

The Japanese Schoolgirl Figure:
Renegotiation of Power through Societal Construction, Masking a Crisis of Masculinity

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A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in International Studies

University of Washington

2012

Committee:

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Program Authorized to Offer Degree:

International Studies

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Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to my advisory committee: Dr. Sara Curran and Dr. Gary Hamilton. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement. You have challenged me in ways I never anticipated. Without your guidance, this thesis would not have been possible.

Dedication

To my fiancé, Nick Rush. Thank you for your endless hours of support and advice along with your unlimited patience,

And, to the 20 Japanese women who shared their stories, feelings, and opinions for this paper. Thank you for allowing me into your world.

Introduction

“Hold out your hand,” the man says, and he places one frozen grape in each of the four girls’ hands. “You don’t have to peel it. Just chew a couple times, and spit it out in your hand. Don’t chew so much that it loses its shape.” He motions to the first girl. “You first. Tell me your name. It doesn’t have to be your real name. Think up a name, and tell me that. Think up a name for your school, too.”

Each girl in turn chews a grape, spits it out, and places it in the man’s hand. They each give him a fake name and high school. He puts the grapes into small, individual plastic bottles and writes their names and schools on bottle labels.

The girls leave the karaoke bar and walk through Shibuya.¹

We never talked about that man again. It’s not as if it was a taboo, or that we hated the fact that we went on a play date and were trying to forget it happened. We didn’t understand that middle aged man nor did we want to understand. That was why we didn’t want to talk about him. However, the fact is that there are people who will buy grapes chewed up by high school girls for 120,000 [yen]², [and it] happened to us.³

This scene from Hideaki Anno’s film *Love & Pop* describes the activities of four Japanese high school girls selling their companionship and saliva to a middle aged man.⁴ While fictional, the film depicts the world of Japanese schoolgirls in the 1990s and the sexual fetish they have come to embody.

¹ Shibuya is a shopping district in Tokyo surrounding Shibuya station, one of Tokyo’s busiest train stations. Shibuya is a popular youth hangout area.

² Approximately \$1,033 on July 19, 1997, the day represented in the film.

³ *Love & Pop*, directed by Hideaki Anno (1998; New York, NY: Kino Intl., 2004), DVD.

⁴ The 1998 film *Love & Pop* is an adaptation of the novel *Topaz II* by Ryu Murakami.

The schoolgirl figure became increasingly commoditized in various forms throughout the decade. Public vending machines and *burusera* shops⁵ sold used schoolgirl underwear along with photos of the previous adolescent owners. *Burusera* shops catered to Japanese men by also carrying items such as schoolgirl uniforms, handkerchiefs, socks, school athletic wear, school swimwear, photographs with semi-nude, nude, and sex-scene images of schoolgirls, and even bottled schoolgirl saliva.⁶ Commoditization of the schoolgirl figure escalated even further beyond the sale of clothing articles to include the schoolgirl herself.

This research examines the schoolgirl figure in Japan and the associated implications for adolescent girls. My own understanding of adolescent girls in Japan is based on my time teaching at a high school in Japan; I spent significant time getting to know my students and their lives. Because of the relationships I built with my students, I view the schoolgirl figure as something entirely different from real adolescent girls. By treating the schoolgirl figure and adolescent girls as separate entities that are intimately connected in this research, I investigate how Japanese society, the media, and popular culture subject adolescent girls to intense scrutiny for scandalous behavior attached to the schoolgirl figure, resulting in misunderstanding and misconceptions surrounding real adolescent girls. This research examines how and why the schoolgirl figure became a primary site of anxiety for Japanese society in the 1990s.

It is impossible to understand the Japanese schoolgirl figure without also examining overlapping societal trends from this particular period in Japan. Part I of this paper will begin by examining how the schoolgirl figure became a site of increasing anxiety in the 1990s, a time when shifting gender roles and a severe economic crisis threatened the equilibrium of the

⁵ *Burusera* stands for “bloomer sailor” and comes from the school uniform. The original schoolgirl uniform was based on nineteenth century English navy uniform. Sharon Kinsella, “What’s Behind the Fetishism of Japanese School Uniforms?” *Fashion Theory*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, (2002): 218.

⁶ Sonia Ryang, *Love in Modern Japan: Its Estrangement from Self, Sex, and Society* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 96.

functioning nuclear family structure. The societal role of Japanese women in particular changed with an increase in lifestyle options.

Following this examination, I provide a detailed analysis of the context of the 1990s and the emergence of the phenomenon of *enjo kōsai*, or subsidized dating, which involved adolescent girls and Japanese men spending time together in new and different ways as demonstrated in the opening of this paper. This analysis includes an examination of the topic in both popular culture and academic literature. The schoolgirl dominated the focus of *enjo kōsai* discussion, particularly during this period. While it is true that the schoolgirl was an easy target for societal blame, holding her solely responsible for this phenomenon risks ignoring other actors and issues.

