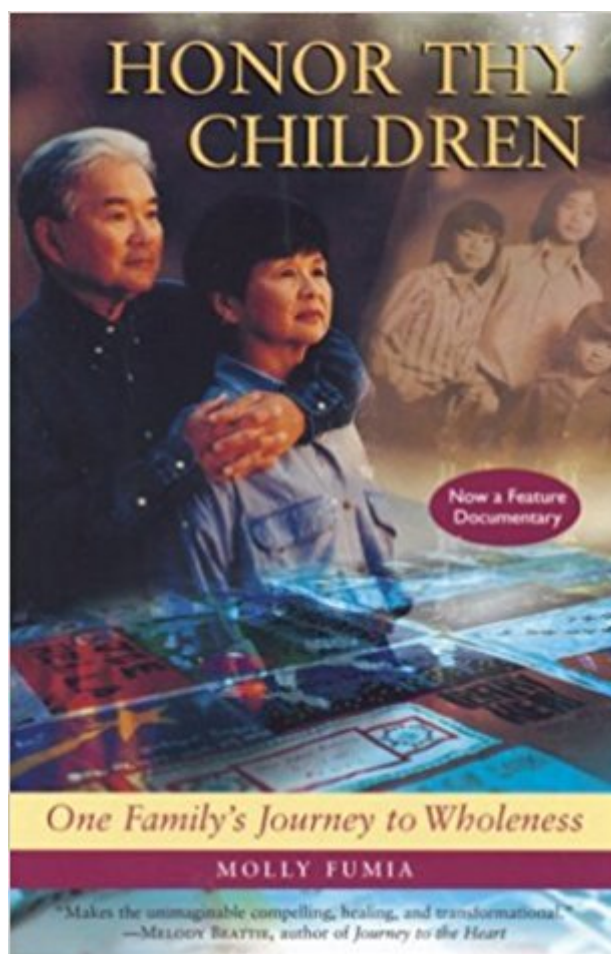


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Honor Thy Children: One Family's Journey To Wholeness



Synopsis

The brave and inspirational story of a Japanese-American family's triumph in the face of the death of their three children, two to AIDS and a third the victim of a tragic drive-by shooting. *Honor Thy Children* chronicles the creation, devastation, and remarkable resurrections of the Nakatanis, a family that journeys from unimaginable grief to healing.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This heartbreaking story of a Japanese American couple who experienced the tragic deaths of all three of their children—two from AIDS, one a murder victim—records the family's trajectory from homophobia and denial to emotional healing. Alexander Nakatani, a San Jose, Calif., social worker, and his wife, Jane, an elementary school teacher, grew up in Hawaii in a culture that prized reticence, hard work, denial of self. They virtually disowned their firstborn son, Glen, upon learning he was gay. Troubled, sullen, secretive, raised by parents who feared he was not "normal," Glen left home in 1977 at age 15, living on college loans and forged checks; he died of AIDS in 1990. Greg, the middle son, a macho, heterosexual engineering student, was shot to death in 1986 in a dispute with an illegal Mexican immigrant over a car. The Nakatanis were initially horrified to discover that Guy, their youngest son, was gay, but anger and shame were gradually supplanted by unconditional love. Diagnosed HIV-positive, Guy became a health educator, lecturing at schools and businesses on the dangers of HIV and of homophobic ignorance—with his father at his side as a fellow speaker. Wheelchair-bound and partly blind from AIDS complications, Guy, 26, died in 1994. Skillfully using letters, interviews, conversations and oral testimony, Fumia, author of previous books on grieving,

gives her moving study of family dynamics complexity. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

When Fumia (Safe Passage, Conari, 1992) was asked by the late HIV/AIDS activist Guy Nakatani to tell the story of his family and himself, she did not know she would become both chronicler and catalyst. Of Al and Jane Nakatani's three sons, one had been murdered, one had died of AIDS, and the third, Guy, was also dying of that disease. Fumia's probing reveals the dysfunction and homophobia that led to the destruction of this Japanese American family, as well as their triumph over these obstacles even as death approaches. Written with compassion, humor, and a minimum of sentimentality, the book is a heartbreaking, riveting study that works both as a moving testament to human endurance in the face of tragedy and as a graphic caution against the physical and psychological ravages of homophobia and AIDS. Recommended for gay studies collections in academic and public libraries. ?Richard Violette, Social Law Lib., Boston Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This must be the saddest book I have ever read. HONOR THY CHILDREN is the true story of the Nakatani family of San Jose, California and what a sorrowful story it is. Jane and Alexander Nakatani, Japanese Americans, were married in 1960 and had three sons, Glenn, Greg and Guy. Two of their sons Greg and Guy were gay and died of complications from AIDS. The other son Glenn was shot by a Latino, someone he did not know, after the man dented the fender of Glenn's Mustang. Although the driver of the car was later convicted and went to prison, the shooter escaped to Mexico and was never apprehended. Molly Fumia, married and the mother of six children, was commissioned by Guy in 1993 to write this family's story but soon became much more than an objective journalist. She soon found herself becoming one of the family's closest friends and was present at his bedside during the last days of Guy's life although she did not witness his death. Alexander and Jane Nakatani were decent people and in many ways victims as much as their two gay children-- homophobia like racism hurts us all-- since they, like many parents over the globe did not in the beginning tell their sons that there was nothing wrong with being gay, that they should love whomever they would. There are so many things wrong about this story and to feel bad about: the fact that the Jane and Alexander had difficulty buying a house they wanted because they were Japanese, that Guy permed his beautiful black straight hair and wore blue contacts in order to look less Japanese, that Jane used the "f" word early on in characterizing gay people, that both Greg and Guy had unprotected sex with no thoughts for their future, that Alexander did not nurture his

