Three minutes in Manzanar:

A Conversation with a “No-No Boy”

https://momentinmanzanar.com

What is Manzanar?

During WWII, more than 120,000 people of Japanese descent were incarcerated in concentration camps, stripped of their livelihood and property by the US government.

Who is a "No-No" Boy?

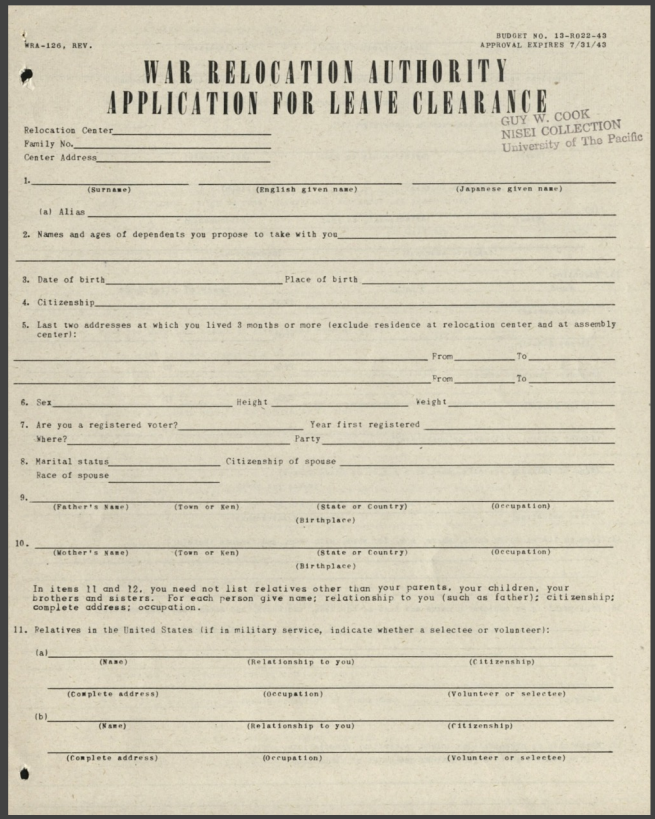
The US Government evaluated the "loyalty" of incarcerated Japanese, with a questionnaire. "No-No boys" were those who answered "No" to questions 27 and 28. Those questions were as follows:

Question 27:

Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty wherever ordered?

Question 28:

Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, to any other foreign government, power or organization?



WRA-126, REV.

BUDGET NO. 13-R022-43
APPROVAL EXPIRES 7/31/43

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
APPLICATION FOR LEAVE CLEARANCE

GUY W. COOK
NISEI COLLECTION
University of The Pacific

Relocation Center_____
Family No._____
Center Address_____

1._____ _____ _____
(Surname) (English given name) (Japanese given name)

(a) Alias _____

2. Names and ages of dependents you propose to take with you_____

3. Date of birth_____ Place of birth _____

4. Citizenship_____

5. Last two addresses at which you lived 3 months or more (exclude residence at relocation center and at assembly center):

_____ From_____ To_____

_____ From_____ To_____

6. Sex_____ Height _____ Weight_____

7. Are you a registered voter?_____ Year first registered _____
Where?_____ Party_____

8. Marital status_____ Citizenship of spouse _____
Race of spouse _____

9._____
(Father's Name) (Town or Ken) (State or Country) (Occupation)
(Birthplace)

10._____
(Mother's Name) (Town or Ken) (State or Country) (Occupation)
(Birthplace)

In items 11 and 12, you need not list relatives other than your parents, your children, your brothers and sisters. For each person give name; relationship to you (such as father); citizenship; complete address; occupation.

