
hearing our elders

Stepping Out, Stepping Up, and Staying Strong: Using Vigilance as a Tool for Preserving Rights and Promoting Social Justice

William D. Parham and Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers

The 5th interviewee for the Hearing Our Elders series is Rod Kawakami, J.D. His reparations work during the 1980s on behalf of Gordon Hirabayashi, an American citizen of Japanese descent, for a civil rights violation alleged to have occurred 40 years earlier serves as the environmental backdrop for this compelling story of courage, commitment, and tenacity in the face of government collusion. The forthcoming narrative will highlight a slice of the life of Mr. Hirabayashi, a symbol of protest against anti-Japanese sentiments that surfaced after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. This interview captured 6 overarching themes: (a) courage in the face of harsh and antagonistic social, political, and cultural environments; (b) enough is enough; (c) serendipity plays a part in launching historical events; (d) engage in creative problem-solving strategies to address social injustice; (e) persevere until justice is served; and (f) follow one's commitment and passion.

Keywords: Japanese internment, social justice, Gordon Hirabayashi, government collusion, Japanese–American reparations, Hearing Our Elders

El 5° entrevistado en la serie Escuchar a Nuestros Mayores es Rod Kawakami, J.D. Su trabajo para lograr reparaciones durante los años 80 en nombre de Gordon Hirabayashi, un ciudadano estadounidense de origen japonés, por una violación de derechos civiles que supuestamente tuvo lugar 40 años antes sirve como el fondo ambiental de esta conmovedora historia de valor, compromiso y tenacidad ante la connivencia del gobierno. La expresiva narración destacará una parte de la vida del Sr. Hirabayashi, un símbolo de la protesta contra los sentimientos antijaponeses que surgieron tras el bombardeo de Pearl Harbor. Esta entrevista capturó seis temas fundamentales: (a) el valor ante un entorno cultural, político y social adverso y hostil; (b) ya basta; (c) la casualidad juega un papel en el desencadenamiento de hechos históricos; (d) resolver problemas

William D. Parham, School of Education, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles; Caroline S. Clauss-Ehlers, Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey. This article represents the fifth contribution to the Hearing Our Elders section introduced as a tool for documenting the stories and lessons learned from visionaries whose historic and heroic efforts paved the way for social justice in the present day. The authors are equal contributors to this article and will be rotating authorship during their writing for this series. The authors thank Dean Wanda Blanchett of the Graduate School of Education, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey for her support and commitment to this project. Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to William D. Parham, School of Education, Loyola Marymount University, 1 Loyola Marymount University Drive, Suite 1500, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (e-mail: William.Parham@lmu.edu).

de forma creativa para afrontar la injusticia social; (e) perseverar hasta que se haga justicia; y (f) seguir el propio sentido de compromiso y pasión.

Palabras clave: internamiento de japoneses, justicia social, Gordon Hirabayashi, connivencia del gobierno, reparaciones a estadounidenses de origen japonés, Escuchar a Nuestros Mayores

The story Mr. Kawakami shared with us is one with important implications and parallels to contemporary life in the United States. The following interview and resulting narrative represent two stories in one. The first story chronicles several years in the life of Mr. Rod Kawakami, J.D., an attorney whose demonstrated commitment to litigating cases involving civil rights violations and social injustices merits its own illumination. The landmark case in which he played a key role and the persons on whose behalf he and his colleagues intervened serve as the second story. The serendipitous juxtaposition of these two parallel journeys represents the tie that binds two generations of persons taking morally courageous stances during times of challenge and controversy.

setting the stage

PROCEDURE

Attorney Rod Kawakami was contacted by Dr. William D. Parham and detailed information about the *Hearing Our Elders* project was shared with him. Following the orientation to this project, to which Mr. Kawakami responded with an enthusiastic embrace, a 45-minute interview was scheduled. As in prior interviews in this series, the coauthors coconstructed an interview protocol (see the following section for interview questions) and distilled the final list down to eight questions. These agreed-upon questions were sent to Mr. Kawakami for his consideration and reflection before the scheduled interview.

The interview was conducted over the telephone and recorded with interviewee permission. The completed interview was subsequently sent to a transcription service. Once completed, the interview transcript was reviewed by the two coauthors, who independently identified key themes. We compared our respective thematic content to assess similarities and differences, resulting in significant interrater reliability across six themes (see the following section for description of thematic content).

