

Reproducing the Stay-At-Home Wife: Japanese Women's Magazines and the Image of Marriage

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Introduction

1. In postwar Japan, conservative entities have consistently implied that the role of the woman is in the home. As late as 1990, the press both inside and outside Japan gave wide coverage to the statement by Hashimoto Ryutaro (1937–2006), then the Finance Minister and Prime Minister of Japan from 1996–1998, that the country's declining birthrate was the result of the large numbers of young women who were pursuing higher education.^[1] This statement, which implied that the young women in question were failing in their duty to give birth to the country's future workforce, is indicative of a conservative masculinist belief that, even in the postwar era, the normative role of women should accord with that of the prewar precept of good wife and wise mother.^[2] The logical corollary of this is that the working wife and mother is a precursor of family collapse. In this chapter I will examine that claim from the point of view of women who, it will be demonstrated, struggle to retain their integrity as subjects, whether they are married and working or married and remaining at home. This is particularly the case when women are required to deal on a daily basis with what Peter Glick and Susan Fiste refer to as 'benevolent sexism,'^[3] a phenomenon which, it will become apparent, is a feature of many women's magazines in Japan. The conclusion to be drawn from the discussion that follows is that marriage is a struggle for women regardless of whether or not they remain in or return to paid work and that, rather than the fragmentation of their families, married women face a fragmentation of the integrity of their own subjectivities.

A Promise of Equality?

2. In 1986, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act for Men and Women was implemented in Japan to secure women's career opportunity and welfare.^[4] The Act was further amended in 1999 thus prohibiting employers from discriminating against women in recruitment, employment, career advancement, vocational training, welfare provisions, retirement age, retirement packages and the termination of employment. During this period, more women progressed to higher education, and hence sought longterm employment. 'Career woman' became a popular expression of the era that was applied to young women who gained financial independence.^[5] Some of these young women continued in employment after marriage, accepting the challenge of balancing work and family life.
3. In 1987, the year after the implementation of the Act, there was a sudden increase to 30.6 per cent of the number of women who remained in the workforce following marriage. Despite common assumptions that this trend would continue, by the year 2010 this figure, it had in fact fallen to 24.7 per cent.^[6] Clearly, by that time fewer women were willing to take on the ordeal of managing the work/life balance. According to *The 14th Basic National Report on Birth*, in 2010, 9.1 per cent of housewives, which equates to one in ten married women, were not in the paid workforce.^[7] This is two-thirds the number in 1987. While there has been a drop in the numbers of women remaining in the home, this has not been

as dramatic as might be expected. The report also states that 36.1 per cent of housewives, three to four out of every ten in this group of women, left their employment at the time of their marriage only to later return to other employment.^[8] The corollary of this is that in 2010 a significant number of married women remained in the home without paid work.