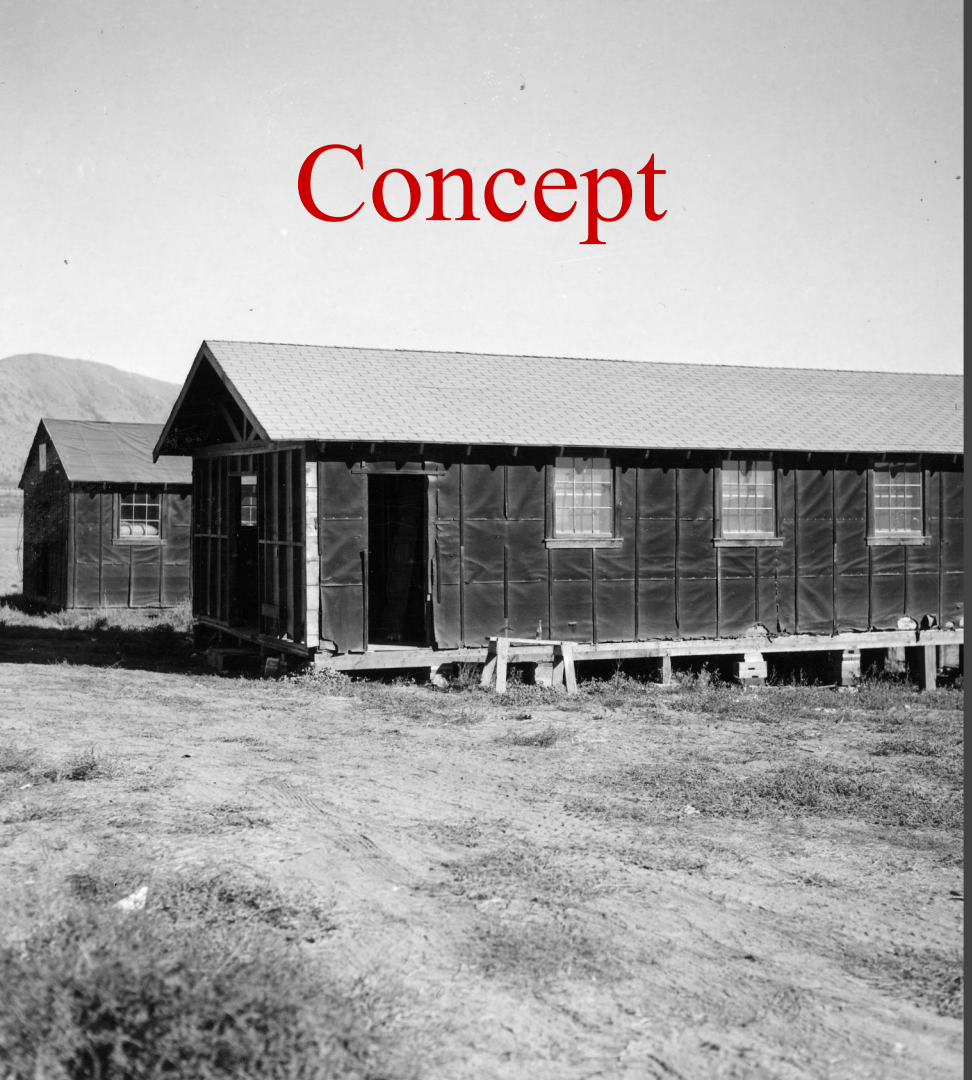
11. Relatives in the United States (if in military service, indicate whether a selectee or volunteer):

(a)_____
(Name) (Relationship to you) (Citizenship)

_____
(Complete address) (Occupation) (Volunteer or selectee)

(b)_____
(Name) (Relationship to you) (Citizenship)