Michel Foucault provides useful theories for examining and analyzing social conditions, including those in Japan in the 1990s. Foucault's theories are useful for beginning to understand the complicated schoolgirl figure and her amplification in this historical moment. Using Foucauldian analysis and his theories of power, resistance, sexuality, and discourse, I trace the historical construction of the schoolgirl from her inception to the present, paying close attention to the preoccupation taken by society to portray her in a specifically sexualized manner. The sexualized schoolgirl figure is so commonplace within Japanese society that it has been normalized. I argue that while the sexualization of the schoolgirl figure is accepted by Japanese society, sexualized schoolgirl behavior is not socially acceptable for actual adolescent girls. This paradox sends a contradictory message to Japanese adolescent girls.

This research also applies Foucauldian analysis to the often-overlooked role of the Japanese male in Japanese society. This analysis includes an examination of the normative production of masculine identity, crafted by the modern Japanese state, specifically during the postwar period of high economic growth. An examination of how that production has changed or

been blocked from its normative formation will demonstrate how and why it became increasingly problematic, particularly in the 1990s. While it is true that gender identities such as masculinity continually change and are influenced by environment, I specifically examine the unitary gender constructions in Japan supported by the state. Feminist scholar Jane Flax writes:

If subjectivity is constituted by pre-given categories like masculine and feminine, no individual subject can escape the effects of these categories...[T]hese categories will continue to generate particular forms of subjectivity beyond the control of individuals.⁷

This has certainly been the case in Japan, where the state has attempted to construct and reinforce categories of masculine and feminine, particularly since the postwar period. Foucault argues that such set identities are inherently impossible to maintain, as identities and the power attached to them must be continually renegotiated. I demonstrate how the inability to uphold set gender roles contributed to the societal panic that defined the 1990s and attached itself to the schoolgirl figure and enjo kōsai. While the 1990s are over, the effects from events during this period continue to reverberate. Part I continues with the examination of why the attainment of masculinity became problematic in the 1990s due to shifting gender roles and renegotiation of power, the changing family structure, and a painful end to the economic success celebrated during the postwar period. I argue that these obstructions to the ideal version of masculinity resulted in a crisis of masculinity evident throughout the 1990s that continues today. This paper treats enjo kōsai as symptomatic of this crisis.

Part II of this paper provides a deeper look at Japanese popular culture featuring the schoolgirl figure by examining manga read by both Japanese adolescent girls (shōjo manga) and men (seinen manga).⁸ Shōjo manga often features empowering portrayals of the schoolgirl. Shōjo manga sends an overwhelming message that schoolgirl participation in enjo kōsai is

⁷ Barbara Molony and Kathleen S. Uno, *Gendering Modern Japanese History* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 11.

⁸ Manga are Japanese comic books.

wrong; only schoolgirls in an extremely unfortunate, negative situation do enjo kōsai. Seinen manga, on the other hand, often portrays the schoolgirl figure as a sexualized object available for domination. Part II utilizes Foucauldian discourse theory to examine how shōjo and seinen manga are both descriptive and constructive of the schoolgirl figure. This analysis uses the concepts of both power and discourse to analyze the complex relationship between the Japanese schoolgirl figure and society.

Part III examines interviews I conducted with 20 Japanese women during the summer of 2010. These interviews represent an attempt on my part to learn more about real adolescent girls and the subject of enjo kōsai. A realistic portrayal of Japanese women and their opinions on this phenomenon is nonexistent within both popular culture and academic literature. My goal is to contribute to existing research with the stories of these 20 women. My analysis of their stories examines how enjo kōsai fits within the social world of adolescent girls. The wide variety of women I interviewed did not fit the schoolgirl figure stereotype. The treatment they received within society, however, and particularly during high school, often suggested otherwise.

Part IV examines national policy aimed at preventing enjo kōsai. In 1999, the Japanese parliament passed the Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and for Protecting Children (CPCPL). The CPCPL protects children under the age of eighteen by designating the adult customer as the criminal party. This law set an important precedent by punishing demand for prostitution when it involves children. The CPCPL effectively changed the discursive and policy framework for enjo kōsai: adolescent girls believed to be acting willfully became protected victims. Part IV provides recommendations to strengthen the CPCPL. It also suggests that applying the law's demand-punishing precedent

throughout the Japanese sex market would effectively target Japan's severe human trafficking problem.

In conclusion, I briefly examine how the schoolgirl figure, while unique to Japan in some ways, has global implications. The global exportation of this figure is increasing through popular culture, the media, and even Japanese government initiatives. The negative treatment of adolescent girls placed in a vulnerable position exists worldwide. The Japanese schoolgirl case represents a small piece of a much larger puzzle. Adolescent girls worldwide deserve understanding, respect, and most importantly, policy protecting their well-being.