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Please describe for us the social, political, and cultural environment within which the protests of Gordon Hirabayashi and his colleagues took place.
2. On what principles did Gordon Hirabayashi and his colleagues stand, and were these principles in contrast to the positions asserted by the U.S. government?

3. What predicted and unpredicted challenges emerged during the case, and how were these challenges responded to?
4. What would you consider as the short-term and longer term implications of the *Hirabayashi v. United States* case?
5. What were/are the “lessons learned” from the case, and in what ways have these lessons influenced your development as a professional and as a person?
6. For our readership, particularly our graduate students and early career professionals, what advice would you share with them relative to current and likely future invitations to stand for social justice?
7. How would you encourage young people today to be involved in social justice efforts?
8. How can the academy improve on efforts to be responsive to social inequities?

THEMATIC CONTENT

We reviewed and critiqued the transcribed interview with regard to our independent conclusions, which resulted in the final agreement on the themes used as the template for this article. Mr. Kawakami’s interview highlights the importance of persevering to protect human rights and to “make sure that the government is kept on its toes,” in his words. Similarly, Mr. Hirabayashi’s life is a stunning example of following one’s instincts, despite outside pressures, to pursue social and human rights. The contributions of both men were captured in six overarching themes that were identified from Mr. Kawakami’s interview:

1. Courage in the face of harsh and antagonistic social, political, and cultural environments.
2. Enough is enough.
3. Serendipity plays a part in launching historical events.
4. Engage in creative problem-solving strategies to address social injustice.
5. Persevere until justice is served.
6. Follow one’s commitment and passion.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Although post–Pearl Harbor events serve as the core overarching landscape of this narrative, especially on the West Coast, embers of hateful and caustic invectives that framed subsequent anti-Japanese sentiments date back to the late 1800s. A xenophobic fear of the “alien” other, viewed within the context of “Yellow Peril” (Tchen & Yeats, 2014; Wu, 2002), promoted notions of anti-Asian sentiment. In his own words, Mr. Kawakami shared,

So a little bit of background might be helpful in terms of setting up what our case is about. So of course pre–Pearl Harbor, the social and cultural atmosphere was pretty

much anti-Asian and anti-Japanese. The Japanese immigrants at the time were characterized as the “Yellow Peril,” in quotes, and perceived as looking different, dressing different, eating strange foods, practicing a different—that is, non-Christian—religion, and having different customs. Therefore, even if you were born in the United States you were not really “American.”

Much of this voiced and acted-upon cultural hatred was goal-directed initially at the Chinese. Chinese nationals were recruited extensively by the United States to engage in work in the railroad and mining industries (Wu, 2002). The tremendous recruitment-based growth in the numbers of Chinese nationals to toil in U.S. industries unexpectedly presented Americans with both economic consequences (e.g., competing with the Chinese immigrants for employment and income) and unanticipated fears of race-mixing (i.e., fears about compromising the purity of the White race). This economic squeeze and threat to racial purity experienced acutely by U.S. citizenry jettisoned a swell of anti-Chinese groups and spawned harsh political and legislative responses (Wu, 2002). The Chinese Massacre of 1871 (Tchen & Yeats, 2014) represented just one of many community-based antagonistic and violent by-products of the surge of anti-Asian sentiments. This horrific and fatal race riot unfolded in Chinatown in Los Angeles, California and resulted in torturing and lynching several Chinese community residents (Tchen & Yeats, 2014).

In parallel quests, outraged U.S. citizens incensed by growing Asian national populations worked strategically and with never-say-die persistence to enact discriminatory laws (e.g., the Naturalization Act of 1870, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882) aimed at making Chinese nationals ineligible for citizenship, voting rights, participation on juries, and real estate ownership.

The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 effectively halted immigration of the Chinese. Interestingly, America’s reliance on Japanese communities, which also were growing in significant numbers, was similarly renegotiated. Given the racial overtones of the times, anti-Asian sentiments were soon goal-directed toward Japanese citizens. Hate-based proclamations, anti-Japanese community actions, and legislative maneuvering were all fueled by the same economic competition arguments and race-mixing fears used earlier to repel the Chinese (Sandler, 2013; Tchen & Yeats, 2014; Wu, 2002).

The state of California was especially troubling in their responses to the perceived “Asian invasion” of Japanese. Their race-based characterizations of Japanese as animals, mad men, savages, and aliens (Sandler, 2013; Tchen & Yeats, 2014) led to the formation of numerous hate groups advocating for “jap” hunting licenses, anti-Asian organizations seeking to halt Japanese progress, and legislation (e.g., Alien Land Law) expressly forbidding Japanese citizens from owning land in California. Arguably, the racial climate of 1940s California was to the Japanese and Chinese what the race-hate climate of the South, especially in Alabama and Mississippi, was to African Americans.

