Discussion Questions

William McFarland/Lum May

1. After his sermon against removing the Chinese, Tacoma’s newspapers printed vicious and mean stories about Reverend McFarland, telling him he should leave Tacoma along with the Chinese. How would this have affected other people who might have supported him?

2. Mayor Weisbach, the mayor of Tacoma who worked to remove the Chinese people, was an immigrant from Germany. Tacoma kicked out its Chinese in part because they were immigrants. Why do you think Mayor Weisbach was not considered a problem immigrant?

3. Our country has a history of viewing immigrants with suspicion and saying they do not belong here. Can you think of some examples? Compare and contrast those situations to that of the Chinese in the 1880s.

Further Investigation

- The transcontinental railroad
- Chinese immigration to the U.S.
- The Chinese Exclusion Act
- Legal discrimination

John Conna

1. In writing about Mr. Conna, the newspapers of the time use the word “colored” to describe him. This was a common term in the 1800s and early 1900s to refer to Black people. We do not use this term now, as it is a reminder of the time of segregation when facilities were separated for “Whites” and “Colored.” Can you think of other terms for groups that have changed over time?

2. Words have power and history attached to them. What terms do you use to describe yourself and the ethnic groups you belong to? What power and history do you find in those words?

3. Mr. Conna’s grandson hopes his story will become “a source of pride for the present generation.” Describe how Mr. Conna could be a source of pride.

4. Describe how “the present generation [can] follow in his footsteps and be all that they can be in following the American Dream of hard work, perseverance, and the rewards thereof.”

Further Investigation

- Black pioneers
- Post-Civil War Oregon/Washington Territory
- Public accommodation laws
• The real estate business
• Black political clubs

**Emma Smith DeVoe**

1. How do you think women felt when they had no say in politics and about the issues that affected them?
2. Mrs. DeVoe believe that women were more peaceful than men and that if they could vote they would make the world more peaceful. Has this happened? Why do you think that?
3. After gaining the right to vote for women Mrs. DeVoe told the suffragists, “Why we must go on and on, for our work has just begun. Since we have formed the habit of success and have secured the ballot we are provided with a tool that if we use wisely and well will enable us to render a vast amount of service to humanity....” What work do you see needs to be done to help people and our country? What kind of issues do you think we need to vote on?

Further Investigation

• The women’s suffrage movement
• Voting rights
• The feminist movement
• The civil rights movement
• The ballot process

**Nettie Asberry**

1. What do you know about segregation and racial discrimination? Why do you think it has lasted so long?
2. Dr. Asberry was a member of many Black women’s clubs. Why do you think these clubs were useful to the Black women of the time, and today?
3. Dr. Asberry had the courage to stand up against racial discrimination. What do you have the courage to stand up against?
4. Dr. Asberry felt just as passionate about music as she did about civil rights. Why do you think she felt called to teach music in Hilltop for fifty years?

Further Investigation

• The NAACP
• Black women’s clubs, especially the Tacoma Association of Colored Women's Clubs, Inc. and the Nettie Asberry Cultural Club
• Discriminatory laws
Jack Tanner

1. Why do you think Judge Tanner saw working as a lawyer as a way to help other African-Americans?
2. Judge Tanner served under a white officer during World War II and never forgot the discrimination he suffered. Are there any experiences you have had that you think will influence the rest of your life?
3. Why do you think Judge Tanner, when he was a lawyer, defended clients other lawyers would not? Why do you think other lawyers would not take those cases?

