Service and Citizenship: Examining the Historical Relationship between Immigration and Military Service in the United States

Claudia Lynn Zibanejadrad
Kennesaw State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/mast_etd

Part of the American Studies Commons, and the United States History Commons

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/mast_etd/26

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Interdisciplinary Studies Department at DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Arts in American Studies Capstones by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu.
Service and Citizenship:

Examining the Historical Relationship between Immigration and Military Service in the United States

December 1, 2020

Claudia Lynn Zibanejadrad
Dr. Jennifer Dickey, Dr. Tom Okie and Dr. Catherine Lewis
# Table of Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 2  
History ............................................................................................................................. 3  
Historiography ............................................................................................................... 5  
Capstone Project .......................................................................................................... 30  
The Importance of Service and Citizenship .................................................................. 39  
Appendices .................................................................................................................. 41  
Camp Ritchie and “The Ritchie Boys”................................................................. 42  
Alex (Alessandro) Sabbadini ..................................................................................... 46  
Werner T. “Tom” Angress ......................................................................................... 49  
Walter C. Wolff .......................................................................................................... 53  
Kurt Frank Korf ......................................................................................................... 56  
Ritchie Boys Timeline ............................................................................................... 59  
Ritchie Boys Teacher’s Resources .............................................................. 60  
The Ritchie Boys Activity #1 .................................................................................... 62  
The Ritchie Boys Activity #2 .................................................................................... 63  
The Ritchie Boys Activity #3 .................................................................................... 65  
The Ritchie Boys Vocabulary ..................................................................................... 67  
Nisei in the Military Intelligence Service .................................................... 70  
Harry Fukuhara ........................................................................................................ 77  
Kan Tagami ................................................................................................................ 81  
Masao Abe .................................................................................................................... 85  
Roy H. Matsumoto ...................................................................................................... 88  
Asian American Timeline .......................................................................................... 92  
Nisei Teacher’s Resources ....................................................................................... 95  
Nisei Soldiers Activity #1 ......................................................................................... 97  
Nisei Soldiers Activity #2 ........................................................................................ 100  
Nisei Vocabulary ........................................................................................................ 102  
Bibliography .............................................................................................................. 103
Introduction

I was born into a military family. Maybe that is the reason that I never thought to question why so many of the soldiers I knew while growing up did not seem like the soldiers I saw on television or the movies. My father’s army buddy spoke with a Hungarian accent. My brother formed a garage band with two boys who were the sons of a Filipino sergeant. I saw and heard people from all over the world at the commissary (that is the military lingo for grocery store for those not familiar). It was not until I had an internship researching and writing biographies for World War I soldiers that I realized how many foreign-born men were drafted into the US Army. The fact that I found most shocking about those drafted was that many of them were not yet American citizens. However, they were willing to serve in order to expedite their naturalization process. This led me to wonder when this practice began and what groups of people it affected. By the end of my research, I discovered that there were many different groups of people who found their greatest opportunity for gaining their political and civil rights, particularly during World War II, by offering service for citizenship.

I have laid out this paper in an orderly fashion as follows. I will begin with a history of immigration and military service, beginning with the Revolutionary War. I will then cover the historiography that informed my research. I then explain the research process that went into my capstone project, which was the creation of teachers’ guides for the Kennesaw State University’s Museum of History and Holocaust Education. Finally, I will discuss the importance of the study of military service in obtaining American citizenship and what it means today.
History

Throughout American history, various peoples have sought to gain the privileges of citizenship through military service. Even before there was a United States, men had volunteered military service for acceptance into American society. I was taught in elementary school about the friendly European soldiers, such as the Marquis de Lafayette, who came to America to help the colonies fight for American independence. However, in my research I found that these soldiers were mostly mercenary soldiers, who came to the American colonies to fight in return for money, as well as the prestige of higher rank, and the chance to gain military experience. On the other hand, some foreign soldiers were encouraged to stay once independence was achieved with the offer of land, in addition to pay. The Continental Army even offered land to Hessian soldiers in the hopes of luring them away from the British Army.¹

The Revolutionary experience set a precedent for offering citizenship to foreign-born men who were willing to fight in the American military. European immigrants fought in the hopes of speeding up the naturalization process, as well as, acquiring acceptance from the native-born populace. African Americans fought with the hope of gaining freedom from slavery and, after the Civil War, in the hopes of gaining full access to the rights that should have come with citizenship. Asian immigrants, who were barred from citizenship by the Naturalization Act of 1790, which established that only a “free white person” could become a US citizen (which changed to black or white persons after the Civil War), also fought in the hopes of proving their ability to assimilate into Anglo American society and to gain citizenship privileges.²

Indians, rendered wards of the State by federal law, fought to gain recognition as active citizens. Mexican Americans, whose nationality changed overnight with the shifting of the southwestern American border, experienced discrimination in their home states. It was quite common for the Irish, Dutch, and German immigrants to seek acceptance from the American public by joining the military during nineteenth century conflicts. These peoples, found their greatest opportunity for gaining their political and civil rights, particularly during World War I and World War II, by offering service for citizenship.

From 1870 to 1920, twenty-six million people immigrated to the United States from around the globe. This early twentieth century surge in immigration is important because it marks a time in American history when popular schools of thought, such as eugenics and nativism, led to increasingly restrictive immigration and naturalization policies. This ideology clashed with the nation’s entry into global wars, causing an increased need for soldiers, making male immigrants from all countries and of all races desirable. However, the American government was conflicted about what exceptions it would willingly make to restrictions on citizenship. The American courts often used the Naturalization Act of 1790, which stated that only a “free white person” could become a US citizen, to prevent Asians and others considered “non-white” from gaining citizenship.

Even after World War I, the service of immigrant soldiers was not enough to stem the growing xenophobic opinion of the American public. The passage of the Immigration Act of 1924 established restrictions on the number of immigrants from each country based on old

---


4 Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: Perennial, 2002), 188.

census records.\textsuperscript{6} Immigration from eastern and southern Europe was greatly restricted, which later created difficulties for Jewish refugees during WWII. Additionally, although Chinese immigration had been halted by the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, this new law virtually ended all immigration from Asia, including Japan and the Philippines. While the Western Hemisphere, including Mexico, was exempt from the quota restrictions, this legislation led to the establishment of the US Border Patrol and immigrants crossing US borders were then required to obtain visas before entering the country. At the same time, Native Americans were still not American citizens.

Due to the support of American Indians during World War I, Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924.\textsuperscript{7} Although this law naturalized American Indians, it did not lead to equal rights. For example, voting rights were established by state, and many states restricted Native American voting for many years after this legislation was passed. Additionally, African Americans were also restricted from voting by Jim Crow laws in the South, even though they had been given full citizenship with the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. With the onset of WWII, immigrants and citizens seeking civil rights that were denied them, joined the military in order to fight for the privileges of citizenship.

\textbf{Historiography}

Not surprisingly, the subject of military service and citizenship has earned the attention of historians and political scientists. In what follows, I will survey this scholarly literature, concentrating mostly on the twentieth century, with an emphasis on World War II which, with


the large numbers of men joining the military, proved to be an important event for those seeking acceptance as citizens. I have included literature on several major ethnic or racial groups including: European Jews, Japanese Americans, African Americans, Irish Catholic immigrants, German immigrants and African Americans. The composition of ethnicities often changed depending on the immigration habits at the time of a particular war. Frequently, I have included Jewish immigrants with the Europeans, because they were not particularly restricted from immigrating any more than Christian Europeans, but became significant during World War II. Of particular interest is the participation of German Jews in the fight to liberate their own families and countrymen in Hitler’s concentration camps. Also, Asians are often grouped together in much of the sources I have cited, but I have focused mostly on the Japanese and Filipino soldiers who played a major part in WWII. In addition to these two groups, I will also examine the service of American Indians, Mexican Americans, and African Americans in order to present a well-rounded view of minorities in the US military, who may not have enjoyed full privileges of citizenship.

Because I was researching scholarship concerning citizenship, I first attempted to establish what American citizenship represented to immigrants and American citizens. Judith N. Shklar asserts in her book, *American Citizenship: The Quest for Inclusion*, that the fight for citizenship in America has not just been a demand for voting rights, but a “demand for inclusion in the polity” and a struggle to overcome “barriers to recognition.”⁸ Shklar further posits that citizenship as a right of inclusion has been denied to many, particularly black Americans and women, who viewed the ability to vote not only as a form of status or acceptance, but a duty

---

much like military service. Her arguments are influential to my thesis because it explores the many aspects of citizenship and its importance to those who had to fight to obtain it.

Shklar argues that as early as the American Revolution, when the United States was not yet a country, the Founding Fathers turned to Europeans to assist in their fight for freedom from Great Britain. This was not a new idea, as Great Britain often used mercenary soldiers in order to maintain the British global empire. For example, German soldiers had been hired to fight for Britain in the Seven Years’ War against France and Austria, as well as, to protect the interest of the East India company in British Colonial India. Often referred to as “Hessians,” these soldiers hailed mostly from Hessen-Kassel, but other principalities contracted with Great Britain for the use of their armies. These soldiers were trained and maintained by various German principalities; whose rulers raised revenue by hiring out their country’s military forces.

In an essay on attitudes towards foreigners in the colonies, “The Decision to Hire German Troops in the War of American Independence: Reactions in Britain and North America, 1774–1776,” Friederike Baer discusses the consequences caused by the hiring of 40,000 German soldiers by the British Empire to fight colonial rebels during the American Revolution. Baer’s argument revolves around hostile reactions by the American colonists, who viewed the hiring of outsiders to quash the rebellion as proof that the American colonies were not viewed as fellow British citizens, since the German mercenaries were previously used only on foreign enemies. She also points out that the American colonists were not averse to trying to persuade German soldiers to defect in return for liberty and land, thereby, making them future American citizens. She asserts that Congress, preparing for a perceived German invasion, hoped to “weaken the enemy by encouraging the men to desert,” although she never offers any opinion of whether the
colonies would welcome the inclusion of men who were being portrayed as “violent enemies.”

Baer claims that although there has been some analysis of the use of European mercenaries in the British army, particularly by Stephen Conway, there has been little academic analysis of reactions to their use by the public in Great Britain and the American Colonies. This essay is helpful in demonstrating the American colonists’ willingness to offer land and citizenship to foreign mercenaries in return for their military service.

As opposed as the colonists were to the use of mercenary soldiers by Great Britain, they also used foreign help during the Revolutionary War. Although historians have long accepted that these men were “volunteers,” Eric Spall argues in his thesis, “Foreigners in the Highest Trust: American Perceptions of European Mercenary Officers in the Continental Army,” that they were actually professional soldiers and were paid for their services, making them mercenaries, much like the German Hessians that fought for the British. However, even Spall agrees that, at least in some circumstances these men fought in the hopes of settling in the newly founded Republic after the war. The most notably case is Baron Frederich Wilhelm von Steuben who professed a wish to become “a Citizen of America” in exchange for his military expertise and service. On the other hand, early consensus among historians asserted that the Germans often eagerly defected to the Continental Army. However, more recent studies, such as those by Daniel Krebs, have established that the German mercenary troops were less likely to be tempted to join the colonists in their fight against the British in exchange for land and citizenship, although it certainly did happen to some degree. Overall, Krebs asserts that Revolutionary

---

leaders chose to portray foreign soldiers in the Continental Army as volunteers “who were dedicated to Revolutionary ideals” rather than some form of compensation. For Krebs, it appears that the Continental Congress was much more receptive to including the Germans into American society than were the Europeans.

Little has been written about immigrants in the military in the years immediately following the Revolution. However, in Devotion to the Adopted Country: U.S. Immigrant Volunteers in the Mexican War, Tyler V. Johnson writes about the Irish Catholic and German immigrants who served during the Mexican War, which began in 1846. Johnson points to theory posed by earlier historians that American’s obsession with the definition of American citizenship during the early nineteenth century, combined with the influx of immigrants who differed from the Anglo-American majority, caused the American public to develop a nativist sentiment. Although some historians have declared that this nativism had diminished before the Mexican American War, Johnson argues that there is much evidence, particularly in ethnic newspapers, that proves deep prejudice against immigrants was still strong. Those ethnic newspapers, along with the support of the Catholic church, promoted ethnic regiments, highlighting their bravery and heroic exploits. Therefore, with the outbreak of war, immigrants and American Catholics had a rare opportunity to use their military service as a defense in the “debate over citizenship, the inclusion of immigrants, and in the fight against anti-Catholicism.”

During the Civil War, European immigrants again had an opportunity to prove their patriotism. Although there were ethnic and immigrant soldiers fighting for both the North and the South, there tended to be larger groups of immigrants in the northern industrial cities, where

---

they often organized into ethnic regiments. Because the South offered fewer income opportunities, most immigrants were dispersed throughout regular regiments, although there were some, such as the “Louisiana Tigers” who were composed primarily of ethnic and foreign-born soldiers.

The ethnic regiments in the North were enthusiastically promoted by their fellow nationals, ethnic politicians, and through the newspapers. Christian B. Keller estimates that German and Irish ethnics, the two largest ethnic populations at the time, made up approximately 27% of the Union Army alone but, despite the hopes and campaigning of fellow foreign-born residents, little credit was given to “this critical immigrant contribution” by the Anglo-American population. Similarly, David Graham writes that the soldiers of the 24th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment felt a certain “otherness” which they hoped would change through their service in the war, making them more “Americanized.” Interestingly, both Keller and Graham use the book, *Melting Pot Soldiers*, as a source for their articles, although Keller is critical of the “incorrect and unsupported conclusion” of author, William L. Burton, who asserted that the war “Americanized” the immigrants, while Graham is apparently in full agreement of Burton’s assessment. Keller is equally disparaging of several writers’ evaluations of ethnic participation in the war, including that of Burton, as lacking in consistency, “scant and filiopietistic.” These characteristics will remain a problem for much research in the field for all historic periods, not just the Civil War.

---

14 Keller, “Flying Dutchmen and Drunken Irishmen,” 125.
15 Ibid.
Candice Bredbenner, in her article, “A Duty to Defend? The Evolution of Aliens’ Military Obligations to the United States, 1792 to 1946,” examines the changing military expectations throughout American history, with particular concentrations on the differences between the Civil War and World War I. She points out changes, such as differences in conscription laws, during the wars and argues that these changes were due to some degree to the changes in power from state to federal government. She also argues that the immigrant’s access to the rights of citizenship, such as voting, owning property, and holding office, have changed throughout America’s history, while they simultaneously have been obligated to perform one of the most demanding duties of citizenship – military service. When the United States government first instituted a military draft during the Civil War, it decided to make use of the many immigrants who lived within its borders. Secretary of State William Seward stated that men who had declared intent of applying for citizenship, as well as, those who had voted in local elections (many states allowed resident aliens to vote) must register for the draft. Although the government offered expedited naturalization for immigrants who served, declarants could avoid being drafted if they renounced their intention to become citizens, which would require leaving the United States within sixty-five days. When the draft was once more instituted during WWI, resident aliens were not only drafted, but were prohibited from ever becoming a US citizen should they refuse military service. Bredbenner notes that there have been many academic studies on the barring of military service based on race or gender, and their “unequal distribution of political privileges and rights,” but very little scholarship on the opposite spectrum, which is
state-imposed military requirements of noncitizens. This article explores the custom of US citizenship in exchange for military service which remains in use today.\textsuperscript{16}

The years following the Civil War gave rise to the industrialization of the United States, attracting immigrants from other countries to work in the factories. By the turn of the century, as a result of the Spanish-American War, America had become an imperial power. In the book, \textit{Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917}, Matthew Frye Jacobson asserts that there was a connection between the rapid industrialization in US, the beginning of American Imperialism, and mass migrations during the period between Reconstruction and World War I. The Professor of American Studies and History at Yale claims that industrialization led to the search for consumers for American-made products which, in turn, led to encounters with less developed countries, which eventually became territories of the US. As the consumer demand in less developed countries grew, the need for cheap labor also increased, leading to the rapid influx of immigrants searching for work in American factories. Like other historians, such as Gerstle (\textit{American Crucible}) and King (\textit{Making Americans}), Jacobson argues that Progressive Era ideas concerning “inferior” races, such as eugenics, was an important influence on American history. However, for Jacobson, these notions about race were used to justify the subjugation of the indigenous populations of American territories, as well as, the restrictions of citizenship rights on certain immigrants and ethnic Americans in the US.\textsuperscript{17} Jacobson’s theories are important to the study of citizenship and military service because he has a particular interest in those countries which often provided


\textsuperscript{17} Matthew Frye Jacobson, \textit{Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign Peoples at Home and Abroad, 1876-1917} (Brantford, Ont.: W. Ross MacDonald School, Resource Services Library, 2005).
individuals and territory for military personnel and expansion, such as the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Hawaii.

As covered in Jacobson’s *Barbarian Virtues*, immigration to America continued to increase in the postbellum period. Irish (and to some degree, the German) immigrants had assimilated into American society, with the help of being able to vote for their own representatives and, combined with the support of ethnic newspapers, which worked to assist them in becoming Americanized. However, new European immigrants, mostly originating from Eastern and Southern European countries, began to challenge the Anglo-European cultural identity of the American citizen, provoking nativism and anti-immigrant sentiment among American citizens. Without immigration restrictions, the influx from Europe alone numbered more than eight million people between 1901 to 1910, the busiest decade of American immigration.\(^\text{18}\)

In *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, Roger Daniels asserts that this flood of new immigrants gave rise to eugenics, a manipulation of Darwin’s theory of evolution, and the Immigration Restriction League, which argued for limits on American immigration. In 1917, despite a decrease in European immigration, due to the war in Europe, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, one of the first to make any major restrictions on European immigration – barring “criminals; persons who failed to meet certain moral standards; persons with various diseases; paupers; assorted radicals; and illiterates.”\(^\text{19}\)

\(^{18}\) Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: Perennial, 2002), 188.