Relative to growing anti-Japanese sentiments in America, two additional contextual variables are hereby advanced for consideration. Japan's encroachment into territories on the world stage evidenced by the Russo-Japanese War (Jukes, 2002), the invasion of China (Hsiung, 1992; Schoppa, 2011), and the Nanking Massacre (Chang, 1998; Wakabayashi, 2007), as examples, further angered Americans whose inflamed ire resulted in calls for embargos and sanctions against Japan. Meanwhile, in the United States, the Great Depression swallowed up much of the 1930s and weighed heavily and understandably on the American psyche. The Great Depression, one of the longest American financial crises in U.S. history, stirred a cauldron of anxiety, despair, fear, and hopelessness evidenced by several residual markers including, but not limited to, increased suicide rates, increased crime rates, collapse of U.S. banks with related depletion of American confidence in the banking system, decreased enrollments in universities and colleges, and increased multiple-state migrations of residents seeking opportunities for a better life elsewhere (McElvain, 2009; Shlaes, 2007).

A complete analysis of the myriad variables that influenced the birth and maintenance of American anti-Japanese and anti-Asian sentiments (to say nothing about the generalized and pervasive cultural xenophobia) is beyond the scope of this article. With that being said, the aforementioned domestic and global events contributed to U.S. citizens feeling emotionally raw, vulnerable, and desperate to regain control of the felt loss of promised freedoms of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Amidst this social, cultural, and economic context, the bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred on December 7, 1941. The Japanese attack on America on the shores of Oahu, Hawaii represented the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back. That "day of infamy" launched the United States into World War II and the preexisting anti-Japanese frenzy added grease to the wheel for the retaliatory events that followed. Mr. Kawakami recalls,

Then after the bombing of Pearl Harbor and the resulting declaration of war, President Roosevelt issued the infamous Executive Order 9066. What this did was empower the Secretary of War and the military commanders to whom he delegated authority to exclude persons, both citizens and noncitizens, from certain designated areas, allegedly to prevent sabotage, espionage, and fifth column activity. The military commander, who was appointed by the Secretary of War and given authority to act under the executive order, was a person named John DeWitt, General John DeWitt. He issued a series of military orders, including the two that were the genesis of my client's case. One was an order of curfew of all ethnically Japanese persons, including Americans, during certain hours. So they couldn't leave their house or be on the street or be out after 8:00 at night. The other order, military order, involved the exclusion of all persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast. So after they excluded them, and there were about 120,000 of them, they had to be . . . you can't just exclude them; you had to exclude them and intern them. So they were kept in internment camps inside the interior away from the West Coast.

thematic content

The six themes are described in the following sections. Table 1 presents strategies to implement thematic content in social justice efforts.

COURAGE IN THE FACE OF HARSH AND ANTAGONISTIC SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND CULTURAL ENVIRONMENTS

The tremendous and often volatile backlash that the U.S. populous exerted against Japanese Americans, Chinese Americans, and Japanese and Chinese nationals seemed to fuel within the minds and hearts of Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu questions about American hypocrisy. According to Gordon Hirabayashi, as told through the lens of Attorney Rod Kawakami, he felt ignored, unheard, and discounted relative to America's alleged conviction that its government is "of the people, by the people, for the people." The hypocrisy seemed especially intensified given that Gordon Hirabayashi and his peers were peaceful, law-abiding, and contributing members

TABLE 1
Strategies to Support Thematic Categories

Thematic Category	Strategies
Courage in the face of harsh and antagonistic social, political, and cultural environments	Identify the injustice being witnessed and experienced Resolve to stand up to the injustice Garner support by encouraging others to stand up with you against the injustice
Enough is enough	Identify the injustice being witnessed and experienced Have the courage to see the injustice for what it is, and recognize the importance of standing up for something larger than yourself
Serendipity plays a part in launching historical events	Consider the ways in which you can stand up to the injustice Be open to learning about new possibilities and solutions Be thoughtful about the significance of the unexpected Be open to changing your hypotheses and conclusions as accidental coincidences occur
Engage in creative problem-solving strategies to address social injustice	Engage in thoughtful coalition building Exercise a collaborative leadership style that builds bridges with constituencies Rather than solely being comfortable with having a professional status, be a learner who seeks out innovative solutions with others
Persevere until justice is served	Strive to make organizations accountable for their actions Be proactive in advocating on behalf of those experiencing injustice Maintain a steadfast belief in social justice pursuits
Follow one's commitment and passion	Explore what you care about Pursue education as a way to commit to an area you are passionate about Participate in activities that are meaningful to you Identify a talent and/or area that reflects your commitment

