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Female Revolt in Male 現代日本における男性的な文化的想像のなかの女性的反乱 Cultural Imagination in Contemporary Japan

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Female Revolt in Male Cultural Imagination in Contemporary Japan

by Sharon Kinsella

The Film *Kill Bill Volume 1* cast the new global archetype of the ruthless Japanese schoolgirl onto the screen of global film culture in 2003. In an animated sequence illustrating the childhood of a character Tarantino names O-Ren Ishii, a half American-Chinese and half Japanese yakuza queen, O-Ren is depicted as an eleven-year-old girl obliging an old yakuza boss by sitting astride him in her school uniform. All the better to position herself to eviscerate Boss Matsumoto in revenge for the murder of her parents.¹

The adult O-Ren's bodyguard is Gogo Yubari, a seventeen-year-old Japanese girl characterized by her inclination towards savagery and a pristine school uniform. Gogo's thuggish persona² is demonstrated in a date scene set at a candy-colored bar in which Gogo thrusts an ornamented dagger through the stomach of a goofy, embarrassed man after asking him if he 'wants to do it' with her.

This scene delivers in a compact and stylized form the story of the schoolgirl turned angry. It is a story that has been the motif of journalistic and cultural production in Japan from the mid-1990s. Powerful but ultimately self-defeated, Gogo captured something of the oafish personality attributed to schoolgirls in revolt in Japan at the turn of the millennium. Meanwhile, the central role of *Kill Bill*, that of an abused bride seeking justice, was drawn from cult films made in Japan in the early 1970's. Itô Shunya's *Female Convict Scorpion series (Jôshû Sasori)* running from 1972, and Fujita Toshiya's *Lady Snowblood (Shurayuki-hime)* running from 1973 provide a useful measurement of the relatively longer duration on *Japanese* screens and in print of cultural interest in female vigilantes fighting for freedom and justice.

Celebratory and indulgent images of female oppression and revolt have taken a polar position in a range of media since the 1970s, initially in genre film and avant-garde material, later taking up residence in Lolita complex comics and animation culture through the 1980s and 1990s. Among other things, it is perhaps the heavy stylization of animated and filmic characters which has tended to deflect interpretation of their sublimated political presentation. The transfer of these ubiquitous fantasy characters into photo-journalism and “news” in the 1990s, brought the theme of a girl-led resistance into a realistic meter, and the purportedly resistant character of actual schoolgirls attracted a new range of critical speculation.

It is significant that conjoined intellectual and cultural work about violent or sexual female resistance has been written and directed all but exclusively by older men.³ Out of the several thousand cultural items produced about deviant schoolgirls only one - a comic book heavily padded with cute photographs of the author, was made by a schoolgirl.⁴ With a small number of identified exceptions, all producers, artists, and writers cited below are men. Regardless of the distinctive presence and the plaintive themes about girls' culture privileged, preppy and asexual (*shôjo bunka*)⁵ as well as café waitresses and burlesque lower-class girls (*jôkyû to gyaru*)⁶ in Japan since the 1900s, baroque visions of female rebellion have been a recurrent feature of the male-dominated quarters of modern Japanese literature and culture. The struggles of agile anti-heroines in what might be described as the male cultural imagination appear to have acted out a pre-scient if distorted apprehension from afar of a future female revolt seeking revenge for the real historical experiences of young women in modern Japan.⁷ That is, this imagination represents a fearful cultural premonition of a young female rebellion against incarceration, economic dependence, forced sexual servitude, and unearned contempt. Fantasies of female revolt against servitude and exploitation constitute an experiential voyeurism that is shared by *both* fearful and sympathetic male sensibilities. This paper explores the nature of this male creative domination of images of the feminine — if not precisely feminist — resistance, and raises the question of how

this projection of male-centered experience and political subjectivity into narratives about young women may impact the development of either an ungendered or a female-centered political imagination.

| Schoolgirls as a Site of Resistance

During the decade between approximately 1994 and 2004, a veritable landfill of magazine articles, television news, documentaries, dramas and variety shows, nonfiction books, novels, comics and academic theses, art house and *BQ* (second-grade) films, animation, character merchandise, advertising copy, and contemporary photography and art, has been produced about the mores of ostensibly delinquent girls. The extraordinary intensity of the mediation of the image of the bad schoolgirl, concentrated within the Tokyo transport zone in particular, bring to mind Marshal McLuhan's claim that, "The crossings or hybridizations of the media release great new force and energy as by fission or fusion."⁶ Researchers, journalists, editors, and television camera crews roamed central shopping districts in search of schoolgirls whom they could investigate, interview, film and photograph. In 1996 and 1997 as many as four or five different camera crews could be found on and around Centre Gai shopping street in Shibuya.⁹ [Figure 1] Girls were filmed from the bottom-up with the camera focused along the length of their naked legs and vaguely up their skirts. High, middle, and occasionally even elementary schoolgirls, were said to be involved in a new form of casual prostitution called "compensated dating" (*enjo kô sai*). Girls who were otherwise "ordinary schoolgirls" (*futsû no ko*) were pictured using mobile phones and public phone boxes to dial into telephone club (*terekura*) chat-lines in order to solicit older male customers for paid dates. No statistical survey was ever able to establish the ontological status of this purported activity, prompting critical observers such as Maruta Koji to conceptualize it as a "pseudo-event."¹⁰ Nonetheless the figure of a schoolgirl trading her body for cash did become a metaphor for middle-brow mass transmissions¹¹ on a battery of subjects including consumerism, globalization, the bankruptcy of political leadership, post-political everyday life, the deconstruction of

the family, sexism, and regional relations in Asia. As the sample of magazine titles listed below illustrates, the notion that schoolgirls were engaged in a form of “resistance” (*hankô*) to the status quo was also implicit in a great deal of this agglomeration:

“Suspicious High School Girls, Tasty High School Girls” (*Marco Polo*, 1993:62);

“The High School Girl Cultural Revolution,” (*Spa!*, 1994:27)

“Extremist *Kogyaru*: Is the Shocking Reality that they are Being Radicalized as they Dance Across the Media Stage!? From Compensated Dates to Sex Services, from Bloomer-Sailor to Adult Videos, from Street Hustlers to Gangs, etc. Girls that Deceive About Their Age Live in a Dark World,” (*Spa!*, 1998-a:26)

“Compensated Dating Running Wild,” (*Spa!*, 1998-b:47)

“The Drunken-Girls Terrible Compensated Dating: a Report on High School Girls from the Frontline,” (*Aera*, 1996:62)

“Dating in Dangerous Waters,” (*Seiron*, 1997:132)

“Cabaret Clubs Have Become Lairs for Those *Ugly Yamanba* Girls,” (*Shûkan Post*, 1999:63).

Though not intentionally dealing with metapolitics, the fact that journalistic material as a mass tended to gravitate towards such words as — *suspicious, revolution, extremist, running wild, lairs, dangerous waters*, gave the impression of a dangerous female *conspiracy* lurking somewhere in the interstices of the headlines. In social and legal debate as well as in the array of comics and films that followed in the wake of these journalistic explosions, schoolgirls were portrayed as resisting patriarchal society through a combination of sexual deviance, subcultural nonconformity, violence, and perhaps most fancifully, through revolutionary direct action.

Ideological wrestling matches over who was to blame for schoolgirls

getting involved in 'compensated dating' lumbered on claiming either that it was the moral deficiency of girls, or the hypocrisy of adult men, yet neither of the major camps could disagree that the prostitution of schoolgirls represented a major challenge to the social order. One youth deviancy specialist summarized the situation by saying: "The boundary between misdeed and deed has broken down and a phase of borderlessness [*mukyôkaika*] has begun."¹² For Kuronuma Katsushi, a leading journalist and expert author on the topic, compensated dating was a "horrific performance" (*susamajii seinô*),¹³ but for critical libertarian and sociologist, Miyadai Shinji, it was a perfectly legitimate "decision".¹⁴ From the earliest stages of reportage schoolgirls were described as having a sense of "pride" about how they managed their relationships and finances.¹⁵ For anti-Christian feminists and social critics, casual prostitution was seen as a powerful rejection of both the repression and the management of young female sexuality. Feminist intellectual Ueno Chizuko supported *Aera* investigative journalist Hayami Yukiko's contention that "these girls grow up seeing the deception and hypocrisy of their parents and go on to exercise their right to sexual autonomy as an act of retaliation."¹⁶ Feminist engagement with the issue of compensated dating was mainly a skeptical silence, though Miyadai Shinji and Ueno Chizuko joined forces with other well-known journalists and lawyers to support the "sexual self-determination" (*sei no jikoketteiken*) struggle of schoolchildren who they said refuse physiological repression. Ueno asserted, "We have to trust in the capacity of children for self-determination. In fact, just trusting in it is not enough. It is the task of parents and society in general now to make a space for self-determination."¹⁷