4. The Global Gender Gap Index is the measurement used by the World Economic Forum to report country by country gender imbalance. According to Global Gender Gap Index statistics covering 134 countries and one region, in 2010 and 2011 Japan was placed 94th and 98th respectively,^[9] clearly demonstrating that not only is gender imbalance prevalent in Japan, but also that it is growing.
5. Gender inequality is largely a function of traditional gender roles shared by the community.^[10] A clear divide in gender roles is maintained in a patriarchal society, in which stereotypical personality traits are adhered to by each gender. Accordingly, men must follow a model of being muscular and strong, while women are required to be frail, warm and generous. It goes without saying that these stereotypes entrench gender differences and confirm the existing power imbalance between very able 'agentic' men and 'communal' women who are considered less able to assert themselves.^[11] Such a system further reproduces prejudice against the nondominant gender.
6. Previous gender roles were based on a 'men work outside and women work in the home' model, in which women ostensibly sought husbands with good financial means that would permit them to become a good wife and wise mother. According to this model, work outside the home would impede a woman's primary goal of serving her husband and raising her children. In the decades following the war, the impact of this model, which dominated in the prewar and immediate postwar eras, diminished and gave way to a more liberal model which sought to equalise gender roles. Thus women were now permitted to find financial independence while men were expected to share home duties. Contrary to the expectation that such a trend would continue, however, in 1998 Japan's Ministry of Health and Welfare identified a new trend manifesting among young women, which they called the 're-orientation to becoming a housewife.'^[12] In other words, rather than working outside to supplement the husband's income, to say nothing of attaining financial independence, many young women at that time merely wished to find a 'good' husband and to stay home after marriage. This is a new generation of young women who believe that 'women should raise their children at home, and stay young and pretty.'^[13] While from one point of view, this attitude may appear shallow, the fact is that these young women are no longer prepared to undertake the arduous task of balancing life and work in a society that provides women with almost no support to work while raising a family. Yet, rejecting the need to negotiate the life/work balance merely results in a different set of problems for them. As a result of the revisionist gender role that has recently emerged, they in fact have limited opportunity for interaction and hence their existence is isolated and cut off from society.
7. What happened in the two decades between the reports cited above to change the attitudes of young women? In this article I look into the role of women's magazines and the images of marriage that young people have in mind in an attempt to locate the answers to this question. I also discuss data from research which indicates recent changes among the attitudes of young women, attitudes that are largely the result of two decades of inertia in the Japanese economy. As noted above, the findings suggest that, rather than family fragmentation, the key issue facing young women is the need to avoid the fragmentation of their own subjectivities. This might come either through the intolerable demands of working while carrying out home duties for a husband and children, or through the isolation that is generally the lot of the stay-at-home mother. Either way, given that married women are largely required to meet an impossible ideal, it is only to be expected that family fragmentation is a feature of postwar Japan.

Stories of marriage: Mother and daughter

8. Feminist psychologist Ogura Chikako points out that around 1985 Japanese women began to differentiate between what they desired in a boyfriend and what they desired in a prospective husband.^[14] Ogura's research suggested that while women expected boyfriends to own a car, be good-looking and fun to talk to, prospective husbands were required to have financial and occupational security, to be deserving of respect, to have a dream, and to be kind. They should not, however, be a firstborn son. Each of these criteria had a specific meaning. To be deserving of respect, for example, meant highly educated, or at least above the educational level of the woman and preferably a graduate of an established university. The expression implied, moreover, that the husband would have a high income. To have a dream meant to be upwardly mobile and also to remain in a job with a high income rather than leave in order to pursue a personal interest or to live with friends. Finally, to be kind did not necessarily mean to provide financial or other support to someone in need. Rather it signalled a commitment by the husband to protect his own family and to put his wife's needs and desires first. It was for this reason that first sons, who had an obligation to their birth family that in some cases could be stronger than the needs of the wife, were not seen as suitable partners.
9. While young women's criteria for marriage primarily focused on the financial capacity of men—though such conditions were cleverly concealed in the statements discussed above—men's conditions, in contrast, focused on women's youthfulness and good looks. In this scenario, marriage can be seen as a venue for resource exchange. A recent Asahi newspaper report noted the prevalence of 'age-gap' marriages between middle-aged men, who can fulfill the necessary financial criteria, and young women, who can fully capitalise on their exchange value in relationships of this kind.^[15]
10. In positing an explanation for this phenomenon, Ogura suggests that it has something to do with a fear of 'hardship' which, in the minds of young women and the mothers who influence them, equates to a social 'fall' or a 'descent.'^[16] It is this fall that is exactly what mothers have emphasised that daughters should avoid at all cost: in other words, mothers teach their daughters that one should never get into a marriage that requires hard work. It is the belief of many young housewives that their lives should consist merely of looking after children and remaining good-looking while also consuming brand-name goods and socialising only with other women in the same situation. The use of the word 'should' here implies an expectation of happiness through following this model. It is women's magazines that positively confirm this behaviour as the most desirable for married women and women's magazines which offer access to the information necessary both to sustain such a lifestyle and to confirm the individual woman's position in such a value system. These women's magazines, which are fundamentally commercial enterprises looking to operate at a profit, have successfully tapped into and exploited the desires of young women who are above all seeking meaning in their lives. While it may prevent young women from struggling with life/work balance issues, the model presented in these magazines arguably operates in its own way to marginalise young women and to devalue their desires.
11. In order to explain the ways in which prejudice operates against women, it is helpful to consider the theory of 'ambivalent sexism' proposed by Glick and Fiske.^[17] They argue that there are two types of sexism: benevolent sexism and hostile sexism.^[18] While the former insists on protection and thereby appears to respect women, it actually works to keep them under men's control. Since benevolent sexism attempts to never show any hostility or bad intentions, it can appear benevolent on the surface. Contrary to this, hostile sexism mounts an upfront attack against those women who resist male domination. Since it is blatantly discriminatory, its intentions are clearly visible.
12. Displays of benevolent sexism are often found in women's magazines in Japan which make a practice of carrying fashion articles that touch upon social norms—how women should behave—and value systems—how women should think. Such articles, which encourage readers to accept the status quo of male dominance, are a form of benevolent sexism in the guise of fashion advice. *JJ*, for example, is a conservative fashion magazine that specifically targets women readers in their late teens to early twenties, although the magazine is probably also read for lifestyle information by women who range in

