

World Religions in Greater Indianapolis Teaching Module

Teacher Name: Joshua M. Phillippe

Humanities Discipline: Art History

Date: February 1, 2017

World Religion: Buddhism

Teaching Module Title: Demonizing the Other

Teaching Module Goals:

1. Discuss the Asian immigrant experience in the United States in the context of religion.
2. Familiarize students with forgotten WWII custom of skull trophies with a famous example.
3. Reflection and class discussions focusing on America's treatment of "the other" in the 20th century and beyond.

Assigned Readings and Video:

1. Paul Numrich, *Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs in America*, "Introduction", pages ix-xii
2. Korematsu v. United States (1944) PBS link
3. http://www.pbs.org/wnet/supremecourt/personality/landmark_korematsu.html
4. *American Photography, A Century of Images*, PBS, 25-28:00 minute mark,
5. "Demonizing The Enemy" Life Magazine photograph of a Japanese skull from WWII:
6. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OG50wcae9XY&feature=youtu.be>
7. Ben Cosgrove, Thank You, Sweetheart, for the 'Jap Skull': Portrait of a Grisly WWII Memento, TIME 2014
8. <http://time.com/3880997/young-woman-with-jap-skull-portrait-of-a-grisly-wwii-memento/>

Study Questions and/or Discussions Prompts for Students:

1. What does Paul Numrich compare the immigrant experience to in his brief introduction? What are the immigrants' dilemmas as traditions are passed down to a new generation in a new home?
2. Describe what is going on in the photograph pictures below and published in 1944 (video & article).
3. Along with Korematsu v. United States, what does this image tell us about ethnic attitudes in the United States during World War II? Why wasn't the practice of sending German skull trophies back home common?



From LIFE Magazine, 1944

When he said goodbye two years ago to Natalie Nickerson, 20, a war worker of Phoenix, Ariz., a big, handsome Navy lieutenant promised her a Jap. Last week Natalie received a human skull, autographed by her lieutenant and 13 friends, and inscribed: "This is a good Jap—a dead one picked up on the New Guinea beach." Natalie, surprised at the gift, named it Tojo.