In one sense, schoolgirls accused of compensated dating illustrate the recurrence of moral hostility towards the old problem of unlicensed or 'hidden' prostitution. Voluntary and casual prostitution instigated by women *for their own profit* has long been considered a form of self-serving economic activity associated with female autonomy. The context for this attitude is a modern society featuring a large and well-established sex industry, as well as a system in which, well into the early decades of the twentieth century, many

fathers considered it their legal right to sell their daughters into bondage in brothels and textile mills.¹⁸ Rather than being utterly novel, compensated dating had a rehearsed symbolic meaning with a natural enemy in the form of this organized sex industry in a touchy patriarchal society. Schoolgirls were portrayed as having utter contempt for whichever “*oyaji*” (old man, man, daddy) would try to rule their lives. “Girls render their customers anonymous and have only one word for them: “old man.”¹⁹

A violent anti-male attitude led girls towards crimes of retribution. The ‘telephone club hold up’ (*terekura gôtdô*) of August 1994 sparked a fascination with the potential for female violence against men that was widely indulged in men’s magazines. During this incident two girls of unknown age, but dressed in clinging outfits, took a thirty-eight-year-old male company employee to a love hotel, where they used a stun gun to assault him. Having bound his hands behind his back, they stuffed his mouth with sanitary napkins and took some photographs of this pose before fleeing with his wallet. Over the next two years compensated dating and “man mugging” (*oyajigari*, or ‘hunting for middle-aged men’) become entwined themes in reportage. Girls were often described as doing things like “taking 70,000 yen from a man’s wallet while he was in the bath in a hotel room, and then running”.²⁰ A key narrative of literature, comics and art house film over the next decade was schoolgirls triumphantly mugging older men and wielding a range of weaponry to get their revenge against an abusive patriarchy of absent fathers, girl-sick nerds (*otaku*), and sexist schoolteachers.

Schoolgirl street-fashion that responded closely to early media reportage describing schoolgirls as paid companions and de facto prostitutes emerged in the mid-1990s. Its adherents became known as *kogyaru* (sexy child-*babes*) and their style was comprised of two alternating outfits. One consisted of customized school uniforms worn with the skirts rolled up at the waist to turn them into mini skirts and with loose socks sagging down around the ankles. These alternated with tight, sexy, and feminine pants, skirts, halter-tops, tans, and tropical accessories. Much attention was paid to

the intimidating sexual confidence suggested by girls' fashion and the excessive height of their platform boots and sandals. Journalists suggested platform boots and sandals were primarily a means to allow teenage girls to look down on men.²¹ A *kogyaru* language (*kogyaru-go*) based partly on lewd and masculine puns and abbreviations was ascribed to schoolgirls, who were at the same time described as using secret codes of girls' slang amongst themselves that deliberately excluding men. In a magazine for older men a certain Professor Yonekawa opined that "There is no need for anyone other than their friends to understand them, and they don't want anyone else to understand them. Perhaps for them adult masculine society lacks credibility in such a fundamental way that they reject all communication with adult society."²² Sexually frank schoolgirl language fit the general image of schoolgirls as lacking in manners, and being sexually voracious, foul-mouthed, boisterous and selfish. Young girls were viewed as the vanguard of rule-breakers. As the chief editor of *Cawaii!* magazine (for *kogyaru*) underscored, "The number of people who feel they just can't tolerate the regulation and hedging-in of their lives, no matter what, is growing. The rules seem arbitrary, people don't understand why rules invented forty or fifty years ago are still being used today."²³ Sociologist Miyadai Shinji suggested furthermore that for the majority who did not dress in full-blown *kogyaru* fashion, simply appearing to be 'ordinary schoolgirls', that in itself contained a form of silent inner irony: "Girls reject completely the 'adult world' which they will be forced to accept in the near future. One is made to think that acting out the symbolic high school girl, is in itself a complete 'gesture of refusal.'"²⁴

■ Films and Comics about Schoolgirl Resistance

Film director Harada Masato first became interested in bad girls after reading about the 'telephone club hold-up' in 1994. He felt "there was a sense that a lot more of such crime might be taking place, but went unreported because salary-men don't want to admit they were mugged by schoolgirls."²⁵ Harada went on to direct *Bounce Kogals!* (1997). In this film three stubborn highschool girls collaborate with each other to earn enough money

from compensated dates in one night to send one of them, Lisa, to America, where she believes that she can start a new life free from sexism. The film starts in Shibuya, seething with shoppers and commuters, where a hustler (*chiima*) struggling to pick girls' up off the street for 'modeling' assignments observes Lisa going to sell her underwear to a 'bloomer-sailor shop' (*burusera*) where she can auction her knickers to uniform fetishists. The sophisticated cashier who runs the shop turns out to be an ex-student radical with begrudging feminist sympathies, who fixes Lisa up with a more lucrative job making a schoolgirl porn movie. But the hustler has become smitten with Lisa and begs her not to make an adult video with the "enemy" (*teki*). In this film schoolgirls who have sex with men are depicted as fools and victims, while the real heroines have self-respect and get their money only by robbery or dates without sex. Demonstrations of graceless white-collar male entitlement are caricatured and lampooned in the film. In one scene a tubby, middle-aged man trots after Lisa in Shinjuku station, pulling at her arm and demanding that she meet him because he knows that she's "doing it". Later another middle-aged customer is portrayed whining to the police that he could do nothing to protect the schoolgirl that he was on a date with from being beaten up by the yakuza gangster also present. He remonstrates that he is the innocent victim of the incident and asks the officer in charge to erase his name from the crime report.

Lisa is eased into a series of lucrative dates by schoolgirl fixer, Jonko, who despises men and runs a compensated dating racket. Jonko's plan is to extract as much money from men as possible, by any means necessary, except sex. On one double date in a love hotel Jonko knocks out the stuttering young salary man in the bathroom with a stun gun after he has wondered out loud whether "it is a dream or not" that Lisa will really consent to sleep with him. On another assignment Lisa and Jonko become additional players in a lavish nightclub party assembled by a wealthy civil servant. The civil servant, who, it is implied, has just taken a cash bribe, takes the girls and a bilingual Chinese hostess to the men's bathroom and requests that they play a cleaning game with him. The civil servant strips down to his

undershirt and begins to abuse them verbally, — shouting that they can not *think*, and that he hates Asian women and call girls, — before proceeding to wipe scum from the plug hole of a urinal on to his skin and to embrace the plug fixture with his lips. He demands that they follow his example and crouch down to clean the toilets with their bare hands. Jonko pulls out her stun gun and the girls wrestle him to the floor before fleeing. In this scene the Chinese hostess kicks the unconscious man and screams her hatred of his twisted disrespect for Chinese women. Harada constructs several such bridges between the historic control of Asian sex workers by Japanese men and the situation of Japanese schoolgirls, which labor the possibility of a Pan-Asian women's movement.

The cause of the highschool girls is also linked back to the revolutionary Japanese university student movement of the late 40s through 60s, the *Zengakuren*, and even with communism. It transpires that yakuza boss Oshima, and Saki, the bloomer-sailor shop owner, are old friends from university days, when they had been involved in the student movement. Oshima has his bar decorated in the theme of the French revolution. Throughout the film a parallel is made between these representatives of anti-establishment politics of the sixties and the deviant schoolgirls, whose dignity they grow to respect. In one scene Jonko offers to pay off a fine that one of her girls owes Oshima with a compensated date in the form of a karaoke session in his bar. Oshima and Jonko sway arm in arm to the backdrop of tattered red flags as they sing the *Internationale* into matching microphones. Harada Masato suggests that “in the sixties we did everything as a team, we went to demonstrations as a group, and we were beaten... whereas Jonko has no political stance; she is bringing the old men down on her own as an individual.”²⁶

Koshihara Tetsuya's comic for men, *Compensated Dating Extermination Movement* (*Enjo kôsai bokumetsu undô*) published in 1998, also envisioned compensated dating as a kind of pubescent vigilante movement. [Figure 2] In this case compensated dating and man-mugging (*oyajigari*) are drawn as strategies in a power war between young girls and men. While the young

girls sometimes get captured and raped by predatory males, old men sometimes get captured and tortured by *kogyaru* and their boyfriends, who fight together against entitled older men who believe they can use money to *buy* young girls. Comic artist Koshihara Tetsuya says that he instinctively felt sympathetic to *gyaru* culture.²⁷ In the 2001 film version of his comic, violence erupts into love hotel rooms as schoolgirls get their revenge on the twisted, misogynous transvestite character who launched the 'extermination movement' and who rapes schoolgirls and does not pay them.