\(^{19}\) Ibid, 279.
Although Daniels maintains in this book that other historians are too “Eurocentric,” he goes into great detail concerning European migration. However, he gives little detail concerning the exploits of these immigrants in WWI. Nevertheless, Daniels not only encompasses European immigrants including Jewish populations, but immigration from other countries worldwide. His studies of immigrants from China, Japan, Philippines, and Central America and their migratory habits during both World Wars serve as a good source of supplemental information for studies on individuals immigrating to America who may view military service as a pathway to citizenship.

One of the Eurocentric writers that Daniels may have been referring to is Nancy Ford Gentile. Her book, entitled *Americans All! Foreign-born Soldiers in World War I*, was written in 2001 and concentrates only on the stories and biographies of European immigrants. Surprisingly, unlike many other historians who point to the eugenics movement as an explanation for the growing xenophobic opinions of the average American, Ford asserts that these fears were evident from the beginning of the Republic, when leaders expressed concern that non-Anglo immigrants would not be able to understand democratic ideologies. She also contends that during the Progressive Era, the Americanization Movement became dominated by ideas about scientific management and social welfare programs, rather than eugenics. When World War I began, roughly eighteen percent of the soldiers were foreign-born and spoke little English, causing the need to Americanize quickly. Ford expresses an optimistic view of the training program of the American Army, stating that the military showed “remarkable sensitivity and respect” for these soldiers by hiring “Progressive reformers and ethnic group leaders” so that the immigrant
soldiers could express their patriotism while keeping their ethnic pride. This is a surprising assertion, although the fact that she concentrates primarily on European immigrants may be an explanation for the dissimilarity.

Similarly, *Forgotten Soldiers of World War I: America’s Immigrant Doughboys*, a book written by two military historians, includes much personal and factual information on immigrant soldiers. Unlike Ford, this book not only contains biographies of soldiers from Europe, including European Jews, but other countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Central and South America are covered as well. They also include more information than Ford concerning the effort of the American government to expedite the naturalization process for immigrant soldiers, with many men taking their oaths at the training camps before shipping out for Europe; some ceremonies naturalizing hundreds of soldiers at one time. Surprisingly, there is no mention of the Progressive reformers that are so central to Ford’s argument, only the mention of “Development Battalions” where soldiers with little language skills were sent to train. There is little in the way of a scholarly argument in this book other than to conclude that many of the soldiers still faced discrimination after their service in the war. However, the narrative is somewhat celebratory, which may be caused by a bias due to the military service of both of the writers, Alexander F. Barnes and Peter L. Belmonte.

Even before WWI began, the US government had begun to establish regulations which changed the definition of US citizenship, both legally and culturally, influencing and shaping American society for generations. Christopher Capozzola’s article, “Legacies for Citizenship:

---


Pinpointing Americans during and after World War I,” concentrates primarily on the legislation that was passed from the outbreak of the war in Europe to 1924, when some of the most restrictive immigrant regulations were passed. The most influential legislation, according to the author, Christopher Capozzola, was the Immigration Act of 1924, which he claims was set in motion during the war years, despite the fact that, as other historians (such as Roger Daniels) have stated, it reflected the politics of the day: “nativism, isolationism, eugenics, and a resurgent Ku Klux Klan.” Capozzola asserts that 1924 was the year which ended the “decade long remaking” of US citizenship, not only placing quota systems on the number of immigrants to America, but expanded exclusion of immigrants from Asia. The Indian Citizenship Act, which granted citizenship to Native Americans, whether they wanted it or not, combined with the earlier Jones Act of 1916, which granted citizenship to Puerto Ricans, were examples of groups which gained citizenship without equality. He also points out that this year marked the beginning of the US Border Patrol. All of these things combined to, not only define the border of the United States, but the conditions of American citizenship.

In his book, *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy*, Desmond S. King argues that through immigration restrictions, which limited the naturalization of certain groups and strengthened the “second-class position” of nonwhite American citizens, the US government was able to mold the American identity into a mainly white, protestant culture to which others must conform. As Gerstle theorized in *American Crucible*, King points to the nativist and eugenics movements that became popular in the early

---


twentieth century and were used to keep out those that were considered unable to assimilate. By controlling the number of undesirable immigrants and denying rights to nonwhite citizens, the American political system strove to define Americans as white and to keep Native Americans, Blacks, Asians and other nonwhite citizens inferior. King also examines each passage of legislation as proof of the effort to keep the perception of American identity white, preferably Anglo-Saxon. This book analyzes the tactics that were used by the American polity to force non-White citizens and immigrants to assimilate to a white culture.

While King argues that the immigration restrictions weakened the efforts for full citizenship by nonwhite American residents, Lucy E. Salyer argues that some Asian WWI soldiers were able to successfully secure their citizenship by exploiting the link the American government made between military service and citizenship during WWI. In 1918, the government required immediate naturalization of all foreign-born soldiers, without regard to the fact that Asian immigrants were barred by law from becoming citizens, beginning with the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. In “Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and US Citizenship Policy, 1918-1935,” Salyer follows the struggle for these men, with the help of American veteran groups, to gain their right to become citizens in the US courts. After years of courtroom battles, Asians finally gained passage of the Nye-Lea Act, which allowed citizenship for Asian veterans. Like Gary Gerstle, Salyer agrees that war “has often been critical to nation building and particularly to the expansion of civil and political membership.”

26 Lucy E. Salyer, “Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and U.S. Citizenship Policy, 1918-1935,” *Journal of American History* 91, no. 3 (January 2004), 849. One of the Asian Americans mentioned in Salyer’s book was Tokie Slocum, whose life is documented in an article in the Densho Encyclopedia, which is an online resource that features reviewed articles concerning Japanese and Japanese American history. Adopted by a Caucasian family, he hoped to use his military service to gain citizenship, After the war, he fought for the citizenship of other Japanese soldiers by pushing for the passage of the Nye-Lea Act. Although Slocum had an early life that was very different than most Japanese Issei, his fight for citizenship for himself and other WWI
concurs with Judith N. Shklar, and other historical scholars, that studies on war and citizenship usually focus on people who were already citizens, such as women and African Americans, but who hoped to improve their status in the “American polity.” This article is important because it covers the attainment of citizenship for Asian immigrants and Asian Americans through military service.

Like Salyer, Angela M. Banks examines the conflict between American laws restricting citizenship versus American ideals that provided for naturalization when individuals are able to prove civic commitment through military service. Banks’ article, “Precarious Citizenship: Asian Immigrant Naturalization 1918 to 1925,” questions how one can evaluate an applicant’s ability to adopt American values in order to become a citizen of the United States using the court arguments and evaluations of Asian soldiers after World War I. Banks argues that Asians were prevented from becoming citizens, even after their service in the military, because they were considered culturally unable to assimilate, thus causing them to be “permanently foreign,” a term coined by Mai Ngai. Despite these barriers to Asian American citizenship, 500 veterans of Asian descent were able to naturalize in the years following World War I, which Banks states “illustrates that the inaccuracy and unreliability of race was recognized” by the US Courts. For this reason, although race is no longer used as a reason to exclude certain immigrants, she believes that it is important to examine tests of cultural assimilation used today when allowing immigrants to become American citizens. Because this article has such a deep legal examination

---

veterans makes him an important subject for the study of military service and citizenship rights. The article can be found at http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tokutaro_Slocum/.

27 Ibid, 850.


29 Ibid, 153.
of immigration statutes, it is important for military naturalization scholarship because it provides
another side of the story of post-World War I Asian naturalizations.

When the United States entered World War II, America was still struggling to incorporate her many different cultures and ethnicities into a unified democracy. In *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*, Gerstle argues that the United States was shaped by two competing concepts: civic nationalism (the rights of all people established by the country’s founding documents) and racial nationalism (that these rights only applied to those of the same color and ethnic background as the Founding Fathers). While many historians might agree that war is a unifying event that shapes national identity, Gerstle points out that soldiers during World War II were still being segregated. He states that the war helped white soldiers, regardless of ethnicity or religion, to assimilate more easily than Asian and Black soldiers who were kept segregated and therefore unable to conform. In fact, the image that most Americans imagined as a “multicultural platoon” was one created by popular culture, such as Hollywood movies, and always contained a mixture of “the Anglo Protestant, the Irish Catholic, and the eastern European Jew” but rarely included African American or Asian soldiers.30 This conclusion agrees with previous scholars, such as Tyler V. Johnson (*Devotion to the Adopted Country*), who found that American media were responsible, to some degree, for the public’s attitude towards assimilation.

Although Gerstle states that he disagrees with what he calls “whiteness scholars” who charge that race is central to every demonstration of nationalism, he does agree with the scholarship of those like Eric Foner, in that oppressed groups have often used the promise of national equality to achieve their civil rights. Gerstle’s discussion of central themes of war and

---

race, including the organizing of the American military by race during WWII, makes this book a valuable contribution to the study of service and citizenship.

Ronald T. Takaki, in *Double Victory: A Multicultural History of America in World War II*, uses the “autobiographies, oral histories, conversations, letters, poems and songs” of ethnically and racially diverse peoples (such as Euro-Americans, African-Americans, Asian Americans, and Jewish refugees) to tell the story of what he sees as America’s somewhat hypocritical battle for Democracy using a segregated military. By utilizing the stories of everyday people who experienced the war, he follows the footsteps of the only historian that he mentions in his book, Studs Terkel, who published a book of oral histories of WWII. He proposes that many of the soldiers who fought in World War II battled, not only to end oppression overseas, but to end bigotry at home - in other words, a double victory. He states that his book gives the reader an “eye level view” of the history of the war, rather than concentrating on the views of political and military leaders. His arguments concerning the racism directed towards soldiers of many different ethnic backgrounds, particularly during the war, is important because it demonstrates how soldiers from different backgrounds claimed their citizenship rights through military service.

Once soldiers began to receive medals and other commendations, their exploits were popularized through news releases. In his article, “Becoming American: ‘Manila John’ Basilone, the Medal of Honor, and Italian-American Image, 1943-1945,” Michael Frontani asserts that the media attention to John Basilone, the first marine to earn a Medal of Honor during WWII, facilitated acceptance of Italian Americans into American society. As with other historians, he

---

32 Ibid.
cites the popularity of the eugenics movement as one of the factors that contributed to the “inbetweenness” of Italian immigrants, a term that was originally coined by David Roediger. Once thought of as “dysfunctional, foreign, and often criminal,” an image which was probably propagated by the newspaper reports and popular movies containing mafia activity, Frontani theorizes that the newspapers’ assertion that Basilone was a hero changed the minds of Americans about what traits comprised the idea of “Americanness.” This change in public opinion on those of Italian ethnicity was important not only to those of Italian heritage, but to elected officials who depended on the large number of Italian voters, and who hoped to soften attitudes against those considered enemy aliens during the war. This article adds an interesting view on ways of how military service, particularly heroic service, can change American opinions of who can be considered a valued citizen.

Another enemy alien population, German Americans, also played an important role in World War II. In her essay, “The Military Intelligence Training Center and the War against Nazism: Military Intelligence Training,” Patricia Kollander argues that the approximately two-thousand German-born soldiers who were trained at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, Maryland, were an effective weapon in defeating the Nazis during World War II, as well as, being important to the “denazification” of Germany afterwards. These soldiers, many of whom were new citizens or not yet naturalized, proved to be valuable assets to the war effort because of their language skills, familiarity with German customs and terrain, and interrogation training from Camp Ritchie. Most of the German and Austrian emigres were Jews who had escaped Nazi persecution and found discrimination in the United States for being German,

---

Despite their obvious aversion to the German regime. Once the law was passed in 1942 that expedited the naturalization of the immigrant soldiers, sometimes requiring the naturalization ceremony to be performed at the war front, the German soldiers felt more accepted by their comrades. Kollander asserts that there has been little-to-no scholarship on the Camp Ritchie trainees, with most writing on the subject consisting of the soldiers’ memoirs and oral histories. This paper offers a scholarly description of the Ritchie Boys experiences in becoming naturalized through military service during World War II.

Similar to the program at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) trained nearly 6,000 linguists, most of them Japanese Americans, for service in the Pacific sector of WWII. In the article, "’They Are Our Human Secret Weapons’: The Military Intelligence Service and the Role of Japanese-Americans in the Pacific War and in the Occupation of Japan,” Kelli Y. Nakamura states that the efforts of the Nisei soldiers of the MISLS not only accelerated the end of the war through their efforts as translators and cultural interpreters, but they also contributed to rebuilding Japan after the war. Nakamura outlines the training, duties, and contributions of the Japanese American soldiers. Unlike the Japanese American combat soldiers in the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat, there has been little scholarly or popular research on the members of the MISLS. The reasons for the lack of recognition are partially due to the confidential classification of their work, obtaining information from the Japanese enemy, which was not available to the public until 1971. Also, there was the awkward issue of their dual identity as Japanese Americans who were “fighting for a government that had interred many of their family

members at home while they were sent to fight the Japanese abroad.”  

This essay is important for research on military naturalization because it is a somewhat unexplored subject that offers examples of Americans who were part of a community that was persecuted and interned, despite their citizenship, yet they were willing to carry out their civic duty as soldiers.

For the combat soldiers of Japanese descent, Going for Broke: Japanese American Soldiers in the War against Nazi Germany, tells the story of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most decorated unit of WWII, which was a segregated unit composed of Japanese-Americans, many of whom were volunteers from Japanese internment camps. Written by James McCaffrey, this book is not a scholarly treatise; however, it does include an abundance of biographical information on the Japanese American soldiers who fought in this unit. This book tells the story of a group of segregated soldiers that performed the duties of citizenship without having the accompanying privileges.

In Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America, Mae M. Ngai argues that restrictions on the number of immigrants allowed to legally enter the United States has encouraged the number of people entering the country illegally, creating an “impossible subject,” or a person who resides within a country without citizenship or rights. Like many modern historians, she asserts that the new immigration scholarship must be based on looking at ethnicity and race differently. She points to the “assimilation paradigm,” which marginalized race within scholarly studies and blamed the immigrant for being unable to assimilate due to deep cultural differences rather than American federal and social constructions.  

Stating that


World War II was an important turning point in the history of Asian Americans, Ngai includes a chapter on the internment of Japanese Americans and the impact that it had on Asian immigration, as well as, foreign policy. Although Ngai concentrates on undocumented immigrants who are unable to enter the military, she also includes in-depth studies of those who were able to use military service as a pathway to citizenship. In particular, her inclusion of chapters on Filipinos, Mexicans, and Japanese are a valuable contribution to the study of military naturalization. Ngai also mentions that there is a similarity in Anglo Americans reaction towards the “unsettled response of nineteenth century Americans to the acculturated Native Americans.”

In the twentieth-century American West, Tejanos (Mexican Texans) joined the military for various reasons including adventure and assimilation. However, as Alex Mendoza asserts in his essay, “I Know No Other Country: Téjanos and the American Wars of the Twentieth Century, 1917-1972,” WWII offered a deeper experience for Tejanos to demonstrate patriotism, as well as, a chance to obtain economic, educational and social opportunities. He maintains that Tejanos have been ignored by scholars until recently, when historians like Carole Christian and José Ramírez wrote about the Tejano military experience as it “pertains to citizenship.

---

member of the Philippine Scouts during WWII. After surviving the Bataan Death March and earning a Medal of Honor, Calugas was one of the Filipino soldiers who was offered American citizenship and continued service as an officer in the American army. Despite his citizenship and military service, he was unable to relocate his family to America until he retired in 1957. This article and be found at (Carol Beers, “Jose Calugas, Medal of Honor Winner, ‘death March’ Survivor,” *The Seattle Times* (Seattle, WA), January 24,1998. [http://community.seattletimes.nwsource.com/archive/?date=19980124&slug=2730347].) Another Filipino soldier who was able to immigrate to America was Jesse M. Baltazar. In his autobiography Baltazar, a Filipino soldier, writes about his service in the United States Armed Forces, Far East (USAFFE) during World War II. Like Calugas, he was one of the few soldiers of the USAFFE that was able to use his service to immigrate to the United States, eventually serving as the first Filipino-born Officer in the United States Air Force. His story provides valuable insight into the question of service and citizenship because so many of the soldiers in the USAFFE, who were also in the Bataan Death March and survived, were not allowed to immigrate to the United States or to receive the benefits that they were promised. See the article at Carol Beers, “Jose Calugas, Medal of Honor Winner, ‘death March’ Survivor,” *The Seattle Times* (Seattle, WA), January 24,1998. [http://community.seattletimes.nwsource.com/archive/?date=19980124&slug=2730347].

37 Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects*, 110. For more information on the American Indian experience in World War II, *Code Talker* by Chester Nez and Judith Schiess Avila (New York: Penguin, 2012), is the story of one of the Navajo men who developed an uncrackable code for long distance communications using the Navajo language. Despite the fact that he was not even able to vote in his own state, Nez chose to join the military in order to do his duty as an American citizen.
acculturation, masculinity, and community.”

Although Mexican Americans fought in WWI, they still faced discrimination once they returned home to Texas. Historians point to WWII, when 100,000 Mexican Americans joined the military to fight in the war, as the turning point for Tejanos pursuit of their political and social rights. This essay is one of few existing scholarly pieces on Mexican Americans in the military.

An article by James Burk, “Citizenship Status and Military Service: The Quest for Inclusion by Minorities and Conscientious Objectors,” examines the relationship between service in the military and citizenship, particularly concerning women, African Americans, and conscientious objectors. Burk notes that many scholars, including Judith Shklar, have asserted that military service is a characteristic of citizenship, therefore, “members of groups not recognized as full citizens could improve their social standing by performing military service.”