to society. As a 23-year-old student, Gordon Hirabayashi and his peers were aware of local, regional, and national U.S. hostilities that were aimed at them and all persons Asian. Nonetheless, he took a principled stance against the constant and incessant discrimination, isolation, and ostracism based on his race and ethnicity.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Throughout U.S. history, as well as world history, there are countless examples of oppressive and restrictive social, political, and economic environments being used to keep marginalized communities only somewhat free to navigate themselves within the limited confines of their designated place. Invariably, the very same oppressive and restrictive conditions designed to create barriers, roadblocks, and glass ceilings unintentionally pushed the communities forced to endure the constraining conditions to coalesce and draw within- and across-community strength to challenge a system intent on holding them down (Chong, 2014). These individual, community, state, and national uprisings against social and politically sanctioned oppressive conditions often came in the form of sit-ins, teach-ins, boycotts, riots, literary expose, and peaceful resistance (Chong, 2014). In the United States, the civil rights movement is among the most recognized revolutions aimed at empowering oppressed communities to reclaim their constitutional rights.

In his own words, Mr. Kawakami takes us back to that time in history when his client Gordon Hirabayashi and his peers took a stand and declared that enough was enough. He states:

My client was Gordon Hirabayashi, who was at the time this all happened, was a 23-year-old student at the University of Washington here in Seattle. How he got involved was as a student he had a habit of studying at the library. Of course when it came to 8:00 p.m. he would have to pack up his books and go back to his room because of the curfew. He even had some students that would act as timekeepers for him and tell him, "Gordon, it's time to go because of the curfew."

At one point he looked around and said, "Why am I doing this? Why should I have to go when all of these other students are able to sit there and do their homework and finish their studies without the same restrictions that I have?" So he decided at some point that he just simply would not comply with the curfew order. After the curfew order, the order came down to exclude people of Japanese ancestry and of course he decided that "if I'm not going to follow the curfew I'm not going to follow the exclusion either."

Political and social resistance against oppression requires courage and a degree of selflessness relative to recognizing and then reconciling that there are forces larger than oneself that need to be considered (Dilonardo & Jump, 2007; Gardner, 2004; Schock, 2015). These provocative responses are stances not universally embraced, even by members within the same oppressed communities on whose behalf the individuals taking stances are advocating. A very public individual, group, or community stance, in spite of the lack of internal support from family, friends, and fellow community residents, often

adds a more focused spotlight on the position being taken. As the interview continued, Mr. Kawakami recalled,

I could also tell you that certainly even the Japanese American community was against him standing up and doing a protest. Obviously he did this to challenge this in court. So this was his way of protesting or challenging, which was to not report and to actually turn himself into the FBI and tell them that "I'm not reporting." But this wasn't a popular decision amongst the Japanese American community who by and large felt that the way to demonstrate your patriotism was to just obey the orders and not protest or complain.

Even his family was against him doing this kind of protest because they had no idea what the government was going to do to him. They didn't want him to be the one that makes an example of himself. So even his family was pretty much against him at least initially going to jail and going through the protests that he did.

Then there were, on the West Coast there were, I think I mentioned to you before. There were two other individuals who also took the stand not to report for exclusion. They were Minoru Yasui in Portland and Fred Korematsu in San Francisco. But when the cases got to the Supreme Court, and they were each tried separately in the different cities, and convicted of violating the military orders. When the cases got to the Supreme Court, Gordon's and Min's cases were consolidated and heard first and Fred's case was heard later in 1944. In each of the cases, the government's argument to justify the internment was that it was carried out because of "military necessity." So after the convictions, of course, being appealed to the Supreme Court and losing, at least from a legal standpoint, that seemed to be the only avenue left to them at that point.

SERENDIPITY PLAYS A PART IN LAUNCHING HISTORICAL EVENTS

The interview failed to surface exact reasons why Gordon Hirabayashi, a resident of the state of Washington and his peers, Minoru Yasui, a resident of Portland, Oregon and Fred Korematsu, a resident of San Francisco, California took the principled stances they did and in the public manner in which their protests were enacted. Perhaps their responses represented ways to exert control over circumstances and situations that seemed very much out of control. A companion observation raises the contrasting question as to why the masses that were influenced by the same oppressive environment chose, at that time and under those circumstances, to take far more passive stances, essentially acquiescing to status quo expectations.