age from their late teens through to their fifties. Women who follow the advice of this publisher, it is claimed, can enjoy university life, work, marriage, childbirth, childrearing and life after their children's independence. [19] *JJ* and its sister magazines, each of which have a circulation of more or less 300,000 copies per year, cannot be dismissed as mere fashion publications with no other purpose than to provide women with advice on what clothes to wear. Rather, it will be beneficial to consider the other messages these magazines send out to women readers in Japan.

13. In recent years, industrialised countries have seen a consistent rise in the average marriage age. According to the NIPSSR Japan *Basic Reports on Birthrates*, the marriage age in Japan is a function of levels of both income and education. [20] The more education a woman receives, the later her first marriage. The corollary is that those women without educational capital tend to marry young — a pattern that exists also in other industrialised countries.
14. In cities such as Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and Fukuoka, more than one in two women in their late twenties are unmarried. One reason for their single status is said to be the fact that they have not yet encountered the right partner. [21] This 'right' partner is someone whom both they and their mothers regard as a 'gain' in their aspirations for upward mobility. In other words, the 'right' partner is a man who can raise a young woman's social status and standard of living. Mothers who raised their daughters in relative luxury during the period of Japan's rapid economic growth (particularly in the 1980s) encouraged their girls to proceed to university or short-term college. [22] Ogura's research found that these mothers wished a life for their daughters that they were largely unable to achieve for themselves as girls and young women.
15. The mothers of daughters who grew up in the bubble era spent their childhood in a Japan that had recently experienced the US Occupation and whose teenage years also were heavily infused with American values. Those values circulated through the American TV dramas and America-focused media reports that saturated the Japanese family home during the late 1950s and 1960s. For example, the TV series, *Bewitched*, in which the protagonist Samantha wears fashionable outfits as she cares for her adorable baby daughter in a large house filled with every mod con, represented a highly desired form of nuclear family life. Instead of being burdened with housework, moreover, Samantha maintains order in the home by merely twitching her nose. Her witch mother, too, despises housework and constantly exhorts Samantha not to waste time labouring around the house. The protagonist's human husband works for an advertising company — a job that also avers physical labour. Samantha's fictional lifestyle evokes that of a real-life icon, the beautiful First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, who became a cherished exemplar of desire in the Japanese media, or more specifically, in women's and girls' magazines.
16. Married women who faithfully emulated the desirable media images they encountered in their early lives, later inculcated the same values nominating their daughters as proxy. Buttressing the desires of these younger women, one of the narratives that magazines directed at this readership was what might be called a retrospective representation that featured Jacqueline Kennedy as presidential First Lady, although never as the successful book editor which Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis had by then become. [23] Instead, in these refeaturings, 'Jackie' was the 'princess who overcame her unhappy childhood' and who was 'waiting for someone who could heal her wounded heart'; in fact, 'her real wish might have been just to become a successful housewife.' [24] Articles such as this were tailored so that younger Japanese readers could easily identify with the previous First Lady, Jacqueline, the woman whose fashion tastes and lifestyle were the role model of their 'mother's' generation. Repeatedly revisiting the imaginary values of the 1960s and 1970s, the articles elicited responses from young 1980s readers such as, 'My mother's fashion is conservative, but it doesn't look old-fashioned,' or 'I think my mother is glamorous. I'd love to be like that.' [25]
17. The real-life Jacqueline Kennedy, who featured in the 1960s myth of America's version of Camelot, modelled a dream life to which women of the J.F. Kennedy presidential era could successfully or unsuccessfully aspire in order to bring change to their own lives. The 'Jacqueline Kennedy' who was

