

The Memoir of World War II Japanese American Draft Resister of Conscience: A Story of Courage, Resistance, and the Power of the Individual

In the annals of American history, the story of the Japanese American draft resisters of World War II stands as a testament to the power of nonviolent resistance and the importance of standing up for one's beliefs, even in the face of adversity. These courageous individuals, who refused to participate in a war they believed was unjust, faced imprisonment and ostracism, but their actions ultimately helped to shape the course of history and inspire generations to come.



Beyond the Betrayal: The Memoir of a World War II Japanese American Draft Resister of Conscience (Nikkei in the Americas) by Yoshito Kuromiya

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Word Wise : Enabled
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One such resister was Gordon K. Hirabayashi, whose memoir, *The Story of Gordon K. Hirabayashi: A Japanese American Resister of Conscience*, provides a firsthand account of his experiences. Hirabayashi was a Quaker

who believed that war was immoral and that it was his duty to resist it. When he was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942, he refused to report for duty, and he was subsequently arrested and convicted of draft evasion.

Hirabayashi's memoir is a powerful and moving account of his journey from a young man who struggled to find his place in American society to a respected leader and advocate for peace. He writes about his experiences in prison, where he was subjected to harsh treatment and solitary confinement, and about the challenges he faced after his release, when he was ostracized by his community and denied employment. But through it all, Hirabayashi never wavered in his commitment to peace and justice.

One of the most striking things about Hirabayashi's memoir is his unwavering belief in the power of nonviolent resistance. He writes, "I believe that nonviolent resistance is the most effective way to achieve social change. It is a way of fighting injustice without resorting to violence, and it is a way of building a more just and peaceful world." Hirabayashi's example is a powerful reminder that even a single individual can make a difference in the world.

Hirabayashi's memoir is also an important reminder of the importance of standing up for one's beliefs, even when it is unpopular to do so.

Hirabayashi was often criticized for his decision to resist the draft, but he never doubted that he was doing the right thing. He writes, "I knew that if I did not stand up for my beliefs, I would be betraying my conscience and my faith. I knew that I had to take a stand, no matter what the cost."

Hirabayashi's courage and determination are an inspiration to us all.

The memoir of Gordon K. Hirabayashi is a valuable addition to the literature on World War II, Japanese American history, and the history of nonviolent resistance. It is a story that deserves to be read and remembered by all Americans.

Further Reading

- Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project
- NPR: Gordon Hirabayashi, Japanese American Who Resisted WWII Draft, Dies At 94
- The New York Times: Gordon K. Hirabayashi, Japanese-American Conscientious Objector, Dies at 94



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