Arguably, both assertive and passive resistance responses may represent needs to exercise control in situations where there has been a shift in the amount of real control experienced. Also offered for consideration is the notion that both responses may represent desires for self, community, and cultural reclamations of dignity, self-designation, and self-preservation of cultural, linguistic, spiritual, economic, and other legacies born out of centuries-old traditions. Lastly, as we have come to appreciate, the significance and uniqueness of the interview conveys an image of serendipity (Merton & Barber, 2004). Despite passionate defenses and abundant evidence supporting the cases of Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu, all three of them ended up serving time in federal prison. At that time, all avenues for recourse appeared to be exhausted. Mr. Kawakami recalls:

So from 1944 when the cases were finalized in the Supreme Court, like I said, it pretty much stayed dormant or stayed that way because there was nothing people could do about reversing a Supreme Court decision, at least the legal part of [it] they couldn't do anything. Obviously, historians and academics and all other people concluded also that it was wrong and that it was unjustified and that the internment was, that is. So they had that bit of comfort but the convictions still hung out there.

Through Mr. Kawakami's recall of past events, as expressed to him by his client Gordon Hirabayashi, and the abundant legal activity associated with the 1980s investigation and uncovering of evidence, serendipity seems to have played a role in ultimately identifying the government as having committed fraud relative to the convictions. As fate would have it, some 40 years later, the truth came to light. Mr. Kawakami recounts the exciting culmination of justice, a 1980s journey that was not without its own federal government-infused surprises that were interestingly reminiscent of the 1940s.

Mr. Kawakami: So for 40 years, nobody knew what to do or how to do anything about it until, like I said, in about the early 1980s this blue ribbon Congressional Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians was formed. A professor—I guess you guys would like that—a professor who also happened to be a lawyer named Peter Irons was going to do some research to do either testify or a presentation in front of the commission. So he went back to the archives, National Archives, to look through some documents. An archivist who was there happened to point out to him a document that he recognized as demonstrating that the real reason for the internment was race prejudice and it was not military necessity.

Even then, . . . Gordon . . . 40 years after his conviction, would talk to any lawyer who would talk to him, any judge who would talk to him, and he would ask, "Well what do you think I could do about my case?" or "How do I get it back before the Supreme Court?" Of course all of the lawyers would say, "Hey, what's done is done and there's nothing much you can do about it."

But when Peter discovered this document, [General DeWitt's "Final Report"], which had been classified at the time and is now unclassified, so he looked at this document. An archivist, Aiko Herzig-Yoshinaga, pointed it out to him. The happy point is that he understood the significance of it, and probably no one else would. I mean I wouldn't have understood the significance of it either if they gave it to me. It would have been a very interesting thing, but that's about it. But because he also had a legal background and he knew about this legal procedure called *coram nobis* he was able to, and his name is Peter Irons, if I didn't say it already. He was able to come up with this plan that we can reopen the cases and overturn the convictions based on this little-used *coram nobis* procedure that he knew about.

Dr. Parham: And how do you define that term?

Mr. Kawakami: It's Latin meaning, I think something like, "the case before us." So, what that means is we had to bring the case back before the judge or the court, the judges were all deceased by then, but back before the court that convicted them. So, we ended up having to file a case in San Francisco, a case in Seattle, and a case in Portland where the three people were convicted. So anyway, that was kind of a serendipitous event that got us involved in the case.

ENGAGE IN CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS SOCIAL INJUSTICE

Mr. Kawakami and Mr. Hirabayashi demonstrated an incredible ability to think outside the box to engage creative problem-solving strategies. Although they were able to reopen the case 40 years later, additional challenges began to emerge. Mr. Kawakami continued to share the story:

The other challenge was, as I said before, the government fought the case, our case 40 years later, tooth and nail against overturning the conviction or doing anything about it. In fact, the government ended up almost relitigating military necessity, which was both a disappointment and a surprise to me. But I guess I understood from a legal standpoint what they were trying to do. I guess the good that came out of that is even when they tried to relitigate that military necessity claim we were able to present documents in court that convinced the trial court and later the court of appeals that there was no military necessity . . . and I guess I can explain that a little bit too.