repackaged in the 1980s Japanese media and presented to the daughters of the women who had grown up subject to 1950s and 1960s American values, however, was merely a model for remaining attractive after marriage. To both groups, the image of the beautiful woman seen in magazines provided inspiration and motivation for upward social mobility.

18. The influence of images of prominent women in magazines does not merely involve the valorisation of an American Camelot-era Jacqueline Kennedy-style figure. Since the early 1990s in Japan, considerably coverage has been given in women's magazines to the figure of the Crown Princess, the former Owada Masako. Masako-sama, as she is popularly referred to, was a young woman with a promising diplomatic career ahead of her who was courted by the Crown Prince of Japan. Although reputed to have initially rebuffed his advances, Masako eventually married the Crown Prince, following which she found herself up against an alliance of highly conservative social commentators who push a relentlessly conservative line of administering the Japanese imperial household and who, recalling Glick and Fiske, make little attempt to conceal the hostility of their sexist assessment of Crown Princess Masako. While the current emperor of Japan appears to have enlightened attitudes towards such thorny issues as Japanese war responsibility,^[26] many of his subjects appear to be relentlessly conservative in social and cultural matters, including the issue of gender. While these ultraconservatives initially expressed muted mutterings about the danger of a once-promising career women becoming the future empress of Japan,^[27] pressure really mounted when Masako 'failed' (in their perverse social terms) to produce a male heir to the throne. The barrage of criticism to which she was subjected saw this young woman descend into a depressed state from which she has yet, in 2016, to fully emerge. It might seem that such a woman would have little to offer in terms of role model potential to a group of young women seeking a standard of living that enables them to remain at home caring for children and attending to their own good looks. What is significant in the Masako narrative, however, is the role of the Crown Prince, and his response to his wife's ill health. It is useful to review that response briefly here.
19. At the time of the couple's engagement, the Crown Prince promised his wife, 'You might have fears and worries about joining the Imperial household. But I will protect you for my entire life.'^[28] This is the secret of Masako's attraction for young women —she has the guaranteed protection of her husband. Given the problems she has experienced, it might be cynically concluded that this promise has not come to all that much. However, the Crown Prince himself has been the subject of much criticism by rightist commentators for not divorcing his wife who is ill and who has given birth to a daughter rather than a son. In the two decades that have passed since the couple's marriage the Crown Prince has nonetheless been unfailingly supportive in public statements of his once promising diplomat partner and, if he has been unable to shield her from both clandestine and overt attacks from the right, he has certainly appeared to make sure that her recovery from ill health occurs on her own terms, in her own time and in her own way.
20. Especially since 2006, when the wife of his younger brother gave birth to a son who is second in line to the Chrysanthemum Throne after the Crown Prince himself, there has been a growing prominence given to the emperor's second son, Prince Akishino.^[29] To some extent, this has had the effect of rendering the Crown Prince, like Masako, superfluous. It has further been suggested that the future emperor of Japan should consider divorce.^[30] But, the Prince remains adamant in his support of his wife. As late as August 2016, he was unwavering of his rebuttal of those who were critical of her public role.^[31] Thus, in spite of the beating handed out by the press to his wife, and also to himself and sometimes even his daughter, the Crown Prince of Japan presents as a man who will defend and support his partner in a manner that accords with the dreams of many young women.

