

*This I may have
already shared with you.*

Michi

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August 13, 1977

Amerasia Journal
Asian American Studies Center
3232 Campbell Hall
UCLA
Los Angeles, California 90024

Dear editor:

Gary Okihiro's review of Years of Infamy qualifies as an interesting bowel movement and deserves no more than that observation. But he dumps his stuff on the best book written to date on the camps and on one of the best writers in the Japanese American Community. So I feel compelled to contradict his metaphysical tailings.

It is, of course, logical that a person who lived through the camp experience will write a better history of it than one who did not. Michi Weglyn does an excellent job of describing the underlying causes of the Manzanar and Tule Lake riots. She does correctly describe the attitudes of Issei and the Japanese work ethic. She is definitely not part of the "liberal-JACL" line, whatever that is. And she is entirely correct to state that good things came out of the evacuation-relocation experience, S. I. Hayakawa notwithstanding.

Okihiro, on the other hand, seems to function from a) book learning, b) a theory about the "liberal-JACL" line, c) a new theory of history as a study of personalities as opposed to events, d) guilt by association (with Hayakawa), and e), of course, the theory that theory necessarily supersedes experience. All of which is interesting as bowel movements go.

Sincerely,

William Hohri
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