Amongst the litter of films about schoolgirls involved with compensated dating or violence, including *Love and Pop* (1998), *Innocent World* (2000), *Limousine Drive* (2001), *Adolescent (Shôjo)*, (2001), and *The Schoolgirl's Friend (Jogakusei no Tomo)*, (2001), it was the congruously titled straight-to-video film, *Bum!* (2002) that brought the idea of a schoolgirl movement into intricate relief. *Bum!* tells the story of a group of schoolgirls who form a secret circle and meet to reaffirm their mission, "girls are cool" (as oppose to cute), on lawns around the futuristic port area of Minato Mirai in Yokohama. The film opens with a sequence of scenes both nightmarish and slapstick, in which Kyoko, the lead schoolgirl, is grabbed by an *otaku* character lying in wait for her, and is subsequently chased through the subway system by a relay of male commuters who appear excited to recognize her. When Kyoko accidentally comes into ownership of a hand gun, she finds herself obliged to loan it to her friends, each of whom in turn requests to borrow the gun to deal with their problems. One girl has been trapped into a series of love-hotel dates with an older man through a false certificate of debt that he insists she must repay. Another bespectacled girl uses the gun to get the full attention of her sexist male teacher who she claims is prejudiced against her because she is plain and does not flirt. Screaming that "violence is scary isn't it?!" ("*bôryoku wa kowai darô!?*"), while shooting to pieces the school statue behind him, she appears to get a general point across. The girls' series of calculated revenges against predatory men, which they see reported on television as a string of horrific schoolgirl crimes, culminate in a complicated plan to rid the lead girl of a stalker who has been taking photo-

graphs of her and posting them on his girl-watching website. The girls bait the stalker with a mocked-up compensated date that they correctly deduce he will want to 'research'. Using lookouts with cell phones to relay his exact movements before stalking him with a hand held camera, the girls finally advance on him *en masse* in the manner of some sort of guerilla cell crawling on its belly. Kyoko resolves the conflict by shooting a sexed-up image of herself from the screen of this *otaku* stalker's laptop computer and destroying it. In this low-budget film, voyeuristic slow-motion shots of the lead schoolgirl's bud-like mouth and glossy hair, are combined with a critique both of the role of men and the media in falsely documenting compensated dating on the one hand, and on the other, an enthusiastic consideration of armed schoolgirls undoing this deception.

The *kogyaru* - mode schoolgirl heroine of Koshihara Tetsuya's comic book is posed on the book's cover holding a pistol. In a deliberate twist on a famous theme, a machine gun with a flower in the barrel appeared in the arms of an *anime*-style cartoon schoolgirl on the cover of the journal *New Reality* (*Shingenjitsu*) in Spring 2003. [Figure 3] The flower in the gun barrel represented that issue's statement, "No War" against Iraq, but perhaps it also suggested a parallel détente about schoolgirl deviancy — or deviancy about schoolgirls — and visually linked schoolgirls to the anti-Vietnam movement of the late 1960s. *New Reality* is a new journal drawn from the distinctive combination of cultural and political theory produced by a younger generation of male intellectuals linked to *otaku* culture who might be described as the *otaku interi*, or *otaku* intelligentia. The image of the gun also suggests a guerilla uprising, or civil war erupting between the genders, and sometimes between generations.

In other laterally related material about self-directed violence, including major films such as *Battle Royale* (2001) and *All About Lily Chou Chou* (*Lily Chô Chô no subete*, 2002), schoolgirls, and sometimes their schoolboy friends too, are depicted as both the victims and the perpetrators of a more demotic and mute vein of delinquent violence. Self-destruction is

presented as a form of willful protest that strikes back against controlling guardians and mass institutions. *Vermin!* (*Gaichû*, 2002), a film that received considerable critical acclaim, depicts the bleak event of a quiet middle schoolgirl who slowly goes off the rails. The girl barely speaks to her young and single mother, who suffers from a maddening loneliness. The girl secretly drops out of school and begins to spend time with a young vagrant man. One day the man-friend that her mother has brought home from a bar attempts to rape the girl. Although she is rescued by her devoted schoolgirl friend from next door, soon after this she fills her school bag with rows of adeptly constructed petrol bombs and burns down the home of that friend's more wholesome and successful family in a fit of dejection. Finally she hitches rides from the curbside and flees into what it is implied will be a life of child-prostitution. In Sono Shion's *Suicide Club* (*Jisatsu Saakuru*, 2002) schoolgirls are depicted as the mindless and bloody vanguard of a suicide offensive that threatens to undermine the nation. The film opens with a scene in which fifty-four schoolgirls from various high schools suddenly clasp hands and form a single line and jump together onto the tracks in front of a train at Shinjuku station. Soon after, uniformed girls and a few boys, chanting similar code words, throw themselves from the roof of their high school. In a narrative which echoed the terms of the debate about compensated dating, the daughter of the chief of the police investigating these deaths kills herself, and the police chief is mocked on the telephone for his poor record in human relations by someone with a little girl's voice representing the suicide club conspiracy. The police chief accepts his failure as a man and as a father, takes responsibility himself for the suicide movement, and shoots himself. It transpires that the extremely cute idols who make up a pre-pubescent girls' band has been responsible for emitting signals during in their choreographed song and dance routines that instruct their listeners to slaughter themselves.

Prostitution as a Symbol of Subaltern Status and Revolt

Despite the startled posture routinely adopted by news commenta-

tors about the emergence of what is described as a novel and incomprehensible generation of belligerent and frightening schoolgirls, the themes of casual prostitution, violent female rebellion, and uniformed vigilantism, have recurred through out modern times and have deep historical resonances. Forced, voluntary, and indentured prostitution among women of the laboring classes, together with the movement for the abolition of prostitution, have nourished a pool of imagination in which female liberation and feminism have been seen less as a reaction to the drudgery of housewifery and child rearing than as fundamentally a reaction to prostitution and male sexual control and manipulation. Fantasies of armed, surreal, or magical female resistance have been closely configured with the ambience and visual trappings of a world of sexual service and bondage. Yanagita Kunio considered the migration of rural women into city employments as one of the principle causes undermining national folk life. For prewar social reformers and Marxists primarily concerned with the condition of society, female experiences of prostitution and poverty became emblematic of the physical suffering forced upon the lower classes in general. By the 1920s female labor and sexual service in the extensive brothel industry emerged as symbols of modern social life and as a core social problem. Female exploitation and prostitution anchored both the movement for social reform as well as new and competing interpretations of social reality developed by a range of progressive social theorists. Prewar urban social scientist Gonda Yasunosuke was drawn to observing the details of the lives of prostitutes and café waitresses, which he also tabulated in extensive statistical surveys.²⁸ Tosaka Jun took the “sale of women into prostitution”²⁹ as an example of a critical social problem that had been masked as custom. Prostitution and its aura became the focus of an interest that was social and political at root, and not merely pornographic.

Memories and mythologies of prostitution and the servitude of young women that correlate with this earlier political prioritization of prostitution and its rendering as a symbol of subaltern existence and potential emerge throughout postwar culture. Cinematographer Imamura Shôhei returned to excavate the theme repeatedly, capturing in his films and a 1973

documentary piece (*Karayuki*) on an historical underclass of female drudges. In *The Postwar History of Japan according to Madam Onboro* (*Nippon sengo shi madam onboro no seikatsu*, 1970) Imamura chooses a woman in an erotic and disreputable profession as the leading character. Madam Onboro appears as an experienced and authentic character, suited to relaying a gritty, unofficial and folkish account of the history of Japan.³⁰ In *What's Wrong With That?* (*Ee ja nai ka?* 1981) Imamura presents a fictional version of the actual *Ee ja nai ka?* carnival riots which moved through Western and middle Japan during the year or two of economic and political disjunction just prior to the Meiji restoration in 1868. A girl sold to a brothel by her impoverished father becomes one of the conspirers of a burlesque revolt of prostitutes, entertainers, and common townsmen. In the climax of the film she protects the clowning men from being shot by armed government forces by encouraging rebel prostitutes to step out of the crowd, form a human barricade, and show their bare bottoms to the pointed rifles. In Imamura's films lower class women, typically prostitutes, embody a profound and special font of human resilience.³¹