University students and their views on marriage

21. Below is an analysis of field-work data conducted following a survey of university students regarding

their views on marriage. Respondents comprised 70 students (35 women and 35 men) from a private university in Japan. The average age was 20.06 years for women (SD=.60) and 20.62 years for men (SD=.62). Questions administered were those featured in a 1998 Ministry of Health and Welfare White Paper and sought respondents' views on marriage, conditions in their choice of partner, preferred number of children, and both the ideal and the probable income. Responses were provided in the form of free writing. After briefly providing an overview discussion of the responses of both young women and men, the discussion particularly elaborated upon the responses of young women relating to ideal and expected experiences of marriage.

22. Participants were firstly asked to respond to the statement: 'Marriage is not compulsory; everyone is free to make their own decision.' 70.59 per cent of women agreed while the remainder agreed to some extent. Of the men, 62.86 per cent agreed with the majority agreeing to some extent. There was, however, a small group of men who disagreed.
23. The second element of the survey involved responding to the question: 'When do you think you have more freedom, in marriage or love romance?' While 20.0 per cent of men and 25.81 per cent of women found a 'legal binding power' in marriage, 29.03 per cent of women thought of marriage as a 'constraint.' Furthermore, 25.0 per cent of men, regarded marriage as a 'risk' relationship.
24. The third element inquired about respondents' opinions regarding the necessary 'conditions' for the ideal marriage partner. At the top of the list for women were financial means (25.81%), physical appearance (10.14%) and kindness (9.46%). Men, on the other hand, sought good character (10.16%), sweet appearance (8.59%) and financial means (6.25%). What women want for their marriage partners are consistent with the popularly known list of conditions that accords to some extent with Ogawa's findings, although in that instance 'physical appearance' was regarded as more fitting for a boyfriend than a husband. What is new here is that the men took into consideration women's financial means. We can read this as an additional burden on women who are now no longer responsible only for carrying out traditional household duties but also for bringing in an income.
25. Tables 1 and 2 provide a content analysis of regarding respondents' images of the ideal marriage against what they think is likely to happen in reality. The ten most frequently occurring answers provided by women students have been paraphrased. There is no analysis of comment from the young men since, as might be expected, marriage was not in the consciousness of male university students. They therefore found it difficult to visualise being married and hence could not give substantial answers. Young women, however, responded as follows.

I would marry my boyfriend from university and live in a resort abroad, surrounded by my family and friends.

I would have a lot of family trips.

I would quit my job and stay at home when I have a baby, and return to work after the child grows up.

My husband would support me if I have a psychological crisis.

Table 1. Representative respondent opinions: ideal marriage

I would marry someone I meet at university or work, and keep my job even after the wedding.

Quitting the job to stay at home and returning to work after raising children would be another option.

I will probably live with my husband's family.

Or, I may not have the chance to meet a man at all and may find a joy in my single life.

Table 2. Representative respondent opinions: marriage reality

26. The images of the so-called ideal marriage have not largely changed over time among college women in Japan. Nevertheless, what stands out in college women's need for their future husband is a man 'who supports his wife at the time of her psychological crisis.' As noted above it is widely known that the Crown Prince has been supportive of his wife in her negotiation of difficult times and we might relate this expectation on the part of young women back to reports of that support in media such as women's magazines. Women see the Crown Prince's actions as the ideal response of a husband and hope that, in the event of their own marriage facing a crisis, their husbands, too, would act in a similar way in order to keep the marriage viable. The ideal husband, in fact, should actually anticipate the possibility of a woman facing some difficulty during her married life and be prepared before the event to give her his full support. It was striking that there was not a significant gap between the ideal and the probable in the image that college women have of marriage.

