

KCJS, Fall 2015
W 2:55-6:10
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FAMILIES AND WORK IN POST-WAR JAPAN

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Course Description:

This course surveys outstanding examples of English language social science research on Japan to introduce the story of post-World War II transformations of Japanese social life. Most of the readings are ethnographic studies, which we will interrogate in order to discover interactions between the interdependent realms of work and families. The texts are presented chronologically, allowing us to gauge change and continuity, and point out the historical underpinnings of the social division of labor. The primary aim of the course is to gain insight into various durable cultural strategies that organize contemporary Japanese social action, noting how they were inflected, first by rapid industrialization and economic growth, and more recently by relative economic stasis. The texts highlight the roles of class, gender, and regional variation in work and family life, and reflect on how social psychology shapes work-family conflicts.

Required Texts:

- Bernstein, Gail Lee. 1985. *Haruko's World: A Japanese Farm Woman and Her Community*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Borowoy, Amy. 2005. *The Too-Good Wife: Alcohol, Codependency, and the Politics of Nurture in Postwar Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Ogasawara, Yuko. 1998. *Office Ladies and Salaried Men: Power, Gender, and Work in Japanese Companies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Roberts, Glenda S. 1994. *Staying on the Line: Blue-Collar Women in Contemporary Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Rohlen, Thomas. 1974. *For Harmony and Strength: Japanese White Collar Organization in Anthropological Perspective*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Students should purchase the five texts above. Other required journal articles and book chapters will be distributed in class.

Recommended Texts:

- Cole, Robert E. 1971. *Japanese Blue Collar: The Changing Tradition*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dower, John. 2000. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co. Inc.
- Fuess, Harald. 2004. *Divorce in Japan*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.
- Gill, Tom. 2001. *Men of Uncertainty: The Social Organization of Day Laborers in Contemporary Japan*. Albany: The State University of New York Press.

- Gordon, Andrew. 2001. *The Wages of Affluence: Labor and Management in Postwar Japan*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 2008. *A Modern History of Japan: From Tokugawa Times to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hamabata, Matthews Masayuki. 1990. *Crested Kimono: Power and Love in the Japanese Business Family*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Itoh, Masako. 2008. *I'm Married to Your Company: Everyday Voices of Japanese Women*. Translated and edited by Nobuko Adachi and James Stanlaw. New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.
- Keene, Donald. 2002. *Emperor of Japan: Meiji and His World*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Kondo, Dorinne. 1991. *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lebra, Takie Sugimoto. *Japanese Women: Constraint and Fulfillment*. Berkeley: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Mouer, Ross and Kawanishi Hirosuke. 2005. *A Sociology of Work in Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ochiai, Emiko. 1996. *The Japanese Family System in Transition: A Sociological Analysis of Family Change in Postwar Japan*. Kyoto: International Center for Japanese Studies.
- Roberson, James E. 2003. *Japanese Working Class Lives: An Ethnographic Study of Factory Workers*. London: Routledge.
- Sugimoto, Yoshio. 2010. *An Introduction to Japanese Society* (3rd edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Totman, Conrad. 2008 (1981). *Japan Before Perry: A Short History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Vogel, Ezra and Suzanne Hall Vogel. 1991 (1971, 1963). *Japan's New Middle Class: The Salary Man and His Family in a Tokyo Suburb*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- White, Merry Isaacs. 2002. *Perfectly Japanese: Making Families in an Era of Upheaval*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS¹

Presentations

The class is a reading intensive, seminar-style inquiry, in which we try to think together in a sustained way about the postwar history and current conditions of work and family life in Japan. Informative and well-written examples of recent research have been selected and the labor will be divided for maximum productivity. Four or five students will present each week on portions of the reading and lead the discussion. Expect to be responsible for a chapter-length section each time you present. Presenters should critically analyze the reading, identifying key passages and using them as a basis for discussion. The aim is interrogation the texts. Each presenter will submit a concise discussion paper (500-words, maximum) on the day of the presentation. Focused comparison with the contemporary work-family reality you observe around you is welcome.

¹ These are tentative plans. We will adjust as needed based on the number of participants and other contingencies.

Commentaries

Students not presenting in a particular week will prepare a 300-400 word commentary on the reading to be used as the basis for their participation in the discussion. The commentaries should make reference to specific passages from the reading.

Commentaries need not be submitted if one is presenting or tasked with summarizing the discussion of the previous week.

Weekly Discussion Summaries

One or more students will be assigned to take notes on the discussion and produce a summary to be distributed to all members prior to the start of class the following week. Students preparing the notes are not tasked with presentations or commentaries.

Final Paper

Write a research paper analyzing one or more cultural strategies for organizing work and family life in Japan that is of interest to you. Papers should make some use of the course readings and draw on our discussions. These research essays should be 12-15 pages, double-spaced. A paper proposal is due early in the semester. The first draft Additional information about the papers will be distributed in class.

Evaluation

Presentations	20%
Commentaries	20%
Discussion Summaries	10%
Final Paper	40%
Attendance and class participation	10%

Schedule: (Assignments are due on the days they are scheduled)

Sept. 9: Introduction: 20th Century Japan's Industrial Transformation

Recommended reading: Dower, *Embracing Defeat*. Pp. 19-167.

