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**Under the Shadow of Mackenzie King?
—Narrative Spatialization as
Working-Through in Kerri Sakamoto’s
*The Electrical Field****

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Abstract

The novelistic presentation of “the electrical field” in Kerri Sakamoto’s eponymous novel—that is, the emotional entanglement of the characters as filtered through Asako’s mind—can be seen as the narrative space of its protagonist-narrator, Asako, through which she both acts out and works through her traumas. Instead of being binary opposites (with one superseding the other), acting out and working through are “countervailing forces” in Asako’s traumatized mind, functioning against one another as they overlap. Asako’s fragmentary narration thus reveals both the symptoms of her traumas and her difficult means of working through them. The symptoms include protective numbing, emotional outbursts, and repeated dreams and rationalization, which

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are seen as both responses to her social constraints and expressions of her desire for social interaction. Asako's narrative working through is then read "spatially"; that is, in terms of its spatial form (with narrative fragments and recurrent motifs) and of Asako's spatial practices in the yard, on and beyond the electrical field, and on Mackenzie Hill. Her narrative spatialization, in other words, is her way of working through traumas and weaving a complicated network of causality, motif and human connection, through which trauma and death are understood from multiple perspectives, while communication and sharing are confirmed.

Key Words: Kerri Sakamoto, narrative spatialization, trauma narrative