In conclusion

27. It is now getting close to two decades since the revisionist desire of young women to return to the 'stay-at-home mother' lifestyle was identified as a new trend. According to this new trend, the ideal married woman should do housework, look after her children, and stay young and pretty in a manner that reproduces the hegemonic—and we might say patriarchal—ideals of a much older gender role model. Ogura's young women wanted a marriage partner who was 'someone they [could] respect,' 'someone with aspiration' and 'someone who [was] kind.' The more recent research cited here concludes that young women want a similar set of conditions with the added criterion 'physical appearance,' something that Ogura's women reserved for boyfriends. Furthermore, the data presented above indicates that young women in more recent years have modified their expectations so that they now aspire to an ideal marriage which remains within rather than well beyond their reach. Moreover, for the current generation of young women, life without marriage is a distinct possibility. While there are likely to be multiple reasons for this, there is little doubt that an understanding of the likelihood of the fragmentation of their own selves through the burdens placed on them by marriage, whether they are in or out of paid work, is one explanation for young Japanese women increasingly accepting the option of never marrying.
28. The influence of the media, especially women's magazines, cannot be overlooked in discussions of women's desires. Following *JJ*, similar magazines, such as *Very*, emerged targeting an older readership. The same readers who read *JJ* during their college years went on to read *Very* as they grew older. These women purchased designer bags and shoes, wore conservatively elegant designer-label clothing, dated with boys from brand-named private universities in Tokyo, and generally lived a fashionable college life in the era of Japan's so-called 'bubble economy.' They may have achieved their goals by marrying the elite *salarymen* who worked for affluent companies. The conundrum that these women faced was that it was only by 'not working' after marriage that they were able to prove their worthiness to Japanese society, yet this very non-participation in society saw them marginalised in return. These women, who had grown up during the Occupation, impressed upon their daughters the need to guard against social 'decline' and the need to marry a man who could provide them with a desirable lifestyle. Women's magazines presented a retrospective view of Jacqueline Kennedy as she was during America's Camelot years in a manner that unrealistically fed this dream. While the daughters of these women may have been and continue to be diligently pursuing this pattern, the economic changes of the mid-nineties and the dramatic burst of the bubble economy are forcing their ideas to change.

29. My research demonstrated that most college women in the second decade of the twenty-first century expect to work in paid employment after marriage. Even if they stop paid employment to have children, these women have no doubt that they will later return to paid work. They were born during the 1990s when Japan's economic downturn exacerbated what??? and they face serious difficulties in finding viable jobs after graduating from university. The ideal of either 'not working' or being 'exclusively a housewife' is no longer sustainable. Young women are now forced to be much more realistic. A lifestyle for a married woman which excludes the need to find paid work is becoming more like the purchase of an exclusive brand-name garment—increasingly difficult. We can only speculate as to where we go from here in addressing Japan's gender inequality. Until that inequality is resolved, fragmentation, whether of families or of individual women's subjectivities, is guaranteed to continue.