Film: *The Japanese Version*.

Sept. 16: The Suburban Salaryman Household as Postwar Family Paradigm

Reading: Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*.

Introduction (1-12)

Concluding Remarks (255-270)

Dormitories and Apartments (212-234)

Marriage and the Family (235-254).

Gordon, Andrew. 1997. Managing the Japanese Household: The New Life Movement in Postwar Japan. *Social Politics*, Summer: 245-283.

Recommended reading: Vogel, *Japan's New Middle Class*.

Sept. 23: No class. (national holiday)

Sept. 30: Cultural Patterns of Corporate Centered Society

Reading: Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*.

The Basic form of the Company (13-33)
Songs, Ceremonies, and the Uedagin Ideology (34-61)
Entrance, Departure, and “Lifelong Commitment” (63-92)
The Office Group (93-120)
A Friend at Court (121-134).

Recommended Reading: Cole, *Japanese Blue Collar*.

Oct. 7: Corporate Structures

Reading: Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*.

Getting Ahead (135-155)
Who Gets What, When (156-175)
The Bank’s Union (176-191).

LeBlanc, Robin M. 2012. Lessons from the Ghost of Salaryman Past: The Global Costs of the Breadwinner Imaginary. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 71, 4: 857-871 (handout).

Oct. 14: Transformation of Rural Family Life

Reading: Bernstein, *Haruko’s World*.

Introduction and Arrival (xi-12)
Haruko Takes Charge (13-24)
Entering the Community (25-40)
Haruko and Shoichi (43-58)
Haruko’s Work (71-90).

Recommended reading: Ochiai, *The Japanese Family System in Transition*

Oct. 21: Gender and Rural Social Organization

Reading: Bernstein, *Haruko’s World*.

Conflict, and Home and School (91-112)
Social Life and Organization (128-140)
Sex and Drinking (141-156)
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow; Departure (157-176).

North. 2009. “Negotiating What’s ‘Natural’: Persistent Domestic Gender Role Inequality in Japan.” *Social Science Japan Journal*, v. 12, no. 1: 23-44 (handout).

N.B. Paper topic statements due

Oct. 28: Family Rituals: Funerals

Reading: Hamabata, *Crested Kimono*. Death (53-85).

Film: お葬式 (Itami Juzo)

Nov. 4: No class. (KCJS fall break: Oct. 31~Nov. 8)

Nov.11: Blue-Collar Families

Reading: Roberts, *Staying on the Line*.

Introduction (1-18)
Azumi’s Good Wives and Wise Mothers (19-42)

The Daily Challenge: Cope or Quit? (43-55)
Time Off (74-86)
Social Life (105-120).
Garon, Sheldon. 2010. State and Family in Modern Japan. *Economy and Society*, 39, 3: 317-336.
Recommended reading: Roberson, *Japanese Working Class Lives*

Nov. 18: Women and Work

Reading: Roberts, *Staying on the Line*.

Juggling Home and Work (153-176).

Ogasawara, *Office Ladies and Salaried Men*.

Introduction (1-16)

The Japanese Labor Market and Office Ladies (17-43)

Why Office Ladies Do Not Organize (44-69).

Film: "Indirect Sexual Discrimination in Japanese Workplaces." Working Women's Network. (20 minutes)

N.B. Paper Drafts Due.

Nov. 25: Gender Power in the Workplace

Reading: Ogasawara, *Office Ladies and Salaried Men*.

Gossip (70-97)

Popularity Poll (98-113)

Acts of Resistance (114-138)

Men Curry Favor with Women (139-154)

Conclusion (155-175)

Recommended reading: Lebra, *Japanese Women*

N.B. Paper drafts returned.

Dec. 2: The Missing Feminist Revolution in Japanese Life

Reading: Borovoy, *The Too-Good Wife*.

Preface and Introduction: Lukewarm Dirty Water (1-41)

Alcohol and Codependancy (42-66)

Motherhood, Nurturance & Total Care in Postwar National Ideology (67-85)

A Success Story (86-114)

Dec. 9: Work-Life Balance

Reading Borovoy, *The Too-Good Wife*

The Inescapable Discourse of Motherhood (137-160)

Conclusion: The Home as Feminist Dilemma (161-176)

Weathers and North. 2009. "Overtime Activists Take On Corporate Titans: Toyota, McDonald's and Japan's Work Hour Controversy." *Pacific Affairs*, v. 82, No. 4 (Winter); 615-636 (handout).

December 16: Making Families in an Era of Employment Instability

Reading:

Slater, David H. 2011. Social Class and Social Identity in Postwar Japan.” In *Routledge Handbook of Japanese Culture and Society*, in Victoria L. Bestor, Theodore Bestor, and Akiko Yamagata eds. London: Routledge. (103-115)

Brinton, Mary C. 2011. Narratives of the New Mobility; The Future of the Lost Generation. Chapters 7 and 8 of *Lost in Transition: Youth, Work, and Instability in Postindustrial Japan*. London: Cambridge University Press. (148-165)

Borovoy, Amy. 2010. Japan as Mirror: Neoliberalism’s Promise and Costs. Ch. 4 of *Ethnographies of Neoliberalism*, Carol Greenhouse ed. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Recommended reading: White, *Perfectly Japanese*

N.B. Final papers due