sons as he should have because they were males. The list goes on. What makes this book worth reading, however, is that this family learned from their mistakes and grew in love and courage. Guy devoted himself to making speeches to mostly high school audiences, warning them of the dangers of AIDS, and admonishing them not to become another statistic like himself. (He spoke to over 37,000 young people before he finally became too ill to continue his project. His father was there for him every step he took; and when he could no longer walk, Alexander pushed his wheelchair. In a passage that will break your heart, Alexander introduces Guy to the last audience he will ever speak to at Saratoga High School: "This is my son, Guy Nakatani, who has brought honor to our family's name." "Honor thy children" is obviously a play on the words of the commandment to "honor thy father and mother" from the King James Bible. something that Jane and Alexander Nakatani ultimately do-- with a vengeance. This very well-written book should be read by both parents and children, both gay and straight. When I finished it, I wished that I could meet these parents who lost so much and tell them how much their story moved me.

excellent

Moving. I am in awe of the strength and fortitude of these parents.

It was sent fast, in excellent shape, for an amazing price. Overall a great experience! Great doing business with this seller! =o) Great book about a family's journey of finding out about their children's sexuality and dealing with their deaths.

I first picked up this book almost by accident at a bargain bookstore in the mall one day. I read the cover and was curious why it said honor thy children and what were the stories behind the people on the cover. Then I sat down and read it, and I was moved to tears!!! It gives a moving yet brutal picture about a family's struggles. I can even imagine how devastating it would be to lose all 3 children. What makes this book so interesting is that it is told from the point of view of the parents that last surviving child, Guy, and the author, and all 3 points of view suck you into their world, their joys and their pain. It also educated me about AIDS, and AIDS prevention not only in practices but in mindset. As a young woman who is in the era of the AIDS epidemic, this book has shown me the importance of holding your own life sacred and to protect oneself from this disease by becoming informed. I am apart of my college's gay straight alliance and my first instinct from reading this book is that I have to donate it to the library because it was too sad for me personally to read again, but if

someone else could get what I got from this book then that would be great. The book also gives a look about the 2 gay son's different views on being gay men, and how that realization changes their lives forever. I suggest that you read this book because this is a true life real glimpse of an American family and what they go through as human beings, it will move the unmovable, inform us about other people, and touch us.

Beautiful and heart-wrenching book. It's very educational as there is very little in terms of written material regarding Asian-American parents, their personal tragedies, and ability to accept these.

"Honor Thy Children" was the most difficult book I've HAD to read in a long time. The Nakitani's were forced to face their worst fears head-on...over and over again. With each terrible event or deep secret exposed, they had to question who they were, where they had been and where they were headed (as a family) in the future. We all tend to think we know ourselves well, but we haven't begun to scratch the surface until tragedy strikes us where it hurts most. Molly Fumia tells this story with such honesty and compassion, that you begin to find yourself immersed in the saga of ignorance which becomes deadly to some very promising young men. The emotional impact of this family's losses and how the parents try to come to terms with their regrets, had a firm hold on me through every compelling page. I'm relieved to have finished reading this incredibly sad story, but I will never forget the affect it had on me. Whether you are a parent or not, this story will open your eyes to yourself. Don't miss this opportunity for enlightenment.

This story hit home for me. We like to believe we are so accepting in this society and that we always do what is best for our children. This story takes place in very recent history. The familiarity of the setting was profound for me. I graduated the same year as Guy Nakatani and went to the neighboring high school. A lot of my friends say they knew him. I didn't. Even in 1986, in San Jose, it was not acceptable to be gay. Most of us didn't discuss it, if we did we made fun of people. Looking back, I can see that a lot of mistakes were made out of ignorance. As a new parent myself, my heart will always be with Jane and Al. I was so proud of this family for sharing their story with all of us who needed to hear it. And an extra thanks to Molly Fumia for bringing it to us.

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