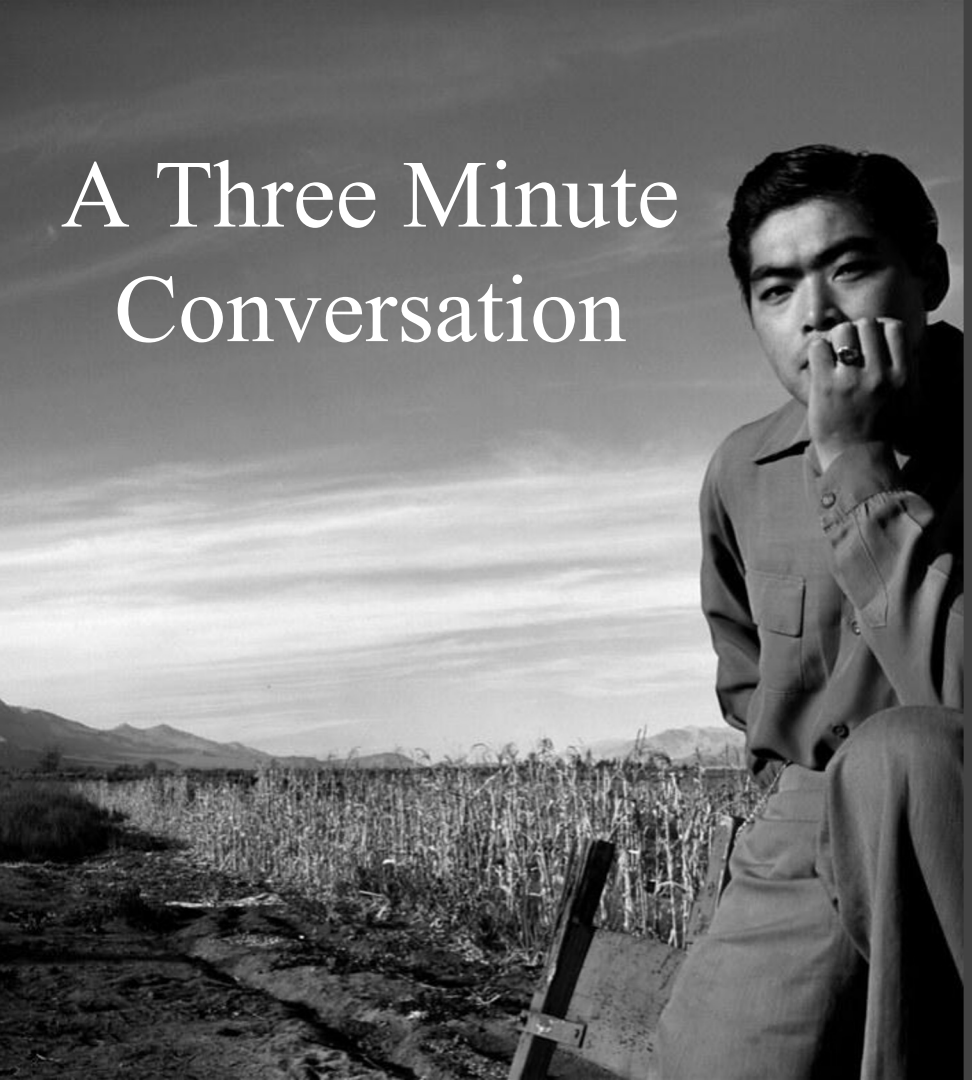
_____
(Complete address) (Occupation) (Volunteer or selectee)



Concept

Show through conversation the frustration of a man who was asked to risk his life for a country that failed him. *Show through conversation,* the frustration of a man who was asked to forswear allegiance to an emperor he never knew.

We will achieve this through a three minute conversational vignette set in Manzanar in 1943, between the user, and a digital “No-No Boy”.

