type out the events of the day in amber Courier, lines of glowing pixels moving across the black screen of the old PC with the steady tick-tack of the keyboard. The hum and whirl of the hard drive is comforting. With no phone connection, no Internet, with only the company of resident mice, I try to make sense of each day. Since arriving in the valley, I've found myself floundering amid confusing social negotiations, unspoken divides and allegiances, and shifting layers of contentious history.
>
> I struggle to let go of how I interpret the world, to resist incorporating what I see and hear into my already established way of understanding the world, a predefined interpretive system imported from elsewhere. I need to somehow open myself to others as they guide the course of inter/action.
>
> But it is difficult to let go ... to pry myself open, to relinquish control. It's unnerving. To let go requires trust, a sense of security. I am an outsider, a stranger, someone no one quite knows. What will happen if I let go, if I open myself, a stranger, to their terms of determination? (Edited excerpts from letters and field notes, August 1996)

Conflicting Positions

I was in no way prepared for the months ahead, living in a valley with the remains of nine internment camps.[1] I met elders who had vivid memories of my maternal grandparents and the places where they had lived and worked before the government stripped them of their rights, liquidated their properties, and sent everyone to internment camps, sugar beet farms, and prison-of-war camps. Nor was I prepared for the continual flow of visitors, each with her or his own conflicted emotional investments in the Nikkei Internment Memorial Centre (NIMC). Some wandered through the memorial in silence; others came to express feelings of guilt. Some were rigid with suspicion and quick to accuse. Many came in remembrance of a childhood friend or schoolmate who had suddenly disappeared in 1942. Some shared their own family's tragic experiences of persecution during other wars. And, among those who sought the joy of happy reunions with old acquaintances they might meet at the memorial, there were others who questioned the authenticity of everything from the Japanese garden to those working at the site, myself included.

I also had to deal with my new status as an outsider. Previously, I had worked as a member *of* the Japanese Canadian community on projects *for* the community.[2] I was now discursively positioned as an outsider who had travelled to New Denver to ostensibly study the elders and their memorial. I had become the intrusive researcher of my graduate student nightmares. I feared I would be trapped within my field of knowledge, unable to learn anything outside of what my theoretical framework already dictated. Like Audrey Kobayashi (1992a, 1994a), Roy Miki (1998b, 2004), and Mona Oikawa (2002b, forthcoming), I was committed to aligning my research with activism but worried that my study would amount to no more than a textbook example of how academics reproduce discursive regimes of knowledge, as Smith (1990) and Foucault (1979) have so exhaustively argued.

In preparation for fieldwork, I had read about the emotional and social trials that ethnographers face in communities they do not really understand, especially when driven by agendas that fail to take into account the political and historical circumstances that made their research possible in the first place. These studies follow the descent of ethnographers into turmoil, clinging to their identities as well-meaning academics, while their research subjects approach them in unfamiliar and alienating terms as suspicious outsiders, ill-mannered guests, naive Westerners, surrogate relatives, and personal confidants (e.g., see Briggs 1970; Crapanzano 1972, 1980; Rabinow 1977; Myerhoff 1980; Kondo 1986). During my first visit to New Denver in 1995, it became obvious that reading about the complexities of negotiating identity in the field is far different than the actual struggle one actually undergoes.

What was at stake in this struggle? I was undergoing what I later realized was a "necessary crisis" in identity. The longer I stayed, the more my way of knowing the world started to lose validity. I became distrustful and critical of my academic field. But without my theories and analytic skills, how was I to make sense of what I saw and experienced? It was only when my institutionalized worldview really began to unravel that I was able to realize that another distinct mode of knowing and ordering the world existed: the world of the elders. And it was this realization that allowed me to view their memorial in new ways, rather than as I initially saw it: a tourist site that also functioned as an educational centre. By working with the elders, I learned that the memorial was one of many memory projects through which they had transformed the valley's terrain of memory over the years.

I had not initially planned to include my own messy subjective struggles in this study; for one thing, they involved my relationships with people living in

New Denver, people who were members of my own community. Although feminist scholars have reflexively turned to the self and the body as a productive site for the analysis of intersecting discursive, psychic, affective, and technological forces (Kuhn 1995; Hirsch 1997a; Stacey 1997; Sedgwick 2003; Sobchak 2004), in the field of cultural studies, there appears to be decreasing interest in subjective struggles and breakdowns. Especially over the last decade, researchers have increasingly turned to visual and digital media and away from more material questions of identity and the politics of representation – which some have argued can easily slide into moralistic "victim discourses" (Brown 2001). With increased investment in virtual media – which involves disembodied, multi-situated subjects – research in cultural studies has moved away from ethnographic, community-based studies, which are found now in specialized area studies rather than in the foundational streams of the field (see Hall et al. 1980).

For my part, I found it necessary to turn to ethnographic practices to track the methodological and epistemological issues that arose from the intersubjective dynamics that shaped what I was able to perceive in New Denver. Ethnographers from the 1970s onward have argued that the subjective struggles faced by fieldworkers have significant epistemological implications (Marcus and Fischer 1986). In the past, the conflicts and frustrating emotional dynamics of field research was left out of research reports, especially when the researcher's field notes revealed not very admirable feelings of irritation and disdain for her or his research subjects (Rosaldo 1989, 175-179). But ever since the posthumous publication, in 1967, of the diaries of Bronislaw Malinowski (Geertz 1983, 56), the myth of the distanced anthropologist who objectively observes the lives of "Natives" has been thoroughly revised with, on the one hand, the anti-colonial criticisms of ethnography (Clifford and Marcus 1986; Harrison 1997 [1991]; Smith 1999) and, on the other, the turn to hermeneutics in the 1970s (Marcus and Fischer 1986; Rosaldo 1989). It is now widely accepted that examining the views, social positions, and changing relationships between anthropologists and their subjects is an essential component of ethnographic scholarship.

While being wary of the "navel gazing" of confessional writing, interpretive anthropologists such as Geertz (1973), Clifford and Marcus (1986), and Rosaldo (1989) claim that subjective struggles can demonstrate how the cultural worlds of others cannot simply be translated into the formulaic theories of a paternalistic anthropologist. Numerous anthropological field studies from the 1970s and 1980s onward show that it is not possible to slide seamlessly into another cultural world and gather whatever information is needed for one's research. This work questions the authority of anthropologists and other social scientists and reveals their value systems, hierarchies, and vested interests. It makes evident that these researchers are limited by their cultures, emotional capacities, and ability to establish equilateral human relations, in addition to raising questions about who benefits from studying "other" cultures. In fact, ethnography has been one of the few disciplines that systematically critiques the ethical and political legacy of its neocolonial relationship to *otherness* at the most intimate level of the self.

Although my study is not strictly ethnographic – it focuses on the memorial rather than, more widely, on the community – ethnography has informed my methods of research as a participant-observer and my hermeneutic approach to interpretation (see Rosaldo 1989). My analysis of many components of the study, including the elders' memory practices as well as the visitors' use of the memorial as a tourist site and place of mourning, rely on ethnographic participant observation. Even though the analysis in Chapters 2 and 3 uses a cultural studies framework – examining an array of materials, including archival records, the NIMC's exhibitions, maps, tourist literature, and images of the everyday landscape of New Denver – it has been informed by participant observation and what I learned from the elders during my stay in the valley. In other words, this study is not restricted to a formal discursive analysis of the memorial; it situates the memorial in the everyday world of New Denver.