In the 1970s young women in films pursued the story of female revenge within established genres of samurai or period dramas. The *Female Convict Scorpion* series, spanning 1972 to 1977, featured women imprisoned for crimes provoked by their mistreatment at the hands of men. These unapologetic women who had been raped by their fathers or cheated on by former husbands, humiliate, mutilate, and kill the prison warders and sexist men they encounter as they lunge for freedom. One creative interlude in the second film in this series (*Jailhouse 41*, 1972) captures the subliminal tone of the series in a magically realistic scene in which hordes of released women in striped prison smocks run freely in slow motion into the wide streets of the modern financial and government districts of Tokyo. In each volume of *Lady Snowblood* (1973, 1974) the leading female of the same name outwits and slays her male enemies using her extraordinary intuition and sword skills. In the first of these films Snowblood seeks and kills the men who had raped and imprisoned her mother twenty years earlier as soon

as she comes of age. In the second film she defects from the secret police to join forces with an anarchist intellectual, eventually slaughtering the chiefs of the Meiji secret police to avenge the torture and death of suspected members of an anti-state cell.³²

Pure and Promiscuous Female Classes

The privileged socioeconomic status of schoolgirls from the first prewar girls' schools was codified into idealized attributes of virginity and cleanliness.³³ This early conception of a girlish asexuality, veering waywardly at times towards androgyny, unconsummated same-sex romance,³⁴ and later pre-sexual cuteness, was probably constructed in part in contrast to the sexual nature of its fearful opposite: the experience of girls from poor, rural, and lower classes entering into factories, workshops, domestic service, and brothels.³⁵

On the one hand prewar reformists balked particularly at the mistreatment of lower class women and focused on their bleak experiences as exemplifying social injustice and as the source of social revolt. Another, less sympathetic and to some extent competing view of prostitution and the female class, however, also emerged in the 1920s. The latter was manifested in the prewar notion of the pampered and licentious modern girl (*modan gâru*) and the 1990s notion of the spoilt schoolgirl involved in compensated dating (*enjo kôsai*). The focus of media attention given to commentators of both persuasions seems to demonstrate a fascination with the idea that lower class female lifestyles, particularly modes of sexual promiscuity, financial independence, and perhaps a political irreverence of a distinctively lower class flavor would spread across class boundaries, to middle and upper-middle class young women (*o-jôsama*, *joshi daisei*), or even to privileged girls attending high-ranking high schools (*jogakusei*, *joshi kôsei*). *Modan gâru* were variably identified as idle flaneurs from wealthy families, or uncouth café waitresses akin to novelist Tanizaki Junichiro's heroine Naomi — an illiterate waitress with dirty personal habits. While discourse centered on

privileged girls attending exclusive girls' high schools, their aberrant behavior, habits, and erotic labor were in fact more representative of the lifestyle of lower-class girls. Critical journalists struggled to reroute the debate by identifying the real modern girls as the factory operatives and café waitresses of prewar cities, and the *real kogyarū* as the offspring of single-parent families, pooled into bad private girls' schools in the 1990s. Nonetheless the main focus of journalism in both the prewar period and recent time persisted in dwelling on the confusing impression of privileged girls adopting the mindset of poor girls. The recurring fascination with girls who adopt the rough speech, erotic dress and cynical attitude of exploited Asian women, on the one hand, and on the other the self-entitlement and confidence of educated daughters, seems to betray a deep conservatism toward female class fluidity. The images of the eclectic modern girl and the rambunctious but shrewd *kogyarū*, seen through the vector of a generalized female solidarity, transmit a vision of non-conformist class attitudes across a wide spectrum of society.

In counter-cultural material created in the 1970s, innocent schoolgirls are paired with casual prostitution in a deliberately iconoclastic and surreal manner. Portraits of schoolgirls as blithely carefree whores in literature, film, and theatre, ridicule the ideals of bourgeois social enlightenment and chastity that are symbolized by the schoolgirl uniform. One scene in Terayama Shūji's film *Throw Out Your Books, Let's Get into the Streets* (*Sho o suteyo, machi e deyō*, 1971), for instance, depicts schoolgirls in uniform sitting on a fence in an idyllic pastoral scene and lustily singing a nonsense song with the lyrics: "When I grow up and become a prostitute I am going to buy me some new soap to wash the men I like best." The happy girls sway from side to side on a wooden fence and gradually remove their sailor uniforms until they are topless. In 1978 film *Third* (*Sādo*) scripted by Terayama Shūji, two schoolgirls who want to sell themselves to get money, request the help of two boys in their school. The four of them travel into Shibuya in Tokyo where the boys find customers and pimp the girls. "Excuse me, aren't you getting a little bored with your wife? Wouldn't you like to have a high school girl for twenty thousand yen?" asks one of the lads to a passerby at a

pedestrian crossing. The boys tell the customers the girls need money badly for their families and ask them to help them out. This experiment results in one of the boys beating up a recalcitrant customer and being sent to a youth reform institution. The deadpan and somewhat camp humor of the sweet schoolgirl gone strangely awry is achieved by rudely introducing taboo and inappropriate traces of the buried history of prostitution into idealized and desexualized images of normal (*futsû*), and implicitly middle-class, society.

School Girls Fighting Back with Weapons

In the counter-cultural current that preceded and accompanied the student movements during the late 1960s and early 1970s, schoolgirls and college girls were sometimes presented by male illustrators, comic artists, and film makers, as the euphoric emblems of a carnal and political rebellion. Adachi Masao captures the figure well in several of his avant garde *pink eiga* (porn movies), including *A Prostitute at Fifteen* (*Jûgosai baishunfu*, 1971) about bored school children who decide to earn some money by pimping one of their number, and *Schoolgirl Guerillas* (*Jogakusei Guerilla*, 1969). The latter film features five enthused school children who steal and burn the graduation certificates for their entire school class, and seduce Japanese Self Defense Force soldiers in order to steal their guns and grenades. Fully equipped with grenades, machine guns, and some farm animals, they set off into the country to barricade themselves in a mountain holdout. The renegade schoolchildren muse about the advances made by college students in campus occupations and plan to set up their own commune based on the principle of 'free love'. The naked schoolgirls defend their encampment with machine guns and succeed in heading off a party of rescuers after taking shots at the principal of their school. [Figure 4] *Schoolgirl Guerillas* was released for sale in DVD format for the first time in 2002, whereupon it instantaneously became a cult item.

The theme of the armed and militant girl continued without interruption in the expanding comic and animation media in the later 1970s and early

1980s. *Saint Michael's Campus Adrift* (*Sei Mikaera Gakuen horyûki*), originally written as a play by Takatori Ei in 1986,³⁶ before becoming a film (1990), a comic (1994), and finally an adult animation with a cult following in 2000, demonstrates the continuity of this theme spanning at least three decades through diverse genres from AMPO-period avant garde drama, to comic, and later animation subcultures. *Campus Adrift* features a girls' high school run officially by an order of strict Catholic nuns, and run covertly by a sadistic military general and his army. The school grounds become the site of a schoolgirl uprising against both the military generals and the nuns after intolerable punishments involving rope bondage and incarceration lead to the suicide of one of the girls.

The figure of the little girl equipped with special powers or weaponry who is prepared to fight bravely against abstract and fantastical unjust powers first appeared in children's comics such as *Cyborg 009* (1964), *Knight in Ribbons* (*Ribbon no Kishi*, 1967), or *Cutey Honey* (1973). Gradually she became the pivotal figure within girls' manga, children's animation, as well as the emergent Lolita-complex genre, made by and for the appreciation of male fans. Gamine female heroines of animation culture appeared in almost all of the major animations of the 1980s to 2000s, including *Nausicaa in the Valley of the Wind* (1984), *Ghost in the Shell* (*Kôkaku kidôtai*, 1995), and *Spirited Away* (*Sen to Chihiro no kami kakushi*, 2001). Girls' comics and animation by female artists, such as *Urusei Yatsura* (*Annoying Guys*, 1978), *Sailor Moon* (1992), and *Revolutionary Girl Utena* (*Shôjo Kakumei Utena*, 1997), have also featured powerful girl heroines and have straddled and to some degree acted as valves between girls' culture and the Lolita-complex opus. The delicate and obscure osmosis between themes found in the culture of school-age girls' and themes in men's and Lolita-complex culture is an extensive and important subject beyond the scope of this essay.³⁷

The split history depicting the schoolgirl's progress³⁸ and yet the systematic exploitation, sexual humiliation and bondage of working girls in

their teens and twenties between 1870 and 1930 in particular, is depicted in the mythological battle that constitutes one of the core narratives of Lolita-complex material. In this battle pure and rather intelligent schoolgirls use weapons and mystical female powers³⁹ to escape, ward off, and outwit manipulative and rapacious evil forces. Brave little girls — maids, servants, daughters, and schoolgirls — battle for survival. Specifically they fight to avoid becoming prisoners in violent and sexual underworlds where they may be raped and turned into sex slaves. This male-driven, animated return to the subject of abandoned and derelict aspects of modern female experience is particularly clear in serialized hard-core pornographic animations such as *Legend of the Overfiend* (*Urotsukidôji*, 1987~), *La Blue Girl* (*Injû gakuen*, 1992~) and *Twin Angels* (*Injû seisen tsuin*, 1996~).