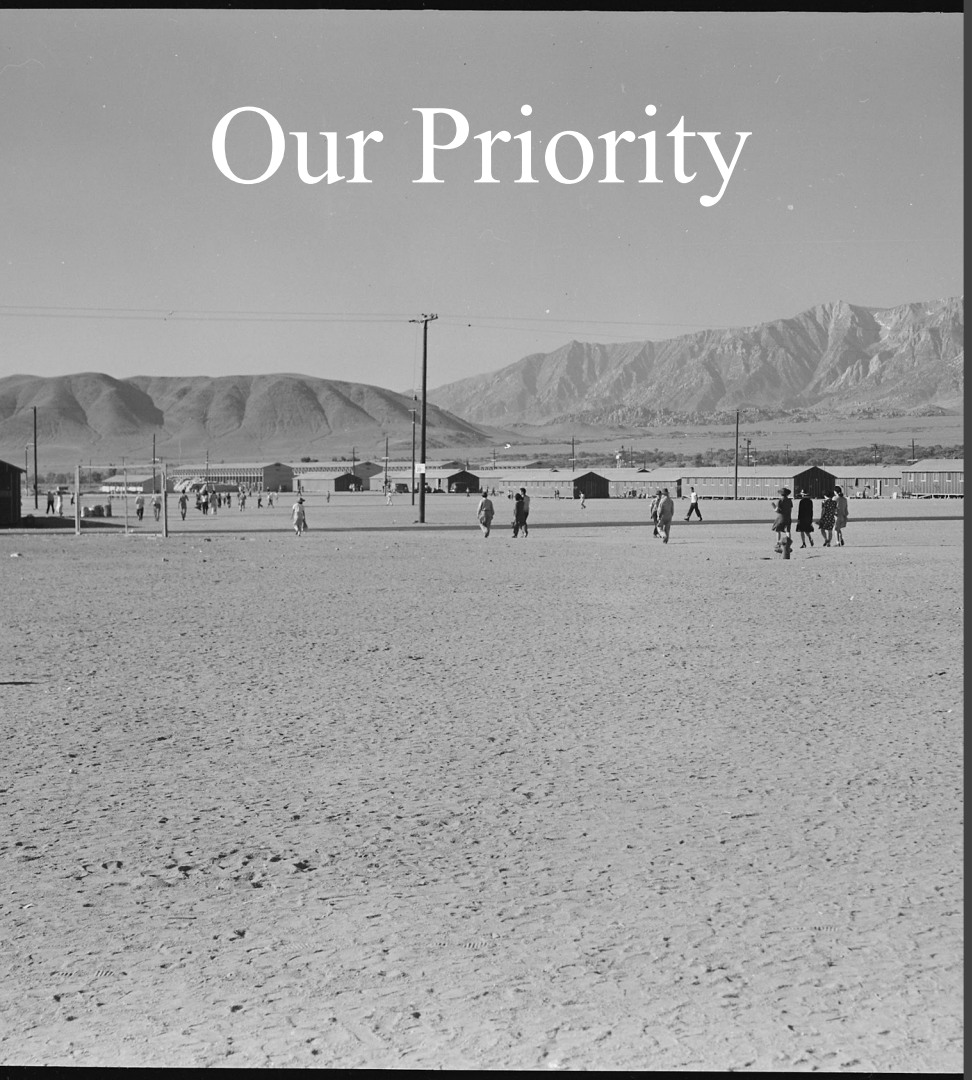


A Three Minute Conversation

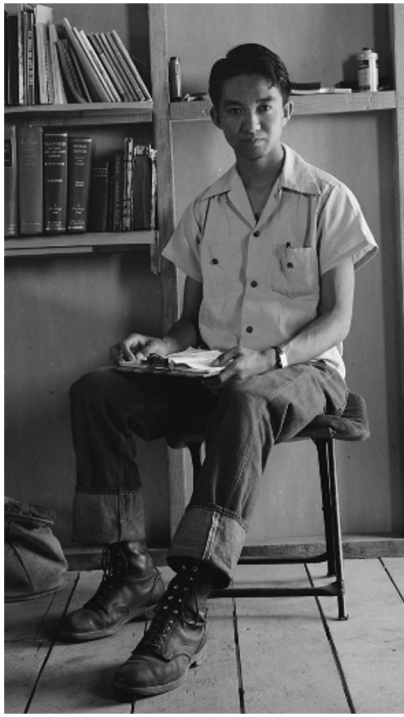
The user is a fictional WRA (War Relocation Authority) agent, asking *Ichiro Yamada (Powered by InworldAI)*, to clarify some of his answers he gave in the “War Relocation Authority Application for Leave Clearance”. *Ichiro* had left some answers blank. A calm and collected Ichiro enters the room, and *the user* will be given the opportunity to ask the questions that were left blank.

When we arrive at questions 27 and 28. *Ichiro* becomes visibly irritated, his tone frustrated and heated, as he gives his reasons of why his answers are “No” and “No”. The experience ends only when *the user* orders *Ichiro* be sent to Tule Lake for being “disloyal”. *The user* will bear responsibility in destroying what little semblance of normalcy *Ichiro* has built in Manzanar.

Our Priority



To get the emotion, and story right.