Part I: The Schoolgirl Figure and Masculinity in Crisis

Japanese Adolescent Girls

Time spent as a high school English teacher in Japan afforded me a unique opportunity to view a side of Japanese adolescents that many never observe.⁹ My understanding of Japanese female adolescents comes from witnessing their interactions with each other and adults as well as the treatment they received from the rest of society. This understanding is often contradictory to the representation of adolescent girls in popular culture and the media. At my school, rather than play the authoritarian role that many other teachers did, I sought a favorable position with the students. This approach worked well for my lessons by keeping students engaged and more interested in communicating with me. I attempted to know them on a personal level and was rewarded with not only their participation and interest, but also an overabundance of gossip and information about their personal lives. It also helped that I was the youngest teacher at the school (22 years old when I first began teaching) and a foreigner, therefore an outsider that posed little threat to the students regarding the information I received.

One particular instance stands out in my mind as a poignant example of how my interpretation of adolescent girls differed from that of others. One day two of my female students, considered troublemakers by the other teachers, were ushered into the principal's office for a mysterious offense. I had always felt that these two students, while certainly rebellious, were seriously misunderstood. From the beginning of my time teaching them, I chose not to reprimand these girls in particular as the other teachers frequently did.¹⁰ I made an effort to get

⁹ I spent two years teaching high school English in Yamanashi Prefecture, Japan, as an Assistant Language Teacher on the JET Program (July 2006 – August 2008). I taught at one of the lowest level academic high schools in the prefecture. Over half of my students did not go on to university; they instead went to vocational schools or found jobs directly out of high school.

¹⁰ Reprimanding students was not my responsibility; I was told it was my job to foster positive relationships with the students to support “internationalization.”

to know them by speaking with them in the hallways, before and after class, and during lunchtime. I encouraged their participation in class by providing them with encouragement and sometimes candy. At times, they would visit my desk in the staff room to say hello. Several times I chose to overlook problems for which these girls normally would have been reprimanded. While these details seemed insignificant to me at the time, my attitude proved helpful in encouraging trust and building relationships. In these situations, I was in a unique position to bond with students, an opportunity never afforded to more authoritarian teachers. Because of the relationship I established with them, these young women participated in my lessons, more so than many of the other students.

Many of the teachers whispered to each other in the staff room when these two girls were taken to the principal's office. A few teachers even consoled the girls' homeroom teacher before she joined the meeting with the principal. I did not understand the behavior around me and was curious; this clearly involved something out of the ordinary. The mood of the staff room, while intense, remained secretive. I asked a few teachers what was happening, but was told "don't worry" or "nothing at all." I finally found another English teacher, who was consistently reliable when it came to providing office gossip. However, he became very uncomfortable when I asked for information. After several attempts to get details from him, he finally told me that the girls had made a website. This website discussed the girls doing "bad things." "Drugs? Alcohol?" I asked, thinking about the trouble American teenagers typically get into during high school. "No, nothing like that." He refused to tell me anything else.

After failing to learn any details from the teachers, I asked students. This proved much easier, and I received an immediate response: the girls were doing "*enkō*." After some internet searching, I learned about the phenomenon involving schoolgirls that led to whispers in the staff

room, disavowal to a foreigner in their midst, and severe reprimand and punishment for the two students involved. Their homeroom teacher apologized to other teachers for weeks, as these girls were ostensibly her responsibility. However, the brunt of the blame fell upon the girls. This incident, if possible, increased the stigmatization these girls faced from the teachers at school after their return.

Enkō is the shortened version of enjō kōsai, which translates to “subsidized dating.” The phenomenon of enjō kōsai emerged as a subject of great anxiety during the 1990s in Japan. Involving junior high or high school girls going on dates with middle-aged men for money and/or gifts, enjō kōsai can include anything from dinner and conversation, karaoke, or group activities to sexual relations. My initial experience learning about enjō kōsai through my students suggested what further examination of literature on the schoolgirl has helped to reinforce. Enjō kōsai fuels misunderstanding around the schoolgirl. While this phenomenon, popularly linked to societal downfall, includes both Japanese men and schoolgirls, the schoolgirl is often the singular focus while Japanese men are left unexamined.

The Japanese schoolgirl is a fictional figure that represents adolescent girls in middle school or high school, between 13 and 18 years old. At this period in their lives, adolescent girls enjoy an increased amount of freedom, yet remain reliant on their parents financially as well as emotionally. They have not yet reached emotional maturity, but their bodies are beginning to develop sexually. They face incredible pressure to succeed within the Japanese school system, especially if they desire to continue on to university and a career. Women face a disadvantage in the workplace, therefore adolescent girls wishing to pursue a career remain particularly disadvantaged and must work even harder to overcompensate. The adolescent girl embodies an age during which social roles become particularly clear and enforced for women. While the

schoolgirl figure is often portrayed as carefree and even careless, this is not necessarily reality for adolescent girls.

