

WOMEN IN JAPANESE STUDIES: VOICES FROM A TRAILBLAZING GENERATION

BY ALISA FREEDMAN — ASIA PAST & PRESENT BOOK SERIES

SUGGESTED COURSES:

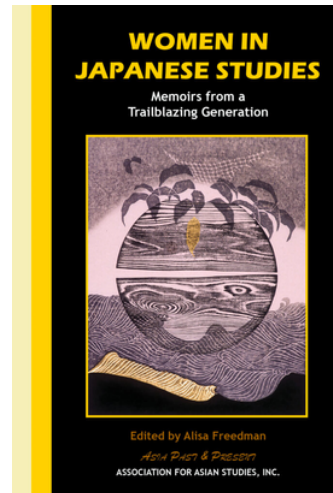
- Gender Studies
- Japanese Studies
- History of Education
- Memoir Studies
- Cultural Studies
- Japan-US Relations

KEY CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS:

- *Women in Japanese Studies* brings together more than thirty trailblazing women scholars from diverse disciplines in Japanese Studies to reflect on their careers and offer advice to colleagues.
- We offer lively, engaging, thoughtful, brave, empowering stories that start larger conversations about gender and inclusion in the academy and in Japan-American educational exchange.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What do these personal stories by trailblazing women teach us about the construction of the field of Japanese Studies? About gender and inclusion in the academy?
2. What did you learn about Japanese Studies between 1950 and 1980? How is the field then different and similar to how it is today?
3. How do these trailblazing women's careers represent changes in Japan-US relations?
4. How are the formation of academic fields affected by both global politics and personal choices?
5. How have women faced different challenges than people of other genders?
6. Which chapters in particular did you find more compelling, educational, or instructive? Why?
7. What are memorable pieces of advice you have learned from this book? How will you use this advice in your life and career?
8. What can we learn by writing and reading memoirs? How do they differ from other kinds of writing?
9. If you could write your own scholarly memoir, what events, encounters, and people would you feature? How would you write the account? Would it be straightforward? Poetic? Funny? Serious? Who would you like to read it?
10. What is your favorite quote from the book? Why is this quote so impactful?



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618 pages

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<https://www.asianstudies.org/store/women-in-japanese-studies-memoirs-from-a-trailblazing-generation/>

“This unique collection testifies to the strength, creativity, and sheer grit of thirty-one women who changed the face of Japanese Studies in North America and Japan. They created new pathways and possibilities, modeling ways to forge ahead with the help of mentors and despite roadblocks. An invaluable resource, Women in Japanese Studies will have you cheering on each remarkable author.”

– REBECCA COPELAND, Washington University in St. Louis

“As individuals, the thirty-one scholars featured in this remarkable collection have each made significant contributions to the field of Japanese studies in North America. Collectively, they have transformed it. Often sobering and at times, breathtaking, their richly varied and deeply personal accounts of what it was like to make that transformation happen will be read with profit by anyone interested in the history of Anglophone scholarship on Japan, and serve as a powerful source of both insight and inspiration for those who seek to chart its future.”

– DANIEL BOTSMAN, Yale University

“This inspiring collection will be a lasting resource for students and scholars of Japan. From the palpable intellectual excitement to the personal experiences and relationships that shaped each writer’s professional trajectory, every chapter tells a story worth savoring, and the scholarly apparatus and illustrations included are true gems.”

– INDRA LEVY, Stanford University

“This volume represents a labor of love - on the part of the editor and organizers, on the part of those women gathered together to share their stories, on the part of AAS in recognizing the importance of individual lives in telling a broader tale of scholarship shaped through relationships and resistant histories. In these pages we feel the very human and institutional costs that have been part of the blazing of intellectual trails. With gender as a critical frame, this volume shines a spotlight upon Japan as a textured object of study, wrought through these women’s experiences.”

– CHRISTINE YANO, University of Hawaii

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