



Discussion Guide

Session 3:

WWII Japanese American Incarceration and the End of Asian Exclusion

Professor Jane Hong

Introduction to the Discussion Guide

Whether you're participating in Hidden No More via an independent discussion group or joining the Thursday night Zoom hosted by Highrock Online, we'll take time each week to process the events, themes, and experiences from each lecture and consider how we may relate or respond to them personally. This guide is provided for facilitators to help them lead meaningful discussions among their peers as we unpack the video content together. Instructions in italics can be spoken/used by the facilitator as a script. For Highrock/church-based discussion groups, additional questions are offered at the end to help emphasize how this relates to faith.

Conversation Covenant

We hope that all discussions in this course are lively and enriching, but sometimes tough topics will be discussed. Highrock has developed this [Conversation Covenant](#), which is an agreement to hold respect and grace toward all participants within a group, no matter the conversation. Please adhere to the [Conversation Covenant](#) or think about creating one that fits your group's specific context.

Introductions and Entry Question (10 min)

- Introductions (if necessary/especially if first time): name, ethnic background, where you call home now, how you found the course.
- Warm-Up Question: What's one club or organization that you're a member of (not an employee)? What did you have to do to join/gain entry? (The more outrageous, the better)!
- Entry Question: Can you think of a time when you were refused admission, membership, or the emotional/social sense that you belonged - even though you really believed you should belong? Share that story briefly here (whether funny or serious).

Transition (1 min)

Having your sense of belonging challenged - especially when you DO belong and qualify for it - can feel like betrayal. We see this play out in today's lecture on WWII, especially in the incarceration of Japanese Americans and how America's pursuit of 'national security' impacted them and other populations.

Lecture Discussion (20 min)

Let's discuss the lecture material:

- **General:** *What significant feelings, thoughts, reactions, or questions emerged while watching this episode? If something stuck out to you personally, you can share it now.*
- **Impact on Asian Americans:** *WWII impacted Asian Americans of all kinds.*
 - *Most of the Japanese Americans who were incarcerated were American citizens. What do you make of how Executive Order 9066 treated their status as citizens?*
 - *Because of its goals in the war, the US formed an alliance with China after excluding and disdaining them for decades. What do you make of this change?*
 - *Other Asian communities in America were also affected by wartime shifts in culture and attitude. What do you make of how other Asian communities in America were treated during this period?*
 - *Broadly, what does this say about America? About national security?*
- **Japanese American Incarcerees:** *What did you make of the various ways that Japanese American incarcerees responded? How do you think you would have responded?*

Personal Experiences (20 min)

15 min: *We'll finish by considering our own experience and context.*

- *Japanese Americans had worked hard to 'become Americans' (both legally and culturally). What's your relationship like to American culture, identity, and nationality? Do you feel you belong? Do you feel you should/want to? How do you engage your American-ness or your place in American culture? Consider how your family (including prior generations) has engaged this question.*
 - *Particularly if you're Asian/Asian American, consider experiences when you've been in majority-White-American (or at least non-Asian) settings and how you might've felt or engaged with 'American-ness' and your place.*
 - *If your family has been here for more than two generations, consider how some of the prior generations may have navigated this question.*
- *How have you seen American identity, inclusion, and favor bestowed or revoked in a modern context or your own life? What were the reasons this happened (both the stated and unstated reasons)?*

Highrock/Church-Based Questions (Optional)

- *As people of faith, how might we view national security or security in general? How might we compare to how the US pursued them, as highlighted in this lecture?*
- *What role should nationality or cultural belonging play in our own lives as people of faith? How do you engage or interact with these identity markers in your own life and faith?*
- *Are there ways you feel prompted to pray, act, or engage differently after this lecture and discussion? Share about them. Pray for one another.*