The figure of the schoolgirl has been the recipient of intense anxiety and fascination in Japan. While attention increased during the 1990s the rise of enjo kōsai, it was certainly not new. Anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl can, in fact, be traced to the beginning of Japan's modernization efforts. The need to control this figure and mold her into a specific form can be witnessed throughout Japanese history, coupled with the anxiety attached to these efforts. The difference in the anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl figure in the 1990s, however, was an intensification of what the schoolgirl actually obscured: a crisis of masculinity.

In this section I argue that participation of the schoolgirl in enjo kōsai is not as problematic as it has been portrayed in the media, society, and existing literature. The nonexistence of literature and discourse focused on male participants, however, is concerning. As I witnessed several years ago with my female students, misunderstanding still surrounds the schoolgirl figure the lack of understanding and has implications for the societal treatment of real adolescent girls. Acknowledging the context of the 1990s and the effects of shifting gender roles is an important next step in understanding this phenomenon.

The Context of Japan in the 1990s

Enjo kōsai emerged in 1990s Japan, a decade plagued by sociocultural crises with deep roots. This decade followed the postwar celebratory modernization period of the 1960s and 1970s; Japan instead faced the loss of a grand narrative, a sense of hopelessness, and a perceived lack of control. A severe economic crisis destroyed any sense of prosperity and success that had built up since postwar reconstruction. The recession that followed substantially affected the sense of societal rupture and decline that plagued the decade. The future of the nuclear family

structure that contributed to Japan's economic postwar success began to break apart in this period.

The Salaryman Family Model and the Shifting Role of Women

1950s Japan was characterized by increased industrialization, which led to the creation of enterprise society's "salaryman family" in the 1960s. This family structure required the father as head of the household to gain salaried lifetime employment and function as the family breadwinner. The wife and mother acted as full-time housewife and was responsible for raising and monitoring the education of the children (typically two). This role for women served as a continuation of the "good wife, wise mother" gender ideology instituted by the Japanese state during the Meiji era.¹¹ In the salaryman family model, mothers raised children to strive for this family arrangement when they grew up in order to gain economic security and eventually care for their parents.¹²

Andrew Gordon, in his examination of the New Life Movement in postwar Japan details how ideal masculinity found a new home in the salaryman and how a naturalized model of gender relations became ingrained within society. The New Life Movement targeted the Japanese household in both rural and urban areas and strove to "engender" Japanese postwar society by "articulating and reinforcing ideal patterns of behavior for women and men."¹³ This movement constructed a model for gender roles in which women managed the home so that men could focus on the workplace. The New Life Movement dictated who and what women could be, but it also offered them the opportunity to participate and have a voice within the family sphere.

¹¹ The Meiji Era marked the beginning of Japan's modernization efforts and lasted from 1868-1912.

¹² Anne E. Imamura, *Re-Imaging Japanese Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 2-3.

¹³ Andrew Gordon, "Managing the Japanese Household: The New Life Movement in Postwar Japan," In *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, ed. Barbara Molony and Kathleen S. Uno (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005), 424.

The state, with the support of many women's organizations, launched numerous initiatives to enforce specific gender roles. The government provided financial support to civil society groups that promoted activities aimed at women and the family, teaching "modern" domestic practices. While the encouragement of these "modern" domestic practices for women had existed within the upper and elite classes since the beginning of the Meiji era, this new effort spread the ideology throughout all classes. Gordon writes:

The movement spoke of rationalizing the role of housewife, the life of the family, and the home as both physical and social space. But its greater impact was in naturalizing a certain model of gender relations – of proper roles for men as well as for women. A society where women of all social strata managed the home, while their men managed the workplace, came to be understood as the natural way things were and ought to be.¹⁴

The role of men under this model became that of provider. In this role, masculine identity became more intimately connected to men's work than to their families. Financial stability and an increasing salary were not only desirable, but expected under the gender ideology produced within enterprise society that flourished in the 1960s and 1970s. The removal of men from the home resulted in their "financially determined paternal role," which limited both men and women in their choices. Tomiko Yoda, Women's Studies professor and Japan specialist at Duke University, explains:

Absent fathers who nevertheless bring home paychecks have consolidated domesticity as the domain of women that is 'separate but equal' in relation to the workplace, and this work-home dichotomy and clear cut separation of gender roles, in turn, has enabled Japanese corporations to marginalize and exploit female workers while imposing an extremely competitive and controlling work environment on regular male workers.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid. 425.

¹⁵ Tomiko Yoda, "The Rise and Fall of Maternal Society: Gender, Labor, and Capital in Contemporary Japan," In *Japan After Japan*, ed. Tomiko Yoda and Harry D. Harootunian (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2006). 265-266.