Further Investigation
- Segregation in public spaces and the military
- How to become a lawyer or a judge
- The concept of equal pay for equal work
- The NAACP in Tacoma

The Black Collective, Earnest Brazill, Harold Moss, Thomas Dixon, and James Walton

1. Why do you think Harold Moss said that when young people suffer inequality, “an explosion is just around the corner”?
2. After the Mother’s Day Disturbance, why was it important to the Black leaders that there be increased neighborhood services and representation on the police force and in the fire department?
3. Discuss Rev. Brazill’s relationship with other pastors, since they called him “Dad.”
4. Explain what Rev. Brazill meant when he said, “I get tired in the work, but never tired of the work.”
5. Harold Moss served in the Army during the Korean War in the 1950s. While working at Ft. Lewis, Mr. Moss and his wife found it nearly impossible to find a place to live, due to discrimination. In your own words, describe what he means when he writes, “Here I am, a man the army being trained to fight and kill but who can't protect his wife or himself from this home-grown form of insult, injury, and pain. My mind went back to why I was out here in the first place; my country enlisted me to fight and risk my life for a foreigner's freedom but would not protect my freedom at home.”
6. Do you agree with Mr. Moss when he writes, “Political involvement is a dream worth fighting for. It matters.” Why or why not?
7. In 1968 Thomas Dixon told the newspaper, “Rather than provide money for a man to pay his rent or to buy food, we want to change the institution that perpetuates unreasonable high rent and food prices in the ghetto.” Discuss what this statement means, what Dixon describes, and what he wants.
8. Describe how the work of the Urban League is “a service to the entire community.”
9. Why do you think James Walton felt it necessary to become “an insider”?
10. How is the Black Collective “paying things forward”?
11. What do you notice about racial issues in Tacoma today?

Further Investigation
- Housing discrimination
- The national civil rights movement of the 1960s
- The Obi Society and the Battle of the Rock at Tacoma Community College in 1969
- Tacoma Black Collective
- Tacoma Urban League
- The development of Hilltop
- Community organizing and political action
- The next generation of Black leaders in Tacoma
- Greater Tacoma Peace Prize

Ramona Bennett
1. Native Americans believe that they have lived here since “time immemorial.” What does this mean? How do you think it affects their interactions with those who came here later?
2. Compare a “fish-in” to a “sit-in.”
3. Discuss how, according to Ramona Bennett, “the fishing rights struggle was a fight for cultural and spiritual survival.”
4. Besides the actions described in the article, Ms. Bennett was also involved in takeovers of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, D.C. in 1972 and 1976. Discuss the use of occupation as protest. Although it is illegal, are there situations where it is an acceptable thing to do?

Further Investigation
- The Boldt Decision
- Cushman Indian School/Hospital
- Indian Child Welfare Act
- Rainbow Youth and Family Service
- The importance of salmon in Puyallup tribal culture
- The history of the Puyallup Tribe
- The Puyallup Tribe today
- Civil disobedience
George Tanbara

1. What do you think Dr. Larson meant when he said that Dr. Tanbara “taught us... not just to care for children, but to care for the community”?
2. Being a doctor was one way Dr. Tanbara served his commitment to social justice. How do you serve your community?
3. Dr. Tanbara wanted people to work together, rather than try to be better than other people. Do you agree? How can we do this?

Further Investigation
- Japanese internment during WWII
- Healthcare accessibility
- Community Health Care
- Pediatrics Northwest
- Buddhism

Perry Watkins

1. Compare the ban on homosexuals in the military to how the military kept servicemembers of color separate from white servicemembers.
2. Perry Watkins’ mother raised him to be honest. What values have your family members and friends inspired in you?
3. Discuss this quote, “The more legal protection we get, the less fear we live under. It’s people like Perry Watkins who make it better for everyone.”

Further Investigation
- Homosexuals in the military
- The Vietnam War
- The Pride movement
- The AIDS crisis (Perry Watkins died of AIDS)
- LGBTQ legal protections

Father Bix

1. What do you think Father Bix meant when he said, “The poor are our teachers, we learn from them to be brothers and sisters with the poor”? How did he do that?
2. Discuss Father Bix’s statement that, "Love is the most powerful force. More powerful than all the nuclear weapons combined."
3. What do you wish didn’t exist in our world? Would you stand up in protest?
Further Investigation

- Tacoma Catholic Worker community
- Homelessness in Tacoma
- Nuclear weapons
- Civil disobedience
- The Jesuits
- Greater Tacoma Peace Prize

Jack Warnick

1. Why do you think white people wanted to restrict where Black people could live?
2. Jack Warnick saw a problem and took action to solve it. What problems do you see that you could take action to solve?
3. In a speech in 1964 Jack Warnick insisted, “To deny... freedoms and opportunities to any group is to deny the basic significance of this country for all groups.” Discuss this statement. What does he mean? Do you agree?