Historical references to sexual slavery recur not merely in the highly stylized and hermetic Lolita-complex genre but also in animation and film produced for multitudinous global audiences. Within Miyazaki Hayao's feminist-tinged animated film, *Princess Mononoke* (1997), it transpires that each of the jolly and liberated women of Iron Town have been rescued from their previous lives in brothels by the owner of the iron foundry, Lady Eboshi. Later the women of Iron Town relay how much better it is to do hard, dirty labor even in an iron foundry, than to work in brothels in the cities. Meanwhile the main location of Miyazaki Hayao's award-winning *Spirited Away* (2001) is an enormous bath house perched on a rocky precipice where the little girl Chihiro, who is the lead character, signs an oppressive contract under a new name. Self-incarceration and hard labor is an ordeal Chihiro bravely undergoes in order to liberate her parents from a curse that has left them as pigs. Chihiro's bondage to the bath house in order to save her ungrateful parents echoes the prewar history of daughters sold into bondage in brothels in order to save their families from destitution. The bath house itself can be read as a euphemism for a brothel, which is variably referred to euphemistically as a 'soapland', 'sauna', or 'health spot,' in contemporary and official terminology. In this particular fantasy the bathhouse is a gated wooden building evoking an Edo-period *chaya* or enclosed brothel quarter,

and is crammed with jubilant guests ordering victuals, drink, and various forms of intimate bathing services from serving girls.

Male Writers and Schoolgirl Actors

Even the cursory examination above, demonstrates that the creative journalistic descriptions of aggressive and sexually assertive schoolgirls which dominated the Japanese media in the second half of the 1990s, were preceded by a powerful political romance with insubordinate and sometimes slatternly young women and were hardly a perplexing new and modern phenomenon. Contemporary popular, legal, and academic debate about errant social attitudes of deviant schoolgirls exhibits hallucinatory similarities to the debate about *modern girls* in the 1920s, and the theme of eroticized and violent female resistance has been a significant one in the history of modern film, literature, and animation. Ever since the postwar turning point of 1970, combative and erotic schoolgirl characters have been rehearsed repeatedly in the more specialized arena of *avant garde* and *otaku* sub culture. Still, though initially debuting in the mass media in the 1990s as a social debate about compensated dating, the passionate, hyperbolic, and constructed (*yarase*) nature, of the television news programs and weekly magazine (*shûkanshi*) articles on the subject meant that the new ethnography of schoolgirls was never clearly distinguishable from parallel and previous fictions.

Perhaps the most complex issue related to this seductive cultural tradition of female insubordination is that it is created and appreciated all but exclusively by men. Typically, several decades older and highly cultivated male intellectuals, artists, writers, editors, and directors discussed with great interest the new wave of resistance reported to be erupting amongst teenage girls. The absence of *any* manifestos, reports, or pronouncements on this subject by young women, meant that the male interlocutors of the debate about schoolgirl resistance had to divine the position of schoolgirls for themselves. Prior to writing the novel and film script, *Love & Pop* (1996), novelist Murakami Ryû conducted interviews with girls, which were later pub-

lished in a non-fiction volume titled *If You Go Beyond the Dream*.⁴⁰ Murakami summarized the critical awareness of the girls in the following manner: “They are not that lost. And neither are they just innocents who know nothing at all about the world. The sharp ones see straight through the lie that is Japan today.”⁴¹ As Murakami goes on to point out, contemporary teenage girls with limited social and intellectual experience could not be expected to articulate themselves politically: “Getting brand - name goods and money are the values of the whole of Japan right now — all the girls are doing is volunteering to join in. And they know that what they are doing is not really about the goods as such. At sixteen or seventeen years old they can’t say it in words, except to say some saying like, “It runs deep” (*oku ga fukai*).”⁴²

Some contributors to the dialogue about schoolgirl deviancy considered themselves supporters of the girls from the sidelines. Film director Harada Masato explained that “The old men are the establishment and I’m against them, on the same side as young girls. All of my films are from the standpoint of an individual opposed to the political establishment. The *kogyaru* fit that stance perfectly.”⁴³ Echoing Harada’s thoughts about the *kogyaru* stance perfectly fitting his own, prominent social commentator and Jungian psychoanalyst Kawai Hayao bared his own feelings: “Reflecting on the 1960s student movement that did not get the results it wanted, I feel I want somehow to contribute to and help the girls’ movement along.”⁴⁴ One of the problems with joining forces with the girls’ movement however was the apparent disinclination amongst girls to identify themselves as *kogyaru* or to stand up for deviant *gyaru* values. The female journalist, Uchida Kaoru complained that, “If you ask likely girls if they are ‘*kogyaru*’ they’ll say they aren’t. But I wish they would say that they were! I wish they would defend themselves against the criticism, and be more defiant!”⁴⁵ One explanation offered for this timidity was that radical young women were isolated. Kawai reports the novelist Murakami Haruki’s view: “Even if youth want to oppose things and know they ought to resist, they can’t easily find any other young people to do it with”.⁴⁶

Murakami Ryū⁴⁷ and Kawai Hayao elsewhere described schoolgirls' involved in compensated dating as a kind of "unconscious movement of adolescent girls."⁴⁸ Girls were engaged in this movement involuntarily: "They have absolutely no interest in opposition or revenge. They might even welcome the older men that do compensated dating with them as people who can help them out. But their actions breed a violence which has the potential to become a destructive power. Except that the girls themselves are completely unaware of this."⁴⁹ The notion of girls as the zombie vanguard of a comatose social revolution was not wholly new.

All signs and sightings of the schoolgirl movement come from the directors, writers, editors, and designers engaged by the very cultural and intellectual industries that produced the harvest of articles, television shows, films, books, and photographs through which the movement itself was evidenced. Likewise, the substratum of so called *kogyaru* culture — print club machines, *gyaru* fashion, and *kogyaru* magazines (*Egg*, *Cawaii*, *Popteen*) — was marketed exclusively by specialists within publishing, retail, and entertainment corporations. As in the case of the titillating literature about modern girls in the 1920s, novels and short stories about rebellious schoolgirls demonstrated "...the interaction of the author's fantasies with questions of gender."⁵⁰ The projection of deviant agency and revolutionary ambition onto schoolgirls in published debates (*zadankai*) and fiction was a contemporary reworking of the long-standing fascination of male intellectuals and writers with female class experience and sexual labor. A schoolgirl movement and even a *kogyaru* subculture may have manifested themselves in contemporary Japan. But its agents, deviant or otherwise, were not teenage girls, but middle-aged, liberal-minded, male, cultural professionals. Lacking media industry resources and any vestiges of social power, actual living schoolgirls had a quite a different role to play in this virtual subculture.

▮ Vicarious Deviancy

On one level the fascination with armed and avenging female vigi-

lantes and deviant schoolgirl culture in the 1990s is a local gendered variant of the vein of cultural populism that crystallized within the mass of democratic and populist sentiment gathered in wealthy postwar societies. As Jim McGuigan has outlined in his critique of the powerful populist compulsion underlying Anglo cultural studies: "Radical conceptions of youth culture, including the recovery and sympathetic 'reading' of deliquescent expression, are sometimes tempted into romanticizing the 'resistance' of disadvantaged, exploited and oppressed groups."⁵¹ The desire to see a resistant working class youth culture in postwar England meant that sociologists and criminologists often took a "vicarious" pleasure in discussing the criminal behavior of their subjects. In his detailed study of Mods in the media in England in the 1960s, Stanley Cohen noted instances similar to those in contemporary Japan whereby "instead of being denounced, [the young resisters] were welcomed for ideological reasons. So, for example, some of the Provos and Destruction in Art movements hailed the Mods and Rockers as the *avant-garde* of the anarchist revolution."⁵² Within hermetic late postwar industrial societies, left wing intellectuals and culture industries have courted black, working class, and (in Japan) girl-centered youth cultures. This youth cultural populism has some of its roots in the prewar investment in folk, working class, or 'negro' cultures, and can be considered the domestic corollary of the romance between first world intellectuals and artists and oppressed people in the third or developing world. Gayatri Spivak's merciless critique of the hidden dynamic underlying the otherwise sympathetic political interpretation of lower class and third world resistance movements can be quite effectively applied to the case of resistant schoolgirls in Tokyo. Spivak argues that theorists of resistance and resistant social groups are divorced and mutually impotent: "The banality of leftist intellectuals' lists of self-knowing, politically canny subalterns stands revealed; representing, them, the intellectuals represent themselves as transparent."⁵³ In contemporary Tokyo the romantic fixation with the ultimate political possibilities of a schoolgirl subculture was in fact a narcissistic affair, one in which cultural and intellectual producers paraded their own educated subjectivity as those of schoolgirls and *gyaru* culture. In matter of fact feminist writer Asano Chie has roundly criticized

the self-interested use made of the narrative about deviant schoolgirls by leading sociologists and investigative journalists: “For these critics, the ‘sex worker,’ the ‘highschool girl doing compensated dating,’ or ‘the Tokyo University student who does prostitution,’ are nothing more than tools to further their own political goals. They use the personal stories of ‘highschool girls who do compensated dating’ and ‘Tokyo University students who do prostitution’, yet they gain nothing but a superficial impact from the girls’ words.”⁵⁴ Detailed and exploratory studies of the consciousness and experiences of young women would threaten to undermine the tenuous essentialist faith in their resistant agency, and it is for this reason that, as Asano points out, sympathetic ethnographic accounts of female experience have tended to be as shallow and perfunctory as they are numerous.