He also emphasizes the importance of military service to the African American community throughout American history because slaves were not allowed to use firearms, nor were they allowed to join the state militias. And yet, black soldiers still fought in a segregated military during WWII, only to return home to racism and limits on their citizenship. However, Burk claims that the military has often “been at the forefront of official efforts to end the stigma attached to race” following WWII and continuing to today. This article is useful for military

---

39 Maria-Cristina García, “García, Macario,” (June 15, 2010). https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fga76. This article written for the Texas State Historical Association covered the life of Macario Garcia, a WWII veteran from Mexico. Garcia was awarded a Medal of Honor, a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Mérito Militar, the Mexican equivalent to the Medal of Honor. Despite his heroism and notoriety, he met with discrimination in Texas when he was refused service at a restaurant because he was Latino. This led to an altercation with the restaurant owner, who called the police and had Garcia arrested. As a result of his arrest, he became a symbol not only of the “plight of Hispanic soldiers who returned from the war, but the plight of the Hispanic community as a whole.”
41 Ibid, paragraph 15.
research in that Burk proposes that African Americans have long used military service as a tool to improve their social standing and citizenship rights.

Citing previous scholarship on citizenship and race in America, Deneesh Sohoni, Amin Deenesh Sohoni, and Amin Vafa agree that there have been two main principles of citizenship: Civic (shared values and beliefs) and Ethno-cultural (a common European heritage and culture). This article studies the efforts of Asian soldiers to gain American citizenship due to their service in the US military through the examination of court cases between 1900 and 1952. Through these lawsuits, the authors attempt to draw conclusions on how well government institutions, particularly the US judicial system, were able to control the “collective identity” of American citizens. Although the government passed a law in 1918 which allowed Filipino and Puerto Rican citizens who served in the American military to become American citizens, other Asians were still specifically excluded. It was not until after World War II, when the government passed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, that all races were eligible for naturalization. Sohoni, et al., point out that military naturalization is often ignored by many historians that study the relationship between race and citizenship but use Mai Ngai and Lucy E. Salyer for their research. However, they assert that “the relationship between military naturalization, race, and other ascriptive characteristics” are still used in interpreting American citizenship. Because this article is specifically about gaining citizenship through military service, including soldiers from Japan, China, and the Philippines, it is essential to be included in a paper on military naturalization.

---

Mitchell Lemer, in his essay entitled “‘Is It for This We Fought and Bled?’: The Korean War and the Struggle for Civil Rights,” contends that the Korean War was a critical influence on the civil rights movement in the United States. He argues that conflicting attitudes toward the war within the African American community, and treatment of black soldiers in the battlefields, led to protests at home. Lemer finds that there has been a great deal of scholarship on African American soldiers throughout history but finds that scholarly interest in the Korean War has been lacking. This is unusual because the Korean War marked the first war after the desegregation of the US military, and although black soldiers found that the military sometimes failed to enforce the equality promised by Eisenhower, they felt it was a “first step towards progress and a gesture of good faith from the administration,” and it encouraged protests for civil rights after the war.  

This essay is important as Lemer claims, the Korean War and African American service has been overlooked by scholars in the study of civil rights.

As fewer American soldiers joined the volunteer army after the Vietnam War, and the influx of undocumented immigrants caused the government to demand military assistance at the US borders, there was a shortage of military personnel by the end of the twentieth century. Darlene Goring wrote “In Service to America: Naturalization of Undocumented Alien Veterans” before 9/11. It is an outline of her plan to solve this problem. The plan calls for using the naturalization of undocumented aliens during peace time in order to lessen the shortage of soldiers in the US military. These soldiers would be used in conjunction with the INS to secure borders in order to prevent further influx of undocumented aliens. Goring, includes three different sections of her thesis including: Historic Examination of Alien Veteran, Congressional

---

43 Mitchell Lemer, “‘Is It For This We Fought And Bled?’: The Korean War and the Struggle for Civil Rights,” *Journal of Military History* 82, no. 2 (April 2018), 522.
Bypasses, and Naturalization of Alien Veterans Unlawfully Present in the United States. She stresses that her plan would allow “qualified undocumented aliens to "earn" their place in American society,” recalling earlier historians who claimed that immigrants often joined the military to “earn” acceptance politically and socially. 44 Although Goring’s theory is somewhat outdated, she includes an annotated outline of naturalizing immigrants through military service throughout American history, which may inform any research for military naturalization.

In more recent years, the nationalities of immigrants have changed. As more people have begun to migrate from the Middle East and Central and South America, many have sought to become citizens through service in the military. In fact, the first American soldier to die in the invasion of Iraq in 2003 was not an American citizen – at least not until two U Senators from Georgia, Zell Miller and Zaxby Chambliss, introduced a bill calling for the immediate naturalization of soldiers killed in action. In this article, “Latino Immigrants in the American Discourses of Citizenship and Nationalism During the Iraqi War,” Hector Amaya reviews political speeches, the actions of Congress and news reports, particularly the biographies of deceased Latino soldiers, to argue that the deaths of non-citizen soldiers caused a “crisis of masculinity” which the government and media alleviated by ignoring the extreme poverty that forced Latino men into the military and emphasized their deaths as a sacrifice for the American dream. 45 Amaya uses the philosophy of Foucault to examine systems of power and Lauren Berlant and Dana Nelson to question ideas of citizenship. This essay is important for the study of Latino naturalization and military service during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

Since 2016, xenophobic attitudes of politicians, often prompted by public uneasiness, have caused changes in the vetting of immigrant soldiers. These changes have led to a shortage of military personnel in the US Army. According to an NPR article entitled, “US Army Is Discharging Immigrant Recruits Who Were Promised Citizenship,” recruits who are legal residents and have applied for military service through the Military Accessions Vital to the National Interest (MAVNI) program are being turned away simply because the required multiple-layered security checks are taking too long due to lack of resources, meaning there are not enough personnel to process them. Others are being denied because they are deemed a security risk because of “foreign ties” in other countries, which are the normal ties of family members that any immigrant might have. The MAVNI program was created to offer opportunities for immigrants with special skills, such as language or medical abilities, to have an accelerated path to citizenship through military service.

Before 2017, recruits could apply for citizenship before entering basic training and could complete their naturalization process in ten weeks rather than the traditional ten months. Naturalization Offices were opened at select military bases across the country to enable soldiers to become citizens before they were sent to fight overseas. After 2017, the Department of Defense required that soldiers must serve 180 days and have a complete security check before citizenship is granted. The delays and changes in the processing of new immigrant recruits caused a sixteen percent drop in applications for naturalization due to hundreds of recruits’ applications being denied, terminated or withdrawn. This decrease in naturalizations led to the closure of many of the naturalization centers at military posts in the US and overseas. As application approval continued to decline, the US military has begun to fail to meet its
enrollment requirements. The military is dependent on immigrant recruits due to the lack of interest of American citizens.\textsuperscript{46}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Capstone Project}
\end{center}

When I began my internship several years ago, I researched fallen American soldiers who were buried at the Suresnes American Cemetery near Paris. A noticeable percentage of these soldiers were recent immigrants, mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe. During my research, I was surprised to find that at the same time the United States was depending on these foreign-born soldiers to fight for America, legislation was passed that limited the number of people allowed to immigrate to the United States. For example, on February 5, 1917, Congress passed the Immigration Act of 1917, one of the first to make any major restrictions on European immigration – barring “criminals; persons who failed to meet certain moral standards; persons with various diseases; paupers; assorted radicals; and illiterates.”\textsuperscript{47} It also completely blocked immigration from the “Asiatic Barred Zone” which included most of Asia, with the exceptions of Japan which had a “gentlemen’s agreement” and the Philippines which was an American territory. Just months later, the United States entered the war.

Despite the overall discrimination of immigrants by the American public, unnaturalized immigrants were required to register for, and were subject to, the military draft. However, the American public found service by soldiers that were not yet citizens distasteful. Therefore, the government required immediate naturalization of all foreign-born soldiers which necessitated an


\textsuperscript{47} Roger Daniels, \textit{Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life}, 2nd ed. (New York: Perennial, 2002), 279.
effort by the American government to expedite the naturalization process. Immigrant soldiers, sometimes hundreds at a time, took their oaths at the training camps before shipping out for Europe.\footnote{Alexander Barnes and Peter L. Belmonte. \textit{Forgotten Soldiers of World War I: America’s Immigrant Doughboys} (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing Ltd, 2018), 19; Lucy E. Salyer, “Baptism by Fire: Race, Military Service, and U.S. Citizenship Policy, 1918-1935,” \textit{Journal of American History} 91, no. 3 (January 2004), 849.} There were also some attempts to “Americanize” the soldiers and teach them to speak English. However, this effort was made mostly for those who immigrated from European countries.\footnote{Nancy Gentile Ford, \textit{Americans All!: Foreign-Born Soldiers in World War I} (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2011), 3.} On the other hand, men from Asian countries were still drafted into the US Army and served during the war, despite the restrictions on their eligibility for citizenship. It took seventeen years of courtroom battles before the passage of the Nye-Lea Act in 1935, which allowed citizenship of Asian veterans of World War I.\footnote{Salyer, 850.}

Still, there does not seem to be much evidence that immigrant participation in World War I, made much difference in the xenophobic attitudes of the American public as evidenced by the passage of restrictive laws such as the Immigration Act of 1924, also known as the Johnson-Reed Act.\footnote{“Immigration Act of 1924.” Accessed October 2, 2019. https://www.doceach.org/documents/document/immigration-act-1924.} This legislation not only put quotas and limitations on immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, it almost completely banned all immigration from Asia. This act was seen as an insult to many Asian countries, particularly Japan. These restrictions not only played an important factor in the crumbling relationship between Japan and the United States, it also created difficulties for the escape of Jewish refugees from Europe during WWII.

Even after various groups gained citizenship, they often did not gain the rights or acceptance that citizenship should have provided. For example, African Americans were restricted from voting by Jim Crow laws in the South, even though they had been given full citizenship with the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment. Also, Native Americans were not
granted citizenship until Congress passed the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924. Although this law naturalized American Indians, voting rights were established by state, and many states restricted Native American voting for many years after this legislation was passed. With the onset of WWII, immigrants and citizens seeking civil rights that were denied them, joined the military in order to fight for the privileges of citizenship. As historian, Ronald Takaki asserted, many of these soldiers in World War II fought for a double victory, not only to end oppression overseas, but to end bigotry at home.

I first became interested in the subject of immigrants in the military when I began my internship several years ago. I researched fallen American soldiers who were buried at the Suresnes American Cemetery near Paris. While preparing biographies for these men, I noticed a large percentage of these soldiers were recent immigrants, mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe. In addition to these soldiers being recent immigrants, I found that many of them were not yet American citizens. During my research, I was surprised to find that at the same time the United States was depending on these foreign-born soldiers to fight for America, legislation was passed that limited the number of people allowed to immigrate to the United States.

I decided to continue my research as a thesis for my capstone experience. As part of my experience, I prepared teachers’ guides for the Kennesaw State University’s Museum of History and Holocaust Education. Although World War II presented an important turning point for many different groups, I chose to concentrate on two groups in particular: European Jews and Japanese Americans. These groups fit in well with the exhibits that were already featured at the museum. They also offered a unique perspective on citizenship and military service. Both groups fought against the country of their own ancestry, which meant they would be executed as traitors should

---


they be captured by the enemy. Also, both were sought out by the US military for their linguistic skills which were lacking among most Americans and were important for the gathering of military intelligence from the enemy.

I first discovered the Ritchie Boys while doing preliminary research for my capstone project. The Ritchie Boys were soldiers who were trained at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. Approximately two-thousand of these soldiers were German-born, many of whom were new citizens or not yet naturalized. Most of the German and Austrian emigres were Jews who had escaped Nazi persecution and were classified as “enemy aliens” by the United States, despite their obvious aversion to the German regime. However, the US Army soon found that these men had something that the American armed forces desperately needed. Their ability to speak the German language, familiarity with German customs and terrain, and newly acquired interrogation training made them valuable assets to the war effort, serving in the Military Intelligence Service. These men would use their knowledge of the German language and culture to interrogate prisoners, translate captured documents and radio messages, and other reconnoitering duties. The only problem was their lack of citizenship papers. When the Second War Powers Act was passed in 1942, the naturalization of immigrant soldiers was expedited, sometimes requiring the naturalization ceremony to be performed on foreign soil, even at the war front. After the war, they assisted in preparing for war crimes trials and reconstruction of war-torn areas.54

For the “Ritchie Boys” Teachers’ Guides, I concentrated on four particular soldiers. Three of them were German Jews and one was an Italian Jew. I chose these soldiers primarily

---

because they had biographies or autobiographies written about them. Since soldiers working in the intelligence field were often sworn to secrecy, these men were often hesitant about talking or writing about their military services and their stories were not a well-known to much of the public. These men wanted to serve in the US Army for many reasons. In addition to receiving expedited naturalization, they were grateful for finding asylum in America and wanted to repay their adopted country. They also hoped to fight against the regime that had taken away so much from them and their families. Finally, they hoped to rescue friends and family members who had been left behind, possibly in concentration camps.

These soldiers’ stories have been documented in several biographical books. Although these accounts are not scholarly research, they are important because they are personal stories of individuals during the war. One such account is Witness to the Storm: A Jewish Journey From Nazi Berlin to the 82nd Airborne, 1920-1945, an autobiography by Werner T. Angress, a German Jew who escaped from Nazi Germany, immigrating to the United States. Angress trained at Ft. Ritchie to become an interrogator, eventually becoming a naturalized citizen in order to serve with the 82nd Airborne Division. His style of writing is very conversational, which makes this book easy to read. While an autobiography may hold some bias due to the personal proximity that the author had to the events discussed in the book, it does give the reader an insight to the motivations of immigrants in military service. This book provides a specific example of an immigrant who was granted citizenship in return for military service.55

Another book about a Camp Ritchie boy, Someday You Will Understand: My Father’s Private World War II, is a biography of Walter Wolff, a Jewish man who immigrated to the

---

United States from Belgium, eventually became one of the “Ritchie Boys,” and was drafted into the U.S. Army before he was naturalized. It is written by Wolff’s daughter, who used the copious amounts of his wartime letters and photographs to compose her father’s memoirs of the war, and his post-war service with the Pentagon. Again, this is a personal story as told by the soldier’s own child; therefore, the author may show some partiality. However, the use of personal letters from the front gives details of the war and a first-person view of events as they happened.

The last German refugee biography, "I Must Be a Part of This War:” a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism, was written by Patricia Kollander and John O’Sullivan, a professor and associate professor of history at Florida Atlantic University. The only scholarly work based on the life of a Ritchie Boy, this biography on Kurt Frank Korf uses personal interviews given to the writers before Korf’s death, along with his WWII papers and documents to relate the story of Korf’s stint in the U.S. Army before becoming an American citizen. His narrative is another story of a refugee from Hitler’s Germany who was naturalized after he served in the American military.

The book, Unavoidable Hope: A Jewish Soldier’s Fight to Save His Family from Fascism, is a biography of Alessandro (Alex) Sabbadini, an Italian immigrant who was Jewish. Written by Sabbadini’s son, Roger Allen Sabbadini, this book is billed as a fight against Fascism, although Hitler had already invaded Italy by the time Sabbadini and his unit landed in Anzio in 1944. He was one of the few Italian Jews who joined the army and fought in the U.S. 5th Army, using his language skills to help advance his unit through Italy. Sabbadini was naturalized on the

57 Patricia Kollander and John O’Sullivan, "I Must Be a Part of This War” a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005).
battlefields of Tunisia in 1942 before going on to fight in Sicily, where he earned his Purple Heart. Because of his unique exploits, this book is a notable addition to the study of military naturalization and World War II, despite the fact that it is not written by a historian.

These men’s stories are an integral part of my Ritchie Boys project. They are combined with: an overview of their training at the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, a timeline which includes federal immigration legislation, a vocabulary page, a teachers’ resources page, and three student activity pages. These made up the bulk of the Teachers’ Guide for the “Ritchie Boys” unit.

While researching the Ritchie Boys, I discovered another group who served in the US Army during World War II in the Military Intelligence Service. These men were born in the United States but were of Japanese heritage. These second-generation Japanese Americans are known as “Nisei.” Despite being fully American, they were incarcerated in Japanese internment camps as “alien enemies,” along with members of their family who were born in Japan and were legally unable to become American citizens. Ironically, many of the men who were assigned to train at the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) were drafted from inside the walls of these internment camps.

While their friends and family remained behind the walls of the camps, these men strengthened their knowledge of their ancestral language at the MISLS. They also learned methods of interrogation, translation, and map reading. The efforts of the Nisei soldiers of the MISLS not only accelerated the end of the war through their efforts as translators and cultural

---

58 Roger Allen Sabbadini, *Unavoidable Hope: A Jewish Soldier’s Fight to Save His Family from Fascism* (Bend, OR: Alighieri Publishers LLC, 2017).
interpreters, but they also contributed to the reconstruction of Japan after the war. Unlike the Japanese American soldiers in the 442nd Infantry Battalion who fought in Europe, these soldiers served on the Pacific front, which meant that they may come face to face with former friends or family members, in addition to the dangers of being perceived as traitors if captured. They also differed from the 442nd Infantry in that they were not segregated from white soldiers but were dispersed throughout US military forces.59

Again, I concentrated on four soldiers for the “Nisei Linguists” teachers’ guides. Much like the Ritchie Boys, these men were sworn to secrecy during their service in the military. However, there are many Japanese American websites which feature information on these men. The US Army website also includes much information on their services as well as photographs, both formal and in the field. These men joined the Army despite the discrimination they experienced because they wanted to prove their loyalty to the United States. They also hoped to obtain a better life for their families who may have been interned during their service. As with the Ritchie Boys, I have included biographies on the Nisei soldiers. In the case of the Nisei soldiers, much of my research on their lives was limited to obituaries, service records, and information from various websites.60 However, I did find two biographies that offer personal stories similar to an oral history.

