



## Enduring Conviction: Fred Korematsu and His Quest for Justice (Scott and Laurie Oki Series in Asian American Studies)

By Lorraine K. Bannai

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Fred Korematsu's decision to resist F.D.R.'s Executive Order 9066, which provided authority for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, was initially the case of a young man following his heart: he wanted to remain in California with his white fiancée. However, he quickly came to realize that it was more than just a personal choice; it was a matter of basic human rights.

After refusing to leave for incarceration when ordered, Korematsu was eventually arrested and convicted of a federal crime before being sent to the internment camp at Topaz, Utah.

He appealed his conviction to the Supreme Court, which, in one of the most infamous cases in American legal history, upheld the wartime orders. Forty years later, in the early 1980s, a team of young attorneys resurrected Korematsu's case. This time, Korematsu was victorious, and his conviction was overturned, helping to pave the way for Japanese American redress.

Lorraine Bannai, who was a young attorney on that legal team, combines insider knowledge of the case with extensive archival research, personal letters, and unprecedented access to Korematsu his family, and close friends. She uncovers the inspiring story of a humble, soft-spoken man who fought tirelessly against human rights abuses long after he was exonerated. In 1998, President Bill Clinton awarded Korematsu the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Wonderful! A moving portrait of a seemingly ordinary man, motivated by love, whose passionate resistance transformed him into Fred Korematsu - an icon of the Japanese American Redress movement, and a true defender of American liberties."?Lane Hirabayashi, coauthor of *A Principled Stand: The Story of Hirabayashi v. United States*

"A remarkable story of a man who stood up and spoke out in the same tradition of others in this country who have spoken out against oppression and discrimination. This is what makes America strong – people who have faith in our ideals and who have the guts to stand up for them. Fred Korematsu was an ordinary man who did extraordinary deeds and with that he made history."?George Takei, actor and activist

"*Enduring Conviction* brilliantly tells the story of an ordinary American with extraordinary courage. Lorraine Bannai has given us the best biography of a litigant in a famous ? and infamous ? Supreme Court case that has yet been written."?Peter Irons, author of *Justices at War: The Story of the Japanese American Cases*

"Bannai unravels, like an engaging novel, the story of Fred Korematsu, the wrongs he endured, and the fortitude he demonstrated. A quiet and modest citizen who thought he'd lost his country, Korematsu and his courage give hope to the rest of us – that we too can stand up to right injustice."?Linda Tamura, author of *Nisei Soldiers Break Their Silence*

"Lorraine Bannai had a frontline position in the struggle for Japanese American inclusion, and her telling of one man's story is so much more than that. She shows that in times of crisis, the appeal of authoritarian, scapegoating rhetoric is a menace to democracy. The Korematsu story is about fighting back against fear and hate, thereby holding our nation to its highest ideals."?Mari Matsuda, author of *Where is Your Body?: Essays on Race, Gender and the Law*

#### About the Author

**Lorraine K. Bannai** is director of the Fred T. Korematsu Center for Law and Equality and professor of legal skills at Seattle University School of Law.

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