It may be precisely the social inexperience and lack of an independent voice by which contemporary young girls between eleven and twenty years old are characterized that has made them such an attractive subject for the attention of writers and producers. The muteness of school-age girls as well as the absence of young women in their twenties from positions of influence has allowed for the uninterrupted, transparent, and successful projection of a narrative onto their image. In his psychoanalytic deconstruction of the male adoration of fighting girl heroines in contemporary animation, cultural theorist Saitô Tamaki makes a parallel observation. He deduces that armed girl characters “transmit desire and energy to the extent that they are vacant.”⁵⁵ Saitô goes on to suggest that it would be appropriate to think of these distinctively ‘empty’ (*kûkyo*) characters as “phallic girls,” who are not independent personalities but rather “girls that are identical with the penis. Yet it is a hollow penis, hardly a functioning thing...”⁵⁶ According to Saitô’s analysis of *animated* fantasies concurrent with the journalistic descriptions of deviant schoolgirls, fighting girls represent nothing but disembodied, disengaged, and impotent expressions of male subjectivity. The paradoxical emptiness (*kûkyo*) which Saitô suggests is fundamental to male subcultural imagination in Japan and on which he dwells, is fundamentally related to the voyeuristic impotence which lies, according to Gayatri Spivak, at the heart

of modern thinking about social resistance in its entirety. Spivak describes how “that radiating point, animating an effectively heliocentric discourse, fills the empty place of the agent with the historical sun of theory.”⁵⁷ By assuming the identity of schoolgirls, effectively or literally, and speaking on their behalf, intellectual and cultural professionals have not only been assisted by the incapacity of schoolgirls to articulate or respond at a proximate intellectual and cultural level, but ironically they have perhaps at the same time blocked the path of young female political imagination. The dense, competitive, and progressive colonization of every last facet of the voice, opinion, attitude, sexuality, and image of girls in the media and throughout academia bears out Spivak’s melancholy complaint that the “possibility of the collectivity itself is persistently foreclosed through the manipulation of female agency.”⁵⁸

Schoolgirl rebels reached a new intensity in the recurring fantasy of female revolution by the late 1990s and reflected what was a desperate quest to find political direction and social energy. Embodied within the up swell of writing and culture about highschool girls were the sentiments of several under-exercised power generations. The persistent fantasy recorded in the work of engaged but politically frustrated cultural and intellectual producers is one in which, on their own behalf, some human power external to existing social structures — in this case Japanese girls — might blast away at the awkward stump of conservative government’s political world and civil bureaucracy. Cultural producers fondly fantasized schoolgirls as a new social force with rational, socialist, and libertine ambitions similar to their own. The dense male-dominated network of cultural and intellectual professionals, manga artists (*interi, bundan, mangaka*) and amateur aficionados (*otaku*) engaged in forging cultural premonitions of violent destruction and social renewal led by girls in contemporary Japan is reminiscent of the unstable stratum of “professional conspirators” [social agitators] of nineteenth century Paris. According to the summary analysis of Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, professional conspirators were composed of “democratic bohemians of proletarian origin,” and “democratic bohemians of bourgeois origin,” as

well as “democratic loafers,” all of whom formed one component of “that social category which in Paris is known as *la boheme*.”⁵⁹ Conspirators spent the greater part of their time communing in bars where they “devoted their whole energy to the conspiracy [resistance] and had their living from it.”⁶⁰ It would seem fair to say that the visions of resistant girl activity that have been projected throughout the media in contemporary Japan bear a distinct resemblance to characteristic modes of spontaneous, violent, and magical foment promoted by Paris’s bohemian agitators: “They leap at inventions which are supposed to work revolutionary miracles: incendiary bombs, destructive devices of magic effect, revolts which are expected to be all the more miraculous and astonishing in effect as their basis is less rational. Occupied with such scheming, they have no other purpose than the most immediate one of overthrowing the existing government and have the profoundest contempt for the more theoretical enlightenment of the proletariat about their class interests.”⁶¹

Note: In film and other media titles the author herein does not romanize Japanese words that come directly from English, but rather uses the original English word.

¹ *Kill Bill Volume 1*: Quentin Tarantino (2003)

² Gogo's stylized delinquent barbarism is perhaps reminiscent of the character 'Alex' in Stanley Kubrick's film *Clockwork Orange* (1971).

³ For another approach to the gendered division of labor underlying the imagination of girls see "Minstrelized Girls: Male Performers or Lolita Complex," *Japan Forum* 18:1, 2006, pp. 65-87.

⁴ Shimaō Maho, *Goriko*, [Gorilla-babe], 1997.

⁵ See Honda Masuko's *Ibunka to shite no kodomo* [Children who Represent a Different Culture], for a classic and formative text on prewar girls' culture, which emerged from the both closeted and exclusive dormitory culture of private girls schools. Tokyo: Chikuma gakugei bunko, 1992.

⁶ See work on the precarious lives and attitudes of the prewar independent *ga-ru* (girls) and *jokyū* (café waitresses) in Miriam Silverberg. "The Café Waitress Serving Modern Japan" in Stephen Vlastos ed., *Mirror of Modernity: Invented traditions of modern Japan*. University of California Press, 1998, pp. 208-225; and "The Modern Girl as Militant," in Gail Lee Bernstein, ed., *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600-1945*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, pp. 239-266.

⁷ As with other spheres of Japanese culture, such as girl's comics, in which the gender of the cultural style and narrative no longer corresponds precisely with the gender of the readers or creators, male cultural imagination is propagated and consumed largely but not exclusively by men.

⁸ Marshall McLuhan. *Understanding Media: The extensions of man*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964, p. 48.

⁹ Journalistic fever for sightings of deviant schoolgirls was similar to the 'Mod hunting,' which for a brief period in England in the 1960s became "a respectable, almost crowded subprofession of journalism." Stanley Cohen observed that "Seaside resorts were invariably full of journalists and photographers, waiting for something to happen, and stories, poses and interviews would be extracted from the all too willing performers. One journalist recalls being sent, in response to a cable from an American magazine, to photograph Mods in Picadilly at five o'clock on a Sunday morning, only to find a team from *Paris Match* and a full film unit already on the spot." (Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, London: Paladin, 1972, p.141.) An extended critique of this form of sociological mediation is forthcoming in a book by the present author: *Girls and Male Imagination: Fantasies of Rejuvenation*.

¹⁰ Maruta Kōji. 'Giji-ibento to shite no enjo kōsai' [Compensated Dating as a Pseudo Event], in *Osaka jogakuin tankidaigaku kiyō*, dai 30, 2000, pp. 209-222. As no surveys of the extent of casual prostitution among either the general or teenage population were carried out prior to the heightened interest in the phenomenon of 'compensated dating' in 1996, linear calculations of an increase or decrease in this type of activity are not possible.

¹¹ According to Raymond Williams' the postwar mass media is founded less on the principle of a dialogue resulting in 'mass communication' so much as a one-directional process of 'mass transmission.' *Culture and Society 1790-1950*, Penguin, 1958 edition, p. 291.

¹² Kiyonaga Kenji. *Shōnen hikō no sekai* [Inside Youth Deviancy]. Tokyo: Yukikaku, 1999, p.107.

¹³ Kuronuma Katsushi. "Joshi chūkōsei no susamajii seinō." Six-part series in *Shūkan Bunshun*, May 2 – June 13, 1996.