General DeWitt, who was the person that issued the military orders of exclusion and curfew, he's the one [who] developed and coordinated and implemented the exclusion plan. So when the cases went to court, government agencies, including his, was asked to provide the attorney general's office arguing the case with evidence that they had to support whatever it was that they were doing. We discovered evidence that the FBI, under J. Edgar Hoover, found that there was no evidence of sabotage or espionage, although any kind of complaints or any kind of suspicious activity, of course, was investigated by the FBI. He concluded that there was no evidence of any sabotage or espionage activity going on.

The FCC, Federal Communications Commission, was charged with investigating any radio signals or any kind of communications that may have gone illegally and they also concluded there was no evidence of any kind of sabotage or espionage. The Office of Naval Intelligence, who was the intelligence branch that was tasked with investigating the Japanese American population, concluded also that there . . . wasn't, that you didn't need to evacuate and intern 100,000 people.

So all of the evidence we put forth is evidence that the government knew about but the key issue is what could the person who implemented the program say was his reason for implementing the exclusion program. It turns out that his reason was a racist reason that Japanese Americans inherently are untrustworthy and cannot be trusted. No matter what you do you can't figure out who the loyal American was from an unloyal American. That was why he initiated the program.

So that's the justification he put in his Final Report. When the higher-ups read that, and I'm a little surprised by this. But even back then they recognized that this rationale would never fly with the court because it's a racist concept that you intern them for this reason and not for military necessity.

So basically what happened after that is the government altered the report. They had all of the previous copies destroyed. So they destroyed evidence. They altered evidence and then they represented to the court military necessity, which is not the actual reason given for the internment. So essentially, the government committed a fraud on the court and in order to get their conviction. They basically cheated.

Collaboration with supporters such as Peter H. Irons demonstrates another creative problem-solving strategy to address social injustice: the ability to engage in thoughtful coalition building. In their work on research on qualities of effective community coalition project directors, Alexander, Zakocs, Earp, and French (2006) discussed multiple steps involved in successful coalition development, including “mobilizing key stakeholders, securing a lead agency to house the coalition, obtaining resources, recruiting a broad-based membership, developing organizational structure and governance procedures, fostering members’ active involvement, resolving inevitable conflicts, generating a collective vision, developing a consensus-derived strategic plan, negotiating with key organizations to implement actions, refining the plan and actions through evaluation, and institutionalizing the coalition and/or its initiatives” (pp. 201–202). Alexander et al. shared how managing the complex tasks associated with successful coalition building requires leadership skill. Related research indicates that successful coalition leadership employs characteristics like having collaborative leadership style (Weiss, Anderson, & Lasker, 2002) and a committed leadership group (Shortell et al., 2002).

In their study, Alexander et al. (2006) found that characteristics related to leadership effectiveness included shared leadership (i.e., engaging others in coalition building rather than being the sole expert), bridge building skills (i.e., being aware of environmental constituencies and knowing who will be able to respond to coalition goals accordingly), and insider status (i.e., being able to recruit coalition members, build trust, and be aware of conflicts). The work of Mr. Kawakami and his team demonstrated an open mindedness that is valued when one is committed to learning about new processes. He shared the team’s reaction when they heard about *coram nobis*:

Really, when the lawyers heard that there might be an opportunity like this we jumped at the opportunity to try to do something about this. Our first job was to look up what does *coram nobis* mean because nobody knew what that meant either.

Mr. Kawakami and his team’s commitment to be learners in social justice efforts reflects conclusions drawn from the Alexander et al. (2006) study:

Contrary to much popular literature suggesting the need for leaders who are both experts and visionaries, these data caution against limiting coalition leadership to those with these attributes. Being an expert on the issue of interest may dampen one’s ability to lead collaboratively or share leadership roles; it may even lead to more autocratic decision-making because the “experts” may have preconceived ideas of the solutions. (p. 207)

Mr. Kawakami discusses the importance of coalition building in social justice pursuits:

The other thing I would say is, and from my experience in doing this case, it's pretty important to do some coalition building. Even if you're passionate about an issue and writing a letter may be important, but in the big scheme of things unless you're coordinating with the coalition of people that are acting on the issue, it's not as impactful. So you do have to coalition build. For example, in our case we had to . . . there were probably, I've never counted the actual number, but there were probably 50 to 75, to maybe even 100 people, if you count lawyers and nonlawyers that participated in the cases. We acted as a team, so we had to get maybe 25 lawyers in a room, and to get 25 lawyers in a room with all the egos that lawyers tend to sometimes have, and to get them to push in the same direction and to make agreements on these things was a little bit challenging. It was necessary in order to do what we needed to do. For example, in Seattle our team consisted of about 13 or 14 core people. In other words, people that would consistently come night after night or week after week to the meetings to draft pleadings, or to discuss the case, or whatever needed to be done. Of course we had Japanese American attorneys, but we also had Chinese American attorneys, we had an African American attorney, we had a Latina attorney, and we had some Caucasian attorneys. So we had a coalition [that was] strong consisting of not just Japanese Americans, but all the lawyers from the different ethnic communities that we were able to put together. I think that was important in a lot of ways. That was a big statement on our part of how we put our particular team together.