This study was influenced by feminist and ethnographic practices that challenge the conventional power relations of academic research, for instance, by requiring researchers to make contributions to rather than simply taking away data from the community.[3] But I was also interested in ethnographic writing devices that would reveal the more subtle power dynamics both in the field and in my final text (see Jacobs-Huey 2002; Ulysee 2002; Cruickshank 1990; Cruickshank et al. 2005). To make power dynamics evident, ethnographers often write themselves into their texts as characters among other characters in the field. They purposely include their annoying value judgments and transparent desires, which they can never fully purge no matter how earnestly they attempt to see the world through the eyes of others. As Rosaldo (1989) claims, the social failings and floundering of anthropologists in the field, their descent into emotional turmoil as well as their obnoxious behaviour and arrogant misconceptions, reveal the fallacy of both the objectivity and superiority of researchers trained in the Western university system (also see Briggs 1970).

Ethnographers' turmoil can also signal being at "the brink of loss of the self," especially the loss of the "analytic self," as I will discuss next in relation to my own study (Briggs 1970; Kondo 1986). Previously, "going native," whereby anthropologists lose distance from their subjects and begin to assimilate their version of reality, was considered one of the dangers of fieldwork (Rosaldo 1989). But more recent writings recognize the insights gained when ethnographers start to question the meanings and values that order their worldviews and become open to the possibility of other realities. Likewise, my turmoil began when my version of reality began to collapse. Distancing myself from my totalizing version of reality, one I viewed with increasing repugnance, made it possible to realize that the elders had a distinctive worldview. This worldview was shaped profoundly by their experiences of internment and their ethos of collectivity that made it possible for them to transform what had been an internment camp into their home community. As I was pulled into the dimensions and rhythms of their way of seeing the world, into their lifeworld, my understanding of exactly what the memorial "was" and what it "did" were radically transformed.

An Outsider

There was no way of avoiding the fact that I was an outsider in New Denver, a village with approximately five hundred residents. Although the old-time logging and mining families with close ties to the elders would occasionally chat and greet me with a friendly wave, there were other locals who regarded me with suspicion, particularly some of the back-to-the-land community, which included artists, tofu makers, homesteaders, and the like. The fact that I was a sansei researching the aftermath of a history that affected my own family did not seem to count for much. Nor did it make a difference that my mentor in New Denver, the person I refer to as Teresa Takana, was a member of their community.

Takana was an established member of the New Denver Japanese Canadian community. As the chair of the Kyowakai Society's History Preservation Committee, she had invited me to New Denver to assist her with a number of projects at the NIMC. During my first visit, I came as her research assistant. When I returned the next year to help finish the projects, I also arranged to conduct my own research.

Given my close working relation with Takana, I was taken aback when I realized she regarded me with suspicion, sharing the cautious regard of her back-to-the-land compatriots. She was critical of the assumptions I had as an outsider with little knowledge about life in the valley. Because I respected her political principles, I struggled to be more conscious of my assumptions. Although we never discussed the dynamics of our interaction in much detail, she took time to explain the caution displayed by some of her back-to-the-land friends. Takana explained that over the last twenty years they had seen many outsiders arrive with research projects, dreams about going "back-to-the-land," newspaper assignments, and big ideas about helping the local community. In many cases, they came with their own agendas, stayed for a brief period, and then departed, never to be seen again. Typically, they would end up misrepresenting the community in embarrassing ways, aggravating local politics, or exhausting everyone with their attempts to set up projects that required excessive time and resources.

Also, some residents had been involved with local movements to protect the local watershed from powerful industrial interests and to monitor the plans to blast highway infrastructure through the region to make a high-volume corridor for trucks to transport wood chips twenty-four hours a day. Thus, they were careful about who they brought into their confidence. On top of this, the fact that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had undercover cops who kept the area under surveillance did not help. I inadvertently met one in a local store who was posing as a young, hip, long-haired guy riding a motorbike through the Kootenays. When he found out I was not a local but rather a student visiting the valley for the summer, he asked if I knew about any illegal activities. The most radical things I had seen were an experimental dance company and an organic tofu factory. As for the elders, the strongest substance I had seen them use was cayenne pepper, which they liberally sprinkled on their garbage to ward off bears. In any case, given the experience that some back-to-the-landers had with security forces during the Vietnam War, this surveillance would have made them even more cautious about newcomers like myself.

In regard to my relations with Takana, even though I was her friend and protégé, she never overlooked the fact that I had my own agenda as a researcher. In her constant company, I began to internalize her suspicion, compounding my discomfort about being in New Denver. I had no idea how to bridge what seemed like two incommensurable positions. On the one hand, I was a nosy researcher driven by an academic agenda; on the other hand, I was a member of a fragmented postwar community that bore the burden of a traumatic history still alive in the constant flow of strangers, all connected yet disconnected through the internment camps. Caught between these two positions, I literally froze in the field. Repelled by my internalized sociological gaze, I avoided even the most basic research tasks while I was working at the NIMC, whether jotting down observations or collecting documents about the memorial. Even the most mundane descriptions of my life in field notes and letters are imbued with anxiety about the implications of my presence in the valley:

> I write late into the night, turning inward, marvelling at the lamp's fluttering halos of insect life, tickling skin, becoming tangled in eyelashes. As I write, I hesitate to turn the page for fear that these delicate creatures will be crushed, to lay down a line of ink for fear that they will become mired in my words. Yet I continue. (Field notes, Rosebery, August 1996)

Yet, as my compulsion to write about my experiences demonstrates, I was desperate to find a way to give meaning to what I was undergoing. At the same time, I felt a responsibility to share what the elders were teaching me. But, associating my analytic skills with my internalized sociological gaze, I did not know how to proceed. This confusion did not end when I left the field. Language failed me months later as I struggled to find the words – a voice – to translate everything into a meaningful account without reducing it to the terms set by my discipline.

Caught between my position as outsider and insider, it could be argued that I was what anthropologists conventionally (and problematically) have called the native anthropologist. The native anthropologist supposedly has enough cultural knowledge to understand her or his research community but lacks the social distance required for objective analysis (Narayan 2003 [1997]). But, as Narayan argues, the dichotomy between insider and outsider is reductive. The operation of power is complex. She states that all researchers, whether insider or outsider, "[exhibit] what Rosaldo has termed a 'multiplex subjectivity' with many crosscutting identifications ... Which facet of our subjectivity we choose or are forced to accept as a defining identity can change, depending on the context and the prevailing vectors of power" (ibid., 291).

In New Denver, "a multiplex subjectivity with many crosscutting identifications" described my situation well. I was a member of the broader Japanese Canadian community in British Columbia but was also an outsider in the village of New Denver. I was conducting research as an academic but was also assisting the Kyowakai Society with their History Preservation Committee's projects. Each position involved different sets of responsibilities as well as different expectations, degrees of social distance, and levels of formality and informality. Narayan argues, however, that as soon as members of a community position themselves as researchers, they step out of their social role and formally become "outsiders." Their agenda becomes defined by terms set by their research institutions rather than by the social dynamics or politics of the community. Yet, as Narayan writes, increasing numbers of anthropologists studying their communities question how to negotiate the conflicting obligations, agendas, and identities entailed in their outsider/insider roles and, in particular, the power dynamics these roles entail (2003 [1997], 285).

Like Narayan, I was uncomfortable with my identity as an academic outsider. It was the most objectionable cross-cutting strand of my "multiplex subjectivity." I had the authority but not the knowledge to make conclusive statements about the other realities of those living in the valley. Takana constantly made me question my authority. I sought a position, an identity, that did not place me primarily in authoritative relation to whatever I observed, automatically fitting data into predefined categories, reordering everything according to established theories and ideologies (Todorov 1987; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992). I struggled to release the grip my discipline had on the way I understood and wrote about what I saw and heard. Thus, my first struggle was over the insidious power dynamics of my disciplinary knowledge. Only subsequently, as I struggled to write about New Denver, did I realize the difficulty I had bearing the confusing and painful memories of incarceration (McAllister 2001, 2006b; Hirsch 1997b).

