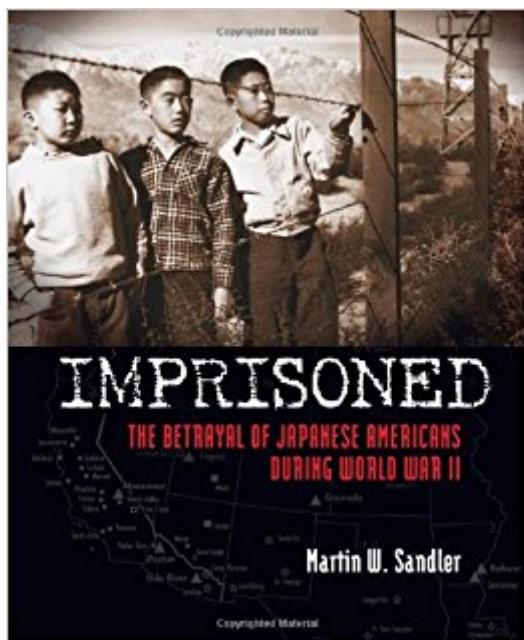


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Imprisoned: The Betrayal Of Japanese Americans During World War II



Synopsis

While Americans fought for freedom and democracy abroad, fear and suspicion towards Japanese Americans swept the country after Japan's sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. Culling information from extensive, previously unpublished interviews and oral histories with Japanese American survivors of internment camps, Martin W. Sandler gives an in-depth account of their lives before, during their imprisonment, and after their release. Bringing readers inside life in the internment camps and explaining how a country that is built on the ideals of freedom for all could have such a dark mark on its history, this in-depth look at a troubling period of American history sheds light on the prejudices in today's world and provides the historical context we need to prevent similar abuses of power.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up  Sandler expertly crafts a narrative that manages to explain the horror and incomprehensibility of locking up American citizens in prison camps simply because of their ethnic ancestry. Japanese American relocation has long been expurgated from school history texts about World War II, and here this delicate topic is handled with sensitivity and insight, providing an in-depth look at the full story, from anti-Japanese sentiments during the first wave of immigration through more current issues such as redress. A close examination of both the nation's feelings after the attack on Pearl Harbor and the political conversations that followed is an important part of the story that leads up to the actual relocation of hundreds of thousands of people. There is also a lengthy and moving section about the young Japanese Americans who served in the military in a variety of capacities, from actual combat to intelligence and translation services. Sandler makes it

clear that these brave folks were battling prejudice and tyranny overseas while their families and friends were suffering under it back at home. The irony was not lost on them. Photographs help to further the narrative and yet tell their own story, offering rich detail and putting a human face on this tragic episode. A must-have for any library collection. —Jody Kopple, Shady Hill School, Cambridge, MA
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Starred Review Yes, the bombing of Pearl Harbor drew America into WWII. But it also created strong waves of fear and mistrust of Japanese American immigrants in the U.S. and led to their internment in poorly appointed, remote “relocation centers” for the duration of the war. In addition to placing their story within a broader context, Sandler uses apt quotes to introduce readers to individual evacuees and their families, who lost their belongings, yet maintained their dignity during their sometimes humiliating ordeals. The book also documents the loyal service of Japanese Americans in the U.S. military as translators and fighting forces. In the opening scene, Japanese American soldiers, whose families still lived in relocation centers surrounded by barbed wire and armed guards, help liberate prisoners from the Germans’ Dachau concentration camp. The well-organized, clearly written text also fills in the broader history of Japanese immigrants in America, from the first generation, who were often excluded from citizenship, to the activists of the 1960s and 1970s, who demanded a public apology and reparations from the U.S. government for the treatment of their elders during the war. Beautifully illustrated with well-chosen photographs and other documents, this handsome book offers a clear view of an episode in American history that still receives too little focus. Grades 6-10. --Carolyn Phelan

Martin Sandler’s book is the compelling story of the banishment over 120,000 Japanese Americans living on the West Coast of the United States. Japanese Americans were forced from their homes due to hysteria after the bombing of Perl Harbor. They had no notice and had to leave homes, businesses, pets, and possessions to move into internment camps for the duration of WWII. Sandler uses photographs, interviews, quotes, and sidebars (backed up with extensive research) to tell about this very dark part of American history. Each chapter consists of information with certain pages containing large font (to stand out) and within these chapters sections highlighted areas of importance, like Dorothea Dix and Ansel Adams photography to document the internment, but their differing viewpoints. Another section is Titled, Expressing Feelings Through Poetry and shares examples of children’s poems from camp classrooms. Within the camps were the Isei and the Nisei,

nurses, doctors, writers, teachers who work hard to end the isolation and depression many felt. Sports, like baseball, became an important way for the Japanese Americans to fight boredom. There were those who created gardens, made jewelry, and found other ways to beautify their substandard lives. The camps were harsh and crowded, hot during the day and very cold at night; there were long waits to for lunch, dinner and laundry of 2-3 hours. There were many Japanese Americans who served in the 442nd Regiment and Nisei who served as interpreters and translators and they had a very profound impact on the US's victory. The chapters on how the Japanese Americans fared after the war and as the years went on were so interesting. Today the Japanese Americans are working hard to make sure this does not happen to anyone ever again. They are strong supporters of the Muslim communities in the aftermath of 9/11 because they look like the enemy and have experienced discrimination like the Japanese Americans. The book ends with Place to Visit, Visiting the Sites of the Relocation Centers, Further Reading and Surfing, Websites, Sources and Bibliography.

Sobering history. We have to make sure it doesn't happen again to other people.

I am seeing more and more of our history lost and not covered in our schools. Even many older people do not know that the Japanese were moved out of their homes into barely habitable internment camps for the duration of WWII. 'Imprisoned' tells that story, covering most aspects of the experience that Japanese Americans on the west coast experienced. The book is listed for grade 5-8, but even older could learn much and recognize the value of this book. There are lots of photos, but one part bothers me. The author has a very interesting section on the Nisei units - the army units made up of Japanese Americans that fought in WWII and were highly decorated. He gives them credit for being the unit that liberated Dachau and has a touching story of the prisoners there being confused and assuming they were the Japanese army and would kill them. Army records show the 63rd Infantry Division (not a Nisei unit) as being the unit recognized as the liberating unit by the US Army's Center of Military History and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. On the same day, 29 April 1945, the 522nd Nisei unit liberated a small camp at Lager Lechfeld in Bavaria. This shifting of factual evidence is vexing. The rest of the book gives excellent descriptions of the settling and success of many of the Japanese immigrants and what they lost in the hysteria after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The laws targeted towards them in the years before the war and the search for remuneration years afterward and the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 are also covered. The photos and descriptions of the camps themselves along with interviews is excellent, even how the

US government documented conditions in the camps and put pressure on Latin American countries to have intern camps as well. Why there were no removals in Hawaii is explained. There is information on how to visit the camp sites and lists of other sources. This is a book that is overdue for reading for many; however the incorrect information on the liberation of Dachau does much to ruin the book's credibility.

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