PERSEVERE UNTIL JUSTICE IS SERVED

Mr. Kawakami's and his team's steadfast commitment, alongside Mr. Hirabayashi's unwavering sense that justice be served, illustrate the perseverance that is at the heart of their story. Mr. Hirabayashi waited 40 years for his wrongful conviction to be overturned. Although there is significant overlap among all of the identified themes, the theme of perseverance is intricately tied to the fourth theme, finding creative solutions. Research demonstrates how a sense of perseverance can be tied to "a solution-focused positive attitude" (Hanna, 2016, p. 57), despite racism and discrimination. Mr. Kawakami spoke of Mr. Hirabayashi's tenacity:

Like I said, for years he never wavered in his belief that this was unconstitutional and persisted in trying to figure out a way to get this corrected. It was not so much his. I mean the conviction is there and certainly that's a mark against anybody if you're convicted of a crime. But he wanted vindication to show that not just for him, not just for even the Japanese Americans, but for everybody, the whole community, because they suffered as well if you take away any constitutional rights from any American.

Mr. Hirabayashi's commitment to uphold and honor constitutional rights parallels current-day concerns. Of lessons learned, Mr. Kawakami shared:

The lessons that I learned was that in order to protect and preserve your rights, you need to be constantly vigilant or these rights disappear. We assume that we would have rights in 1940 and that didn't happen. We had to wait 40 years to be able to be vindicated on that, but even then for the last 30 years, we've been talking and speaking and discussing about these very same issues. I don't have to tell you guys that the issues

about Muslims and that they look different, that they dress different, that they eat different food, and that they're not Christians, and all these other things are the exact same things that were said about the Japanese Americans and their population. If you let that pass, that policy, then we're really in trouble. So we have to make sure that we hold the government accountable for whatever actions they take. We certainly can't, as we did back in the '40s, just sit by silently and hope that the government will do the right thing. Sometimes you do have to kick them in the butt to get the right result. So those are kind of the lessons that I learned.

FOLLOW ONE'S COMMITMENT AND PASSION

Recent research has explored the notion of "sparks" among young people. Sparks have been defined in the literature as a "passion for a self-identified interest, skill or capacity that metaphorically lights a fire in the adolescents' life, providing energy, joy, purpose and direction" (Scales, Benson, & Roehlkepartain, 2011, p. 264). In their study that explored developmental outcomes among a diverse group of 15-year-olds, Ben-Eliyahu and Rhodes (2014) found that "spark intensity was associated with positive outcomes and supportive relationships" (p. 85). Youth in the high spark group reported greater social involvement, sense of mastery, industriousness, and a focus on learning, alongside fewer school absences. Youth in the high spark group also reported more relationships with parents, adult mentors, extended family members, friends, and neighbors. It was important to note that "a range of adults (not just parents) provided key support for developing interest-driven interest" (p. 86).

Mr. Kawakami shared how education is an avenue to develop one's passion, or spark, as a young person. He recalled his own experience as a student in the 1970s and applied it to a sense of how people can use their talents to pursue their passions:

Mr. Kawakami: I, myself, was a student activist back in the '70s. . . .

That was the love, peace, and flower power era. I was a student activist back then and participated in marches and demonstrations and sit-ins and any other kind of protests that needed to be done at the time.

I don't have any . . . a lot of money to put on the table for issues or I can't sing and dance and I'm not an entertainer, I'm not a politician but I was able to use my education as a lawyer to contribute. So their education, I think, they can find a place if they're passionate about an issue and use whatever passion that is to contribute in that way through education.

One of the reasons I'm certainly doing this is because I'm a strong believer that educating about this issue and others is vital. So I fully expect that your students will find a niche and follow it.

Dr. Parham: What I also hear you suggesting, not only should the students find a niche, but they should also be passionate enough to use whatever talents they are given. In your case it was education. Again,

you weren't an entertainer or a politician, but were you to have followed those paths, you would have used those paths as the springboard for those conversations.