¹⁴ Miyadai Shinji. *Seifuku shōjotachi no sentaku* [The Choice of the Little Girls in Uniform], Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1994.

¹⁵ An article in *Views* pursues this idea, April 1996, p. 28.

¹⁶ Ueno Chizuko in Ueno Chizuko and Miyadai Shinji, *Baibaishun kaitai shinsho: Kindai no seikihan kara ika ni nukedasu ka?* [The New Book of Commercial Sex: How far have we departed from modernist sexual order?] Edited by the Sexual Rights Project, Tokyo: Tsuge shobō shinsha, 1999, p. 61.

¹⁷ Ueno. *Ibid.* p. 99.

¹⁸ One aspect of the Meiji government's promotion of 'filial loyalty' was the legal provision of the right of fathers to sell their daughters, generally to brothels and factories. From the 1880s in particular, tens of thousands of teenage girls were sold into bondage on fixed-term contracts of approximately two to six years. Factory officials and independent labor recruiters routinely wooed destitute farmers, offering instant lump sums in the form of advanced loans, and claiming "preparation money" for themselves, ostensibly to meet the costs of the girl's relocation to the factory, both of which were borrowed against her future earnings (Patricia Tsurumi, *Factory Girls: Women in the thread mills of Meiji Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, 60-61). After the deduction of fines and boarding fees, these debts, could amount to all or more of a girls' annual wages. Further a widely implemented system of "forced savings," whereby a significant portion of the girls' remaining wages were withheld, to be paid upon completion of the term of the contract, bound the girls to the factory. To prevent girls from running away from brothel quarters and factories, they were housed in both instances in locked and supervised dormitories inside compounds with high walls, which operated in practice as a "detention house" system (Tsurumi, p. 67). In 1872 both the Antislavery Law (*Jinshin baibai kinshi rei*) and the Prostitutes Liberation Law (*Shōgi kaihō rei*) prohibited the sale and enslavement of women and children, and allowed prostitutes to terminate their contracts voluntarily. Interestingly, the Antislavery Law was passed after a humiliating episode in which a Peruvian minister to Japan, claimed that the legal right of legal guardians to sell women and children to brothels, could only be interpreted to mean that, contrary to the current mood of international politics, slavery was legal in Japan (Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The state in everyday life*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997, p. 91). The passage of these laws marked the beginning of a long political struggle between the state and abolitionists, seasoned with reformist, Christian, and feminist sentiments, over the legal status of prostitution. The emancipation suggested by the titles of these laws was, in practice, over-ruled in 1876. Legislation passed in the Diet in 1900 re-established the right of prostitutes to 'free cessation' (*jiyū haigyō*) (Garon, pp. 91-3). In practice young women discovered that police enforced the continuation of their employment and that they were in many cases obliged to work the full terms of their contract and even beyond in order to pay back fresh debts owed to the brothel owner. Evidence from legal and court records suggest that by the 1920s and 1930s licensed prostitutes (over the legal age of 18 years) were somewhat freer and able to leave their masters mid-way through their contracts. (Mark Ramseyer, *Odd Markets in Japanese History: Law and economic growth*. Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 109-134)

¹⁹ *Aera*, April 15, 1996, p. 63.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ See Laura Miller, "Media Typifications of Hip Bijin." *U.S.-Japan Women's Journal, English Supplement 19*, 2000, pp. 176-205.

²² Cited in *Dacapo*, October 15, 1997, p. 93.

²³ Ogino Yoshiyuki interview. Tokyo, November, 1997.

²⁴ Miyadai Shiji, "Afterword" in Sakurai Ami's novel *Innocent World*, Tokyo: Gentōsha, 1997, p. 217.

²⁵ Interview with Harada Masato, Tokyo, October, 1997.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Interview with Koshiba Tetsuya, Tokyo, March, 1999.

- ²⁸ Harry Harootian suggests that Gonda Yasunosuke's "detailed information about the lives of licensed and unlicensed prostitutes came out of a direct engagement with the subjects in their milieu." *Overcome by Modernity: History, culture and community in interwar Japan*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 167.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.* p. 122.
- ³⁰ Harootian notes Imamura's interest in the everyday life of lower-class women in *History's Disquiet: Modernity, cultural practice, and the question of everyday life*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000, pp. 157-8.
- ³¹ The magical, maternal atavism of lower class female characters are resonant with the atavism of black characters in prewar American film. See Richard Dyer, "Black as Folk", in *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*. British Film Institute Cinema Series, London: Macmillan, 1986, pp. 79-89.
- ³² The political story portrayed in *Lady Snowblood: Love Song of Vengeance (Shirayuki-hime: Urami Renka, 1974)* is probably loosely based on the events surrounding the death of anarchist Kōtoku Shūsei [1871-1911], who was convicted of plotting to murder the emperor and was eventually hung with eleven other suspected dissidents in 1911.
- ³³ The creation of this ideal is discussed by Kawamura Kunimitsu in *Otome noshintai: Onna no gendai to sekushuaritei [The Maiden's Body: Female modernity and sexuality]*, Tokyo: Kinokuniya Shoten, 1994, pp. 18-40.
- ³⁴ See work on these latter tendencies in Jennifer Robertson, *Takarazuka: Sexual politics and popular culture in modern Japan*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.
- ³⁵ Mariko Tamanoi and Patricia Tsurumi detail aspects of the sexualized nature of both the labor itself and the system of labor discipline imposed on young girls. See Tamanoi, *Under the Shadow of Nationalism: Politics and poetics of rural Japanese women*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1998; and Tsurumi *Factory Girls: Women in the thread mills of Meiji Japan* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990, pp.147-187.
- ³⁶ Script published by Tokyo: Jiritsu Shōbo; and comic by Tokyo: Fusion Production.
- ³⁷ Arai Hiroyuki argues that the narrative of *Revolutionary Girl Utena* represents a *shōjo* (girl) mode of feminist thinking because the heroine, Utena, who cross-dresses as a dashing and worldly man and fights duels with a cruel and sexist prince, seeks to be a comrade and not the female savior of a man. 'Naze, 'shōjo' 'kakumei' no ka?' ('Why 'girl' 'revolution'?) in *Pop Culture Critique 2: Shōjotachi no senrei [The History of Fighting Girls]*, Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1998, pp. 18-29.
- ³⁸ Mariko Inoue traces the modern, enlightened, and virginal schoolgirl in "Kiyokata's *Asasuzo*: The emergence of the *jogakusei* image." *Monumenta Nipponica* 51:4, Winter, 1996, pp. 431-460.
- ³⁹ The battle cry of the *Twin Angels* (1996-) is 'virgin power!' Retaining virginity denotes power.
- ⁴⁰ *Yume miru koro o sugireba*. Tokyo: Recruit, 1998.
- ⁴¹ In "Joshikōsei to bungaku no kiki", in *Bungakkai*, New Year issue, January, 1997, pp. 282-297, especially p. 284.
- ⁴² In Murakami Ryū and Miyadai Shinji, "Enjo kōsai ni hashiru joshikōseitachi," in *Sunday Mainichi*, 75:3 November 24, 1996, pp. 50-54, especially p.54.
- ⁴³ Interview with Harada Masato, October 1997.
- ⁴⁴ Kawai Hayao, "(Enjo kōsai) to yu movement," in *Sekai*, March, 1997, p.148.

- ⁶⁵ Interview with female journalist Uchida Kaoru, November, 1997. Critical writers of the 1920s appear to have faced similar difficulties finding modern girls who adequately fulfilled their assigned political destiny. Marxist journalist Ōya Sōichi then claimed that only the “daughter of heroic leftist activists, who had been imprisoned countless times” was the truly authentic modern girl. Early feminist critic Hiratsuka Raichō expressed her hope that modern girls would, if not then, perhaps eventually, show their critical “social conscience”, in an essay titled “How the Modern Girl Should Be.” Cited in Silverberg, (see note 6 above), 1991, pp. 249-30.
- ⁶⁶ Discussing schoolgirls, Kawai reported that in a recent meeting with the novelist Murakami Haruki (author of *Norwegian Wood* etc.), Murakami Haruki made this argument to him. (Kawai, *Ibid.* p.143)
- ⁶⁷ Novelist Murakami Ryū and investigative journalist Kuronuma Katsushi have both written books about deviant schoolgirls. In one interview Murakami proposes that “What I was writing in *Love & Pop*, and what you, Kuronuma have written in your report *Compensated Dating*, is that the highschool girls are engaging in some kind of an unconscious movement.” In “Joshikōsei to bungaku no kiken,” in *Bungakkai*, New Year issue, January, 1997, pp. 282-297, especially p. 297.
- ⁶⁸ Murakami. *Ibid.* p.147
- ⁶⁹ Kawai. *Ibid.*, p.143
- ⁷⁰ Barbara Satō comments on the “phantasmagoric” character of the modern girl. *The New Japanese Woman: Modernity, Media and Women in Interwar Japan*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003, p. 66.
- ⁷¹ *Cultural Populism*, London and New York: Routledge, 1992. p. 91.
- ⁷² *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, London: Paladin, 1972, p. 142.
- ⁷³ Gayatri Charavorty Spivak, “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds, *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1988, p. 275.
- ⁷⁴ In “Konmei suru sex work ron,” *Gendai Shisō*, 26:8 July, 1998, pp.117-25, especially p.124.
- ⁷⁵ Saitō Tamaki, *Pop Culture Critique 2: Shōjotachi no senreki* [Pop Culture Critique 2: The History of Fighting Girls], Tokyo: Seikyūsha, 1998, p. 17.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁷ Spivak. *op.cit.* p. 274.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.* p. 283.
- ⁷⁹ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works: Volume 10*, 1978, London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1850, p. 317.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.316.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p.318.