In many ways, Takana took up the classic position of gatekeeper, monitoring and questioning my research activities. Although this was intimidating at times, it also meant that all my activities were double-checked and discussed with someone knowledgeable about the community. I could also ask Takana as well as Katherine Shozawa, a researcher-artist with close ties to New Denver, for critical feedback on the drafts of my dissertation (see Greenaway 1995). Ironically, it was especially because I knew Takana so well that I understood her ambivalence about my status as an academic outsider. My experience with the controversial debates about politics of representation in the 1990s made me hypersensitive to Takana's views on outsiders. In the 1990s, Vancouver and other Canadian cities were alive with protests about the domination that hegemonic institutions had over representations of racialized communities in the public arena. Cultural activists and artists mobilized to challenge demeaning (mis)representations of their communities and demanded equal access to funding, venues, and infrastructure so they could represent their own histories and explore images and abstractions that did not reproduce Orientalist and colonial imaginaries (Bannerji 1993, 2000; Miki 1998d; Gagnon 2000; Lowry 2001; Gagnon and Fung 2002; Razack 2002). Thus, through the lens of the politics of representation, I could understand Takana's identification of me as an outsider with the institutional power to misrepresent her community (or communities).

My relationship with Takana as a gatekeeper was complex because, as mentioned, she was also one of my mentor figures. She shared insider information with me. Before even arriving in New Denver, she told me that community activists from the valley and elsewhere had concerns about the contractors' design for the memorial. Some claimed the contractors had ignored the community's vision for the memorial and instead constructed a tourist site that would generate revenue for local businesses. At the same time, Takana pointed out that it was unfair to criticize the contractors since, from the start, the Kyowakai Society had not specified that the memorial was a community-based project. Moreover, the contractors had experience in historical restoration, not with racialized communities coming to terms with historical traumas.

Ironically, as will become evident in Chapter 6, I rather dogmatically adopted a defensive insider position and was critical of what I concluded was the appropriation of the elders' memorial as a tourist site. It could be argued that I reproduced the moral discourses that rigidly divided the world into outsiders and insiders, making me excessively vigilant about what I deemed appropriate behaviour. As Hunt explains, "moral discourses impute blame and assign responsibility. Most importantly, moral regulation acts upon" subjects, impelling them take responsibility for "constant self-monitoring and self-supervision" (1999, 411). Cloaked in the language of protection and cultural self-determination, when taken to an extreme this discourse can become a way to assert authority over others, and it fails to recognize the complex intersubjective and discursive constitution of communities. I had to question my emotional investment in this position, as I will discuss in Chapters 4 and 6, if I was to learn about how the elders found ways to work with the contractors and also turn the memorial into a site for their own memory projects, as discussed in Chapter 5.

Working with a Gatekeeper

Takana introduced me to the elders, whom she had known since the 1970s, when she and her former husband had gone "back to the land" in the Slocan Valley. They were among the many politicized young Americans who came to Canada, escaping the Vietnam War draft. She explained how, given her Nikkei background, she was drawn to the valley because of the resident Japanese Canadian community. Her own mentor was the widely respected Mrs. Kamegaya, the president of the Kyowakai Society who initiated the memorial project.

When the NIMC was opened to the public in 1994, two projects still needed to be completed: the NIMC's historical collections and the NIMC's public displays. The Kyowakai Society decided to make Takana the chair of their History Preservation Committee, placing her in charge of the projects. She asked me to assist her with the projects because I had some experience with community-based work of this kind. She offered funding to cover my travel expenses as well as an honorarium. We had worked together on other projects when I lived in Vancouver, and so in this respect I was an insider. She knew I shared similar principles and would support her plan to design the historical collections in a way that would allow the elders to access and manage them without relying on external expertise.[4]

As a video artist with experience in political theatre troupes, Takana had an acute awareness of the political implications of a project's aesthetic form, design, and operation. Working on the projects with her was challenging. She did not hesitate to quickly dissect one's ideas, pointing out their practical consequences and ethical problems. Notes from my diaries give an example of these dynamics.

> My eager urge to make suggestions to improve the memorial has been met with disapproval. Takana does not hesitate to question, for example, my assumption that making the memorial more accessible to Japanese Canadian artists and researchers from other regions would be a good thing. This idea fails to take into consideration the needs of the members of the Kyowakai Society – the elders living here in New Denver. Already the elders find the large number of researchers travelling to New Denver to interview them and take photographs exhausting. Why encourage an even larger influx of researchers and artists, especially if their visits might begin to influence the operation of the NIMC?
>
> Takana pointed out that, while plans to expand might be suitable for a memorial centre in a large urban centre with ample resources and volunteers, this was not necessarily the case for New Denver. Before jumping forward with plans to expand, introduce new programs, increase the accessibility of the NIMC's historical collections, and make commitments to set up annual events for researchers and artists, it is necessary to consider what each will entail, not just in terms of financial resources but also in terms of the impact on elders. Despite Takana's efforts to make me understand the context, I continue to find it difficult to resist my urge to introduce expansion. (Field notes, 6 August 1995)

I was always on my toes. Takana could be taciturn at the best of times, but now our conversations seemed to be a minefield. I never knew what might trigger an explosion of disapproval. Still, I was drawn to work with Takana precisely because of her critical awareness and extensive experience. At heart, she wanted to ensure that the elders' needs were at the centre of our design of the NIMC projects. Her careful attention to their daily routines and social interactions meant the projects would dovetail with the elders' lives rather than forcing them to reorganize their routines around the NIMC projects. As I would later learn, a number of other sansei working with elders in New Denver, including Katherine Shozawa, Tsuneko Kokubo, and Ruby Truly, shared this approach.

Takana must have found me a handful, always bursting with poorly conceived ideas. Nevertheless, she requested that I return the following year to assist in finishing the projects. Fixing the signage in the exhibits was a priority. Before the memorial opened, local Japanese Canadians and visiting researchers had criticized the signage designed by the contractors. They said it Orientalized

Japanese Canadians and used language that justified the government's actions in the 1940s. In response, most of the signage had been removed before the memorial opened to the public, and visitors frequently asked why there was no text explaining the history of New Denver.

When Takana asked me to return to New Denver in 1996, I told her that this was not feasible because I was in the middle of my PhD program at Carleton University in Ottawa. I planned to begin my research that summer on documentary films about Japanese Canadians and would have neither the resources nor the time to spend a second summer in New Denver. She was insistent. We discussed the idea of shifting the focus of my research to the NIMC. I was wary because of the complex community politics, and Takana was not keen to have an academic poking about New Denver. But something compelled both of us to compromise, and soon we were writing grant applications to fund a summer project. Thus, when I returned to New Denver in 1996, I came as both a graduate researcher and as a project worker for the NIMC.

In her capacity as chair of the History Preservation Committee, Takana initially oversaw my relations with the elders. I appreciated the advice and guidance she offered. At first she was mainly worried about whether my research activities would overtax the elders. They were exhausted. Over the last two years they had dedicated most of their time and energy to building the memorial. And following the opening of the NIMC in 1994, the director Anne Wheeler arrived in New Denver to film *The War between Us,* a television drama about the internment. She hired many local Japanese Canadians as extras, actors, interpreters, and consultants, re-enacting what many had undergone during the war years. Although working on the film was exciting, replaying scenes from the past was emotionally wearing.

Working closely with Takana on the NIMC projects every day left little time to reflect on our dynamics. I was also a guest in her home. During my first visit in 1995, since there was a shortage of short-term accommodations available in the valley, Takana and her partner offered me the "coal shed," a small yurt-like sleeping hut for guests. Dark and filled with comforters and blankets, it wasn't a place to do much more than sleep, though I was welcome to use their kitchen and living room.