This model resulted in the child's strong dependency on the nurturing mother and the strengthening of what came to be known as maternal society, where the role of the mother within the home was paramount.

Gordan acknowledges that while gender roles constructed through politics and culture were characteristic of modernity movements in many countries, Japan's New Life Movement was unique in several ways. First, society admired the Japanese housewife for her skills and abilities as a homemaker, to the point that she was regarded as a "professional."¹⁶ Second, the support and parallel efforts of both the government and private corporations to enforce these structured roles was unrivaled. Of particular significance, the New Life Movement was taken up by corporations to provide the new aspect of "rationalizing the workplace" in conjunction with the household. "The corporate campaign made rationalizing the household a project parallel to rationalizing the workplace. It identified the enterprise-dominated society with a particular structure of gender roles."¹⁷ Gender roles for men were thus constructed as well. Corporations also worked to ensure that households did not promote values other than those that fully supported the enterprise. Finally, the enforcement of the New Life Movement activities throughout Japanese civil society helped to institutionalize gender roles. By the late 1960s, "the role of the full-time housewife was so well established, and so many young girls studied home economics in middle school, high school, and junior college, that corporate programs to teach women to cook and shop hardly seemed necessary."¹⁸

For a time in postwar Japan, specific gender roles superficially led to incredible economic success, particularly given the conditions of industrialization and fast economic growth. Ezra Vogel in his famous work *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* painted an optimistic

¹⁶ Gordon, 450.

¹⁷ Ibid, 432.

¹⁸ Ibid, 447.

picture of Japan and its future, particularly for the salaryman who represented a “bright new life.”¹⁹ The lifestyle of the salaryman provided men with stable lifetime employment and a seniority system of promotion desired by many. Under this model, the role of the father became that of provider, earning money for the family. This process in turn disconnected him from any family intimacy. At the same time, the role of the mother as housewife, caregiver, and nurturer of children was reinforced by the father’s absence. The intense bond created between mother and child left no place for the father within the modern Japanese household. While these fixed gender roles are perhaps characteristic of modern industrial societies, Yoda, like Gordon, points out the rapidity that this configuration spread in the postwar period, throughout every level of Japanese society. Successful and rapid economic growth in the capitalist system certainly contributed to the reinforcement of this enterprise society structure as well. If men worked hard, they could provide a comfortable, even luxurious lifestyle for their families.

By the 1970s women’s roles expanded to include work outside of the home. Part-time jobs and volunteer work, adult education, and political or consumer activities became viable options for women’s time. Ann Imamura in *Re-Imaging Japanese Women* argues that “through such activities, women became involved outside their homes and neighborhoods and had opportunities to develop personal interests and networks while defining their dominant roles as wives and mothers.”²⁰

The 1980s brought further changes for women. After signing the United Nations Declaration on Women, Japan passed the Equal Employment Opportunity Law to improve access to jobs for women.²¹ This law increased opportunities for women to find low paying, blue

¹⁹ James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki, introduction to *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa*, ed. James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki (London: Routledge, 2003), 1.

²⁰ Imamura, 3.

²¹ *Ibid*, 4.

collar and part-time jobs, yet did little to equalize opportunities for women to rise beyond low level management.²² Nevertheless, labor shortages and high costs of living pushed women into the workforce in increasing numbers. By the 1990s, the economic recession increased the number of women working even more and led to further variation in life choices for women. Many women waited longer to marry, increasing the average age of first marriage for women from 25 to 26.²³ Greater numbers of women in the workforce coupled with the economic crisis and the rising cost of living deterred many from having children, causing the birthrate to fall below 1.5 children per woman by the 1990s.²⁴ Instead of just the traditional “good wife, wise mother” role, a variety of paths opened up to women ranging from marriage and full-time housewife, to higher education and more work before marriage or a career, to the unmarried “career track” woman.

An abundance of literature focuses on gender inequality in Japan as the leading cause of declining marriage and birthrates. Women had more lifestyle options by the 1990s and many chose to forgo the traditional housewife role. While this is inarguably true, this explanation often fails to examine the corresponding effects on Japanese men. Japanese feminist writer Sumiko Iwao argued in 1993 that, “the range of roles a ‘typical’ thirty-five-year-old housewife might assume have multiplied. Her options are quite varied, whereas those of her thirty-five-year-old husband have remained the same and are quite limited.”²⁵ Fewer options for Japanese men and a singular path to the ideal form of masculinity contributed to a crisis of masculinity in 1990s

²² Ibid, 9.

²³ Unmarried women beyond the age of 25 were previously considered “Christmas cake”: dried up, old, and undesirable. However, the average age of first marriage for women continued to increase. By 2011, it reached 29-30 years of age. Nearly one third of Japanese women remain unmarried in their thirties and half of them will likely never marry. The Economist, “Asia’s lonely hearts: The decline of Asian Marriage,” *The Economist*, Print Edition, August 20, 2011, <http://www.economist.com/node/21526350>.