Illustrations



Figure 1.

Camera crews on a regular trawl through Shibuya in 2004. Photograph by John Fitzpatrick (April 2004).



Figure 2.

Girls defend themselves against an extermination movement, (*Enjo Kōsai Bokumetsu Undō*). Reproduced with kind permission of Shōgakkan and Koshiba Tetsuya ©.



Figure 3.

“No war!” *Shingenjitsu* cover page. Spring 2003. (Kadokawa Shoten, illustrated by Sadamoto Yoshiyuki)



Figure 4.

Schoolgirl takes a machine gun to the headmaster in soft porn. Adachi Masao dir. *Jogakusei Guerilla* (1969).

A Message from Kyoto

From Kyoto we send our profound thanks to Professor John Carpenter for undertaking the organization of the 2006 "Fourth Chino Kaori Memorial 'New Visions' Lecture" at SOAS, London, with the cooperation of the Sainsbury Institute, and to Professor Sharon Kinsella, the Fourth Chino Kaori Lecturer.

The Chino Lectures are by no means just another lecture series designed to contribute to international dialogue on the visual arts. Professor Chino's extraordinary influence, first of all at Gakushuin University, but also in a broader arena in Japan, is a measure of how revolutionary and disturbing her new gender and political insights and perspectives proved to be among more conservative established academics.

As you know, the inaugural First Chino Lecture took place in 2003 in Kyoto and was delivered by Professor Wakakuwa Midori, who was Professor Chino's close friend and "colleague-at-arms" on the academic gender battlefield in Japan.

The Second Chino Lecture in 2004 was organized in Heidelberg, Germany by Professor Melanie Trede and featured the eminent art historian Professor Linda Nochlin of New York.

The Third Chino Kaori Memorial 'New Visions' Lecture in Tokyo in 2005 was under the direction of Professor Ikeda Shinobu and brought together the brilliant collaboration of the powerful political artist Tomiyama Taeko and the musical genius of Takahashi Yûji.

The Fifth Chino Lecture, featuring Korean art historian Professor Kim Hyeshin, student and close associate of Professor Chino's will be held in Tokyo on December 1st, 2007. (Please look for announcements on our website <http://www.chusei-nihon.net/>.)

We are happy to have been able to publish these lectures bilingually. Copies are available for your purchase. (Please see pp. 78-79 for purchase guidance.)

With hopes for your continued support and with warmest wishes to all,

Barbara Ruch, Director

Center for the Study of Women,
Buddhism and Cultural History (Kyoto)
Medieval Japanese Studies Foundation (USA)

Wakakuwa Midori, Director

Research Institute for Gender and Culture
(Tokyo)

Introduction

The Fourth Chino Kaori Memorial “New Visions” Lecture was presented by Dr Sharon Kinsella on October 20, 2006 in the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Dr Kinsella gave an illustrated presentation on the subject of “Female Revolt in Male Cultural Imagination in Contemporary Japan,” which introduced a number of images drawn from *manga*, *anime* and recent Japanese films. The lecture was well attended, with over 250 people in the audience, including many Japanese specialists and students from UK universities, including many enthusiastic members of the SOAS Anime Society. This year’s Chino Lecture was co-hosted by the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures in cooperation with the Department of Art and Archaeology at SOAS. The lecture series is organized and sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women, Buddhism, and Cultural History (Kyoto), the Medieval Japanese Studies Institute (Kyoto), and the Research Institute for Gender and Culture (Tokyo).

The Chino “New Visions” Lecture Series commemorates the groundbreaking contribution that the late Chino Kaori, Professor of Japanese art history at Gakushuin University, Tokyo, made to the field of Japanese art studies from a feminist perspective. The Chino Lectures are intended to inspire new ways to interpret Japanese visual arts in the context of religion, gender, narrative, and cultural history. They are held annually, with the venue alternating between Japan, Europe, the USA and Asia. Each lecture is published bilingually in Japanese and English. Previous Chino Lectures were presented in 2003 by Wakakuwa Midori (Professor Emerita of Chiba University) in Kyoto, and the following year by Linda Nochlin (Institute of Fine Arts, New York University) at the University of Heidelberg. In 2005 in Tokyo, two performing artists, Tomiyama Taeko (a multi-media painter) and Takahashi Yûji (an avant-garde composer), gave a collaborative visual-musical presentation.

Since this was the first time the Chino Lectures had been presented to a British audience, I gave a brief introduction to Chino-sensei’s career and publications, and explained how the lecture series came into being through the efforts of Professor Barbara Ruch (Professor Emerita, Columbia University), and several of Chino-sensei’s former students. I also mentioned

how the Chino Lectures and Chino Kaori Memorial Essay Prize were designed to promote and encourage new ways to think about approaches to studying Japanese visual culture. After my introduction, Dr Kinsella was introduced by Professor Paul Webley, the newly appointed Director and Principal of SOAS, who noted that this had been his very first public appearance at the School and was delighted to be involved in such a momentous scholarly occasion. After Dr Kinsella's talk, there was an animated commentary and discussion session led by Professor Joy Hendry, who teaches social anthropology at Oxford-Brookes University.

We were particularly honored to host the Chino Lecture in London since so many scholars based here knew Chino-sensei as a teacher and friend when they first entered the field of Japanese art studies. Timothy Clark of the British Museum, Nicole Coolidge Rousmaniere of the Sainsbury Institute, and both Timon Screech and I at SOAS all got to know Chino-sensei well during our visits to Tokyo as graduate students, and we had many opportunities to attend her inspiring graduate seminars at Gakushuin or sit in on her lectures at various scholarly forums. She played an instrumental role in encouraging many young Japanese and foreign scholars to continue in the field of Japanese art studies, and enjoined them to keep in mind new developments in related disciplines of gender studies, religion and literature. Many of Chino-sensei's former students are now based at universities throughout Japan and abroad, carrying on the research and teaching mission that she so energetically championed.

Our speaker this year, Sharon Kinsella, is based in the UK but at the time of her lecture was teaching as Visiting Professor of Anthropology at MIT, and she had previously taught at Yale University in New Haven. She has now returned to the UK and continues to lecture and publish as an independent scholar. She is also affiliated with the Institute for Social and Cultural Anthropology at Oxford University, from where she received her PhD.

Dr Kinsella is well known to many readers as the author of *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society*, published in 1999, which has been widely hailed as a pioneering work in the field of contemporary Japanese cultural studies. In recent years, Dr Kinsella's work has taken an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach to the study of social trends linking youth, the media, subcultures, corporate culture and new

modes of governance. Her work is based mainly on Japanese case studies but has global applications. Her research interests extend to concepts of “cuteness” and perceptions of schoolgirl culture in contemporary Japan, which are among the subjects discussed in her presentation for the Chino Lecture. In various publications she has also investigated the *manga* industry, men’s comics, male cultural imagination and popular journalism in Japan. Her Chino Lecture, published here in revised form with various citations included, is based on topics investigated in more detail in her forthcoming book, *Girls and Male Imagination: Fantasies of Rejuvenation in Contemporary Japan*.

We are greatly pleased that Dr Kinsella has let us publish her lecture as the fourth volume in the Chino Lecture series. We feel confident that Chino-sensei, even if the research presented here is not specifically one of the areas she had worked on herself, would have understood the importance of raising the often disturbing social and aesthetic issues discussed here. Chino-sensei is remembered as a remarkably energetic, innovative, and courageous scholar. She never shied away from controversy, and we hope by publishing this essay in a series bearing her name we are helping to keep alive the spirit of intellectual enquiry she ignited in others through her inspired teaching and ground-breaking publications.

Dr John Carpenter

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