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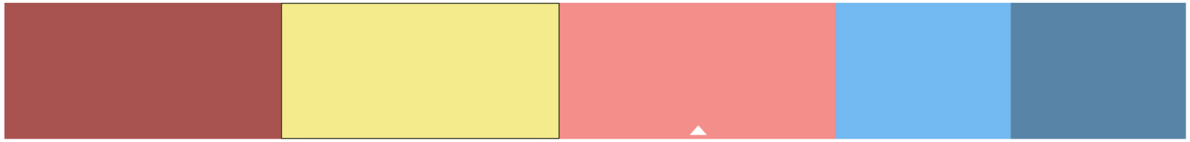
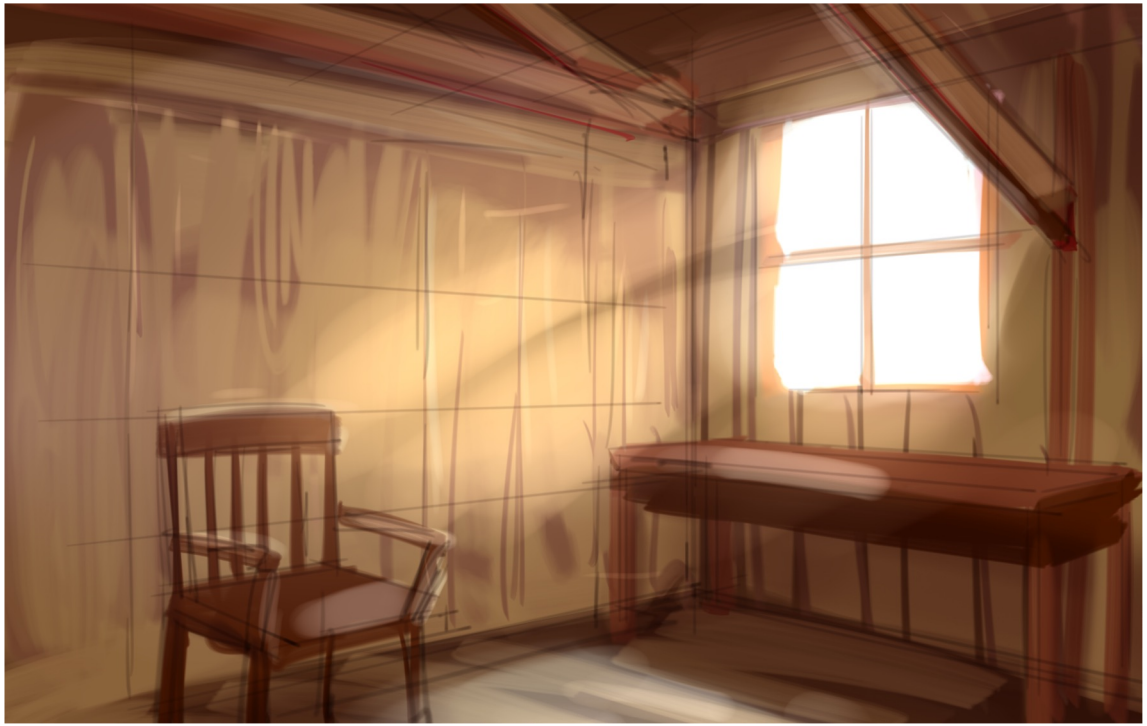
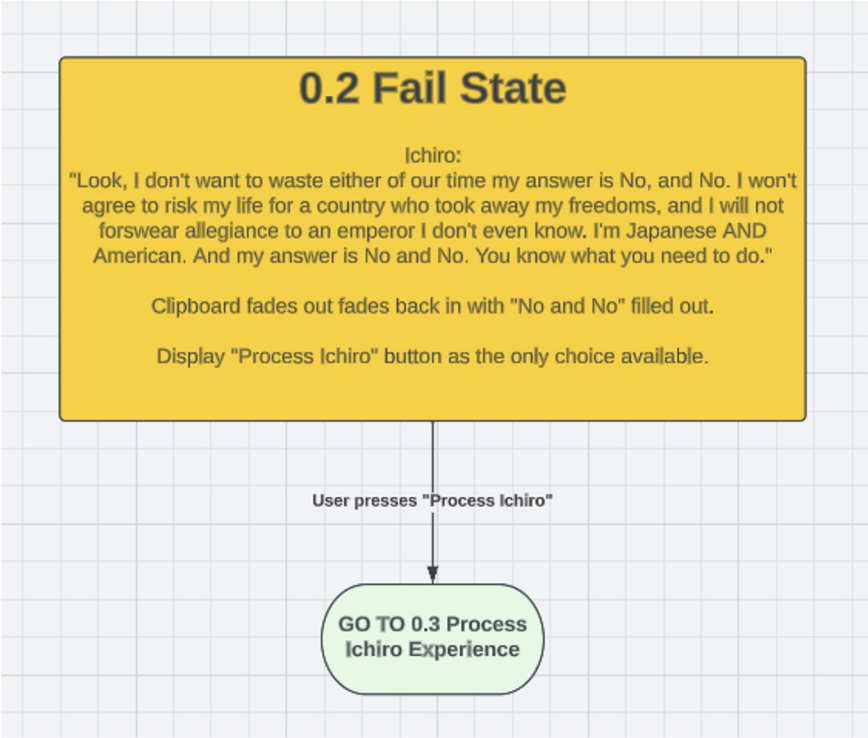


