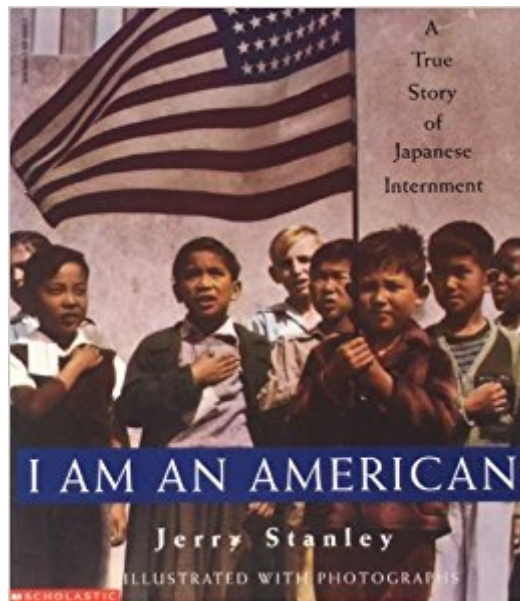




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# I Am An American: A True Story Of Japanese Internment



## Synopsis

Illustrated with black-and-white photographs. Young Shi Nomura was among the 120,000 American citizens who lost everything when he was sent by the U.S. government to Manzanar, an internment camp in the California desert, simply because he was of Japanese ancestry. "In clear and fascinating prose, Stanley has set forth the compelling story of one of America's darkest times--the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. His meticulously researched volume is accompanied by numerous, fine period black-and-white photographs...This eloquent account of the disastrous results of racial prejudice stands as a reminder to us in today's pluralistic society." --School Library Journal (starred) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Stanley does an admirable job of distilling the intricate story of the Japanese in America during World War II," said PW, adding that the numerous period photos help make the volume a "haunting, at times heartrending chronicle." All ages. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 5-10-In clear and fascinating prose, Stanley has set forth the compelling story of one of America's darkest times- the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. He has based his account on the experiences of Shi Nomura, who was sent to Manzanar in the deserts of eastern California when he was a high school senior. But the author weaves in more than absorbing personal details; he places the camps in a broader historical context, from Japanese immigration

and the resentment it aroused to outstanding Japanese American service in the war. His meticulously researched volume is accompanied by numerous, fine period black-and-white photographs, many by Dorothea Lange and Ansel Adams; and he makes judicious use of maps. This eloquent account of the disastrous results of racial prejudice stands as a reminder to us in today's pluralistic society. Diane S. Marton, Arlington County Library, VA Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“The bombing of Pearl Harbor was a great tragedy in American history, but it resulted in a second tragedy that was no less important: the forced imprisonment in the United States of 120,000 people, two-thirds of whom were United States citizens. These citizens had committed no crime, broken no law, and, when their rights were taken away, they were charged with no offense. Their only crime was that they were of Japanese ancestry.”

On a Sunday afternoon earlier this month, I was delighted at the chance to enjoy, soon to be ninety-years-old, Mary Kageyama Nomura, The Songbird of Mazanar, perform, in concert with the Tex Beneke Orchestra, at Stonebridge Entertainment Center's Great Nisei Reunion II. What an extraordinary treat that was. Mary Kageyama Nomura is the widow of Shiro Nomura, about whose WWII internment Jerry Stanley's young-adult book, *I AM AN AMERICAN: A True Story of Japanese Internment*, is written. Shiro and Mary met as teenage internees at Manzanar War Relocation Center in the high desert of eastern California. Their story, like so many about the internment camps, is poignant. Recommendation: An excellent read for every American—especially those in high school.

In clear and fascinating prose, Stanley has set forth the compelling story of one of America's darkest times—the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II.

from the goodreads synopsis.

No loyal citizen of the United States should be denied the democratic right to exercise the rights of citizenship, regardless of ancestry. . . . Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry [FDR, February 1, 1943; the very same FDR who, less than a year earlier, had issued E.O. #9066.]

Scholastic, Inc. paperback edition, 102 pages

Shiro (Shi) Nomura was the son of Hachizo and Tsuru Nomura who had emigrated from Japan to Hawaii in 1900 and then to Berkley, CA, in 1905. Shi was born in the United States, and the family finally settled on a farm southwest of Los Angeles at Keystone where Shi became a student at

Banning High School and fell in love with Amy Hattori. But the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, changed his life drastically. On Feb. 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order No. 9066, which resulted in the forced internment (it's internment, folks, not interment) of 120,000 Japanese-Americans, two-thirds of whom were United States citizens, in concentration camps throughout the western United States. Shi and his family ended up at Manzanar, just south of the desert town of Independence in Inyo County, eastern California. Amy was sent to Amache near the town of Lamar in Colorado. Illustrated with copious black-and-white period photographs and numerous maps, *I Am an American* tells the true story of the Japanese internment by specifically following the life of Shi at Manzanar, where he lived with his parents, his older brother Shigeru and his family, and his older sister Sadae and her children; through his furlough work on A. T. Tjaden's farm at Conrad, north of Great Falls, MT, and return to Manzanar; to his visit to Amache in a vain attempt to rekindle his relationship with Amy and final freedom after which he married Mary Kageyama. On the one hand, we can partially understand the anti-Japanese hysteria because our nation was at war with Japan and, while the vast majority of Japanese-Americans were loyal to the United States, there were some spies and traitors, however few they might have been. On the other hand, there is no doubt that most of the mania was the result of simple racial prejudice that resulted in one of the saddest chapters in America's otherwise mostly commendatory history. I am sure that there was enough blame to go around, but it is interesting that it was a Democrat administration and a Democrat-controlled Congress which allowed this to happen. There are some references to dancing, and the word "Japs" is used once by protesters to describe Japanese-Americans. Otherwise, this is a good source of material to accompany a study of World War II.

This book tells us how it could happen. Japanese-Americans were the subject of constant pressure and segregation in Hawaii and California as well as the rest of the United States. Apparently the Japanese were excellent farmers and the whites were no competition for their success so laws were passed, no male immigrants, no female immigrants, no citizenship, citizenship doesn't really matter, etc. The story is pretty stunning and it really covers how the idea of internment could happen. Hate a group of people, refuse them the right to assimilate and then send them off without rights when there is an excuse to do so. I think it could happen again. It would be better if it didn't though.

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