"Montana" Oiye: The Journey Of A Japanese American From The Big Sky To The Battlefields of Europe

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Abstract

Being a pale-skinned, red-haired, Irish-English descendant, I am often questioned by people about my fascination with East Asian culture and history. I tend to respond to their inquiries as simply as possible. For me, the histories of countries such as Japan are intriguing because they are so unique from those of western civilization. Studying the stories of places far removed from the culture I come from has helped me to understand and appreciate the differences between the United States and the rest of the world. The interest that I developed in East Asian history has grown, over time, into a captivation with the experiences of Asian Americans. The hardship, sacrifice, and diligence of these people are truly some of the richest stories in American history. I first came across George Oiye while on the internet. I was interested in studying the Japanese American experience in Montana during World War II, so I typed in a few search terms, including "Japanese American," "World War II," and "Montana." One of the first web pages I came across was a brief interview with George. It told of his experiences in Dachau and mentioned that he spoke with a soft Montana twang (whatever that is!). From there, I discovered other internet sites about George and decided to pursue his story as a thesis topic. I found his phone number, nervously called him, and asked if I could interview him in person. He was, of course, very hospitable and welcomed me into his home. The only problem was that he lived in San Jose, California. When I made the decision to take the trip to California and interview George, I knew from that point on that I would try to do my best to tell his story as completely and accurately as possible. I hope that I have succeeded.

Recommended Citation


Montana is known as big sky country, so it’s unsurprising that Big Sky, Montana would be a particularly gorgeous spot. Whether you’re in town for skiing, hiking, or just taking in the scenery from the comfort of your balcony, you’ll want to know where to eat. The town has an excellent selection of restaurants serving everything from farm-to-table steaks to gourmet hot dogs. It’s up to you! Here are our 10 favorites.