One of these books is Rising Son: A U.S. Soldiers Secret and Heroic Role in World War II, written by Sandra Vea, an educator of twenty-five years. In this book, Vea retells the war

60 The main websites used for Nisei military service included the US Army website at www.army.mil, the Go For Broke National Education Center at www.goforbroke.com, the Japanese American Veterans Association at www.JAVADC.org, and the Japanese American website at www.densho.org.
stories of her partner’s father, Masao Abe. Abe was already in the US Army when World War II began. Later he was trained at the MISLS and posted to duty on various islands in the Pacific. Known for using his language skills to talk enemy soldiers out of hiding, he worked in Japan after the war using his language skills to assist in reconstruction. Although this book has not been peer reviewed, it offers the personal narrative of a Nisei soldier.\textsuperscript{61}

The second book, \textit{Midnight in Broad Daylight: A Japanese American Family Caught between Two Worlds}, was written by an educator for the University of Hawaii system and the Punahou School in Honolulu. This book recounts the story of Harry Fukuhara, a Nisei soldier who was recruited from the internment camp at the Gila River Relocation Center. After his training at the MISLS, Fukuhara fought bravely throughout the war, even after the bombing of Hiroshima, where his mother and brothers lived. Fukuhara’s biography offers a unique point of view on the harrowing life of the Nisei soldiers.

I included these two biographies along with two others on Roy Matsumoto and Kan Tagami. The rest of my “Nisei Linguists” teachers’ guides included: a timeline, vocabulary, overview, teachers’ resource page, and two student activity guides. The timeline also includes an extensive listing of immigration legislation restricting the immigration of Asian persons, beginning with the Chinese Exclusion Act.

Although these Nisei soldiers fought to be recognized as full citizens of the United States, it was not until the passage of the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 that America ended the exclusion of all Asian immigration and naturalization in the United States. It was at this time that many of the Japanese Issei (first generation immigrants) who were forced into

internment camps during the war, were finally granted citizenship. Therefore, the sacrifices made by the Nisei soldiers did not automatically grant benefits to their parents after the war, but probably contributed to the eventual naturalization of their families. It is interesting to note that this same statute still allowed more immigrants from Northern and Western Europe and attempted to block persons from Communist countries who were perceived as a threat to national security.62

The Importance of Service and Citizenship

As a child, I always thought that the US military was automatically inclusive. It never occurred to me that immigrants and even US citizens might be denied the right to join the military, especially during a major conflict. In my research on service and citizenship, I found that military service did not always circumvent the laws that were set to control the racial composition of the American public. I felt that it was important to emphasize immigration laws in my Teachers’ Guides because these laws were relevant to the men who fought in World War II, and they are still relevant today. For example, in 2017 President Donald Trump attempted to pass an Executive Order preventing the immigration of all citizens coming from seven Muslim countries into the United States by citing the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952.63

There have also been delays and changes in the processing of new immigrant recruits which caused a sixteen percent drop in applications for naturalization due to hundreds of recruits’ applications being denied, terminated or withdrawn. As application approval continues

---

to decline, the US military has begun to fail to meet its enrollment requirements.64 If this trend continues, not only will this threaten the long-held precedent of accepting immigrants into military service in exchange for citizenship, but it also threatens the security of the country.

With the recent change of the presidency, questions arise about the future of immigrants in the American military. Will President Joe Biden reverse the trend and ease the naturalization process for immigrants who are willing to join the US military in exchange for citizenship? What restrictions, if any, will be made on the ethnic and religious composition of our military? As for my own beliefs, the US military should be as it was when I was an army brat – a path to citizenship through military service.

Appendices
The United States entered World War II when the Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1942. Once America entered the war, the need for combat intelligence led to the creation of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS), an operating branch of the G-2 government intelligence organization. Once the MIS was created, its first important task was to establish schools to train soldiers as intelligence officers. Soldiers were needed to act as interpreters, translators, and interrogators during the war.

One of these schools, known as Military Intelligence Training Centers (MITC), was founded at Camp Ritchie. A former encampment of the Maryland National Guard, it was situated on 638 acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Maryland. When the U.S. Army leased it in 1942, there were already several buildings on the property. These buildings included: a headquarters building, two kitchen facilities, a parade field, a machine gun range, and a pistol range. In addition to these facilities, the Army added barracks, classroom buildings, medical facilities, and administrative offices. They also constructed a replica of a German village. This allowed soldiers to train in areas that looked the same as the European towns they would eventually occupy. The center could train up to 6,000 soldiers at one time. By the end of the war, it had educated 19,000 intelligence specialists.

Next, the Army began to search for military recruits who were proficient at a foreign language, particularly German and Italian. Some trainees had knowledge of these languages because their parents or grandparents were immigrants. Others had learned a foreign language through high school and college classes. When it seemed that there would not be enough American recruits with linguistic skills to train, the Army began to look at recent immigrants in the military.
The Selective Training and Service Act Of 1940 required all men, including non-citizens, to register for the draft. During WWII, thirty-three thousand German immigrants served in the U.S. military. Almost half of them were not naturalized citizens when they were drafted. There were also over thirty-nine thousand Italian-born immigrants who served in the military. One out of four Italian-born soldiers were not yet citizens when they joined the military. There were also soldiers from other countries who served during the war. The U.S. Army assigned immigrant soldiers with certain skills, such as knowing a foreign language, for training at Camp Ritchie.

These men had immigrated from the very countries that America was fighting. They not only had the linguistic skills, but were familiar with the culture, landscape, and mindset of the citizens of their homeland. In addition to their native tongue, many recruits spoke more than one language. Other languages spoken at Camp Ritchie included: German, Italian, French, Spanish, Dutch, and Japanese.

Some of these soldiers were Jewish refugees, who had fled persecution in Europe. They were also eager to join the war to fight for the family members they left behind. These recruits were hand-picked by their superiors for their skill in foreign languages and their leadership qualities. Among those chosen to train at Camp Ritchie were almost two thousand German-born soldiers. Once they arrived at Camp Ritchie, their superiors warned them that their military intelligence training was top secret and they could not tell anyone about their assignments.

The training program was difficult and varied. The soldiers learned how to read terrain maps and how to draw a topographical map. They also trained to recognize objects in aerial photographs. They learned self-defense in a class called Close Combat. They also learned how to send and receive messages through Morse code. Some of the most difficult classes involved learning details about the German army. This included classes about weaponry, uniforms, badges, and the Order of Battle. The Order of Battle was a classified document which detailed the various divisions, regiments, and hierarchy of the German military.

The lessons learned in these classes were committed to memory because they contained top secret details. This meant that soldiers could not have any written information for the enemy to find if a soldier was captured. In some of the classes, students could speak only German, which strengthened their language skills. The class that many of the students enjoyed the most was the Interrogation of Prisoners of War (IPW) class. In IPW class, the students practiced obtaining tactical information. For example, they might ask about enemy strength and the location of munitions. Occasionally, the students were allowed to practice on German POWs who were being detained at Camp Ritchie. Most of the time, they took turns practicing on each other. They often used bribery, threats, or psychological manipulation to get answers. However, they were never allowed to physically touch or abuse the person they were interrogating.

Recruits attended eight-week courses, then they received their assignments based on their talents. Some might stay at MITC to work as instructors. Others might translate captured documents that had been sent back to America. Those that excelled in IPW classes were assigned, usually in groups of two to six, to different regiments going to the warfront in Europe. These men were needed near the battlefields to assist in interrogations and onsite translations.
For those soldiers who might not yet be citizens, it was important that they were naturalized as soon as possible. This became easier in 1942 by the Second War Powers Act. This legislation waived some requirements for citizenship and overseas naturalizations. This was essential because unnaturalized soldiers captured by the Nazi regime would not receive the same treatment as American soldiers. They would be considered German citizens and executed as traitors. Many Jewish soldiers took extra precautions by changing their name and religious designation on their dog tags. Still, at least two Ritchie Boys captured by Nazi soldiers were executed when they were identified as German Jews.

Some of the earliest graduates from Camp Ritchie participated in the North African campaign of 1943. Their interrogations of German prisoners provided the Allies with information concerning the design of German tanks. Their intelligence work helped defeat the Nazi’s Afrika Corps. They would go on to defeat Italian and German forces in Italy. Many others participated in the invasion of Normandy. Some arrived in Europe to late to fight, but in time to assist with the Nuremberg Trials.

The Ritchie Boys were able to discover crucial information by interviewing POWs, members of resistance movements, and local residents. This helped advance the Allied troops, hastening the surrender of the Axis forces. Their interrogations often uncovered the locations of land mines and the positions of enemy soldiers. Their efforts accelerated the movement of American troops. This also saved the lives of many of their fellow soldiers. Two psychological warfare techniques learned at Camp Ritchie helped enable the surrender of enemy forces. One was to make propaganda announcements over mobile speaker systems, urging the German soldiers to give up. The other was to prepare and drop leaflets in towns and over enemy forces. The leaflets promised humane treatment of the enemy if they surrendered immediately.

At the war’s end, many of the Ritchie Boys stayed in Germany to gather evidence of the crimes of the Nazi regime. Thousands of documents needed to be translated to distinguish which individuals were guilty of war crimes. Witnesses were interviewed, and their testimonies were translated for the trials. Some MIS officers were stationed at Displaced Persons Camps. They ensured that Nazi criminals were not hiding amongst the other residents, while assisting civilians recovering from the war.

Once the Ritchie Boys returned home, many of them led normal lives. They tried to forget the horrors they had seen during the war, often not speaking of it to their families. Others spent their lives teaching younger generations about the Holocaust. Some taught classes or wrote about the dangers of bigotry and intolerance. Many spent their last days promoting the American ideals for which they had fought.

Sources:


Kollander, Patricia and John O'Sullivan. "I Must Be a Part of This War" a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.


Allessandro Sabbadini was born on October 26, 1916, in Rome, Italy. He was the ninth child born to Silvia and Umberto Sabbadini, a successful printer. The Sabbadini family, who were Jewish, were wary of the Fascists’ rise to power. The family was aware that Mussolini held anti-Semitic views. However, the enactment of a series of Racial Laws in 1938, came as a surprise because many Jews were members of the Fascist party. Others held positions in Mussolini's government.

Similar to Hitler's Nuremberg Laws, the Italian Racial Laws also restricted Jews from joining the military, attending public schools, and owning property or businesses. In January 1939, Allesandro Sabbadini was dishonorably discharged from the army for being Jewish, only four months after he was drafted. As a way of marking him as an outcast, fellow soldiers shaved his head before he was sent home. The following month, he registered as a Jew with the state police. He received an identity card, which he would have to carry at all times. Although this angered him, he also feared the growing racism of his country.

The Sabbadini family decided that it was time to relocate to a safer place. They would start with Allesandro, who was single, childless, and jobless. One of his sisters had already emigrated to the United States, and he planned to join her. With help from family contacts, he was able to plan his escape. First, he obtained a job working at the Italian Pavilion at the upcoming World’s Fair in New York City. Then, he obtained an Italian passport and a visa to enter the United States. This would have been very difficult to get at the time, particularly for an Italian Jew. Not only did the Immigration Act of 1924 restrict immigration from Italy, but there were added restrictions to Jewish refugees. For example, in May of 1939, a ship transporting 937 Jewish refugees, called the S.S. St. Louis, was not allowed entry into the United States. Returning to Europe, many of the Jewish passengers ended up back in Nazi territory, where 254 of them perished. Only two weeks before this incident, Allesandro Sabbadini departed Italy on a luxury liner.
Ten days later, Sabbadini arrived at Ellis Island, in New York City. In order to enter the U.S., he had to provide his passport and prove that he could read and write. He also had to claim his sister as his sponsor. This meant that she would provide support until he could support himself. When America entered the war in 1941, Sabbadini tried to enlist in the military twice. However, he was refused because he was considered an "enemy alien." A Presidential Proclamation #2526, put restrictions on immigrants from Italy. Although he was not placed in an internment camp, he was restricted from freely moving about the country. He was also not allowed to own cameras, guns, or short-wave radios. By late 1942, these restrictions were lifted for Italian residents. The following month, Sabbadini was drafted into the U.S. Army. He was happy to finally be able to fulfill his mission to help his family, by fighting the Fascist who threatened their security. Sabbadini was immediately assigned to the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. His training included the interrogation of POWs and the translation of enemy documents. Sabbadini’s command of the Italian language, and his knowledge of the countryside, were important to the success of the American campaign in Italy. More importantly, he had experience in the Italian military which gave him an intimate knowledge of the Italian military organization. While many of the Ritchie Boys were German and Austrian Jews, Sabaddini and other Italian-speaking recruits, were the first to be sent to the front as MIS soldiers.

By January 1943, Sabbadini was fighting in the North African Campaign. Traveling through Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, MIS agents spent much of their time interrogating captured enemy soldiers. Their questioning led to valuable information about German tanks. Besides interrogation duties, Sabbadini helped to plan an invasion of the nearby island of Sicily. However, before Sabbadini could enter Italian territory, he had to become a naturalized citizen. Otherwise, he could be executed as a traitor should he be caught in the country of his birth. Fortunately, the Second War Powers Act sped up the naturalization process by eliminating certain restrictions, such as his enemy alien status. It also allowed the first overseas naturalizations in U.S. history. Taking advantage of this statute, Sabbadini became an American citizen in Algeria on June 13, 1943. He would be one of the 13,587 foreign-born soldiers to receive an overseas naturalization during the war. At this time, he chose to change his first name to Alex, which he felt was more fitting for an American.

The invasion of Sicily began on July 10, 1943. Allied forces were able to quickly capture enemy headquarters, which contained important documents. This provided Sabbadini and his MIS team with valuable military documents to translate. Thanks to their efforts, the military became aware of the location of land mines. They were also able to interview some of the 4,000 captured enemy soldiers. Their interrogations helped the allied forces assess the strength of the enemy. One day, as Sabbadini and his partner drove towards the front, he was injured when his jeep hit a land mine. It also killed the driver, who was a close friend and fellow Ritchie Boy. By the time he recovered, the war in Sicily was over and his unit was ready to head to the Italian mainland. Sabbadini and his team, along with U.S. 5th Army, made an amphibious landing at the port town of Anzio, Italy, on January 22, 1944. Sabbadini had intimate knowledge of this location because his family’s summer villa was located nearby. As an intelligence officer who was familiar with the area, he was able to pinpoint buildings used by enemy officers. Therefore, the MIS team found important documents that had been left behind. He also interviewed townspeople and local resistance fighters, who reported the locations of enemy troops.
Although Sabbadini was only forty miles from Rome, where he hoped to find information about his family, there were 120,000 German troops that prevented the Allies from entering the city. It would be almost five months of heavy fighting before the Allies liberated Rome. On June 4, 1944, Sabbadini was among some of the first troops to enter Rome after its liberation. It was important for members of the MIS to locate and preserve recently evacuated command facilities. They had to preserve important documents and letters for translation to English. They were particularly interested in finding any evidence that the Germans were aware of the impending Allied invasion of Normandy. In addition to processing and packing many crates of abandoned paperwork, Sabbadini was able to locate his family members. They had survived the war in hiding, thanks to close friends and members of the Catholic clergy. It was a quick reunion before he had to continue following the warfront north, pursuing the retreating German army.

As Sabbadini and the Special Forces approached northern Italy, they received information that Mussolini may have been hiding nearby. Unfortunately, they arrived too late to capture him. On April 28, partisan soldiers had executed him, hanging his body in a public square in Milan for viewing by mobs of angry townspeople. Although they were unable to arrest and interrogate Mussolini, Sabbadini and his team were able to locate his office. There, they found such an immense amount of Fascist records, it took weeks for the MIS team to review it all.

Sabbadini and his partner were sent to investigate the recently liberated concentration camps near Innsbruck, Austria. Arriving just hours after the evacuation of the Gries-Bolzano camp, they found that all the documentation had been destroyed, leaving no records for future war crime trials. They then proceeded to inspect the complex of subcamps around Mauthausen. They were searching for evidence for war trials, when they heard the news that the war was over on May 8, 1945.

Alex Sabbadini was discharged from the U.S. Army on October 31, 1945. After the war, he became an art appraiser and owner of an antique and fine arts auction company, in California. He passed away on August 4, 2004.

Sources:


Sabbadini, Roger Allen. Unavoidable Hope: A Jewish Soldier’s Fight to Save His Family from Fascism (Bend, OR: Alighieri Publishers LLC, 2017).
Werner T. “Tom” Angress

Werner T. Angress was born on June 27, 1920 in Berlin, Germany. His father, a banker, provided a comfortable middle-class lifestyle for Angress, his mother, and two younger brothers. Although his family was Jewish, Angress attended a public high school. As the sole Jewish student in his class, he experienced bullying and antisemitic comments. This harassment came from both his fellow students as well as some of his teachers. In 1936, Angress decided to leave school without taking his final examinations. This was partly due to the harassment that he experienced after the passage of the Nuremberg Laws. Believing that there was no future for him in Germany, Angress chose to attend a training farm in Poland. This farm taught agriculture to Jews who wanted to emigrate to other countries.

