



# **Reconfiguring Citizenship and National Identity in the North American Literary Imagination (Series in Citizenship Studies)**

*Kathy-Ann Tan*

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## **Reconfiguring Citizenship and National Identity in the North American Literary Imagination (Series in Citizenship Studies)** Kathy-Ann Tan

Literature has always played a central role in creating and disseminating culturally specific notions of citizenship, nationhood, and belonging. In *Reconfiguring Citizenship and National Identity in the North American Literary Imagination*, author Kathy-Ann Tan investigates metaphors, configurations, parameters, and articulations of U.S. and Canadian citizenship that are enacted, renegotiated, and revised in modern literary texts, particularly during periods of emergence and crisis.

Tan brings together for the first time a selection of canonical and lesser-known U.S. and Canadian writings for critical consideration. She begins by exploring literary depiction of “willful” or “wayward” citizens and those with precarious bodies that are viewed as threatening, undesirable, unacceptable—including refugees and asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, deportees, and stateless people. She also considers the rights to citizenship and political membership claimed by queer bodies and an examination of “new” and alternative forms of citizenship, such as denizenship, urban citizenship, diasporic citizenship, and Indigenous citizenship. With case studies based on works by a diverse collection of authors—including Nathaniel Hawthorne, Djuna Barnes, Etel Adnan, Sarah Schulman, Walt Whitman, Gail Scott, and Philip Roth—Tan uncovers alternative forms of collectivity, community, and nation across a broad range of perspectives.

In line with recent cross-disciplinary explorations in the field, *Reconfiguring Citizenship and National Identity in the North American Literary Imagination* shows citizenship as less of a fixed or static legal entity and more as a set of symbolic and cultural practices. Scholars of literary studies, cultural studies, and citizenship studies will be grateful for Tan’s illuminating study.

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