Without a car, I was dependent on Takana for transportation. We would drive into New Denver together each morning to work on the projects. Then I discovered an abandoned railway bed that internees had used to travel from the Rosebery internment camp to New Denver. I began walking the five-mile route every few days, retracing the paths of the internees through the overgrown brush, luxuriating in the space for much-needed reflection. Takana did her best to ensure a good working relationship, despite what must have been the tedious responsibility for her younger and often annoying urbanite friend. She even left New Denver and stayed a few days in her house in Nelson, no doubt to regain some much-needed personal space, giving me time to settle into a routine.

When I returned in 1996, I ensured I had my own transportation, purchasing my brother's old Toyota pickup truck. As in the previous year, there wasn't much housing available in this economically depressed, sparsely populated region. Takana suggested I rent "the mansion" from her and her partner for a low monthly cost. Once a rather grand Victorian home built during one of the mining booms in the early 1900s, the mansion was, when I moved in, a gutted two-storey wooden shell surrounded by the encroaching forest. Takana's partner had installed electricity and plumbing before I arrived, and so, with borrowed dishes, sheets, a lopsided table, and a good supply of firewood, it became my makeshift home. The mansion was in Rosebery, where Wilson Creek's icy waters spill into Slocan Lake. During the mining boom over seven hundred men lived there. Most worked in the local mill, processing silver and lead ores. It was also a transportation hub where the railway line from Nakusp connected with the steamship and barge that served mining towns up and down the length of Slocan Lake (Turnbull 1988). Today, Rosebery is a series of empty fields with a scattering of residents. The only employment is the log yard on the edge of the lake and the Wild Rose Mexican Restaurant. It was also the site of the Rosebery internment camp, although almost nothing is left to indicate its presence. But, like most of the other internment sites in the Slocan Valley, such as Lemon Creek and Popoff, there was something disquieting about the place, especially after dusk. Although I was relieved to have my own place where I could retreat, I was never quite at ease, as letters to friends and daily field note entries indicate.

> The mansion's wooden structure expanded with the moist coolness of the evening, creaking and trembling with echoes of life. Among "the living" were my rarely seen cohabitants, nocturnal creatures living in the walls. I could make out families of mice, flying squirrels, and also a bird or two from their annoyed squeals, chirping lullabies, and determined gnawing. The most ornery creature was the packrat. At midnight it would thump on the living room floor in a menacing manner, as if to shoo me upstairs, reminding me that my shift downstairs was over. Unfortunately, it took to peeing under the sofa, prompting Takana to take swift action. She asked her son to set a trap, sealing its fate. When it was finally captured, it stared angrily at me from the depths of the cage, its delicate, pink, human-like

> hands clasping the wire door. Then it let out one last defiant pool of acrid pee. Clearly, the packrat didn't have any doubts about who was the rightful occupant of the mansion: it certainly was not me. (Field notes, July 2006)

Looking back, I see that my descriptions of daily life are overwritten with metaphors that express anxieties, as in the case of the poor packrat that was displaced from the mansion and met its fate soon after. The unseen presence of other entities, living and dead, was also a recurring theme, as I will suggest in Chapter 3. These field notes point to my unease in New Denver, my inability to define a space of living where I felt secure, an inability that led to, as I will discuss, an existential crisis, or what I call "a crisis in identity."

Renting the mansion in Rosebery meant that I worked and lived, not quite under the same roof, but nevertheless in close proximity to Takana, whose house was within walking distance. There's no doubt that I relied on Takana for guidance and company. When we went for evening walks, Takana would share her reflections on her own history in the valley.

> Earlier in the evening, we walked north up the highway. It was just on the other side of dusk. She told me this was the new highway – that it cut right through an old cougar trail. When the road was blasted, cutting a massive trench through the bluff, the animals stood along the edge of the gapping cut, looking down in disbelief. She has a video shot of this image ... When they settled in the valley, they had a teepee up on a meadow behind the bluff. They'd walk down along the cougar trail since it was padded down by all the animals using it. Sometimes, there'd be rabbits and dead deer along it. (Field notes, 25 July 1996)

Given our respective projects and obligations to various organizations and funders, it was not always easy to always coordinate our work.[5] There were times when I felt that Takana was overly possessive of my time. This raised questions about the extent to which overseeing my research turned into control. For example, when Mrs. Inose and Katherine Shozawa, who was the NIMC administrator at the time, asked me to come with them to the Doukhobor's Peace Conference in Castlegar, Takana stated,

> "I don't necessarily feel it is necessary for you to go – I only thought you may want to go – but as far as the project is concerned, I don't need you to go ... [though] you may enjoy seeing the event." Trying to retain some autonomy, I replied that I would determine whether or not I wanted to go. I then hesitated and added that since I was planning to go to Nelson on

> Saturday, perhaps it was not a good idea. In the end, I stayed in New Denver, chagrined about what I had missed when Mrs. Inose told me about Katherine's moving speech and the proceedings. When I asked Takana for clarification about the scheduling for the projects, she stated that she was concerned about whether I could complete her projects while conducting research for my PhD. I reminded her of our initial agreement. I would spend the first three weeks on her projects and then focus on mine. Annoyed, I added that if I failed to complete whatever it was she expected, she could keep the honorarium, which, of course, she didn't. (Field notes, 25 July 1996)

There were also subtle battles of control over the material I documented. For instance, on another occasion I mentioned how beautiful I found the elders' singing and told Takana that one of the elders had asked me to record them. Takana raised questions about my interest in their singing. She suggested that I was privileging traditional cultural practices over more significant regular everyday activities, such as bingo. I was taken aback by the suggestion that I was more interested in what Japanese Canadians refer to derogatorily as "Japanesy" activities. I underlined

> that I had been asked to record the singing by an elder and, since she [Takana] was the chair of the History Preservation Committee, she might want copies for the collection. I added that I thought singing was important to the elders. Mrs. Hoshino told me that she used to sing frequently in the Kyowakai Hall when it was filled with people, probably in the 1950s or 1960s. That was when her husband, a well-respected man, was the president of the Kyowakai Society. (Field notes, 25 July 1996)

Takana considered what I said and clarified her point, emphasizing the importance of activities that have historic value to the community, and she stated that she would be interested in the story behind the singing.

Feeling increasingly defensive, over time I unconsciously adjusted my behaviour, for the worse. Rather than risk a flurry of disapproval, I found it easier to show no initiative whatsoever, letting Takana determine everything from scheduling to when and if she would consider my input. I became increasingly passive and lethargic. It was only once I established my own independent relations with the elders and other residents, and my own perspective on community dynamics, that I began to reassert my boundaries.

Every researcher has her or his own way of situating her- or himself in a new place. As a newcomer with little knowledge of local life, I initially relied on the one person I knew: Takana. Entering this social space with her support helped me to become sensitized to the complex interpersonal dynamics in the valley. But it also meant a loss of autonomy. When I began to establish relationships with local residents on my own terms, my relationship with Takana began to shift. Rather predictably, I began to feel irritated when she questioned my activities and assumptions. At the time, I did not take any responsibility for my own complicity in creating a situation in which Takana oversaw my activities. I was too preoccupied with trying to break out of my own straightjacket to be self-reflexive. I became argumentative and ill-tempered around her back-to-the-land friends, waiting for a chance to point out that they were, after all, Americans, the *real* newcomers, unlike those of us with several generations of family history in British Columbia. My field notes went through a Malinowski-esque phase. I was even more cantankerous with family and friends who came to visit.