However, his training was cut short when his father became alarmed by Hitler’s increasing restrictions. He decided to move the family to England in 1938 using tourist visas. Later, when their visas expired, they moved to Holland (now the Netherlands) while Angress waited to emigrate to the United States. Angress applied for a visa to immigrate but, due to the restrictions of the Immigration Act of 1924, he would not be eligible to migrate until 1943. However, Jewish organizations were lobbying U.S. officials to get special visas for students at the agriculture school that he had attended. He hoped that when they received their visas, they would include him on the school list.

During his time as a refugee in Holland, he listened to radio reports detailing Hitler’s growing power and aggression. Radio reports detailed the annexation of Austria and the violence of Kristallnacht. Finally, he was able to get an American visa in the fall of 1939. This allowed him to join his former agriculture classmates at another training farm in Virginia. Less than two months after the invasion of Poland and the beginning of World War II, Werner boarded a ship headed for the United States. Unfortunately, he had to leave his family behind just as German forces began gathering near the border of Holland.
For the following eighteen months, Werner lived at Hyde Farmlands Academy in Burkeville, Virginia. Hyde Farm was being used as a training facility for Jewish immigrants interested in farming. At this time, Werner filed his “first papers,” the first step in becoming a U.S. citizen. When an official asked if he wanted to keep his name, Werner said that he only wanted to change his middle name from Karl to Thomas, since he felt that “Tom” was fitting for his new identity as an American. In February of 1941, Hyde Farmlands had become financially unsustainable and was forced to close. Angress, given the choice of working as an apple picker or joining the U.S. Army, chose the military. Angress was no longer interested in farming and hoped joining the military would improve his English so that he could attend college.

Not yet a citizen, Angress was inducted into the Army of the United States on May 7, 1941. Stationed at Fort Meade in Maryland, he began his military training with the 29th Virginia National Guard Division 116th Infantry Regiment, Company B. His inability to comprehend much of the English language made it challenging for him to understand commands or to make himself understood. While some of his fellow soldiers laughed at his attempts at speaking English, others helped him learn the language. Angress quickly became proficient enough to communicate with others in English, albeit with a German accent.

On December 7, 1941, Angress was on maneuvers when his unit received news that Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor. The following day, they learned that the United States had declared war with Japan. On December 11, when Germany and Italy declared war on America, the U.S. entered World War II. Although Angress had previously been able to write and receive letters from his family, all communication ceased after the declaration of war. This made him anxious about his family’s welfare and eager to join the war effort.

When the 29th Division was sent overseas to join the war, Angress was prevented from going because he still had not been naturalized. During the war, Presidential Proclamation #2526 stated that immigrants who had not yet become citizens were “enemy aliens.” Therefore, for ten months, Angress was placed in an “alien detachment” within the 79th Infantry Division. These soldiers were all from other countries and had not yet become citizens. The wearing of military uniforms was forbidden. They were forced to do menial jobs and were often victims of verbal abuse from other soldiers.

One day, Angress saw a notice on the company’s message board. It asked for any soldiers who spoke another language, particularly German or Japanese, to submit an application to the Military Intelligence Training Center (MITC). The MITC trained soldiers to be interrogators, propagandists, and interpreters. Angress applied immediately and was quickly accepted into the Eleventh Class (September – December 1943) of the MITC at Camp Ritchie. He joined many other soldiers who spoke one or more foreign languages. These languages included German, Japanese, French, Spanish. While Angress was at Camp Ritchie, he learned such diverse subjects as telecommunications, interrogation, and the German Order of Battle. He became a U.S. citizen on October 5, 1943 and shipped out on the next transport to Europe.

Angress arrived in England in January of 1944. He was surprised to find that his assignment was to the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, since he had never had any training as a parachute
jumper. His jump training consisted of fifteen minutes of instruction on the day before D-Day. During the invasion of Normandy, enemy fire forced his plane off course, causing Angress to land in a field alone and far from the rest of his regiment. Captured by German soldiers and held prisoner in Cherbourg, France, Angress and his fellow prisoners endured days of shelling from American forces before the German military in Cherbourg surrendered on June 27. Returning to his own unit, he was finally able to do his job as a POW interrogator.

Angress moved throughout Europe as needed, acting as an interpreter for higher ranking officers. He also interviewed captured German soldiers and local residents. His task was primarily to obtain tactical information from the German prisoners. For example, he needed to know the number of troops that were positioned nearby or how many had been killed in action. While working on the front lines, he was often in danger of being hit by incoming artillery from nearby German forces. During the Battle of the Bulge, his safety was further put at risk by friendly fire. Because English-speaking Nazi troops had been caught attempting to infiltrate American encampments while wearing U.S. Army uniforms, Angress was restricted to staying close to his unit because he was in danger of being mistaken for the enemy by unfamiliar American soldiers.

As the war was coming to an end, German soldiers began to abandon concentration camps to flee incoming Allied troops. On May 2, 1945, Angress’s division discovered and liberated Camp Wöbbelin. Although Camp Wöbbelin was a transit and work camp, the American soldiers found many of the prisoners were starving or had died. Several days later, the American military arranged a funeral and burial for the dead prisoners. The local townspeople as well as the captured Nazi soldiers were forced to file past the graves.

When the war ended on May 8, 1945, Angress asked for permission to look for his family in Amsterdam. He was able to find his mother and two brothers who had been hidden by Dutch resistance fighters. He enjoyed a brief visit with them on Mother’s Day. His father, however, had been arrested and sent to the Auschwitz concentration camp, where he subsequently died.

Angress applied for an honorable discharge as soon as he was eligible. He had no interest in witnessing Berlin, his birthplace, in ruin. He was also eager to attend college to prepare for his future life in America. Angress received a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart for his service in World War II.

Shortly after arriving back in the United States in June of 1945, he applied and was accepted to Wesleyan University. Using the G.I. Bill (Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944) to pay for his education, Angress graduated magna cum laude in 1949. In 1953, he earned his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley. After graduation, he became a professor of European and German history. He later accepted an offer from the State University of New York, Stony Brook, where Angress taught until his retirement in 1988. He published many articles and several books about German history and his experiences in Nazi Germany. After his retirement, he moved back to Berlin where he continued to teach. Werner Angress died in Berlin on July 5, 2010.
Sources:


On July 8, 1924, Walter Wolff was born to an affluent Jewish family in Koblenz, Germany. Walter’s father was a merchant and was known to oppose the Nazis. In 1933, after Hitler became the chancellor of Germany, the Wolff family decided to flee the growing antisemitism in their homeland. Wolff’s parents moved to neutral Belgium, while he and his sister attended an elite boarding school in St. Moritz, Switzerland. It was here that Wolff became adept at several languages, including French and English, in addition to his native German. At this school, where the director was also Jewish, Wolff felt safe from the religious intolerance of Nazi Germany.

Unfortunately, Belgium was being threatened by German forces. Therefore, Wolff’s parents decided to pack what items they could and, taking their children out of school, they fled the city of Brussels. They left just four days before bombs began to drop on the city. They joined an estimated two million other refugees who were escaping south on the roads to France. They drove along the Normandy coast to avoid the crowds of exiles blocking the roads, often sleeping in their car. One day, they were ordered by the French police to pull off of the road because the German army was approaching. The Wolff family hid under their car as a battle between French and German forces exploded around them. When the noise ceased, civilians and soldiers lay lifeless around them and they were now behind enemy lines.

By posing as Americans who had lost their passports, the Wolff family was able to live and travel through German occupied territory. By late summer of 1940, they had reached the French city of Leon, which was a stronghold for the French Resistance. There was no school for the children so they spent most of their days trying to get food for the family. At night, young Walter Wolff worked for the Resistance, risking his life to lead lost British paratroopers through the city to safe houses. Eventually, the family made their way to Marseille, on the Mediterranean coast. With the help of American embassy officials and relatives living in the U.S., they were able to get their visas to the United States.
In August 1941, the family took a train to Seville, Spain, where they boarded a freighter ship, the *SS Navemar*. The vessel was originally made to accommodate only twenty-eight passengers because it was a cargo ship. However, rows of bunk beds were installed in the filthy cargo hold to provide living quarters for over one thousand desperate Jewish immigrants. The Wolff family was lucky because they had enough money to pay for a spot in one of the cabins, which had been the captain’s quarters. There were few sanitation facilities and no privacy. There was not enough food and some people suffered from food poisoning because the provisions had spoiled. Cramped quarters often led to the spread of diseases and six of the passengers died during the six weeks that it took for the ship to reach New York City. While Walter Wolff and his family endured the deplorable conditions during their crossing, circumstances for those they left behind worsened. Jews were ordered to wear yellow stars, the use of gas chambers at Auschwitz began, and Goring ordered a plan for the “final solution.” When the *SS Navemar* docked in New York on September 12, 1941, they must have thought that they had escaped the war completely. Unfortunately, three months after the Wolff family’s arrival, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and America entered the war.

The family settled in New York City near other family members. Since Walter Wolff had been unable to attend school for the previous two years, he immediately resumed his education and graduated in June of 1942. Less than a year later, not yet an American citizen, the U.S. Army drafted him. He reported for duty on May 31, 1943.

Assigned to the medical corps, Wolff was stationed at Camp Pickett in Virginia for training. While at Camp Pickett, Wolff impressed his superiors with his knowledge of languages. He was soon accepted for the Army Specialized Training Corps (ASTM) after his basic training. Because he was fluent in three languages, the government sent him to college for further training, where he found that the military had plans to train him in the difficult language of Japanese. This was not good news for Wolff, for he hoped to return to Europe, where he could fight those that had forced his family out of their home – the Nazis.

However, in January 1944, the Army moved him to Camp Grant, near Rockford, Illinois. In addition to being used as a training center, Camp Grant was also a detention center for German POWs. Several times, Wolff acted as an interpreter for these prisoners, giving him his first chance to apply his knowledge of the German language. In March, he became an American citizen, which allowed him to apply for positions that had previously been off limits to him as an enemy alien. He submitted an application and his transfer to Camp Ritchie was approved.

At Camp Ritchie, Wolff attended classes on varied subjects which would be useful when he deployed to European battlefields. Classes including record keeping, cartography, radio intelligence, and photo intelligence. He also had to take courses about the Italian, French, British, and American military. As the Allied troops advanced and it was clear that Germany was losing the war, Wolff became impatient. He feared that the war would be over before he could return to Europe and have some part in the downfall of the Nazi regime.

On April 12, 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt died from a cerebral hemorrhage. Worried the death of the President might influence the war, he urged a colonel at Camp Ritchie to send
him overseas so that he could do his duty. He was soon headed to Europe to assist with the surrender of the enemy.

It took five days for Wolff to reach the European continent and, in that time, the war came to an end. He left on April 28, 1945, the same day that Mussolini was executed in Milan, Italy. On April 30, Hitler committed suicide in his air raid bunker in Berlin. On May 2, the same day that Nazi forces in Berlin surrendered, Wolff landed in Italy. As part of his duties, Wolff became one of the first translators of Mussolini’s personal papers. Later, he moved to the German POW camps in Modena, Ghedi, and Verona. He and his six-man team were in charge of the registration and screening of nearly 100,000 former Nazi soldiers. The most important part of this job was to determine which of these prisoners were guilty of war crimes. They used the interrogation techniques that they had learned at Camp Ritchie. Later, Wolff assisted with the screening of war criminals for prosecution at the trials in Nuremberg and Dachau.

However, for Walter Wolff, the Displaced Persons (DP) camps that he visited throughout Europe had the most impact on his life. DPs were the people who were previously interned in the Nazi concentration camps, forced labor camps, and POW camps. Many of these DPs were Jewish survivors of the Holocaust who had no wish to return to their former homes where they were unwelcome. They were also unable to immigrate to other countries which refused to take responsibility for the refugees. As Wolff gathered information on Nazi war crimes, he visited several of the seven hundred DP camps in Austria and Germany. He was concerned that provisions were inadequate for those living there. Finding that American and international relief organizations had not yet reached some of these camps, he wrote friends and family in the U.S., asking them to send donations of food and warm clothing. This request led to the arrival of 1500 packages, which were dispensed to these refugees.

Wolff was demobilized and returned to the U.S. in April 1946. He later became a successful businessman and founder of the Bon Marche furniture stores in New York City. Walter Wolff passed away on January 31, 2006.

Sources:

“1,100 Jammed in Ship Designed to Carry 15.” *Daily News*. September 13, 1941.


Kurt Frank Korf

Kurt “Frank” Korf was born in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, on November 18, 1909. Although he was raised in a Catholic family, his maternal grandfather had been born Jewish, but later converted to Protestantism. It was his grandfather, a successful publisher, who became his mentor when Korf’s father passed away. Before his grandfather died in 1929, he encouraged Korf to become a lawyer. However, before Korf could finish law school, Hitler gained power, becoming chancellor of Germany in 1933. Soon after, the Nuremberg Laws were issued, which restricted anyone of Jewish ancestry from practicing in a court of law. Because Korf was one-quarter Jewish, he could not become a lawyer. Instead, he earned a doctorate of jurisprudence so that he could work as legal counsel for his family’s publishing firm. Unfortunately, the type of books that the firm published brought him to the attention of the Nazi administration and he was questioned by officials. Fearing that he might be sent to a concentration camp, he pretended to go on vacation, leaving for the United States in January 1937.

With no friends or relatives in New York City, Korf could only find work as an elevator operator and attended free English classes to improve his language skills. Eventually, he found work as a reporter for a German-American newspaper, where he wrote articles concerning German immigrants and the German-American community. As a reporter, he often wrote articles about pro-Nazi organizers and rallies. When Korf discovered important information about Nazi collaborators, he forwarded that information to the FBI. In his free time, Korf attended classes at law school, in the hopes of finally becoming an attorney.

Unfortunately, the United States entered the war before Korf could finish law school. Not yet a citizen, he received his draft notice in November 1942. Korf was happy to serve in the military of his adopted country. He hated the Nazi regime because he felt it was not only a threat to his family in Germany, but to the stability of his new home in the United States. Korf was assigned to boot camp at Fort Dix, New Jersey. After training, he was sent to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he was featured in an article of the *Ft. Bragg Post*. In this article, Korf’s abilities with languages, experience in business, and studies in law were featured. Shortly after the article was published, he was reassigned to Camp Plauche, a training base and staging area for outgoing troops, in New Orleans. His new position required him to assist with the needs of outgoing soldiers. One day, when Korf realized that thirteen unnaturalized Germans would soon be...
heading to the front, he warned his commander that these men would face execution as traitors if they were captured by German forces. With the commandant’s approval, arrangements were made for the men to be sworn as American citizens, including Korf himself, in April 1943.

Korf applied and was accepted to the Transportation Officer Candidate School, which was located at Camp Plauche. Although he succeeded at the academic portion of officer training, Korf’s small stature caused him to fail at the physical portion of the course. However, he was offered an assignment at Camp Ritchie, which allowed him a better chance at advancement and the ability to save lives.

At Camp Ritchie, Korf found that the training was not only more physically demanding, it was also more demanding intellectually. Many of the other eighty-two students in his class, some from privileged backgrounds, were better educated. Others, like Korf, were European and Jewish immigrants. Although the classes were challenging, he particularly liked to practice interrogating prisoners. When his training was over, Korf scored highest in his class and he earned one of the two available commissions as an officer. In late 1944, he and his four team members shipped out to England.

While waiting in London for orders, Korf was called to translate German High Command documents that were of interest to General Eisenhower. After painstakingly decoding the papers, it was clear that they were of great importance to the war effort. After his translation duties, Korf crossed the English Channel to France. By December 1944, he was transferred to Namur, Belgium, which was the front line for the Battle of the Bulge. It was the job of Korf and his team to extract information from captured Nazi officers to gain important information about the location of fuel supplies. On March 23, 1945, Korf was put in charge of the Combat Intelligence Team of the 97th Infantry Division, which was advancing into Germany, following the retreating German army. His duty was to gather information from local civilians, including members of anti-Nazi underground organizations. His interviews with these individuals produced information on the location of minefields and city defenses, helping the military to advance quickly with fewer troop losses. As the end of the war approached, Korf printed leaflets in German, urging the enemy to surrender. Facing shortages of food and fuel, many German soldiers chose to submit to Korf’s division, rather than continue to fight. He was also relieved to find his mother, and other family members, who had survived the war. He enjoyed a brief reunion before heading back to his unit.

At the end of April 1945, Korf was part of the forces that liberated the Flossenbürg concentration camp, which was a forced labor camp located near the Czechoslovakian border. In the seven years that Flossenbürg existed, almost 97,000 prisoners of various ethnicities, nationalities, and sexes, passed through its complex. When Korf entered the camp, he was horrified by the number of corpses that the fleeing Nazis had left behind. He did not know that in the previous month alone, there had been 1,367 deaths documented at the camp. He also found that there were over 1,500 prisoners still living in the camp, many dying at the rate of sixty per day of typhus, cholera, and starvation. Korf issued orders for his troops to gather food supplies from the well-stocked pantries of nearby residents. He also directed the mayor of the town of Flossenbürg to send townsmen to the camp to dig graves for the dead prisoners, partly to prevent further spread of disease, but also as punishment to the people who had ignored the atrocities which occurred at the camp.
Korf remained in Germany after the end of the war in Europe. He continued to interrogate prisoners of war as he searched for the worst offenders of war crimes. Working at the Auerbach POW camp of 20,000 former German soldiers, he was in charge of interviewing the prisoners in order to track down war criminals. He also prepared a deposition which outlined his knowledge of the structure of the Nazi military for use at the Nuremberg trials. He was discharged from the U.S. Army and sent home after an accidental injury in June 1945.

