



Haunted by Waters: A Journey through Race and Place in the American West (American Land & Life)

Robert T. Hayashi

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Even though race influenced how Americans envisioned, represented, and shaped the American West, discussions of its history devalue the experiences of racial and ethnic minorities. In this lyrical history of marginalized peoples in Idaho, Robert T. Hayashi views the West from a different perspective by detailing the ways in which they shaped the western landscape and its meaning.

As an easterner, researcher, angler, and third-generation Japanese American traveling across the contemporary Idaho landscape—where his grandfather died during internment during World War II—Hayashi reconstructs a landscape that lured emigrants of all races at the same time its ruling forces were developing cultured processes that excluded nonwhites. Throughout each convincing and compelling chapter, he searches for the stories of dispossessed minorities as patiently as he searches for trout.

Using a wide range of materials that include memoirs, oral interviews, poetry, legal cases, letters, government documents, and even road signs, Hayashi illustrates how Thomas Jefferson's vision of an agrarian, all-white, and democratic West affected the Gem State's Nez Perce, Chinese, Shoshone, Mormon, and particularly Japanese residents. Starting at the site of the Corps of Discovery's journey into Idaho, he details the ideological, aesthetic, and material manifestations of these intertwined notions of race and place. As he explores Idaho's fabled rivers and visits its historical sites and museums, Hayashi reads the contemporary landscape in light of this evolution.

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