

First Thursday Book Group Discussion Questions**Translation of Love**

by Lynn Kutsukake

April 4, 2019, 2pm. Lorraine Wheeler hosts. Barb Selis leads the discussion.

1. Discuss the devastation of the war and its effects on the survivors who are caught between a painful past and an uncertain future.
2. How are the Japanese treated by their American occupiers? How prevalent is discrimination by the Japanese towards Americans and the Americans toward Japanese? What do you make of the treatment, for instance, of Aya at the hands of her classmates?
3. Five different voices make up this novel. Do you find one more compelling or sympathetic than others?
4. Why do their relatives resent Aya and her father's move to Tokyo?
5. Talk about Matt's presence in Tokyo. Consider the irony of his internment in America—where he was considered a foreign threat—and his position now among the ranks of the victors. Where do his sense of identity and his sympathies lie?
6. What do the letters to General MacArthur reveal about the state of the Japanese and their society? When one letter writer asks, "how should a man live?" What were your thoughts?
7. What do you make of Sumiko, who was raised to be "proper", but who feels the thrill of escaping convention to flirt with danger in a dance hall? Why does Matt decide to help Fumi find her?
8. What does the book's title, "The Translation of Love," mean in the context of the story?