When he returned to America, Korf was able to finish law school at Fordham University, but found that anti-German sentiment kept him from finding employment as an attorney. Eventually, he was employed by the U.S. Department of Justice, and returned to Germany in 1947. His job for the Office of Alien Property (OAP) was to determine which Germans were eligible to claim property left in the U.S. before the war. He was also given the task of translating the diaries of Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Propaganda Minister. Kurt Frank Korf passed away on September 6, 2000.

Sources:


Kollander, Patricia and John OSullivan. "I Must Be a Part of This War" a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 26, 1924</td>
<td>Immigration Act of 1924 – (The Johnson-Reed Act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 30, 1933</td>
<td>Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 15, 1935</td>
<td>Nuremberg Laws Announced in Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 12, 1938</td>
<td>The Annexation of Austria by Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 29, 1938</td>
<td>The Munich Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – December, 1938</td>
<td>Italian Race Laws (Manifesto of Race) enacted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9-10, 1938</td>
<td>Kristallnacht</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 1, 1939</td>
<td>Germany invades Poland initiating the beginning of World War II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 10, 1940</td>
<td>Germany invades Holland and Belgium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 7, 1941</td>
<td>Japanese Assault on Pearl Harbor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8, 1941</td>
<td>United States declares War on Japan (FDR speech)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 8, 1941</td>
<td>Presidential Proclamation #2526 and #2527 – established German and Italian “Enemy Aliens”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11, 1941</td>
<td>Germany and Italy declare War on the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 14, 1942</td>
<td>FDR issued Presidential Proclamation #2537 – requiring Enemy Alien Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 27, 1942</td>
<td>The Second War Powers Act of 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 10, 1943</td>
<td>Allied invasion of Sicily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 6, 1944</td>
<td>D-Day or The Invasion of Normandy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 22, 1944</td>
<td>Passage of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (the G.I. Bill)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 16, 1944 – January 25, 1945</td>
<td>The Battle of the Bulge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12, 1945</td>
<td>Death of President Franklin D. Roosevelt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28, 1945</td>
<td>Execution of Benito Mussolini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 30, 1945</td>
<td>Death of Adolf Hitler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 7, 1945</td>
<td>Unconditional Surrender of Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-1949</td>
<td>The Nuremberg War Trials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ritchie Boys Teacher’s Resources

Books


Kollander, Patricia and John OSullivan. "I Must Be a Part of This War" a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.


Film


A Two-Minute Youtube Clip from *The Ritchie Boys* about Training: [https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video;_ylt=A0geJaYa1Ude5AcA5dxXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEyNXBhZDM5BGNvbG8DVYmYxBHBvcwMzBHZ0aWQDQTA2MTVfMQRzZWMDc2M-p=camp+ritchie&fr=yfp-t#id=1&vid=96f8d12a40212a244e4173619b59085&action=view](https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video;_ylt=A0geJaYa1Ude5AcA5dxXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEyNXBhZDM5BGNvbG8DVYmYxBHBvcwMzBHZ0aWQDQTA2MTVfMQRzZWMDc2M-p=camp+ritchie&fr=yfp-t#id=1&vid=96f8d12a40212a244e4173619b59085&action=view)

A Two-Minute Interview of Ritchie Boy, Guy Stern: [https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=yfp-t&p=the+ritchie+boys&id=1&vid=75cfbff1838b560ceba0cefe9227eed&action=view](https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=yfp-t&p=the+ritchie+boys&id=1&vid=75cfbff1838b560ceba0cefe9227eed&action=view) or [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqUANC1nVQs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pqUANC1nVQs)


The Ritchie Boys Activity #1

Laws and Immigration

Goals:

Federal legislation affected immigrants from Europe in various ways. In Europe, the Nuremberg Laws and Italian Racial Laws placed restrictions on the citizenship rights of Jews and others living under Nazi and Fascist rule. American immigration restrictions often prevented immigrants fleeing from persecution from entering the United States. Other legislation had an impact on immigrants in the U.S. after the start of World War II. As European-born immigrants, the Ritchie Boys were impacted by these regulations. Students will examine the biographies of these soldiers in order to analyze how government statutes affect its own citizens, as well as, the citizens of other nations.

Materials Needed:

Computers or tablets with Internet access, pencils/pens, paper

1. Have the students read the Camp Ritchie introduction and the biographies of the Camp Ritchie soldiers.

2. Have the students research the following legislation online for a better understanding of these laws that influenced the lives of the Ritchie Boys and other immigrants:

   In Europe:
   - Nuremberg Laws of 1935 (Germany)
   - Italian Racial Laws of 1938 (Italy)

   In the United States:
   - Immigration Act of 1924
   - Selective Training and Service Act Of 1940
   - Presidential Proclamations #2525, #2526, and #2527
   - Second War Powers Act of 1942
   - Nationality Act of 1940

3. Have the students write an essay comparing these statutes and how they affected the Ritchie Boys as individuals.
The Ritchie Boys Activity #2

Who Were the Ritchie Boys?

Goals:

When studying World War II soldiers, most students think about men fighting with weapons on a battlefield. The Ritchie Boys offer a different view of warfare. These men used their language skills and psychological techniques to help end the war by gathering information or “intelligence.” Many of the Ritchie Boys were Jewish refugees who saw their military service as their chance to do something about the abuses they and their families had suffered. Others hoped to rescue family members that were imprisoned or were hiding in enemy territory. **Students will learn a different view of soldiers’ experiences by examining the stories of the Ritchie Boys, as well as be able to answer:**

- How were the experiences of each Ritchie Boy different or similar to other soldiers?
- How did their ability to speak a language other than English help the war effort?
- Were the Ritchie Boys able to help their families and former countrymen?

Materials Needed:

Whiteboard, projector, computers or tablets with Internet access, pencils/pens, paper

Preparation:

Print copies of the Ritchie Boys introduction and biographies for students
Reserve computer lab (if applicable)
Write the following questions on a whiteboard or projector for class discussion:

- Who were the Ritchie Boys?
- Was every soldier who trained at Camp Ritchie Jewish or German?
- What similarities or differences did you find in the biographies of the featured soldiers?
- How do these soldiers differ from other soldiers in World War II?
- How were they similar to other soldiers in World War II?
- Why were the contributions of the Ritchie Boys important to the war effort?
- What happened to these Ritchie Boys after the war?
Activity:

4. Have the students read the Camp Ritchie introduction and the biographies of the Camp Ritchie soldiers.

5. Have the students watch or listen to the following oral histories during class and take notes. Some facts they should include in their notes would be the soldiers’ names, if they are Jewish (if revealed in interview), how they were able to escape and reach the United States, and how they were recruited into the military. Some oral histories that are available at the USHMM website are as follows:

   Stephan Lewy – audio only
   https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn538194

   Henry W. Bloch from 1:39:37 to 2:07:40
   https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn561464

   Kurt Klein from 35:00 to 54:27
   https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn504600

As a class, discuss the questions that are posted on the board. After class discussion, ask the class to imagine that they have an opportunity to interview these men. What questions would they ask them? What information would they be interested in knowing? Perhaps they would want to know more about their childhood or their lives after the war. Have the students prepare a questionnaire for these soldiers or other Ritchie Boys as if they were preparing an oral history.

Extension Activity:

For students who might finish ahead of others, encourage them to view other oral history interviews at:

https://collections.ushmm.org/search/?page=2&q=ritchie+boys+oral+history&search_field=all_fields&utf8=%E2%9C%93.
The Ritchie Boys Activity #3

What Happened to the Ritchie Boys?

Goals:

After the end of World War II, many of the Ritchie Boys went on to enjoy successful lives. In many ways, their training helped them to become useful citizens outside of combat. **Students will learn how soldiers lead productive lives after World War II by researching the lives of the Ritchie Boys, as well as be able to answer:**

- What contributions do soldiers make to society after their military service?
- Can skills learned in the military translate to a civilian career?

Materials Needed:

Computers or tablets with Internet access, pencils/pens, paper

Preparation:

Reserve computer lab (if applicable)

Write the following instructions on the board/projector:

- Include place and date of birth
- Include military service (if given)
- Include reason this person is considered famous
- Did or could any skill acquired during military service contribute to this person’s abilities after the war?
- Did this person remain in the U.S.?
- How did this person contribute to society?

Something to think about:

Some soldiers have a successful career after they leave the military. In fact, some former soldiers become “famous.”

Activity:

1. Have the students read the Camp Ritchie introduction and the biographies of the Camp Ritchie soldiers.

2. Assign one of the following prominent Ritchie Boys to each student:

   A. Ralph Baer – inventor, “father of the video game”
B. Gardner Botsford – editor, writer
C. Eugene Fodor - travel writer
D. John W. Kluge - media mogul, philanthropist
E. William R. Perl – psychologist, lawyer
F. Eric Pleskow – film producer, film executive
G. David Rockefeller - banker, philanthropist
H. Eric Ross - manufacturer and philanthropist
I. J.D. Salinger – writer
J. Richard Schifter - U.S. Lawyer and Asst. Secty. of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs
K. Rudolph Schirmer - composer, writer
L. David Seymour – photographer
M. Ernst Wynder M.D. - medical researcher
N. William Warfield - concert singer and actor

3. Have the students research these men online. Instruct them to prepare a presentation including the answers to the questions displayed. They can include any other information that they found interesting or important.

4. Have students present their findings to the class.

**Extension:**
If a student finishes early, the student might research the work produced by the individual. For example, if the person was a writer, the student might read some of his work. If the individual was a composer or singer, the student might find a song written or sung by the former soldier and listen to it.

**Differentiation:**
Students can be divided into groups.
The Ritchie Boys Vocabulary

1. **Displaced Persons (DP) Camps** – When World War II ended in May of 1945, it is estimated that eight million persons were uprooted from their homes throughout Europe. This population consisted of various peoples including: slave laborers, voluntary workers, civilian prisoners, and concentration camp survivors. Allied forces established hundreds of Displaced Persons Camps, which offered food, medical care, and help with registering and repatriating these refugees. Unprepared for such massive crowds, the camps were often overcrowded, dirty, and lacking basic personal items. Some of these camps were set up within the confines of former concentration camps, such as Bergen-Belsen. While seventy-five percent of these people were repatriated to their homeland, others were either unable or unwilling to return to their former homes. Among these were Jewish refugees who had suffered untold horrors, in addition to losing family and property, and could not return to live where they had been brutally persecuted by other members of the community. In 1948, the Displaced Persons Act was passed in the United States, allowing one hundred thousand refugees to relocate to America. By 1952, most of the DP camps were closed.

Sources:


2. **Enemy Alien** – Following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt instituted Presidential Proclamations 2525-2527, which stated that all Japanese, German, and Italian immigrants who were not citizens of the United States would be considered a possible threat to the American government and its citizens. As such, they were not allowed to be on or near any military or strategically important areas, such as forts, arsenals, power plants, and navy yards. They were also forbidden to own or use firearms, ammunition, or explosives. Furthermore, their movements were restricted and they faced the possibility of internment and deportation. One month later, the president issued Proclamation 2537, which required these persons to register with the Department of Justice. They were then issued an identification card called a “Certificate of Identification for Aliens of Enemy Nationality.”

Sources:


3. **Italian Racial Laws** – Similar to the German Nuremberg Laws, the Italian Racial Laws were also known as The Laws for the Defense of the Race. Passed in November of 1938, this statute forbid Jews from holding government or public office, to serve in the military, or to marry non-Jewish Italians.

Source:

4. **Naturalization** - the procedure in which a foreign citizen is granted U.S. citizenship after meeting the requirements established by U.S. statutes.

5. **Nuremberg Laws** – Introduced in September, 1935, to the German Parliament (Reichstag) by Adolf Hitler, the Nuremberg Laws consisted of two separate statutes: the Reich Citizenship Law and the Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor. These laws established that the people of Jewish ancestry were a separate race (rather than followers of a religion) and, since only those of Aryan descent could be a citizen of Germany, Jews would be considered “subjects” of the state and had no rights. It also restricted relationships between Jews and German citizens, including marriage.

Source:

6. **Second War Powers Act of 1942** – this statute excused noncitizens in the military from many of the requirements needed to become naturalized citizens of the United States. These requirements included: age, race, educational tests, length of residence, fees, and enemy alien status. It also permitted overseas naturalizations by authorized representatives for the first time in American history. This legislation led to 13,587 overseas naturalizations during World War II.

Source:

7. Selective Training and Service Act Of 1940 – also known as the Burke–Wadsworth Act (Pub.L. 76–783, 54 Stat. 885) was the first military conscription enacted during peacetime. It was signed into law on September 16, 1940 by President Roosevelt. This statute required every male, both citizens and immigrants, between the ages of twenty and forty-five to register for training and service in the military. However, it also prohibited any male that was considered an enemy alien from serving in the military.

Source:
Selective Service and Training Act (§ 303)
http://cdn.loc.gov/service/ll/uscode/uscode1940-00505/uscode1940-00505a003/uscode1940-00505a003.pdf

8. Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 – also known as the “G.I. Bill,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed this act into law on June 22, 1944. The G.I. Bill made funds available to veterans of WWII to help them obtain a college education, housing, and unemployment insurance in order to help them adapt to civilian life. This document is available at: https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc_large_image.php?flash=false&doc=76.
When the phrases “Japan” and “World War II” are mentioned together, most people might think of enemy soldiers from Japan. Others might think of the 110,000 Japanese immigrants and Japanese American citizens who were confined to internment camps as “enemy aliens.” Many would not think of the 33,000 Nisei, or American born men of Japanese descent, who served in the U. S. military. Some of these men served in the Army as combatants in the European front, such as the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion. However, Japanese-American men, called Nisei, served in every branch of the military, particularly those who trained for the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). Approximately 6,000 Japanese Americans were trained at the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) to fill the needed intelligence positions as translators, interpreters, and interrogators. Unlike other Nisei soldiers who were limited to fighting in Europe during the war, the language skills of these MIS officers would be needed in the war in the Pacific.

Even before the attack on Pearl Harbor, America was aware that war with Japan would be inevitable. The American government began to search for citizens who could speak and write Japanese. There were very few military members who were fluent in Japanese. In their search for linguists, they were surprised to find that there were very few second-generation Japanese, or Nisei, who could speak or read their ancestral language. The military quickly realized that a language school would have to be created in order to teach soldiers fluency in Japanese. This school began in 1941, shortly before the war began, as the Fourth Army Intelligence School in San Francisco. This first school was located in an old aircraft hangar with little more than orange crates to sit on. Four instructors taught the sixty students, two of which were Caucasian. Of these
students, only forty-five would graduate due to the difficulty of the curriculum. However, those that graduated in May 1942, were so successful in the early campaigns that the War Department decided to expand the school.

Once the United States entered the war and Executive Order 9066 was implemented, all those of Japanese descent, whether noncitizens or citizens, were forcefully evacuated from the West Coast to internment camps. Because the Japanese students and instructors could no longer remain in San Francisco, the school was relocated to Camp Savage in Minnesota. It was also placed under the Military Intelligence Service. When the program expanded again in August 1944, it would move to Fort Snelling, Minnesota. The school was continually expanding and by the final class in 1946, there were 1100 students and 100 instructors.

After the first class, the military recruiters found it difficult to find appropriate candidates for the program. Some recruits were Japanese Americans from parts of the U.S. other than the West Coast. Others were recruits from the territory of Hawaii. They also turned to the Nisei who were being detained in internment camps in order to obtain fluent speakers of the language. Although these Japanese Americans and their families had been labelled “enemy aliens” and were being confined for no reason, some of these men willingly agreed to join the military in order to help their country win the war. This was not an easy decision for them to make. Some of the volunteers’ own families did not agree with their decision. Others in the internment camps were resentful that these soldiers would fight for a country that was incarcerating Japanese Americans. Some of these internees threatened and physically assaulted the soldiers or their families.

The Nisei soldiers found that attending the language school was not going to be easy either. Soldiers from Hawaii and the West Coast had to become accustomed to the cold weather in Minnesota. At first their quarters were not properly heated and they needed warm clothing. However, many of the students of the school were pleasantly surprised to find that the residents of the nearby town were welcoming of the soldiers.

Nisei Soldiers at the MIS Language School
Photo Courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society
The school program required the students to attend classes for seven hours on weekdays with a two-hour study period from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Those that were not quite fluent in Japanese spent hours studying after the lights were out. They often studied by flashlight or hid in the latrines because it was the only place where the lights were left on. On Wednesday afternoon, the men participated in military training, such as ten-mile-long marches. Saturday mornings were reserved for exams. The students had the rest of the weekend for leisure time to relax or go into town.

Besides learning how to speak, read and write Japanese, the students also learned how to translate the language. They were trained to interrogate witnesses and prisoners, analyze and interpret documents, and memorize Japanese military organization and terms. They studied map reading and the geography of Japan. For those who had never visited Japan, lessons in the cultural, political, and social background of their ancestral country were important.

After the men finished their six months of training, they were sent to different areas of the warfront. They also assisted with international combat units from Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, China, and India under the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS). Groups of Nisei linguists were attached to a military unit and moved to different units as needed because their numbers were so limited. At first, commanders in the military were leery of using soldiers of Japanese ancestry. However, once they proved how useful they could be on the warfront, more units requested language assistance on the warfront. Because of this, they took part in almost every battle in the Pacific war. Nisei soldiers in the MIS served in the U.S. Army, Marines, Navy, and Air Force. Because Asians (other than those from the American colony of the Philippines) were not allowed in the other branches of the U.S. Armed Forces, the Nisei soldiers were attached from the Army to Navy, Marine and Air Force units in order to translate during their battles.

