

Japanese Femininities

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the corporate salaryman and professional housewife stand as hegemonic archetypes of masculinity and femininity in japan however these rigid gender roles are being challenged by women who are seeking to move beyond the strictly defined confines of their traditional roles as caregivers and homemakers through interviews with a range of japanese women this book explores how women s gender roles are both reified and undermined in japan today and uncovers the prevalent themes or discourses that are utilized to construct gendered identities it shows that while dominant discourses formulate notions of femininity within the domestic sphere these are simultaneously resisted and problematized by contemporary women to this end justin charlebois traces the construction of different oppositional femininities such as the single career woman and married working mother which challenge destabilize and potentially reconfigure the traditional gender order this book makes an important contribution to our understanding of gender roles and femininity in japan and as such will be of great interest to students and scholars of japanese culture and society gender studies and women s studies

kawaii the love of all things cute has become the dominant image of japanese girls and women real japanese women are however more complex some celebrate their uterus others experiment with fashion and cross dressing or embrace their chubbiness many struggle with motherhood and some may even return as vengeful ghosts this third collection of studies by young scholars from the university of cambridge looks beyond the kawaii image and explores the diversity and complexity of being a japanese woman in the new millennium

the history of japanese memoir literature began over a thousand years ago its greatest practitioners being women of the middle ranks whose literary talents won many of them positions as ladies in waiting at the heian imperial court as female

writers they both inhabited and helped create a discursive world obsessed with the arts of concealment and self display the perils and possibilities erotic political and literary of real and metaphorical peepholes as memoirists they were virtuosos in the exacting art of feminine self representation fictions of femininity explores the heian memoirists creations of themselves in four texts kagero nikki the kagero memoir after 974 makura no soshi the pillow book after 994 sarashina nikki the sarashina memoir after 1058 and sanuki no suke nikki the memoir of the sanuki assistant handmaid after 1108 essays on the individual memoirs pursue a dual interest asking how each text works as a rhetorical construct and how it reflects the author s negotiations with heian fictions about women and writing letting the memoirs themselves set the terms for exploring gender constructions fictions of femininity addresses a spectrum of related issues the reading of the kagero memoir probes two traditional avenues of feminine expression the writing of waka and the discourse of buddhist nunhood two essays on the sarashina memoir reveal a fine weave of literary religious and autoerotic fantasies highlighting the intellectual gifts of a memoirist long misread as naive and girlish the essay on the memoir of the sanuki assistant handmaid examines the use of spirit possession as metaphor for commemorative writing tracing the balancing act its author performed in the midst of political intrigues at court the relationship between the memoir and voyeurism takes center stage in the closing essay on the pillow book which compares its author s treatment of the thematics of seeing and being seen with that of her chief rival murasaki shikibu creator of the tale of genji taken together the essays in this book underscore the diversity of the heian memoirists responses to their roles as women and as writers in one of the most unusual epochs of japanese history

in the japanese new woman dina lowy focuses on this new female image as it was revealed discussed and debated in popular newspapers and magazines in the 1910s as well as on the lives of a specific group of women members of the feminist literary organization known as the seitosha

the book examines women s language as an ideological construct historically created by discourse the aim is to demonstrate by delineating a genealogy of japanese women s language that to deconstruct and denaturalize the relationships between gender and any language and to account for why and how they are related as they are we must consider history discourse and ideology the book analyzes multiple discourse examples spanning the premodern period of the thirteenth century to the immediate post wwii years mostly translated into english for the first time locating them in political social and academic developments and describing each historical period in a manner easily accessible for those readers not familiar with japanese history this is the first book that describes a comprehensive development of japanese women s language and will greatly interest students of japanese language gender and language studies linguistics anthropology sociology and history as well as women s studies and sexuality studies

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