Notes

- [1] [David E. Sanger](#), 'Tokyo official ties birth decline to education,' *New York Times*, 14 June 1990. Online: <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/06/14/world/tokyo-official-ties-birth-decline-to-education.html> (accessed 12 November 2015).
- [2] Koyama Shizuko, *Ryosai kenbo to iu kihan* (The Normative Standard of Good Wife and Wise Mother), Tokyo: Keisei shobo, 1991.
- [3] This term appears in the title of a key study by Peter Glick and Susan T. Fiske, 'The ambivalent sexism inventory: Differentiating hostile and benevolent sexism,' in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70(3) (1996): 491–512.
- [4] For details on this law, see [Alice Lam](#), 'The Japanese equal opportunity law: Its effects on personnel management policies and women's attitudes,' *London School of Economics and Political Science, Discussion Paper IS/92/254*, October 1992. Online: https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/11559/1/MPPA_paper_11559.pdf (accessed 3 November 2015).
- [5] The online Japanese Google (GOO) dictionary supplementary explanation appended to the entry of this word gives the background to the use of the term, 'career woman,' in Japan. URL: <http://dictionary.goo.ne.jp/jn/54542/meaning/m0u/>, site accessed 16 November 2016.
- [6] [National Institute of Population and Social Security Research](#) (NIPSSR Japan), *The 14th Basic Report on the Current Birthrate: A National Survey on Marriage and Birth* [Sai 14 kai shusseki doko kihon chosa: kekkon to shussen ni kansuru zenkoku chosa, fufu chosa ni tsuite], National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, Department of Population Dynamics, October 2011, p. 32. Online: http://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/e/doukou14/Nfs14_Couples_Eng.pdf (accessed 15 November 2015). [Japanese website](#).
- [7] NIPSSR Japan, *The 14th Basic Report on the Current Birthrate*, p. 18.
- [8] NIPSSR Japan, *The 14th Basic Report on the Current Birthrate*, p. 33.
- [9] [World Economic Forum](#), *Global Gender Gap Report (2010)*. Online: <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2010> (accessed 15 November 2015); [World Economic Forum](#), *Global Gender Gap Report (2011)*. Online: <http://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2011> (accessed 15 November 2015).
- [10] Alice H. Eagly, *Sex Differences in Social behavior: A Social-role Interpretation*, Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1987.
- [11] Alice H. Eagly and Valerie J Steffen, 'Gender stereotypes stem from the distribution of women and men into social roles,' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46(4) (1984): 735–54, p.743. This assumption also underpins Suzuki, Atsuko, *Gender Roles: From a Cross-Cultural Perspective: Social Psychology Lecture III*, (Seiyakuwari: hikakubunnka no shiten kara: rekucha shakai shinrigaku III), Tokyo: Kakiuchi Shuppan, 1997.
- [12] [Ministry of Health and Welfare](#), *Annual Report on Health and Welfare 1998: Thinking about a Society with a Declining Birthrate: Towards a Society in Which People Want to Have and Raise Children* (Kosei hakusho heisei 10 nen ban: shoushika shakai o kangaeru: kodomo o umi sodateru kotoni 'yume' o moteru shakai o), 1998. Online: http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei_hakusho/hakusho/kousei/1998/ (accessed 20 November 2015).