On the battlefields, the ATIS soldiers risked their lives while attempting to capture and translate documents that contained important information. They were interested in obtaining clues about the location of nearby enemy soldiers, the morale of the enemy soldiers, or the time and location of planned attacks. Some of the records that the soldiers interpreted included documents known as the “Z Plan,” which detailed the Japanese intention to attack the U.S. Pacific Fleet in the
Philippine Sea. These papers were retrieved from a high-ranking Japanese official who was captured by allied guerilla soldiers after his plane crashed. The documents listed all the details of the Japanese naval forces, their placement, and their movements. The U.S. used these translated plans to prepare for the battle, which ended with a major loss for the Japanese Navy. The Nisei also had major contributions in the important battles at Manila, Okinawa, and Iwo Jima.

Nisei linguists gathered information through interrogations of captured enemy soldiers. Influenced by their own government’s propaganda about American cruelty, many Japanese soldiers chose to kill themselves rather than be captured. However, the MISLS training taught the Nisei to use the strategy of offering such wartime luxuries as cigarettes, food, or medical care for those who had been injured in order to gain the trust of the enemy soldiers. When the prisoners of war realized that they would not be tortured, they often gave their interrogators vital information about their military units. Nisei soldiers were also able to save the lives of Japanese civilians by using their language skills to convince them that suicide was unnecessary because they would be treated respectfully. After getting over their surprise at finding American soldiers of Japanese ethnicity speaking to them, many Japanese citizens left their hiding places in jungles and caves. The Nisei also prepared leaflets to distribute to civilians, urging them to surrender peacefully.

The Nisei soldiers also provided translation services for ATIS units throughout the world. They also worked with the Southeast Asia Translator and Interrogation Center (SEATIC) in India and the Signal Security Agency in Virginia. They interpreted messages from intercepted radio transmissions and captured documents. They translated a seized Japanese Army List which provided detailed information about the Japanese military order of battle. Fortunately, the documents did not need to be decoded because the Japanese military considered their own language too difficult for the Allied nations to learn. Their official and military documents were written in Japanese and were not coded. By the end of the war, Nisei interpreters translated over twenty million pages in a total of 18,000 documents. They had also prepared and distributed 16,000 propaganda leaflets and questioned over 10,000 Japanese POWs. Top military officials praised the Nisei soldiers by declaring that their work had shortened the war and saved lives.
After the war, many Nisei stayed in Japan in order to help in the reorganization of the government and to assist with the war trials during the American occupation. They were some of the first Americans to witness the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nisei linguists were on the U.S.S. Missouri to assist with the surrender of the Japanese Emperor and his general to General MacArthur. They also assisted with the surrender of the Japanese military throughout the Pacific front. They provided translation assistance for the war crimes tribunals and trials held in Japan, as well as China, French Indochina, the Philippines, and the East Indies. In addition to their peacekeeping duties, Nisei interpreters were needed in the construction of a new government, including the creation of a new constitution, redistribution of public lands, and acting as mediators between the citizenry and occupying military forces.

Although the Nisei in the MIS hoped to prove their patriotism and worthiness of being citizens of the United States, it took many years to achieve the recognition that other military groups received immediately after the war. The fact that they were moved from unit to unit, changing their commanding officers, often prevented those in charge from recommending them for commendations. In addition, they had operated in secrecy during the war so that the public was mostly unaware of their service. However, many of the Nisei received military honors such as the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Purple Heart, and many others. Unfortunately, some of these accolades were given after the soldiers’ death. Beginning in 1988, nine soldiers were inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame. Three of the Nisei soldiers who served in the famed Merrill’s Marauders were inducted into the Army Rangers Hall of Fame. On November 2, 2011, the Congressional Gold Medal was presented to the Nisei serving in the MIS, as well as the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Two years later, the MIS Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center was opened on the grounds of the Presidio in San Francisco, where the language school had originated.
Sources:


In 1920, Harry Fukuhara was born in Seattle, Washington. His parents, Katsuji and Kinu Fukuhara, were Issei, or first-generation Japanese immigrants. Moving to the nearby town of Auburn, Fukuhara and his brothers spent their days like most American boys, going to school and playing with their friends. On the other hand, his family often observed traditional Japanese customs and spoke to each other in Japanese. This mix of both cultures was common among Nisei or ethnic Japanese children born in America. When Fukuhara was thirteen years old, his father passed away. With no way to support her family, his mother returned to Japan with her children. In Japan, Fukuhara attended high school, where he perfected his knowledge of the Japanese language and grammar. However, anti-American sentiment was growing and Fukuhara was often bullied for being born in the United States. Feeling that he was more American than Japanese, Fukuhara moved back to the United States after graduation. His mother and three brothers stayed in Japan.

When Fukuhara moved back to America, he became a Kibei, which is a child of Issei parents born in the U. S., moved to Japan, then returned to America. Fukuhara eventually settled in Los Angeles, where he worked as a domestic worker, cook, and gardener to pay his way through college. When he earned his Associate’s Degree from Glendale Junior College in June 1941, he was unable to find work in his field. There was a growing hostility towards Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans, making it difficult for anyone of Japanese ancestry to work and support themselves.

Six months after his graduation, Pearl Harbor was bombed. Immediately following the bombing, President Franklin Roosevelt signed Presidential Proclamation #2525 which identified all Japanese nationals as “enemy aliens.” This legislation prohibited Japanese nationals from any area where the government thought they would represent a danger to public safety, such as coastlines and military bases. After President Roosevelt signed Executive Order #9066 in February 1942, all Japanese and Japanese Americans living on the west coast were placed in internment camps. Fukuhara was forced to go to the Gila River Relocation Center in Arizona. Although he was upset and angry that he was being confined for no reason, he wanted to prove
his loyalty to his own country. So, when military recruiters asked him to join the military to train as a Japanese interpreter, he accepted.

After Fukuhara enlisted in November 1942, he was sent to the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) in Camp Savage, Minnesota. Unlike many of the other Nisei who were recruited to the school, Fukuhara did not struggle with learning the language because he was fluent in Japanese from his years living in Japan. However, he also took classes to learn about the Japanese military, Japanese culture, and interrogation techniques. By May 1943, Fukuhara had graduated from the language school and was headed to Australia and New Guinea as a member of the Allied Translator and Interpreter Service (ATIS).

Fukuhara was soon promoted to team leader of a group made up of ten military personnel from the United States, Australia, and Holland (The Netherlands). As an ATIS member, he interrogated prisoners, translated captured documents, and printed surrender leaflets. The ATIS teams also participated in PT boat patrols, reconnaissance assignments, and attempted to persuade Japanese soldiers and civilians to surrender. In fact, during the war the members of the ATIS questioned 14,000 prisoners, interpreted almost two million documents, and printed more than twenty million pages of Japanese intelligence. This provided Allied forces with an overall picture of the Japanese military machine and led to many of the Allied successes in the Pacific. For his contributions, Fukuhara was rewarded with a promotion to Master Sergeant. He also received a Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters.

However, Fukuhara’s success in the military did not come easily. He experienced combat fatigue and was hospitalized for malaria more than once. At the same time, Fukuhara worried about his family still living in Japan. Had his brothers been conscripted into the Japanese Army? Would he have to face a member of his family on the battlefield? These concerns increased when he heard of plans for his unit to invade Kyushu in Japan.

However, the plans for invasion were never realized. On August 6, 1945, the atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima, the hometown of the Fukuhara family. It was Fukuhara’s duty to notify the Japanese prisoners of the bombing, informing them that the bomb had destroyed all life in that city. He felt great guilt that his family had probably died from the blast. On the other hand, he was relieved that the war would end soon.
Japan formally surrendered on September 2. Afterwards, Fukuhara was assigned to duties as an interpreter in Japan. There was still much for the Nisei linguists to do during the post-war occupation. Documents had to be translated, American prisoners of war were interviewed, and top military officials needed interpreters. The most grueling assignments for the Nisei involved the investigation and trials for war crimes committed during the war.

As soon as he was able to get permission, Fukuhara returned to Hiroshima to search for family members who may have survived the atomic bomb explosion. He was shocked by the devastation of the city and the condition of his family home. One brother was suffering from radiation sickness and severe burns. He eventually died from his wounds. Fortunately, his mother and her sister, though suffering from the effects of radiation, were still alive. His remaining two brothers had been inducted into the Japanese military and were alive and unharmed.

After the war, Fukuhara wanted to help his ancestral country recover from the conflict. He worked in Japan for almost forty-five years. During the occupation of Japan, he played an integral part in the creation of the Japanese Defense and Police Agency. After twenty-five years, he retired from the U.S. Army as a Colonel. He then served at the Department of the Army Civilian for another twenty years. In addition to his Bronze Star, Fukuhara was inducted into the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 1988. In 1993, he was also made a Distinguished Member of the Military Intelligence Corp. In 1990, Fukuhara received the 3rd Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, awarded by the Japanese government. He also received the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service from President Bush. Harry Fukuhara died in Hawaii in 1995 at the age of 95.

Oral History Interviews:


In this clip, Fukuhara describes entering Hiroshima shortly after it was bombed: [http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/archives/oral_histories_videos.php?clip=18209](http://www.goforbroke.org/learn/archives/oral_histories_videos.php?clip=18209)

Bibliography:

[https://www.army.mil/article/111236/Allied_Translator_and_Interpreter_Section_Activated_19_September_1942/](https://www.army.mil/article/111236/Allied_Translator_and_Interpreter_Section_Activated_19_September_1942/).


Kan Tagami

Kan Tagami was born on February 21, 1918 in Selma, California. His father, Sengoro Tagami, had immigrated to America in 1902 and worked as a farmer and bicycle shop owner. His mother, Chise, immigrated to America in 1915 and also worked as a farm laborer. Tagami was sent to Japan when he was eight years old to live with his grandparents while learning the Japanese language and culture. He returned to America at the age of thirteen to finish high school. Then, he obtained a bachelor’s degree from the University of Maryland. Despite his advanced education, Tagami could only get a job working at a fruit stand.

Tagami was drafted into the U.S. Army on February 17, 1941. He trained at Ft. Ord near San Francisco, but was sent away from the West Coast to Camp Crowder in Missouri after the war began. However, even though Tagami was serving as a soldier in the U.S. Army, his parents and five siblings were relocated to an internment camp due to the passage of Executive Order 9066. They would remain confined for the duration of the war. Although Tagami was angered by the treatment of his family, he still wanted to do his best as an American soldier. When he heard that the army was looking for men with Japanese language skills, he volunteered to transfer to the MIS Language School at Fort Savage, Minnesota.

Tagami joined the first class at the MISLS at Camp Savage in June of 1942. Because he was a diligent student, he graduated at the top of his class. He was one of ten students who was selected to remain at the school as an instructor. However, as the war in the Pacific intensified, Tagami asked to be sent overseas to assist at the battlefront.
Tagami accepted an assignment as a team leader of a 15-man linguist detachment to the 124th Cavalry Regiment. In July 1944, he and his unit became a part of the MARS Task Force in Burma. The task force was formed to replace “Merrill’s Marauders,” the group that had been assigned to a mission behind Japanese lines and had been decimated to the point that there were no longer enough soldiers able to fight. The MARS Task Force then took over their duty of clearing the Burma Road in order to supply weapons and provisions to troops in China. The linguist team was used to interrogate prisoners of war and to translate documents captured by the unit.

After the end of the war, Tagami was sent to Washington, D.C. to continue his work translating Japanese documents that had been sent to America. However, he requested to be sent to Japan to help with the occupation and reconstruction instead. In December 1946, he was appointed to be the Aide-de-Camp and personal interpreter to General Douglas MacArthur, the commander of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE). His position required that he not only act as a translator, but he also had to advise MacArthur about the customs, laws, and culture of the Japanese people. As such, Tagami made a great contribution to the creation of a smooth transition to a democratic society.

Tagami often stated that a highlight of his service in Japan came when he was sent by MacArthur to deliver a message to the Emperor Hirohito. Before the war, the Emperor of Japan was
considered a living god by the Japanese people. The Emperor met with Tagami alone, without any guards or attendants, which was unprecedented. After their conversation, the Emperor commended the Nisei soldiers for their work during the reconstruction of Japan, calling them “the bridge between our two nations.”

In 1951, Tagami served in the Army Counter Intelligence Corps until his retirement in 1961. He then worked for the government as a civilian throughout Asia until 1978. He was awarded the following for his military service: the American Campaign Medal, the Asia-Pacific Campaign Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal – Japan, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman’s Badge, the Korean Service Medal, the Bronze Star Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal. He also received a Career Intelligence Medal. He was inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame in 1996.

Kan Tagami passed away on November 24, 2005. He was 87 years old.

His oral history interview can be found at http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1004-19-7/.

Bibliography:


Masao Abe was born in 1916 in San Bernardino, California. His father, a grocer, had immigrated from Japan in 1907. His mother, a “picture bride,” spoke little English. Despite his mother’s limited ability to communicate with him, the Abe family did not speak Japanese in their home. Therefore, Japanese was not Abe’s first language. However, when Abe was nine years old, he was sent to live with his paternal grandparents to learn the Japanese language and culture. He was eventually joined by the rest of the family four years later. In Japan, Abe attended a military high school and was expected to join the military. However, his friends often argued that he seemed more American than Japanese. Instead of becoming a soldier, Abe’s father feared for his son’s life, and sent him back to America to live with an uncle in 1939. However, this tactic would not prevent Abe from becoming a soldier.

Abe lived with his uncle, working at the family grocery store. He had to relearn English and adjust to being an American again. In 1941, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. The U.S. had not yet entered the war, but America was preparing for the possibility of joining the conflict in Europe. Abe was assigned to train as an army medic and finished his basic training. Then, on December 7, he heard about the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Suddenly, America was at war and Abe was no longer sure what would happen to his military career. At the same time, his uncle was arrested because he was seen as a leader in the Japanese community. He was sent to prison with no reason given and without a trial. With the signing of Executive Order 9066, his uncle’s family was placed in an internment camp and they lost ownership of the grocery store. Concerned about the well-being of his family, Abe also had to endure suspicious glances from his fellow soldiers. Although he wasn’t removed from the Army, he was assigned to train as a dental assistant. This job would keep Abe far from the war front where he might become aware of military secrets. However, Abe wanted to fight as a soldier. When he heard that the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) was looking for Nisei (American born children of Japanese immigrants), that spoke Japanese, he immediately applied and was accepted.

Abe arrived at Camp Savage, Minnesota in July 1943. Although he was fluent in the Japanese language, Abe learned other skills that would help him in the military. He learned how to
interrogate prisoners and how to look for military information in captured documents. When he was sent to Camp Blanding to learn combat skills, he knew that he would soon be heading into battle.

Eventually, Abe was sent to the South Pacific with the 81st Infantry Division. Because of his heritage, Abe was in more danger than most of the other soldiers in his division. Being in an American uniform, he would surely be killed as a traitor if caught by Japanese soldiers. On the other hand, American soldiers could mistake him for the enemy and shoot at him by mistake. Because his mission was considered secret, many of these soldiers did not know the purpose of his presence in their ranks. For this reason, Abe was protected at all times by bodyguards, whose sole job was to keep him alive and able to do his duties.

Abe first fought on the island of Anguar, located in the western Pacific Ocean. However, no enemy soldiers were captured for him to interview. He moved to nearby Peleliu, where the Japanese hid in a network of tunnels and caves that ran throughout the island. Abe accompanied members of his division on missions to locate enemy soldiers. He translated any captured documents seized by the soldiers. On several occasions, he was able to talk Japanese soldiers out of their hiding spots and obtain information from them. If Abe could not talk the enemy out of their hiding places, the enemy soldiers were in danger of being killed by the American soldiers. At other times, Japanese troops chose to kill themselves rather than submit to the enemy. One day, while Abe was investigating a cave, a sniper’s bullet hit him in the leg. Badly injured, his bodyguards rushed him to the medics. He had barely recovered before he was sent back to the front in the Philippines. It was in the Philippines that Abe heard the war was over. Still, he was not able to go home because he was considered “essential” for the work to be done in Japan. During the occupation, he censored sensitive correspondence.
Abe was awarded two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart. In 2012, over sixty years after the war, he was among many Nisei soldiers who were finally awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for their secret mission. After he was released from military duty, Abe used the G.I. Bill to study aviation-mechanics. He married and his family moved to Seattle, where he worked for Pan American Airlines as a crew chief. Masao Abe passed away in 2013 at the age of 96 in San Bernadino, California.


In 1913, Roy Hiroshi Matsumoto was born in Laguna, California. His father, Wakaji Matsumoto, had immigrated to America in 1907 and worked as a farmer and photographer. His mother was the daughter of a famous martial arts instructor and came to the U.S. as a “picture bride.” Matsumoto grew up on the family farm until he was sent to Japan to live with his grandparents at the age of ten. He returned to America to attend high school. He once said that he was bullied in Japan for being the son of an immigrant, but in America he was also treated as an outsider. When his parents and siblings returned to Japan, he remained in California. In 1942, after the signing of Executive Order 9066, he was sent to the Santa Anita Racetrack where he was forced to sleep in a horse stall. Later, he was sent to an internment camp in Jerome, Arkansas. Matsumoto, as an American citizen, was hurt and angry for being imprisoned for no other reason than having Japanese ancestors.

