

Book Review

Park, Y. (2020). *Facilitating injustice: The complicity of social workers in the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans, 1941-1946*. Oxford University Press.

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Freedom Rehabilitation

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Facilitating Injustice is Yoosun Park's first book. She is an associate professor of social work at Smith College whose scholarship focuses on immigration and social work's role in immigration. Park's aim for the book was to describe the involvement of the social profession in the removal, incarceration, and resettlement of Japanese Americans during World War II and to include that involvement in the history of the social work profession. This book has relevance for social work students and practitioners particularly as lessons can be applied to our current immigration conversations.

Park's discussion of deserving and underserving clients; her analysis of the social work profession's reluctance to speak out more against FDR's administration, possibly due to the active role the profession had in shaping New Deal legislation; and policy discussions within the War Relocation Authority (WRA) Camps would be useful in any policy class as students learn about the effects of social policy at the local and federal level. Her detailed description of the work of nonprofits like the YWCA in creating board policy about their commitment to the Japanese while in the camps would further add depth to policy discussions but also could be utilized by macro students as they examine how much these organizations were changing outcomes of unintended government policy for Japanese Americans, both in the camps and during resettlement.

There are also many case examples and discussion applicable to diversity topics, i.e., cultural competency,

immigration, racism. One such description is of the work of Grace Coyle, well-known to those studying group work, who was employed by the YWCA. Coyle's work was to develop groups that would help the Japanese prepare and plan to leave the camps for resettlement but were also designed to assimilate the Japanese and instill in them American ideals. Parks also described the way in which the Japanese valued their independence, privacy, and pride, viewed as noble while in the community, and problematic and disloyal once in the WRA Camps, which provides a good case example for a diversity class trying to understand how race, culture, and socioeconomic status can affect the relationship between clients and social workers.

Further analysis of how people were treated based on their race and ethnicity (as some were US-born) by not just the Army and local citizens, but by social workers within the camps, provides excellent case examples for an ethics discussion or class. There is also the disagreement that the profession initially had as to whether all Japanese Americans should be removed from their homes or whether only those who could be determined to be disloyal to the United States should be removed. The profession's eventual deferment to the government policy of overall removal and cooperation with the program of mass incarceration is worth consideration. It provides an opportunity for students or practitioners to examine how a profession tied so closely with social welfare policy and the system but committed to social justice can find solutions that are ethical and mindful of the value of the dignity and worth of individuals.

Facilitating Injustice has many strengths including numerous instances of first-hand accounting through written letters, government documents, and actions of those involved that provide greater depth and understanding of what occurred in and outside of the camps and how it was all being viewed at the time. Further, it provides a comprehensive history of the removal, incarceration, and resettlement of Japanese Americans during 1941–1946. At the same time, this can also be seen as a weakness, as the history is quite comprehensive and at times quite dense to read through. Another strength is the documentation of involvement of individual social workers and the social work profession during these years. In an era of accountability, it is important that our profession be accountable and transparent about our involvement, so that we learn and continue to evolve as the kind of social justice profession that we espouse to be.