- [13] Eiko Osaka, 'Traditional sex roles in Japanese young women's magazines,' *Surugadai University Studies*, 47 (2013): 229–40.
- [14] Chikako Ogura, *The Conditions of Marriage* (Kekkon no joken), Tokyo: Asahi Shibunsha, 2003, p. 25.
- [15] Asahi Shinbun, 'A marriage with a large age difference' (Toshi no sa kon), Asahi Shinbun (Morning Edition), 12 October 2011, p. 37.
- [16] Ogura, *The Conditions of Marriage*, pp. 23–24.
- [17] Glick and Fiske, 'The ambivalent sexism inventory.'
- [18] Peter Glick and Susan T. Fiske, 'Ambivalent alliance: Hostile and benevolent sexism as complementary justifications for gender inequality,' *American Psychologist*, 56(2) (2001): 109–118.
- [19] This has been discussed in Osaka, 'Traditional sex roles in Japanese young women's magazines,' pp. 231–33.
- [20] [NIPSSR Japan](http://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/j/doukou14_s/chapter3.html#32), *The 14th Basic Report on the Current Birthrate*. This discussion is on the Japanese webpage. Online: http://www.ipss.go.jp/ps-doukou/j/doukou14_s/chapter3.html#32 (accessed 24 January 2017).
- [21] Osaka, 'Traditional sex roles in Japanese young women's magazines,' p. 231.
- [22] Ogura, *The Conditions of Marriage*, pp. 34–35.
- [23] See Osaka 'Traditional sex roles in Japanese young women's magazines,' p. 235 for examples of this.
- [24] 'The prima donna of the century and the first lady: Maria Callas and Jacqueline Kennedy' (Seiki no purima to fast redii: maria karas to jakurin kenedi), in *Fujin Gah o*, June, 2006, pp. 101–103.
- [25] 'The prima donna of the century and the first lady: Maria Callas and Jacqueline Kennedy.'
- [26] [Jonathon Soble](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/world/asia/emperor-kihito-expresses-deep-remorse-for-japans-role-in-world-war-ii.html?_r=0), 'Emperor Akihito expresses "deep remorse" for Japan's role in World War II,' in *New York Times*, 15 August 2015. Online: http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/world/asia/emperor-kihito-expresses-deep-remorse-for-japans-role-in-world-war-ii.html?_r=0 (accessed 20 November 2015).
- [27] She is, for example, said to have not ceded to her future husband at a press conference. See, for example, '[Japan shocked as prince blames royal courtiers for his wife's illness](http://www.scotsman.com/news/world/japan-shocked-as-prince-blames-royal-courtiers-for-wife-s-illness-1-531129),' in *The Scotsman (on-line)*, 15 May 2004. Online: <http://www.scotsman.com/news/world/japan-shocked-as-prince-blames-royal-courtiers-for-wife-s-illness-1-531129> (accessed 12 February 2015).
- [28] [Cynthia Sanz](http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20110658,00.html), 'The princess bride,' in *People*, 23 June 1993. Online: <http://www.people.com/people/archive/article/0,,20110658,00.html> (accessed 24 November 2015).
- [29] [Iwai Katsum](http://www.nippon.com/en/currents/d00060/), 'Japan's imperial family in crisis,' in *Nippon.com*, 21 November 2012. Online: <http://www.nippon.com/en/currents/d00060/> (accessed 11 February 2015).
- [30] [Uwe Schmitt](http://www.worldcrunch.com/culture-society/as-all-toast-dutch-royals-the-saddest-princess-arrives-on-rare-escape-from-japan/kihito-masako-owada-emperor-hirohito-prince-naruhito/c3s11592/), 'As all toast Dutch royals, the saddest princess arrives on rare escape from Japan,' *Worldcrunch*, 30 April 2013. Online: <http://www.worldcrunch.com/culture-society/as-all-toast-dutch-royals-the-saddest-princess-arrives-on-rare-escape-from-japan/kihito-masako-owada-emperor-hirohito-prince-naruhito/c3s11592/> (accessed 12 February 2015).
- [31] [VOA](http://www.voanews.com/a/japan-crown-prince-throne-crown-princess/3459095.html), 'Japan's Crown Prince ready for the throne but Crown Princess another matter,' in *VOA*, 10 August 2016. Online: <http://www.voanews.com/a/japan-crown-prince-throne-crown-princess/3459095.html> (accessed 24 November 2016).

MAIN

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Image. Ms. Matsui, right, at her job. The percentage of women who work in Japan is higher than ever. Credit...Andrea DiCenzo for The New York Times. "One reason to get married for a woman is to have a stable financial life," said Miki Matsui, 49, a director at a Tokyo publishing house. "I don't have any worries about being alone with myself or any financial worries." "In the older generations, husbands were the bosses of the family and the wives were obedient and in a weaker position." Women who are not interested in having children often see little point in marriage. Though single motherhood is on the rise in Japan, it is largely due to divorce rather than women choosing to have children on their own. Little Women Movie. Movie. La La Land. Three cheers to Laura Dern for receiving the Oscar for Best Actress in a Supporting Role at the 92nd Academy Awards. It looks like you may be having problems playing this video. If so, please try restarting your browser. Close. Marriage Story | Playing In Theaters And On Netflix. Posted by Marriage Story. 22,644 Views. Marriage Story. February 8, 2020. Marriage Story is thrilled to receive Best Screenplay and the Robert Altman Award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards. See All. Videos. Marriage Story | Now Playing In Theaters And On Netflix. 1.2K. 170. Marriage Story | Now In Theaters And Apparently Japanese girls turn into mothers and the relationship changes. I've heard lots of stories of their wives becoming demanding, bossy, and controlling after marriage and kids. And pretty much all the guys are dealing with a sexless relationship as well. They've all warned me about getting married to a Japanese woman. Rather, all of them have said "don't do it". I tried to research the topic a bit but I found more of the same opinion - she's going to change, become more motherly, forget about being happy with her. So I thought I'd try here - how many g