He was at the internment camp when army recruiters arrived in search of Japanese Americans who were fluent in both English and Japanese. Although Matsumoto had suffered discrimination by being labeled an “enemy alien” by the government, he volunteered to join the Army because he wanted to prove that he was a good American. Matsumoto was inducted into the military on November 12, 1942. In December 1942, he was assigned to the Military Intelligence Service Language School (MISLS) at Camp Savage, Minnesota. By September 1943, he had graduated at the top of his language class and completed his basic training. He was then asked to join the unit that would later be called “Merrill’s Marauders.” He was part of the fourteen-man language team who provided interpretation and intelligence services to the unit. After undergoing training in jungle combat in India, the unit was assigned a very dangerous mission in Burma (now called Myanmar). Merrill’s Marauders was assigned to penetrate Japanese forces in order to cut off the Burma thoroughfare that was crucial for moving supplies and equipment to the warfront in China. On the way they also cut off enemy communications and liberated an airfield. This mission was so dangerous that there were no provisions made for bringing the soldiers back since they were not expected to survive.

Matsumoto proved to be an asset to the team. On one expedition, he found a telephone cable running through their encampment and tapped the line. He overheard a soldier speaking to his commander about the location of a nearby Japanese ammunition dump, along with the fact that the dump was only guarded by two men. Alerting his superior, the unit attacked and destroyed the ammunition storage facility.
In April 1944, Matsumoto once again played a crucial part in battlefield intelligence. Surrounded by Japanese troops who were located so close to the American foxholes, Matsumoto could crawl close enough to the Japanese to listen to their conversations. Finding that they planned to attack early the next morning, Matsumoto crawled back to report what he had heard. Merrill’s Marauders then retreated from their encampment, leaving it boobytrapped. When the Japanese attacked the next morning, the confusion caused by the empty foxholes forced the soldiers to run blindly forward where they were met by heavy artillery from the Americans. There was a second wave of soldiers, who had been waiting for the command to attack. Matsumoto yelled the Japanese command to charge and the second wave rushed in, only to be met by a barrage of bullets. At the end of the battle, at least fifty-six Japanese soldiers were dead, but the Americans had no casualties. Matsumoto’s actions that day saved his unit from certain annihilation when the enemy attacked at dawn.

Merrill’s Marauders suffered heavy casualties, not only from battle, but from tropical diseases. Of the 3,000 original volunteers, there were only 1,300 remaining when the unit was disbanded in August 1944. Of those, approximately 300 were still considered fit for combat. Matsumoto, one of the last of the group to be evacuated, went on to serve behind enemy lines once again in the Detachment 202 OSS which was attached to the Chinese Army guerrilla forces in Yunnan Province, China.

After the war, Matsumoto continued to serve in the army in Shanghai and Tokyo, assisting with the prosecution of war crimes. He continued his military service for twenty years, fighting in the Korean War and retiring in 1963. Matsumoto received many commendations for his service including: the Legion of Merit, a Presidential Citation, a Bronze Star with two Oak Leaf Clusters, a Presidential Medal, a Chinese War Memorial Medal, a Myanmar Medal of Freedom, and a Congressional Gold Medal, among others. He has also been inducted into the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame and the Military Intelligence Hall of Fame. He died at his home in the state of Washington in 2014, two weeks before his 101st birthday.
Oral History Interview:
Densho Digital Repository [http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1004-9-1/].

Oral History Interviews of Roy Matsumoto can be found at the Densho Digital Repository: [http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1004-9-1/].

Bibliography:


Asian American Timeline
(World War 2 – Pacific Front)

March 26, 1790
The Naturalization Act of 1790
Provided that naturalized citizenship could be given to “any Alien being a free white person”

January – December, 1852
Chinese Immigration Greatly Increases
After a catastrophic harvest season in China, over 20,000 Chinese immigrants arrived in San Francisco. Hoping to find success in the California gold rush, many of the Chinese ended up doing menial jobs instead. By the end of the decade, Chinese made up a quarter of the population in San Francisco.
https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/goldrush-chinese-immigrants/

March 31, 1854
Treaty of Kanagawa (U.S. - Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity)
The United States forced isolationist Japan to open its ports for trade. This treaty was later amended by the Treaty of November 22, 1894.

July 28, 1868
Burlingame–Seward Treaty of 1868
In order to encourage trade in China, America signed this treaty which guaranteed the Chinese the ability to freely travel and immigrate to the United States under the most-favored-nation rule.
https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/burlingame-seward-treaty

March 3, 1875
The Page Act of 1875
This law was directed at laborers and women from “China, Japan, or any Oriental country” who were being brought to America for “immoral purposes.” Because an unmarried woman travelling alone at this time might be seen as immoral, this legislation put a stop to almost all single Asian women from entering the United States. Asian men were not allowed to marry women of another race, therefore they lost the ability to marry and have families within the United States. This led to the establishment of “picture brides” who were chosen by Japanese men living in America using the photographs provided by matchmakers. They were then married by proxy so that the women could join their husbands in the United States.
https://immigrationhistory.org/item/page-act/

November 7, 1880
Angell Treaty of 1880
Following growing anti-Chinese sentiment, this legislation was passed in order to restrict the number of Chinese allowed to immigrate to the U.S.
https://history.state.gov/milestones/1866-1898/chinese-immigration

May 6, 1882
The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882
“That hereafter no State court or court of the United States shall admit Chinese to citizenship; and all laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.” This act prohibited Chinese immigration for ten years and prohibited any Chinese person from becoming a citizen of the United States.

October 11, 1906
San Francisco Segregation Order
The San Francisco Board of Education sought to order Japanese children who attended public schools into segregated Chinese schools.
http://encyclopedia.densho.org/San_Francisco_school_segregation/

February 18, 1908
Gentlemen’s Agreement
The Japanese government agreed to stop issuing passports to workers planning to move to the United States.
https://www.history.com/topics/immigration/gentlemens-agreement
May 19, 1913  
Prohibited “aliens ineligible for citizenship” from owning land in California. Other west coast states also passed similar legislation. This law was amended in 1920, with additional restrictions on leasing land.  
https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8pc388j/

May 26, 1924  
**The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)**
This bill put restrictions on all immigration but essentially excluded all persons from Asia (“aliens ineligible for citizenship”), with the exception of the Philippines, which was a U.S. territory. This caused much resentment from the citizens and the government of Japan.  

December 7, 1941  
**Japan Bombs Pearl Harbor, Hawaii**
The surprise attack by the Japanese military on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor led to entry of America into World War II. Immediately, the Justice Department arrested approximately 1500 mostly male Japanese community leaders who were sent to special prison camps with little information given to their families of their whereabouts. Many of these prisoners were not allowed to stay in the same internment camps with their families and were not released until after the war.  
https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/pearl-harbor
and https://www.nps.gov/articles/historyinternment.htm

November 1941  
**Military Intelligence Service Language School Established**
The U.S. Army established the first Japanese language school for Nisei recruits at the Presidio in San Francisco, California.  

December 7, 1941  
**Presidential Proclamation #2525**
Similar to Presidential Proclamations #2526 (Germany) and #2527 (Italy), that all “natives, citizens, denizens, or subjects of the Empire of Japan” would be considered “Enemy Aliens.” This proclamation was not directed towards born or naturalized citizens. In addition to directing enemy aliens to withhold information or help to the enemy, they were also to avoid entering sensitive military areas. They were not allowed to be in possession of certain items including: cameras, short wave radios, weapons, ammunition, or signaling devices. This allowed search warrants to be randomly issued for the residences and businesses of Japanese Americans randomly.  
https://www.athenapressinc.com/smithsonian/Appendix5.html

January 14, 1942  
**Presidential Proclamation #2537**
This legislation required enemy aliens to register with the United States Department of Justice in order to obtain a Certificate of Identification for Aliens of Enemy Nationality. Because the registration included the addresses of the registrants, it helped to expedite the execution of Executive Order #9066.  
https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/roosevelt-ushers-in-japanese-american-internment

February 19, 1942  
**Executive Order #9066**
This order approved the evacuation of all 120,000 Japanese persons living on the western coast of America to internment camps throughout the United States.  

December 17, 1943  
**The Magnuson Act (aka The Chinese Exclusion Repeal Act)**
This legislation reversed the Chinese Exclusion Act only for Chinese nationals. Chinese citizens were allowed to immigrate to the U.S. However, the visa quota was set at 105 visas per year.  
https://history.state.gov/milestones/1937-1945/chinese-exclusion-act-repeal

January 1, 1944  
**The Draft becomes compulsory for Japanese Americans**
Although Japanese Americans were considered enemy aliens at the beginning of the war and were often sent home if they reported for the draft, that decision was reversed at this time. This applied to
both interned and uninterned citizens. Those who resisted as a protest to Japanese internment were sent to federal prisons.
https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Draft_resistance/

January 2, 1945  **U.S. War Department announce end of Japanese Internment**  Mitsuye Endo won her lawsuit against the U.S. Supreme Court on the grounds that law abiding American citizens could not be lawfully detained.

August 6, 1945  **The United States drops the atomic bomb on Hiroshima**  Three days later, Nagasaki was also bombed.
https://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/bombing-of-hiroshima-and-nagasaki

August 14, 1945  **Surrender of Japan**
Nisei Teacher’s Resources

Books


Movies
Movie by the Armed Forces Heritage Museum on Roy Matsumoto’s unit, “Merrill’s Marauder’s” at [http://www.afhmus.org/home/living-history-project/merrills-marauders/](http://www.afhmus.org/home/living-history-project/merrills-marauders/).

Movie by PBS about the internment camp in Jerome where Roy Matsumoto was interned called Time of Fear at [https://archive.org/details/TimeOfFear](https://archive.org/details/TimeOfFear).

Documentary - “Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story”

Online

The following are some of the soldiers featured at DDR who served with the Military Intelligence Service during WWII:

Harry Akune
Kenjiro Akune
Francis Mas Fukuhara
Kenji Goto
George Hara
Grant Hirabayashi
Victor Ikeda
George Katagiri
Robert “Rusty” Kimura
George Koshi
Kiyo Maruyama
Henry Nakano
Roy Takai

Nisei soldiers inducted into the Military Intelligence Corps Hall of Fame:

John F. Aiso
Harry M. Akune
Harry K. Fukuhara
Gero Iwai
Arthur S. Komori
Hisashi J. Masuda
Roy Matsumoto
Richard Sakakida
Kan Tagami

Their biographies can be found at: https://www.ikn.army.mil/apps/MIHOF/Home/Members.
Nisei Soldiers Activity #1

Laws and Immigration

Goals:

Federal legislation affected immigrants from Asia in many ways. Chinese nationals were one of the first groups to immigrate to America in large numbers. War, economics, and famine drove Chinese laborers to migrate to the western coast of the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century. However, Chinese immigrants were denied citizenship based on the language in the Naturalization Act of 1790, which stated that the only people allowed to become citizens of the United States must be “any Alien being a free white person.” This approach continued as people from other Asian countries, such as Japan, immigrated to the U.S. As Japanese immigration increased, the Naturalization Act of 1906 was passed. It stated that only "free white persons" and "aliens of African nativity and persons of African descent" were eligible for American citizenship. People of Asian ancestry who were born in the United States were considered citizens of the U.S., but still had to face racial intolerance by the American government and fellow citizens. A major example of this prejudice can be seen in the treatment of both Japanese immigrants and their American born offspring during World War II.

Students will examine the biographies of Japanese soldiers in order to analyze how government statutes affect American citizens, as well as the citizens of other nations. They will also be able to answer the following questions:

- When and why was discriminatory legislation passed against Japanese immigrants?
- How did World War II change or enforce attitudes about Japanese Americans?

Materials Needed:

Whiteboard, Projector, Computers or Tablets with Internet access, pencils/pens, highlighters, paper

Preparation:

Print copies of the Nisei soldiers’ introduction and biographies for students
Reserve computer lab (if applicable)
Write the following questions on whiteboard or projector:

1. Who were the Nisei soldiers?
2. What were their lives like before World War II began?
3. How did their lives change after discriminatory legislation was enacted?
4. What legislation in America had an effect on these men and their families?
Something to think about: Nisei men were citizens of the United States, yet were labeled “enemy aliens” by their own government and sent to internment camps. Nevertheless, when the government requested them to join the military to help fight for their country, some refused but others complied. What reason or reasons might these men have for refusing or complying to this request?

Questions to keep in mind while you are reading:

- Why is military service important as the citizen of a nation?
- What are some of the laws in the United States today that affect American citizens?
- Can you think of American laws or policies that might affect immigrants in the U.S.?

Activity:

1. Students will read the Nisei soldiers introduction and the biographies of the Nisei soldiers. Have students underline or note examples of legislation that had some influence on one or more of the soldiers’ lives.

2. Use the questions on the board to lead a discussion about what the students have read.

3. Divide the students into groups. Assign one of the following statutes to each group. Have the students research these laws on the internet.
   a. The Page Act of 1875
   b. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882
   c. The Gentlemen’s Agreement
   e. The Immigration Act of 1924 (The Johnson-Reed Act)
   f. Presidential Proclamation #2525
   g. Presidential Proclamation #2537
   h. Executive Order #9066

4. Have the groups prepare a presentation stressing how their legislation topic influenced the lives of the Nisei soldiers and other Japanese Americans.

5. As each group presents their findings, have the other students take notes on important facts produced during the presentations.

6. Lead a class discussion about the group’s presentations. Some points that might be made could include:
   a. Did this legislation change over time?
   b. Do you think that military service should be expected from those who are not treated as citizens? Why or why not?
   c. Does military service ensure equal treatment or respect?
7. Have the students write an essay comparing these statutes and how they affected the Nisei soldiers and their families.

**Extension:**
For students finishing early, have the student search online (or on Newspapers.com if available) for newspaper articles announcing or discussing the legislation listed above. Searching images is often helpful when looking for newspaper articles. Have the student take note of mindset or attitudes of the public or writers towards the legislation and the people that it will affect.
Nisei Soldiers Activity #2

Who Were the Nisei Soldiers?

Goals:

When studying World War II soldiers, most students think about men fighting with weapons on a battlefield. While many Nisei men fought as soldiers in World War II, most notably the soldiers of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, other Nisei men and women served in a different way. These men who attended the Military Intelligence Service Language School used their language skills and psychological techniques to help end the war by gathering information or “intelligence.” Many of these Nisei soldiers were men of Japanese heritage from the American territory of Hawaii. Others had entered the army before the onset of the war. Still others were recruited at the Japanese internment camps where the government had imprisoned ethnic Japanese who were living on the western coast of the United States. Many of these men had wanted to serve in the military immediately following the attack on Pearl Harbor but were prevented from doing so by the government. Most were willing to enlist in the army to prove that they were loyal to the country of their birth and because it was their duty as U.S. citizens. Students will learn a different view of soldiers’ experiences by examining the stories of the Nisei soldiers, as well as be able to answer:

• How were the experiences of each Nisei soldiers different or similar to other soldiers?
• How did their ability to speak a language other than English help the war effort?
• What special problems did the Nisei soldiers face at home and on the Pacific front?

Materials Needed:

Whiteboard, projector, computers or tablets with Internet access, pencils/pens, paper

Preparation:

Print copies of the Nisei soldiers’ introduction and biographies for students
Reserve computer lab (if applicable)
Write the following questions on a whiteboard or projector for class discussion:

• Who were the Nisei soldiers?
• Was every soldier who trained at the MIS Language School of Japanese heritage?
• What similarities or differences did you find in the biographies of the featured soldiers?
• How do these soldiers differ from other soldiers in World War II?
• How were they similar to other soldiers in World War II?
• Why were the contributions of the Nisei soldiers important to the war effort?
• Were the Nisei soldiers ever recognized for their effort in the war?

Activity:

6. Have the students read the “Nisei in the Military Intelligence Service” overview and the biographies of the Nisei soldiers.

7. Have the students watch or listen to the following oral histories during class and take notes. Some facts they should include in their notes would be the soldiers’ names, where they were born, if they had family interned in the camps, and what duties they had during the war.

Oral histories located at the Densho Digital Repository:

Francis Mas Fukuhara  
http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1000-9-1/

George Hara  
http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-one-7-3-1/

Grant Hirabayashi  
http://ddr.densho.org/interviews/ddr-densho-1000-183-1/

As a class, discuss the questions that are posted on the board. After class discussion, ask the class to imagine that they have an opportunity to interview these men. What questions would they ask them? What information would they be interested in knowing? Perhaps they would want to know more about their childhood or their lives after the war. Have the students prepare a questionnaire for these soldiers or other Nisei soldiers as if they were preparing an oral history.

Extension Activity:

For students who might finish ahead of others, encourage them to view other oral history interviews at:

http://ddr.densho.org/narrators/?page=1
Nisei Vocabulary

1. **Issei** – immigrants from Japan who settled in North and South America.

2. **Gentlemen’s Agreement** – In order to block immigration from Japan to the United States, the American government pressured the Japanese government to stop issuing passports to manual workers planning to move to the United States.

3. **Kibei** – a person of Japanese descent who was born in the United States, sent to Japan to learn the language, and then returned to America to live.

4. **Nisei** – children of Japanese immigrants, or Issei, who are born in the United States.

5. **Picture Bride** – due to lack of money and the passage of the Gentlemen’s Agreement (1907), Japanese men working in the United States or its territories were not allowed to easily travel back and forth to Japan. However, they were allowed to bring their wives and families to America from Japan. Single men used a matchmaker to arrange marriages with women in Japan. The matchmakers showed pictures of the women to the men to help them decide which one he might want to marry.
Bibliography

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources

https://www.army.mil/article/111236/Allied_Translator_and_Interpreter_Section_Activated_19_September_1942/.


Daniels, Roger. Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life.


King, Desmond S. Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse


Kollander, Patricia and John OSullivan. "I Must Be a Part of This War" a German American’s Fight against Hitler and Nazism. New York: Fordham University Press, 2005.


McIlwain, James. "Nisei Served in U.S. Army Air Corps, Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and


https://doi.org/10.1093/ohr/oht057.


Volpp, Leti. “‘Obnoxious to Their Very Nature’: Asian Americans and Constitutional