²⁴ Japan’s birthrate in 2012 hovers at 1.4. The Economist, “The dearth of births,” *The Economist*, Special Report, Print Edition, November 18, 2010, <http://www.economist.com/node/17492838>.

²⁵ Imamura, 5.

Japan. Japanese men, however, remain overlooked and often invisible participants within societal issues, whereas youth are rather front and center within the discussion.

Societal Perceptions of Japanese Youth and Enjo Kōsai

Japanese youth in the 1990s were directly linked to numerous societal ills, receiving significant attention and blame. The same Japanese adolescents who would determine the future success of Japan by continuing the salaryman family model exhibited both resistance to this set path and anxiety-invoking behavior. An increase in violent acts committed by teenage boys throughout the country, specifically a string of murders committed by a fourteen year old, left many Japanese both fearful of and concerned for youth.²⁶ Girls were seen as contributors to societal downfall through their seeming increase of sexual promiscuity. Enjo kōsai emerged, tying schoolgirl sexual behavior with the materialism and consumerism considered characteristic of a postmodern society. One aspect in particular that fueled interest for the media was the idea that the sexually promiscuous behavior traditionally associated with lower class women had spread across class boundaries. Middle and upper class schoolgirls now engaged in this behavior.

For adolescent girls, enjo kōsai began as a group activity. Girls and their friends often earned money together, as demonstrated in the introductory example from *Love & Pop*. The ease and availability of engaging in enjo kōsai increased with modern technology. *Terekura*, or telephone clubs, and internet dating websites provided convenient ways to connect. *Terekura* allowed men to pay a fee to sit and wait for phone calls from girls who wished to arrange a date. The girls called *terekura* at no charge and chose from available messages from men; enjo kōsai

²⁶ Tomiko Yoda, "A Roadmap to Millennial Japan," In *Japan After Japan: Social and Cultural Life from the Recessionary 1990s to the Present*, ed. Tomiko Yoda and Harry D. Harootunian (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 21.

operated this way for most of the decade.²⁷ The government shut down many terekura by the late 1990s as an attempt to stop schoolgirl promiscuity. However, dating websites still operate and offer an anonymous avenue for enjo kōsai meet-ups. Enjo kōsai is now an underground phenomenon characterized by individual meetings, rather than group activities for girls. The phenomenon shifted around the turn of the millennium from a socializing opportunity to an isolating, and even lonely, experience for adolescent girl participants.²⁸ The Yakuza, Japan's organized crime syndicate and controller of the sex industry, now functions as the middleman in many enjo kōsai encounters. Due to this new component, adolescent girls are now much more susceptible to financial exploitation and risk becoming trapped in the sex industry.²⁹

The actual number of adolescent girls participating in enjo kōsai during the 1990s is unclear. An investigation by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government in 1996 found that 4 percent of female high school students and 3.8 percent of female junior high school students had engaged in enjo kōsai.³⁰ A survey conducted in 1997 by Fukutomi Mamoru, a psychology professor at Tokyo Gakugei University, showed similar results, with 5 percent of high school girls surveyed admitting to participation.³¹ The media was famous in the 1990s for sensationalizing enjo kōsai stories by suggesting every adolescent girl was a participant, however this was not actually the case.

The rise of enjo kōsai is attributed to numerous causes. Japanese sociologists, psychologists, educators, and researchers suggest the main cause of this phenomenon to be

²⁷ Laura Miller, "Those Naughty Teenage Girls: Japanese Kogals, Slang, and Media Assessments," *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 17, no. 2 (2004): 239.

²⁸ Based on a discussion in September 2010 with David Slater, associate professor of Japan Studies and Anthropology at Sophia University.

²⁹ Based on a discussion in August 2011 with Jake Adelstein, sex industry journalist and author of *Tokyo Vice*.

³⁰ N = 1,291, from 1st grade junior high school to 3rd grade high school. Miller, 239.

³¹ N = 600, from randomly selected high school girls in the Tokyo metropolitan area. Asahi Shimbun, "Survey Disputes 'enjo-kōsai' Hype," *Asahi Newspaper*, English edition, April 24, 1998, <http://www.anusha.com/enjoko-2.htm>.

effects of the economic bubble of the 1980s.³² Others blame the failure of traditional family values. Some charge consumerism. Shintarō Ishihara, noted author and governor of Tokyo since 1999, complains of “moral bankruptcy” in Japanese society.³³ Ishihara, famous for his paternalist stance which blames societal issues on the diminishing authority of the father in the family, takes a particularly radical stance on the issue. He argues the Japanese mother is responsible for the downfall of moral values in society and erosion of the nation state. Ishihara views maternal excess as responsible for violent crimes committed by today’s youth, enjo kōsai, refusal of children to attend school, and a range of other economic, social, and political issues.³⁴ While this view is indeed extreme, Ishihara’s platform as governor provides significant leverage with the media and successfully paints a negative picture of adolescent girls and women to society.

