

11-Rewriting the Unthinkable: (In)Visibility and the Nuclear Sublime in Gerald Vizenor's Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57 (2003) and Lindsey A. Freeman's This Atom Bomb in Me (2019)

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After identifying some of the aesthetic, rhetorical, and ontological pitfalls of the nuclear or atomic sublime (the over-aestheticization of nuclear risks and the resulting absence of any sense of responsibility) this essay undertakes narratological and rhetorical analyses of one novel, Gerald Vizenor's *Hiroshima Bugi: Atomu 57* (2003), and one creative memoir, Lindsey A. Freeman's *This Atom Bomb in Me* (2019). As this article shows, the two works offer alternate ways of representing and critiquing the beguiling but dangerous nuclear sublime while shedding light on a wide array of notions that are intimately associated with atomic culture but have yet remained understudied from this perspective, at least in the fields of (American) literary studies, ecocriticism, and the environmental humanities. These include the dichotomies invisibility/visibility (or absence/presence) and whiteness/color, and the related trope of silence. By engaging with non-dominant traditions and cultures (Anishinaabe; Japanese) and elaborating complex metaphors in the case of Vizenor, or in multisensorial experiences which draw on theories from new materialisms in Freeman's, the two works converge to suggest that experimentation in the contemporary novel and memoir can lead to an ecocritical revision of the dominant and ocularcentric nuclear sublime, and of the risks it aestheticizes and conceals.