Other pose ideas

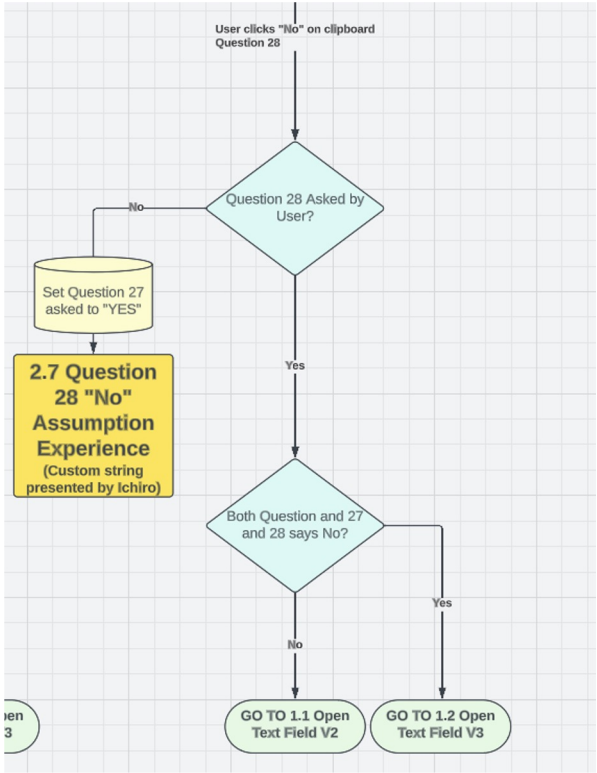


Assume responsibility for distribution of official information.
A "Cog in the Wheel"
Personal Mail
"Hear All Complaints"

Conversation Logic: Error Handling



Selected Excerpts:
User fills out “No” for question 28 in the questionnaire when the user hasn’t asked the question yet (Assumption experience)



“Escape Hatches”:
E.g. when user asks too many questions, Ichiro will interrupt and ask the user to stay on topic.

Label	Context	String
0.0 Ichiro Says Hello Experience		Hi. Let's make this quick, alright?
2.4 Question 27 "Yes" Experience V2	User clicks Yes for Question 27	Hey. Give me that clipboard. My answer to question 27 isn't "yes". I will not risk my life for a country that doesn't value mine. It's no.
2.4 Question 27 "Yes" Experience V2	User clicks Yes for Question 28	Are you kidding me? Give me that clipboard. My answer is no. I'm American. I can't "forswear" allegiance to an emperor I've never sworn allegiance to
2.6 Question 27 "No" Assumption Experience(Custom string presented by Ichiro)	User clicks No for Question 27 without asking the question	Oh, I guess you figured it out. Yeah, that's right my answer is "No". I will not risk my life in combat for a country that doesn't value mine.
2.7 Question 28 "No" Assumption Experience(Custom string presented by Ichiro)	User clicks No for Question 28 without asking the question	Yeah, mark me down as "No". It's true, I won't "forswear" my allegiance to the emperor...because I've never sworn allegiance!
2.3 Force Question Ask Experience	User hasn't asked the questions yet.	Can you stop wasting my time? Please just read out the question please.

Team Members (https://www.momentinmanzanar.com/team)

Kent Morita

Kent is the producer and creator of “Moment in Manzanar”. They are also a conversation designer based in New York, who has worked on Google Assistant and Amazon Alexa.They are also an award-winning screenwriter, comedian, producer, and actor exploring the intersection of neurodiversity and Japanese-American identity, whose work you can find on Amazon Prime, The Onion, Clickhole, and Caveat.

Ben White

Ben is a video editor and filmmaker based in New York. He hopes his work on “Moment in Manzanar” illuminates the crimes of the American government against Japanese-Americans during World War II. Ben has valued his time working on “Moment in Manzanar” as a way to deepen his own understanding of the heartless treatment of Japanese-Americans during this time period.

Cindy Shin

Cindy is a product designer based in Brooklyn, NY. She joined the Moment in Manzanar team due to her deep interest in exploring narratives with a focus on social equity and underrepresented perspectives. Outside of her work as a designer, Cindy's favorite things to do are wheel throwing ceramics, recommending new books to friends, and fostering rescue dogs.

Herrick Ong

Herrick is a game artist and illustrator based in the San Francisco Bay Area, with a lifelong passion for drawing and communicating ideas. His previous clients include, Crazy Maple Studio, Kongregate, Voltage Entertainment, 5 Color Combo, and more.

Kyle Holmberg

Kyle tells people that he makes "pretty web things" for work. His career involves building features and design systems at Nike, Acorns, and Capsule (among others). When he's not coding, he spends his time traveling the world with his fiancé, playing video games, and watching Arsenal—his favorite team—disappoint him in new and creative ways.