Chizuko Ueno, sociologist at the University of Tokyo and one of Japan’s foremost feminist scholars, lists several reasons that girls participate in enjo kōsai: out of curiosity due to rampant portrayal in the media, to improve their own self-esteem, and for materialistic purposes. Ueno also argues, “given limited choices for the future, women tend to choose the path of self-realization through consumption,” and “consumption is a handy tool for hegemony, in other words, even a rational choice for women within a patriarchal context of limited resources assigned to them.”³⁵ Unlike most scholars, Ueno also examines why men participate in enjo kōsai and believes “male fetishism attached to innocence creates an additional value to juvenile

³² Arlene M. Goodison, “The Spectacle of Schoolgirls: Enjo Kōsai Through a Tokugawa Lens” (master’s thesis, University of Kansas, 2004).

³³ *Ibid.*, 2.

³⁴ Yoda, 43.

³⁵ Chizuko Ueno, “Self-determination on Sexuality? Commercialization of Sex Among Teenage Girls in Japan,” *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 4, no. 2 (2003): 317.

girls.”³⁶ Ueno concludes that enjo kōsai both supports feminism as it challenges oppressive sexual norms and opposes feminism in that it exists within an oppressive patriarchal regime.³⁷

Mamoru provides a different perspective on the phenomenon in his *Asian Women's Fund* 1997 article: “An Analytical Study on the Causes of and Attitudes Toward ‘Enjo Kōsai’ among Female High School Students in Japan.” Mamoru, with the help of numerous co-researchers, interviewed 30 female high school students in the Tokyo metropolitan area using questions falling under the following categories: school environment, family environment, relationship with friends, financial life and daily life, communication tools, future plans, self-evaluation, enjo kōsai, and gender equality. Adolescent girls provided a range of responses when asked to define enjo kōsai, including “a relationship in which a girl has dinner with a man, they go to karaoke together, and in return he gives her money and gets him to buy her clothes” to “I think ‘enjo kōsai’ is having sex for money.”³⁸ Mamoru states:

Whether ‘enjo kōsai’ involves sex or not is not essential. Even if it does not, it divides the relationship between the man and the woman into that of ‘buyers’ and ‘sellers’, and is the reproduction of a traditional formula that ‘the value of women lies in their youthfulness.’ This is symbolized by female high school students (in recent years, junior high school students have been also targeted). In this context, the issue of ‘enjo kōsai’ can be said to be a result of the ‘commercialization of sex.’³⁹

Mamoru lists many reasons for the existence of enjo kōsai in both the interviews and comments, yet concludes that the topic is a gender inequality issue:

To stop this vicious cycle, the issue of ‘enjo kōsai’ needs to be examined without merely regarding ‘enjo kōsai’ as a social phenomena of the day. Whether or not ‘enjo kōsai’ involves sex, the following have to be made clear; ‘enjo kōsai’ is a form of women’s

³⁶ Ibid, 322.

³⁷ Ibid, 323.

³⁸ Fukutomi Mamoru, “An Analytical Study on the Causes of the Attitudes Toward ‘Enjo Kōsai’ Among Female High School Students in Japan,” *Asian Women's Fund* (1997): 72.

³⁹ Ibid, 72-73.

sexuality commercialised, it distorts the relationship between men and women, and it dishonours the dignity of women.⁴⁰

Shinji Miyadai, a Japanese sociologist who conducts research on the topic of enjo kōsai, believes that adolescent participants generally come from families with “good” parents. However, he points out a lack of communication at home and believes that children have become superficial by playing the role of a “good” child that comes home on time and attends school regularly. Enjo kōsai is an activity done separately from the home. Girl participants that Miyadai spoke to typically responded they would feel sorry for their parents (*kawaisō*) if their activities were discovered.⁴¹ Miyadai believes a major reason for the girls’ participation in enjo kōsai is low self-esteem, fueled by a lack of familial communication. A Tokyo University student and previous enjo kōsai participant shared the following with Miyadai:

I’ve experienced [diverse forms of sex], but I’m convinced my decision [to enter prostitution] was right. Although I started it because I was so hurt [by unconsummated love], I was able to meet many different men and see the real world, a world that was different from the ideal story I had been made to believe...Psychiatry was bad for my soul, but prostitution was good for me. Those people who tell you that you’ll regret it one day don’t really know it, they don’t know anything – I will never regret having done this. I’m not selling my dignity and I’m not humiliating myself. I’ve regained my pride [through prostitution] and sometimes, I feel superior [to these men who pay me for sex].⁴²

Miyadai believes that the girls’ self-esteem is destroyed by their domestic environments and that they are attempting to regain their self-worth by turning their bodies into commodities. He reasons that by altering the body, whether by creating a commodity to be consumed or by just getting a tattoo, one is able to separate body from soul to ultimately feel better about oneself:

By modifying one’s own body, just by making a hole, one can be free from self-consciousness. In other words, the body is not the last trustworthy foundation of the self,

⁴⁰ Ibid, 82.

