



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

## ***The Red Kimono: Powerful Historical Novel Revisits Racial Tensions of 1940s America***

*With themes of fear, racism and forgiveness that are as relevant today as they were seventy years ago, Jan Morrill's debut novel is gripping audiences from coast to coast. Taking readers deep into the lives of two young Japanese Americans and their African American friend as they experience dramatic events of World War II, The Red Kimono offers a compelling reality check for all.*

**Fayetteville, AR** – A glimpse back at 1940s America will send chills down the spines of many who lived through it. As the United States suffered crippling societal fear and racism, a string of geopolitical events further deepened tensions. In a ground-breaking debut novel by Jan Morrill, the fictional story of three young Americans caught up in troubles of the era is vividly depicted for a twenty-first century audience. *The Red Kimono* travels deep into each of their lives as they navigate and pay for the problems inflicted upon them.

Synopsis:

*In 1941, racial tensions are rising in the California community where nine year-old Sachiko Kimura and her seventeen-year-old brother, Nobu, live. Japan has attacked Pearl Harbor, people are angry, and one afternoon, Sachiko and Nobu witness three teenage boys taunting and beating their father in the park. Sachiko especially remembers Terrence Harris, the boy with dark skin and hazel eyes, and Nobu cannot believe the boys capable of such violence toward his father are actually his friends.*

*What Sachiko and Nobu do not know is that Terrence's family had received a telegram that morning with news that Terrence's father was killed at Pearl Harbor. Desperate to escape his pain, Terrence rushes from his home and runs into two high-school friends who convince him to find a Japanese man and get revenge. They do not know the man they attacked is Sachiko and Nobu's father.*

*In the months that follow, Terrence is convicted of his crime and Sachiko and Nobu are sent to an*

*internment camp in Arkansas. While behind bars and barbed wire, each of the three young people will go through dramatic changes. One will learn acceptance. One will remain imprisoned by resentment, and one will seek a path to forgiveness.*

As the author explains, her book's startling themes are still deep-rooted in modern society.

"Fear, racism and forgiveness are as relevant today as they were when this story took place seventy years ago. Though the fear surrounding 9/11 certainly reminded me of the fear surrounding Pearl Harbor, I see smaller instances of ignorance that causes anger, fear, hatred, etc. almost daily in differences of a politics, religion, culture, and class," says Morrill, whose own mother was a Japanese American internee during WWII.

Continuing, "*The Red Kimono* compares the lives of those who choose to remain closed to those who open themselves to the discovery of our differences."

Since its release, the book has attracted a consistent string of rave reviews.

"It is rare that a book of such importance is published, and even more rare does one come from a debut novelist. Probably the best compliment that can be paid to this book is its honest look at this family's life seen through the eyes of a child. Morrill pulls no punches as she exposes prejudice from every standpoint" says Velda Brotherton, who reviewed the book on Amazon.

*The Red Kimono*, published by the University of Arkansas Press, is available now: <http://amzn.to/13tVZbz>  
For more information, visit the author's official website: <http://www.janmorrill.com>

#### **About the Author:**

Jan Morrill was born and (mostly) raised in California. Her mother, a Buddhist Japanese American, was an internee during World War II. Her father, a Southern Baptist redhead of Irish descent, retired from the Air Force.

*The Red Kimono*, (University of Arkansas Press, February 2013), as well as many of her short stories, reflect memories of growing up in a multicultural, multi-religious, multi-political environment.

Her award-winning short stories and memoir essays have been published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul* books and several anthologies. Recently, she was nominated for the Pushcart Prize for her short story "Xs and Os," which appeared in the *Voices Anthology*. An artist as well as a writer, she is currently working on the sequel to *The Red Kimono*.

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