



# Thin Wood Walls

*By David Patneaude*

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## Thin Wood Walls By David Patneaude

Eleven-year-old Joe Hanada likes playing basketball with his best friend, Ray, writing plays and stories, and thinking about the upcoming Christmas holiday. But his world falls apart when Japanese planes bomb Pearl Harbor. His country goes to war. The FBI takes his father away. And neighbors and friends in his hometown near Seattle begin to suspect Joe, his family, and all Japanese Americans of spying for the enemy. When the government orders people of Japanese heritage living on the West Coast to move to internment camps, including Joe and his family, Joe turns to the journal his father gave him to record his thoughts and feelings.

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## **Thin Wood Walls** By David Patneaude Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8—The bombing of Pearl Harbor puts an end to 11-year-old Joe Hanada's happy-go-lucky life in the White River Valley near Seattle. Basketball, marbles, and Christmas plans are suddenly overshadowed by fears about the war. When longtime acquaintances begin to suspect Japanese-Americans of being spies, even the loyalty of Joe's Caucasian best friend can't soften the hurt of being called names or of having his father, a leader in the Issei community, taken away by the FBI. Joe finds comfort in his journal, where he records his impressions in both prose and haiku. After he is sent to the Tule Lake Relocation Camp in California with his older brother Mike and their mother and grandmother, Joe finds relief from the tedium of confinement in his writing. When Mike turns 18, he volunteers for the Army, eager to prove his loyalty. Not all of the detainees share his desire to fight for the U.S. Some request repatriation to Japan, while others forbid their children to speak English. The inclusion of many differing viewpoints within the Japanese-American community makes this book unique. Featuring a main character who grows and develops as historical events unfold, this well-written novel is a worthy companion to Ken Mochizuki's *Baseball Saved Us* (Lee & Low, 1993) and Yoshiko Uchida's *Journey to Topaz* (Turtleback, 1985) and *Journey Home* (McElderry, 1978).—Ginny Gustin, Sonoma County Library System, Santa Rosa, CA  
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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 6-10. In this first-person narrative, readers find out what it was like to be a young Japanese American boy in Seattle after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. First Joe's immigrant dad is arrested and held in secret. Then the rest of the family is removed to internment camps. Joe's older brother can't wait to join the army and prove his loyalty, and he fights the Nazis in Europe, but that doesn't reduce the prejudice and the family's hardship. There have been several books about the Japanese American internment--fiction, nonfiction, and even a few picture books--including Ken Mochizuki's *Baseball Saved Us* (1993) and Yoshiko Uchida's autobiographical accounts. Like some of those, this one makes history the drama, and Patneaude scrupulously reports the facts and shows the wide range of attitudes among Japanese Americans and whites, citizens and immigrants, even among members of one family. Basing his story on extensive research and interviews, the author does a fine job of bringing the daily experience up close through the story of an American kid torn from home. *Hazel Rochman*  
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Review

The author does a fine job of bringing the daily experience up close through the story of an American kid torn from home.

Joe's first-person narrative is moving and clear in its depiction of the life, so cruel and unfair.

Intricate and informative, the story portrays the clash of love and prejudice with depth and even humor.

## Users Review

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**Margaret Watkins:**

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**David Lussier:**

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