> I am far from a hospitable host. What should be a welcome respite is not. They arrive in New Denver in the midst of the slow process of my unravelling identity: the reorientation and reconfiguration of self around a character not yet developed. I resist prying myself out of this state and push my visitors away, argumentative, moody.
>
> It has taken such exhausting emotional energy to do all the work to leave my former self. I'm still not there – incomplete – somewhere in transition. When family and friends arrive, with our shared histories and understandings, I feel my old world pulling me back to my old self. I am resentful, impatient. I am ill-behaved with my parents, rolling my eyes and becoming comatose in their company.
>
> When a close old friend visits, I make a point of disagreeing with (almost) everything he says. But thank goodness the remnants of hospitality did not completely leave me. As is proper for a travel-weary senior friend, I give him the bedroom, not confident he could survive the packrat on duty downstairs or deal with the cobwebs in the study, where I sleep on the floor. Mice ping-pong off my face all night. My mood in the morning is not pretty. (Based on field notes from different dates in August 1996)

Rereading this material on returning to Ottawa gave me a chance to reflect on what were at times my ridiculous moods and my own hyperbolic constructions of social dynamics. Anthropologist Vincent Crapanzano offers his reflections on retrospectively reading notes from his research in Morocco.

> As I look back over my notes, and as I attempt to recall my meetings with Tuhami some ten years ago, I am immediately struck by the impoverished quality of my

> emotional response. My questions seem frequently cold, unemotional ... It was at such times that I took refuge in my difficulties with Arabic and exploited, I suppose, the presence of Lhacen [my assistant and translator] ... [making use of] "ethnographic distance" ... and theoretical positions ... to distance and defend myself from an onslaught of presumably intolerable emotions ... Even today, as I write, such defensive manoeuvres ... come into play ... The ethnographic encounter, like any encounter, however distorted in its immediacy or through time never ends. It continually demands interpretation and accommodation. (Crapanzano 1980, 139-140)

Likewise, rereading sections of my field notes, I continue to be taken aback by my judgmental views, irritation, and inability to appreciate what a burden I must have been for Takana. Read as defensive manoeuvres, whether in the field or in my written descriptions, this behaviour shows internal resistance to giving up my investment in a particular self – a strand of authoritative subjectivity that I had tried to repress – as it contradicted my conscious desire to respect the caution of those living in New Denver about researchers like myself.

A Dissolution of Identity

Before I began to redraw boundaries and negotiate a new identity in New Denver, it could be argued that I underwent what Kondo describes as a "dissolution of identity" (1986). As a Japanese American conducting fieldwork in Japan, Kondo had internalized enough Japanese cultural codes to feel a compulsion to please the family with whom she was staying. Trying her best to be respectful, she embraced the protocols for a good Japanese daughter, serving the father at dinner, for example. The more approval she received from the mother and father, the more she conformed to these protocols. Ironically, she became much more obedient than the daughters in the family. In contrast to the compliant role she assumed in the field, at home in the United States Kondo saw herself as an independent career woman. She was shocked when she finally grasped the extent to which her identity had been refashioned. This realization occurred by chance, when she failed to recognize her reflection in a street window. What she saw, looking back at her from the reflection, was a docile young Japanese woman.

Like Kondo, I was complicit in refashioning my identity in an attempt to become a unobtrusive, agreeable visitor. I accepted what I thought was an expected role, suppressing my critical and analytic habits. My familiarity with the basic social protocols of Japanese Canadians led me to believe that everything from my haphazard housekeeping to how I addressed the president of the Kyowakai Society must be carefully considered in order to reflect well on my host, Takana. Thus, like Kondo, I understood enough to know what was expected but lacked the cultural skill to distance myself from my host without appearing to be ignorant of social proprieties. In this instance, I felt locked into my role as a Japanese Canadian visitor invited by Takana to assist her on NIMC projects. Kondo claims that this ambiguous lack of distance between researchers and their research participants can lead to a "collapse of identity" (1986, 75). Rather than viewing this process as a failure to assert one's boundaries, however, Kondo explores the epistemological implications and concludes that this process "may open anthropological inquiry to the possibility of other, more experiential and affective ways of knowing" (ibid.).

Although Kondo recognizes that she was complicit in modifying her behaviour to seek the approval of her hosts, she also argues that this was a typical example of how research subjects can "[seek] to dominant the anthropological encounter through control of the ethnographer's behaviour. This in turn [helps] them to preserve their own sense of identity" (1986, 80). Rather than simply viewing people in the field as powerless, Kondo reminds us that "one's informants are also subjects who possess certain understandings of the ethnographer and the power to shape and control the ethnographer and the ethnographic encounter" (ibid.). Likewise, it could be argued that Takana sought to dominate the research encounter. Perhaps she wanted to ensure that I would not be an intrusive outsider. So rather than moulding me into a clearly defined role (as daughter or apprentice, for example), she seemed more concerned with setting up protective boundaries around the elders, her projects, and her personal life. I was an outsider who had to be managed.

Yet the boundaries were confusing. By sharing her concerns about the memorial and the elders, Takana suggested I was to be trusted. On some occasions it was as if I was serving an apprenticeship, training for my future life in New Denver. For example, rather than pay for the last month's rent, she asked me to arrange to get the winter's supply of firewood for the mansion, explaining that this would be an important skill if I were to live in the valley in the future.

In New Denver, I felt that my social identity was constantly under negotiation, whether with Takana, visitors who questioned my authenticity as a Japanese Canadian, or the local residents who treated me with cool suspicion. At the same time, the president of the Kyowakai Society related to me as a sansei doing research that would benefit his community. In my daily encounters with people visiting the memorial, I met some who knew my mother's family and greeted me with warm familiarity. Many of the elders extended themselves to me, welcoming me into their homes as a younger person or student from the community.

Amid these conflicting strands of identity, during the first several months I lost a sense of who or what I was *there,* in that village and valley. At an abstract level, I tried to interrelate my roles as academic researcher, project worker, and community member. But there was little to guide me through conflicting sets of responsibilities and the various levels of exclusion and inclusion that each position entailed, never mind the confusing rush of conflicting emotions. In one situation, someone might grant me a great level of trust (as a younger community member); in another, the same person might regard me with ear-scorching suspicion (as a researcher from the city). As a newcomer with no established identity in New Denver, confronted with different expectations from a range of people, I began to undergo a dissolution of, or as I came to view it, a "necessary crisis" in identity.

Anthropologists such as Rosaldo (1989) and Kondo (1986) have argued that it is precisely the dissolution of identity that makes it possible to apprehend the existence of other cultural worlds. Especially if the work requires moving to an unfamiliar place, the researcher will begin to realize at a certain point that the systems of meaning, habitual practices, and emotional sensibilities that configured her or his self have little coherence. The old sense of self begins to unravel, while a new self configured through relations in the field begins to form. When the researcher begins to rely on local meanings and sensibilities to make sense of her or himself in this new habitus (Bourdieu 1991), when these meanings and sensibilities begin to make sense emotionally, not just in abstract terms, shaping one's behaviour and inclinations, this is when she or he begins to have some insight into the other world (Geertz 1973; Shields 1991). My situation in particular, as I have explained, involved a crisis. My sense of self did not merely dissolve; rather, strands of my identity were viewed suspiciously, and many of my assumptions were regarded as objectionable. This is what accounted, I believe, for my temporary state of paralysis in the field.

In cultural studies, especially for many scholars working primarily at a theoretical level and/or conducting visual and textual analyses, field research consists of descriptive observations concerned with localized events that lack relevance beyond the place and time in which they occurred. My point is to underline that fieldwork has much to contribute at a hermeneutic level. As Kondo notes, the experiences researchers undergo when their identities dissolve "may open anthropological inquiry to the possibility of other, more experiential and affective ways of knowing" (1986, 75).

