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## "Japanese Canadians: Race, Religion and Confinement during World War II"

Professor Greg Robinson  
Département d'Histoire  
Université du Québec À Montréal  
Thursday April 20, 2017

4:00pm

Birks Building, 3520 University  
Senior Common room (100)



The mass official confinement of Japanese Canadians During World War II (often called the Japanese Canadian Internment) was heavily influenced by religious factors as well as by race and ancestry. Ethnic Japanese, as a majority Buddhist population, were targeted for suspicion and discrimination on religious grounds. They were divided in confinement sites by religious affiliation, with Buddhists, Anglicans, United Church members and Catholics being sent to separate confinement sites. The inmates in these confinement sites were then obliged (both separately and in partnership) to organize to meet the religious needs of their faithful. Since the Canadian government refused to provide public secondary education, religious groups then mobilized to open high schools for children in the confinement sites. In particular, French Canadian priests and nuns from Quebec opened schools in the "Catholic" camp of Greenwood. Catholic and Anglican missionaries in Montreal later assisted refugees from the camps to settle in Montreal and defended their civil rights.

Greg Robinson is Professor of History at l'Université du Québec à Montréal, and a researcher at that the university's Center for United States Studies and Chaire de Recherche sur Immigration, Ethnicité et Citoyenneté. A specialist in North American Ethnic Studies and U.S. Political History, Robinson teaches courses on African American history, Twentieth-Century U.S. Foreign Policy, American Immigration History, and visible minorities/racial groups, among others. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in American History from New York University, and a B.A. in History and French Civilization from the University of Pennsylvania. Robinson's first monograph, *By Order of the President: FDR and the Internment of Japanese Americans* (Harvard University Press, 2001), is an in-depth history of the decisions behind the government's mass removal and confinement of West Coast Japanese Americans during World War II.