

# BOOK REVIEW OF “MY YEAR OF MEATS” BY RUTH L. OZEKI



## Abstract

This text is a review of Ruth L. Okezi’s novel entitled “My Year of Meats”. The paper has five different sections, the first section giving a general introduction to the book while the second section focuses on the characters. The third section tackles the main theme of the novel while the fourth highlights the two main styles employed in the text. The last section gives a summary of the text and the main conclusions drawn from the discussions.

## Introduction

My year of meats is the first novel to be written by Ruth Ozeki who has currently been known as award winning writer. The novel gives an account of two cross cultural women who have been brought together in an intersection of television, agricultural and industrial interactions. Other issues that are discussed in the novel also include fertility, motherhood, life and love.

## Main characters

In this text, Jane Takagi-Little is portrayed as the main character. She

takes a job in a reality show whose main objective is to encourage Japanese women to consume more beef (Ozeki, 2013). In pursuit of this goal, Jane is revealed as a very responsible American housewife who would open her house to the media and make a meal right before the cameras. In the entire process of her cooking, beef seems to dominate her dishes. Furthermore, this process also exposes her to more issues about meat industry that challenge her commitment to the show. She also gets to interact with another character by the name Akiko Ueno who is the wife to the advertising executive that oversees the show (Ozeki, 2013). From Akiko Ueno, Jane gets to learn that there is more in life than just being obedient to a husband that she never loved.

## Main Theme/ Issue

The main theme in this novel is the use of antibiotic and hormones in meat that is consumed by many households. This is revealed when Jane takes up a job through which she gets involved in promotion of beef consumption in Japan (Ozeki, 2013). As Jane begins her work, she gets to discover the effects of drugs used in meat and makes an attempt to address this with the Japanese producers. However, her initiative proves to be less effective as the company employs a strategy of sending new producers within a very short time.

Although these antibiotics are revealed to be harmful, Jane's input is often ignored in the entire process. She would, however, only be listened to if any of the producers shows an allergic reaction to the antibiotics (Ozeki, 2013). In such a case, she would report the case to a doctor, but such case would not be revisited until the next case that has more adverse effects is realized.

## Styles used in the Book

The author of the novel employs the use of two main styles to narrate her story. The writer thus adopts the narrative style in her writing. In the sections of the text that are narrated by Jane, the author uses the first person point of view. In these sections, Jane who is the main character tells the story as if she is viewing the present time from a future date. She, therefore, behaves as if she is either a diary or a pillow book or both. However, in the sections that are narrated by Akiko, the author uses third person point of view. In this case Jane, who remains the main character, tends to narrate Akiko's story even on the incidences that seemed to have occurred to her before Jane met her.

## Conclusion

In summary, "My year of Meats" is a novel authored by Ruth L. Ozeki. In this novel, she reveals various issues that emerged as a result of interaction of two women from different cultures. Although the text has two different characters namely Jane Takagi and Akiko, Jane remains the main characters since she is used to narrate the most part of the story. The main theme of the novel is the use of antibiotics and hormones in meat. In communicating the theme, the author employs two different styles namely first person and third person points of view in the narrative.

# References

1. Ozeki, R. (2013). *My Year of Meats*. Melbourne: Text Pub. Co.