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**A Sense of Belonging: Local Sansei Women's Experiences  
in Hawai'i.**

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
degree of**

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In  
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## Abstract

While Issei (first) and Nisei (second) generations of Americans of Japanese Ancestry (AJA) in Hawai'i have been well documented, limited literature exists in relation to non-Issei women, and the Sansei (third) generation. Based on six months of fieldwork in Hawai'i and, in-depth interviews and personal inventories of thirty Sansei women, this dissertation primarily provides an ethnographic investigation into the diversity and complexity of what it means to be a Sansei woman in Hawai'i, focusing on themes identified by Sansei women - of the past, values and social relationships. Drawing on these themes, this dissertation explores how they relate to a 'sense of belonging' in Hawai'i. It also considers the significance and politics of Local identity and the consequences of emphasising the existing historical stereotypes and narratives for Sansei women, AJA and Locals in Hawai'i.

**Key Words:** Americans of Japanese Ancestry, ethnicity, gender, generations, history, Hawai'i, identity, Issei, Japanese Americans, Local, marriage, motherhood, Nikkei, Nisei, picture bride, Sansei, sense of belonging, values, women.

For Okaasan, Dad, Grandma and Grandad, Ojiichan, and Obaachan.  
Thank you for igniting my passion for talking story long before I knew  
what it was.

For women, past, present and future, who share the gift of talking story  
and touch lives.

*Remember to always give back.*

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