Reading theoretical texts or even studies of particular groups cannot provide the understanding made possible by fieldwork. Nor can the necessary crisis in identity that some researchers undergo be achieved through a set of cognitive exercises, for example, reading complex theories that promise to rearrange one's conceptual order of the universe. The crisis is existential. Although reading theory can be experiential, reading about a radical form of ethics that challenges your way of understanding the world does not translate readily into an artful enactment of this knowledge, especially when one is confronted by an uncooperative other who is resistant to your theories and refuses to adhere to your idealized conceptions and instead draws out your deeply ingrained emotional reactions. Undergoing this crisis helps loosen the relentless grip of one's disciplinary framework as well as ideological and psychological investments in relating to the world in particular ways, making it possible to recognize the existence of other realities: ways of ordering and understanding the world in terms distinct from one's own.

This occurs most profoundly when working with others, when the researcher becomes emotionally confused and uncertain of how to respond. Feelings of warmth might be rejected as patronizing; indignation over a perceived injustice might be viewed as egotistic. Judgments about what constitutes a topic of concern in a caring relationship might be viewed as meddling and controlling. When others reject or fail to recognize the terms by which one understands the world, it becomes increasingly difficult to maintain an identity based on that knowledge. That knowledge is now inadequate for negotiating relationships with others. Researchers who find themselves in this situation might retreat to more rigid articulations of their identity or, depending on the safety and ethics of giving themselves over to their participants' world, might allow themselves to undergo a crisis of identity.[6] In this case, relating meaningfully to others entails a desire to be recognized by them as a social subject.[7] Their recognition becomes important to the researcher's continuing sense of self, even if only for the sake of emotional stability during the period of research. It takes time to build relationships as well as to learn the gestures and symbolic acts that make it possible to become a social subject in a new community (Geertz 1973, 11-14). The belief that studying local habits in the abstract will make it possible to pass as an insider often leads to ridiculous mistakes. Only over time, as the researcher develops relationships with members in the community, does meaningful engagement, across differences and through commonalities, become possible. Rosaldo argues that only through "full engagement and involvement in the meaningful order of everyday life [can one open] oneself fully to Otherness, with a willingness to change one's perceptions through this intimate contact (Gadamer 1979, 152). Only then [can] difference be truly realized" (Rosaldo 1989, 82).

Opening oneself to otherness, on the one hand, also entails attempting to shift the power relationships that typically regulate the interactions between ethnographers and others. It is not simply a matter of being willing to adjust one's perceptions; rather, it entails letting go of how one makes sense of the world as well as the security, control, and authority associated with this worldview. The suspension or shifting of power relationships is always temporary (if it is possible in the first place) because the ethnographer always returns home, where she or he can reassert the authority of her or his knowledge. Conventionally, the ethnographer then writes about "her or his subjects," representing them and rendering them meaningful according to terms set by the field of anthropology. But anthropologists have also questioned the problems of representation and the authorship of their texts. Several decades ago, ethnographers concerned with challenging the reproduction of colonial and disciplinary knowledge in their work began to critically discuss these issues (Clifford 1988; Clifford and Marcus 1986; Marcus and Fischer 1986). It is important to emphasize that realizing difference can not be equated with fully understanding the other. This is impossible. According to Kondo,

> most ethnographies, even the reflexive kind, are products of contexts in which the observer/ethnographer is a visible outsider. Perhaps as a consequence (and perhaps as a gender difference ...), these ethnographies end up depicting the Other as ineffably alien ... The best we can do, they say, is to engage a reasoned dialogue with the Other, thereby achieving a "fusion of horizons" (Gadamer 1982), where discourse constitutes threads tenuously connecting two monads (e.g., Rabinow 1977; Dwyer 1982). (Kondo 1986, 74-75)

Working with the Elders

It was with the elders that I felt the most secure. Through familiar formalities and practices of hospitality, they positioned me as a younger Japanese Canadian visiting their community. The members of the History Preservation Committee – notably Mrs. Inose, Mrs. Takahara, Mr. Matsushita, and Mrs. Matsushita – made special efforts to ensure that I felt welcome, offering their company when I was lonely and advice when I needed direction. I accompanied them to community events, where they always ensured I felt included. They shared their playful sense of humour with me. For example, at a community meeting, I caught the eye of Mrs. Inose just as she plucked a tissue out of her sleeve to dab her brow. She looked at me and said mischievously, "This is a great technique for pickpockets, you know ... You'd be surprised what one can fit up one's sleeves!" She then took the arm of Mrs. Takahara and, with a flourish of her tissue, sashayed out of the Centennial Hall.

Although the elders had busy schedules, many insisted on taking me out to restaurants or invited me to their homes, where they made all sorts of delicacies, including *matsutake gohan,*[8] *manju,*[9] or grilled chicken with secret sauce. When I visited my Obaasan's household after I left New Denver, she exclaimed, "Kausty, so round and healthy!" It became apparent that the elders had a relationship to

Obaasan through me. They wanted to be certain that I was sent back to her household looking well-fed (about ten pounds heavier in fact). This demonstrated to Obaasan that they had taken care of me and that their households, and especially their larders, were plentiful. For my Old World Japanese Canadian hosts, if I returned home looking as if I had lost weight, it would be an embarrassment, reflecting poorly on their hospitality.

In addition to nurturing me with hospitality, the elders saw that I was on a social learning curve and offered guidance, often with great patience, as this account of my visit to Mr. Senya Mori for an interview indicates.

> Mr. Mori was a well-respected man of stature in the Village of New Denver and the Buddhist community. He had been president of the Kyowakai Society in the past as well as the mayor of New Denver. The morning of the interview, I rushed to the local store to find an appropriate *omiyage*, a symbolic gift of gratitude for the hospitality of his household. I would rather be late than arrive without a gift. I could not bear arriving empty-handed. When I finally arrived at his house, I was faced with another dilemma. His entire house appeared to be surrounded by an immaculately cut carpet of green grass. I couldn't see any walkway. So I stood at the edge of the lawn – panicked by my tardiness and, even more, about how I was to reach his door without treading on his lawn.
>
> Mr. Mori finally saw me and bellowed in the fashion of my Ojiisan, "You're LATE!" I called out, "How do I cross your lawn?!" In a begrudging manner he pointed the way. After I gingerly made my way to his doorstep, I handed him my gift, a bag of large sweet fruit: "Peaches! For you!" Just as quickly, he replied in a deep voice, "Ohhhh – how nice!" Focusing on the gesture before him, rather than my late arrival, he brought me inside and arranged some in a bowl as an offering for his wife's *butsudan*,[10] explaining that she had recently departed. He gestured me down the hall to see her most beautiful butsudan, a delight to the senses so delicately carved it made one sigh. So, unforgivable lateness, a faux pas when visiting one of the community's respected leaders, was soon softened by the exchange between issei and sansei, though no doubt my lateness had been noted and would be discussed with other elders.
>
> He beckoned me to the living room, where he brushed aside the formalities of the consent form, impatiently nodding to my description of the project, and then launched into his life story as I scrambled to set up the tape recorder. There was little chance to ask questions as he strode forward with his account. Shaking his head, with a dismissive laugh, he recounted

> how his family had made an agreement with a *hakujin* woman to take care of their property on Fairview slopes when they were forced to leave Vancouver in 1942. By their agreement, the woman could live in the house and rent out the rooms, but she instead quickly sold the property with all the contents, leaving the Moris with nothing. He continued with his account, weaving family history into the history of New Denver and his role in the Buddhist church. Halfway through, he stopped to make us both steaming bowls of ramen. Then he continued, inexhaustible. When we ended the interview, it was hard to say goodbye. I wasn't sure why. It felt as if we both lingered, not wanting to depart. He showed me the wooden tub he had made for the family *ofuro,* steaming hot soaks, and we visited a little while longer. Finally, politeness required me to leave, as it was getting close to the dinner hour. (Field notes, 5 September 1996)

The elders very much reminded me of my Obaasan and the formalities of her household. I recognized that Mr. Senya Mori, like the other elders, was very graciously extending his hospitality, sharing his life history and opening his home to me. The kindness and consideration of the elders were acts that called for recognition through a show of deep appreciation, respectful regard, and honorifics. But, at the same time, these formalities were not rigidly prescribed, as was evident with my tardy arrival at Mr. Senya Mori's home. There was also room to recover from clumsy missteps without being dismissed as ill-mannered and disrespectful.

