

## **Representing Trauma and Resilience in Japanese American and Canadian Internment Narratives.**

In my dissertation, I evaluate how Japanese American and Canadian communities were able to use literature to assert, define, and reclaim agency over their history as well as their hybrid cultural identities that arose before, during, and after the WWII internment. Taking diachronic-, cultural-, and historical-narratological approaches as my methodological basis, I compare and contrast the ways in which internment narratives published between 1946-2020 approach ethnically Japanese identity and trauma in their various political and social contexts. Here, I consider how these narratives may have been influenced by both American and Canadian rhetoric about the war at the time of their publication, as well as how the texts have, within themselves, come to influence the contemporary understanding of internment.

In order to do so, I intend to evaluate the literary reception, discursive influence, and various literary forms of internment narratives published throughout North America's post-war history. Here, this study considers the various historical, political, and social factors that inform the position of these texts as vital parts of the Japanese North American literary canon. In essence, my study aims to find where literature and discourse intersect in their portrayal of experience and to compare and contrast their unique views and responses to history.

Finally, I intend to evaluate how different generations deal with historical trauma and how each generation's individual and cultural socialisation processes have come to influence their reactions to internment. Here, I hope to show that internment narratives are both contingent on the cultural milieus from which they emerge and that these intergenerational experiences form vital bases for future narratives. I will assess how the books propose to answer the central question of what it means to be ethnically Japanese in North America's multicultural environment, as informed by a history of internment, marginalisation, and racial injustice. Here I aim to show that the subjective and remembered histories of Japanese internment narratives are able to step into dialogue with historical discourse and challenge the silencing rhetoric connected to North America's internment history.