Mr. Kawakami: Right. That's right. At whatever level or whatever talent, and this would apply to anybody. Your other question about even the young people, I mean to me if you can lick stamps, or e-mail, or write letters, or start petitions, or sign petitions, or do whatever you can within your talent to add to or to contribute. I think that would be something that's needed. Again, you can always sit by the side, which is the most comfortable, but you do have to get out of your comfort level at some point and act if you really are interested in social justice issues.

In an interesting parallel, a growing body of research demonstrates how youth can gain a sense of well-being through participation in the activities that they care about (Ben-Eliyahu & Rhodes, 2014). It is thought that such experiences may support identity development in that youth have the chance to discover and develop talents, a process that forms a basis for identity formation. Participation in prosocial activities may motivate youth to engage with like-minded peers who have shared interests (Ben-Eliyahu & Rhodes, 2014).

Dr. Clauss-Ehlers: I guess I'm just wondering what advice [you would] give, particularly for our readership, about how to do that, how to step out of your comfort level.

Mr. Kawakami: Well, I think first of all like I said, to me if you find an area that you're passionate about that will drive you and hopefully that will get you to be able to step outside of your comfort level.

Dr. Clauss-Ehlers: So it's almost like following your passion and your commitment, and that's at the forefront, and then just dealing with maybe the fear or the shyness or the discomfort part.

Mr. Kawakami: It's when you believe in the issue enough that then you're willing to step out and do that. Obviously if you're not really passionate about the issue or aren't fully supportive of it, you're less likely to want to take that step. If you are really interested in social justice and you find that area that you really feel, "Okay I can take this and run with it, and I have the talent to write a paper on it, or to start a petition, or to contact my members of Congress," or whatever action that needs to be taken. I think that it makes it easier to do those things.

conclusion

The 2016 political campaign to seek the Presidency of the United States eerily evoked images, practices, and proclamations of the 1940s. Explicit and implicit assumptions nestled in beliefs about privilege, subordination, and domination were seen in abundant xenophobic responses that called for building walls and mass deportation of "criminals," "murderers," "drug

dealers,” and “rapists.” The Black Lives Matter movement, the challenges of Native Americans relative to resisting oil drilling and transport across ancestral land, the paired associations with Muslims as “terrorists,” and the portrayal of refugees from war-torn countries as communities imposing on the American way of life, have become everyday news items. Growing distress, including hatred targeting the aforementioned “trouble makers,” is captured in 24/7 coverage of visual and audio news as well as social media. The Southern Poverty Law Center reported an increase in hate crimes targeting minority groups following the November 2016 presidential election (Miller & Werner-Winslow, 2016).

The stark realization that change continues to occur baits questions about how best to manage new realities. A key first step is to acknowledge and reconcile that, despite feelings to the contrary, new and ever-changing political and social realities are here and come with two distinctly different invitations. The first invitation is to develop wise, carefully considered, and strategic responses to current and likely future challenges. The second invitation is to sit on the sideline and do very little or nothing at all. A second step is to consider that hidden in the morass and undeniable challenges of new experiences is a kaleidoscope of opportunity if we only choose to see what is right in front of us.

Relative to reflecting on the significant challenges that lie ahead, several questions come to mind. Are Americans ready to navigate the seas of change using sails of hope and resilience to propel our forward movement? Are we prepared to turn inward and rely on each other as we journey to new shores acknowledging the reality that on occasion we might feel off course? Ships navigating tumultuous storms and choppy, even violent, seas do not sink simply because they are sailing in rough waters. Ships sailing in rough waters sink only when the water on which they are sailing comes inside and weighs the ship down. Are we prepared to move forward buoyed by acclamations that affirm and validate the cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, and other traditions that keep us strong in the face of adversity?

The stories of Gordon Hirabayashi, Minoru Yasui, and Fred Korematsu within the context of World War II, as well as the stories of Rod Kawakami and his colleagues within a social, political, and environmental context 40 years later, serve as reminders that, in spite of difficult and unfair realities, qualities like vigilance, courage, commitment, integrity, honor, pride, creative problem solving, an ability to display calm in the midst of a storm, and a willingness to be a strategic risk-taker, can culminate in an ability to actively address systemic and structural disparities. How this current generation of students, early career professionals, seasoned professionals, and retirees adds to the ongoing story of U.S. social justice represents a novel whose ending has yet to be written.

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