Further investigation

- Housing discrimination and redlining
- Tacoma Human Rights Commission
- Civil Rights Act of 1968
- Tacoma City Council

Dolores Silas

1. In 2002 Dolores Silas asked, “We have made some progress, but have we really heard Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s message?” What do you think?
2. Discuss how on public safety, economic development, education, and affordable housing work together to improve people’s lives.
3. Have you seen changes in your neighborhood over time? What do you notice?

Further investigation

- The Hilltop neighborhood
- Tacoma crime in the 1980s
- Tacoma City Council
- Hilltop Multi-Service Center
- Neighborhood councils
Rosa Franklin
1. Explain what Rosa Franklin meant when she said, “Politics affects your life from the day you’re born until the day you die.”
2. How do you think Rosa Franklin’s career as a nurse helped in her career as a legislator?
3. How did Ms. Franklin become “a model for other young women to see that it can be done”?

Further investigation
- Washington State Senate and House of Representatives
- Healthcare access
- Governor’s Interagency Council on Health Disparities
- Housing discrimination
- Washington Housing Policy Act
- League of Women Voters

Dennis Flannigan
1. What do you think Dennis Flannigan meant when he said, “We needed to engage to community, because no one group could win alone”? How did he help make this happen?
2. Mr. Flannigan felt called to do what “needed to be done.” What do you think needs to be done in our community?
3. Mr. Flannigan believes that “Hopeless becomes hope; hope is contagious.” Why do you think he believes that? Do you agree?

Further investigation
- Tacoma crime in the 1980s
- Pierce County Alliance
- Emergency Food Network
- Pierce County Council
- Safe Streets
- Washington State Senate

Theresa Pan Hosley
1. One of Theresa Pan Hosley’s goals was to add to the cultural diversity of Tacoma. Describe how the Chinese Reconciliation Park does so.
2. How do you think “passion, effort, sweat and thoughtfulness” achieve peace?
3. Ms. Pan Hosley believes it is her duty to give back to her community. What do you feel is your duty to your community?
4. Do you think the project will help in preventing something like the Chinese Expulsion from happening again?
Further investigation
  • Little Canton
  • Chinese Expulsion
  • Chinese Reconciliation Project Foundation
  • Fuzhou, China (our sister city)
  • Chinese gardens
  • Greater Tacoma Peace Prize

Anna Maria Garcia
  1. In 2001 Anna Maria Garcia spoke about the Latino/a population in Washington. She told a reporter, “We won’t get out of the factories or the fields – the low-paying jobs – if we don’t have an education.” What does she mean by this?
  2. What do you think is the answer to Ms. Garcia’s question, “What's better in this world because Anna Maria lived in it”? What if you ask it about yourself?
  3. Ms. Garcia is willing to go out on her own to help homeless and sick people. What are you willing to do on your own to help others?

Further investigation
  • Latino/a immigration to Washington
  • Homelessness in Tacoma
  • The HIV/AIDS crisis
  • Healthcare access
  • Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
  • Pierce County AIDS Foundation

Laurie Jinkins
  1. Why was it important for the gay community to organize and band together to speak out and make change?
  2. Ms. Jinkins insists, and research shows, that improving the lives of women and girls improves society for everyone. Why do you think this is?
  3. Laurie Jinkins says to “Find the thing you love and act.” What do you love? What will you do to take action?

Further investigation
  • Marriage equality
  • Legal protections for homosexuals
  • Washington State House of Representatives
• Minimum wage
• Reproductive health care
• Equal pay for equal work
• Paid leave and child-care policies
• Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department