When I first met the elders, one of my greatest concerns was that my position as a sansei visitor would camouflage my position as an academic researcher. But I quickly realized that I had overlooked the elders' experience with researchers. A month after my arrival in New Denver, they began to ask why I had not started my research. They observed that I was neglecting my own project and seemed to have noted my discomfort about my position as a researcher. Finally, a number of elders pulled me aside and indicated in no uncertain terms that my time was running out; if I did not start interviewing them, it would be too late. They basically told me: "Get going with your project!" They had read the documents that I had sent to the Kyowakai Society months earlier to explain my project and expected me to conduct my research. In fact, in some cases, the elders initiated the interviews. In other cases, they spoke with me about their histories in the course of conversations during social events.

> Mrs. Hoshino chatted in Japanese with one of the new residents. When the new resident smiled at me and then looked the other way, I thought, uh-oh,

they are chatting about me ... Then Mrs. H. leaned over the table and pulled one of my research proposals off the stack toward her. I felt kind of embarrassed because my title had "political violence" in it. But she didn't bother with the title. She underlined my name with her finger and said "Emiko." Then she told me how her grandchildren's first names are Japanese – they don't use their middle names, which are English. "Ohh ... " I replied, a little embarrassed by the way the Japanese component of my name was hidden.

She mentioned how there was a Nakashima, like my mother's family, just down the road from New Denver during the war, "though, no, probably not related." She was very physical, her hand on my shoulder, leaning close. So warm.

An energetic, fit woman in her early sixties, tall and lanky with short, cropped hair, wearing a T-shirt and shorts, came by. She scooped up the pink lemonade and began to pour herself a second cup. "Can I have another cup? This is very tasty stuff!" As she plonked the container down on the table, I replied, "Please, help yourself ... " then shrunk a few inches, realizing that my formality probably made me sound like a sarcastic smartass. Who could she be? The seniors chatted pleasantly with her, not seeming to notice anything. Then off she went, in another gust of energy.

Mrs. H. leaned over again and confided in me. The woman was the daughter of a local property owner. She said the government put internment shacks on their ranch during the war; Mrs. H. and her family were interned there in 1943. She made a gesture indicating that the woman was a small girl then. There was a look on her face – disbelief? – that said: it is always surprising to see little children grow up and become adults.

Mrs. Hoshino explained that in the camp, at first, they had no water, so they had to use buckets to retrieve water from the creek. No electricity, either. She had to walk with two buckets (she laughed in amazement, shaking her head) on a pole over her back – "Like this," she gestured. Later, when I visited her home, she told me she had had to wash their clothes in the creek. She couldn't haul all that water back to the shack – with their one-year-old son, there was a lot of laundry. She said that the family who owned the ranch was really nice. Very nice. She warmly recalled when the woman was a little girl. I asked if the family visited the interned Japanese Canadians, and she said "No *[laughing]*, people would go visit them." This family was so different from the nearby Silverton residents, who were anti-Japanese. There were signs telling the Japanese to keep out of Silverton.

I asked where she was before the war, and she said, "Vancouver." I said, "Powell Street?" She replied that they had a drug store kitty-corner to what

> "was then called Powell Grounds." I said, "Oppenheimer Park?" She nodded. And she said that their house – they owned their own house – was in Kitsilano. But they lost everything during the war. (Field notes, 26 July 1996)

Like other elders, Mrs. Hoshino reached out to me as a younger Japanese Canadian visiting New Denver by telling me about her history and linking me to her grandchildren. In addition, this was a way to link the people she knew and the places where she lived before the war with me, creating new community bonds across the generations.

Other elders also approached me, indicating that they had information to share. This was my cue to ask them for an interview. Once I began interviewing, social courtesy required me to ask all the elders so that no one would feel overlooked. I then conducted interviews more broadly with the sansei president of the Kyowakai Society and some of the contractors who had worked on the NIMC. In many ways, it was the elders who initiated this last phase of research. No longer was I a participant-observer working in the community during the day and writing copious field notes in the evenings and early mornings. I knew residents well enough to directly ask them questions about the NIMC without feeling that I was approaching them instrumentally simply as sources of data. I now felt a responsibility to share what I learned from them.[11] I understood that the act of sharing their accounts with me entailed trust. Their trust came with an expectation. As I learned over time, this was not simply the expectation that I would record their accounts for future generations but also that I would find my own way to put into writing what they shared with me that summer.

Between working on the NIMC projects and interviewing the elders, I collected local publications, including maps, postcards, newspapers, tourist brochures, and published histories. I squeezed in time to photograph and take notes on the NIMC's layout and historical displays. Near the end of my research visit, the president of the Kyowakai Society decided that he could trust me enough to give me access to the NIMC's files.

It was through spending time with the elders, rather than simply interviewing them, that I became sensitive to their distinctive way of knowing and organizing the world. Their worldviews were present in the way they had continually transformed the site of the internment camp over the years, making it into a space of living. It took me several months before I realized the significance of the memorial to the elders. They located it in a field of activity different from (while still articulated with but not reducible to) the discourses that constituted it as a public place of mourning, a museum, or tourist site. This other field of activity was a world with its own temporality and spatiality and with many layers of nuanced meaning.

Their worldviews became apparent only as I interacted with them and as they continually unravelled my preconceptions with humour and patient explanation. I recall Mr. Matsushita's gentle manner as he showed me his photograph albums. Without thinking, I commented, "What a cute boy!" and "That teenager certainly shows a talent for art!" Mr. Matsushita quietly explained: "Oh, that is sad story; the boy drowned shortly afterwards" and then, "Well, she had problems with depression and ended up committing suicide." The elders' regard of me as someone cognizant of the implications of what I said and did was important for my sense of self. I had to reflect on my enthused commentary about the boy and the teenager in the photographs. I had an impulse to idealize life in New Denver, imposing stereotypical ideas about happy children and villages. I had failed to recognize that New Denver was a village in an economically depressed area with a history of incarceration camps.

I had no pretensions of ever being able to fully know the way elders perceived and inhabited their worlds (Geertz 1973; Marcus and Fischer 1986; Merleau-Ponty 1994 [1962]). Only those who *lived* in these worlds could have this knowledge. In New Denver I was an outsider but, as the elders showed me, not necessarily an objectionable one. As members of the Kyowakai Society, they regarded me as someone interested in the memorial who might share their principles of justice. As issei and nisei, they looked to me as a younger Japanese Canadian who wanted to learn about transforming the burden of the past carried by our community. I hoped to learn from them, beginning with how to engage in a manner that respected the terms of their existence rather than imposing my own. Through our interchanges, I realized they, too, hoped for the possibility of creating a new zone of knowledge together. The elders had the finesse to work with me as a relative stranger, inviting me into their homes. They offered a sense of security in circumstances in which I was insecure; they had the skill and generosity to teach me to persist and trust what was there, even if I did not yet have the language to articulate it.

Writing

I returned to Ottawa in the fall. Winter came and went. In March, cold sheets of rain washed the grit and icy debris from the grey city streets. In my apartment were stacks of boxes with NIMC records, newspaper and magazine articles, photographic records, and field notes. What I needed to write seemed evident, but I had no idea how to do it. Language failed me. I tried to sum up my research with a background chapter on the history of the internment camp in New Denver, a chapter on the development of the NIMC, a third chapter on the memorial's representation of the internment camp, and a fourth chapter on the ways the memorial integrated the local community into a larger national community commemorating the Japanese Canadian internment camps. But this failed to convey what I had experienced. It flattened everything into manageable facts and descriptions that simply illustrated the well-established conclusions of already published studies. A ten-day research visit would have sufficed. Had I spent significant amounts of time in New Denver over two summers, working with elders and the chair of the History Preservation Committee, to achieve only this?

Rosaldo (1989, 82) claims that to transform fieldwork into an ethnographic text it is necessary to draw away from the immediacy of the ethnographic encounter.

> Writing ... becomes a way of freezing the disturbing flux, encapsulating experience in order to control it. Writing ... offers the author the opportunity to re-encounter the Other "safely," to find meaning in the chaos of lived experience through retrospectively ordering the past. It is a kind of Proustian quest in which the ethnographer seeks meaning in events whose significance was elusive while they were being lived. The writer, then, addresses, her/himself in an attempt at self-reconstruction.

The process of imposing distance after the ethnographic encounter has also been described in the language of violence (Kondo 1986; Narayan 2003 [1997]). Imposing control and laying down structure can reduce the complexity and rich ambiguity of experience. Perhaps unconsciously, I resisted controlling the disturbing flux. Retrospectively, I realize that I feared that reordering the experience would mean imposing my interpretation, which is what I attempted to avoid during my stay in New Denver.

I wrote listlessly and endlessly, unable to find the words to connect with what I had experienced in New Denver. I could not bear reading academic texts. I viewed them as reductive and monolithic, using data, whether observations or accounts, to illustrate theories rather than engaging productively with the material in context. I turned to novels, completely consumed by their fictional worlds. There are many ways to avoid facing oneself in the struggle of writing. I immersed myself in aikido, a rather ascetic martial art, training as often as twice a day, five to six times a week, going to seminars in Canada and the United States, reading martial arts literature, and adhering to a strict training regime that included the gym and water running. Even as I wrote draft after draft, I poured all my analytic and emotional energy into aikido training.

But aikido was not simply a diversion, at least at first. After returning from my 1995 visit to New Denver, I felt overwhelmed by the valley's emotional currents and turned to the only practice I knew that might help. This was martial arts. As an undergraduate student, I had studied karate for a brief two-year period with Sam Wong, a very strict and tough teacher. I never learned how to fight effectively (despite Sam's efforts to show us where to hit all the vital organs). Instead, karate helped me learn that it is possible to withstand being swept away by powerful emotional forces, whether fear, anger, indignation, or shock. I learned that an over-reliance on cognitive thought can be a barrier to learning. Sparring, an arena of staged conflict in which powerful emotional forces can overwhelm one, can, with the right teacher, become a way to learn how to release oneself from the emotion's overwhelming power and develop other ways to engage with them. If I was to return to New Denver, I knew I would have to find a way to live in the intense emotional landscape.

In Ottawa, Wendy Larner, a friend in the PhD program at Carleton University, introduced me to Ottawa Aikikai, the dojo where she trained. For the next four years, I trained almost daily, exploring what would be entailed in an embodied ethic in one's often troubled relations with others and oneself. Whereas karate requires moving in relation to others at a hostile distance of kicking and punching, aikido emphasizes moving with the other to transform the aggression and fear into harmonious interdependence. Only later did I realize that my immersion in aikido was a way to work through traumatic post-memories (Hirsch 1997b) of internment. In the short span of four years, of course, I could only learn a little. And as Alan Hunt, my PhD supervisor, noted, it was as if a cult had claimed me. At the right moment, as no one else could have, he took it upon himself to deftly force my attention back to the real struggle, which I had clearly begun to replace rather than transform with aikido. A frank and unnerving lecture forced me awake, using what I likened to a stick of dynamite in a calm pond in which I was in fact drowning.

The question of how to write about what I learned in New Denver was really a question of how to render experience into a meaningful form (Rosaldo 1989). To render experience meaningful one must interpret, enforcing a level of control over the material. I feared doing this because imposing order seemed to be a violent act. But my refusal to interpret, to impose meaning, was a refusal to take a subject position and acknowledge my presence in the world: to have a voice. The problem I faced was trying to determine *how to take on a subject position* in a non-reductive, non-monolithic manner – how to situate myself in a mutual relation with others – which entailed interpreting and organizing experience and rendering it meaningful. Only later did I realize that representing what the elders had taught me was difficult to bear (McAllister 2001). The material was potent. The experience at some level was terrifying. I did not know how to work with the intangible residues of memory, the aftermath of loss, fear, and hatred.

I did not know how to put it into a form, to respectfully present it, keeping what remained alive.[12]

This is when Derek Smith, one of my other academic supervisors, met with me frequently. I would walk several times a week over the Alexandra Bridge to the Museum of Civilization in Hull where he was working on a project involving First Nations mapping. He would take time to talk me through the complexities of encounters with other worlds, fear, and death and to explore different novelistic forms of writing. Audrey Kobayashi, my other supervisor, kept me grounded with her guidance and the example of her own work. Her clarity about the politics of research reminded me about my responsibility to move beyond my personal struggle. Retrospectively, I can see that through my obsessive novel reading and aikido I was searching for a narrative form, a way of moving, a rhythm with a principle of mutual engagement that could bear, while transforming, what I had experienced.

Narayan argues that we need to adopt narratives with an ethical stance that does not efface our complex subject positions as researchers or deface the "vivid humanity of the people with whom we work" (Narayan 2003 [1997], 297). I have thus made this book a composite text, drawing on multiple types of material, whether field notes, quotations from interviews, and excerpts from public exhibits and archival documents. Without wanting to make myself the centre of the narrative, I have written myself into the text, especially in this chapter and Chapter 6. Following the ethnographic tradition, I constructed myself as a character, sometimes, as Alan Hunt noted, a very irritating and opinionated character. The intention was to make the basis for both *what* has been written and the *form of writing* evident. That is, I disclosed the way the constitution of my complex subject position has played into the way I render the memorial and portray the "vivid humanity of the people with whom [I worked]."

When I began reading academic texts again, Jackie Stacey's *Teratologies: A Cultural Study of Cancer* (1997) demonstrated that it was possible to create a sociological text that brought together and analytically deconstructed the different voices and disciplinary discourses that seek to contain the organic flows and ruptures of, in Stacey's case, the living body and, in my case, what would be the social body. Annette Kuhn's *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (1995) revealed that it was possible through "imaginative acts" to breath life into what we too often sweep aside as the everyday clutter of our lives, what in this study are remnants of internment camps embodied in social gestures, fading letters, and stories. From these remnants, Kuhn shows that it is possible to give texture, weight, and emotional force to undocumented, untold worlds of people and places that have passed on.

In this book, I use lengthy descriptive passages to locate readers in New Denver as a site of memory. Rather than approaching the memorial in the singular, I write about its multiple forms as the memorial is constituted through different fields of activity: as a memorial marking the site of the New Denver incarceration camp; as part of the ongoing transformation of the Kyowakai Society as an organization founded by internees to represent their interests to the camp administrators; as a site for small scale-memory projects; and as a tourist site for a range of visitors travelling to New Denver, whether on personal pilgrimages or seeking education about human rights violations.