⁴¹ Ryang, 100.

⁴² Ibid, 95.

but rather the last controllable environment, the modifiable exterior. That is why there is no problem with the body being consumed by others.⁴³

By participating in enjo kōsai, Miyadai argues that girls give up any attempts to gain meaning in life by instead focusing on transitory pleasure. Japan Studies researcher Yumiko Iida, however, is not so easily convinced:

Japan in the 1990s appears to be plagued by the loss of an end, death or the absolute, the loss of a structuring frame for cognition and a system of meaning authorized by a sense of the finite. In this terminal condition, Miyadai's 'romanticism' is little more than a passive, aestheticized form of 'resistance' that seeks to survive by adjusting its mode of thinking, modifying the structure of the senses, and ultimately by erasing the self altogether.⁴⁴

Iida's points return to the context of the 1990s, and the social discontent that enjo kōsai fits within. Existing academic literature surrounding enjo kōsai provides a range of opinion about schoolgirl participation from her materialistic desires to her low self-esteem. The media in turn uses this literature for dramatized reports, effectively creating an air of anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl. This attention ultimately contributes to the overriding viewpoint that the Japanese schoolgirl is contributing to society's moral degeneration.

The schoolgirl is an easy target for blame, as were most youth in the 1990s. Yoda points out that youth bashing in general "translated less into a campaign to reform them into upstanding and productive citizens than into an encouragement of public opinion that holds them responsible for their economic and social displacement."⁴⁵ Youth in many countries are an easy target of blame for societal issues, yet this blame risks ignoring other causes. While acknowledging the concept of youth as a major contributor to social ills is not unique to Japan, the circumstances and social evolution that shaped public opinion of the Japanese schoolgirl during the 1990s has

⁴³ Ibid, 233.

⁴⁴ Yumiko Iida, *Rethinking Identity in Modern Japan: Nationalism As Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 2002): 235.

⁴⁵ Yoda, 43.

its own historical specificity worthy of further examination. Foucault's theories of power, resistance, sexuality, and discourse provide a useful framework for examining the constructed schoolgirl figure as well as contributing factors to this construction.

Foucault

As discussed in the previous section, academic and public opinions on the schoolgirl figure and her participation in enjo kōsai differ significantly. This research provides a new examination by employing the theories of Michel Foucault, which provide useful approaches for examining and analyzing societal relations. Foucault's Western, often male-focused work was created based on different contexts and different subjects, and throughout the research process I kept this juxtaposition in mind. Rather than attempting to completely apply Foucault's theories to this topic, I allowed them to influence deeper questions regarding the historical construction of the schoolgirl figure and the particular context of Japan. Ultimately, this examination is a useful step in understanding a complicated figure and this historical moment.

Japan scholars have employed Foucauldian theories in a limited way to examine gender roles and sex practice in Japan. Jennifer Prough provides one of the only studies to apply Foucauldian theory in relation to the Japanese schoolgirl figure. Prough employs Foucault's theory of discourse to examine the entire shōjo manga industry, noting how "discourse is a system of representations that in the guise of describing a subject actually define it; rather than merely listing the characteristics of a subject, discourse creates the very thing it is trying to describe."⁴⁶ Prough refers to the manga industry and an attempt by editors to allow girls to decide the themes and issues covered in their manga. However, the stories and images published by the manga industry are also heavily influential on girls' culture and adolescent girls in the

⁴⁶ Jennifer S. Prough, *Straight from the Heart: Gender, Intimacy, and the Cultural Production of Shōjo Manga* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011): 128.

1990s, thereby constructing a discourse of understanding. Prough's use of Foucault's discourse theory is certainly useful for examining the shōjo manga industry as a whole, as well as individual themes and issues within manga specifically related to the schoolgirl figure, such as the phenomenon of enjo kōsai. While the manga industry attempts to describe the issue of enjo kōsai as it occurs within Japanese society between schoolgirls and men, the industry actually defines the subject and creates the various understandings that exist throughout society. Prough's application of Foucault is incredibly useful for understanding discourse, but falls short in explaining the important component of power. Power inherently plays a role in every societal relationship, significantly influencing the structure of a discourse. For Foucault these two concepts are inherently connected. This research will therefore employ both power and discourse in analyzing the complex relationship between the Japanese schoolgirl figure and society. This research includes Foucault's theories of power, resistance, sexuality, and discourse to provide a framework for examining the Japanese schoolgirl figure as well as masculinity in a way not previously discussed.

Theories of Power and Resistance

Michel Foucault examined the concept of power throughout much of his work. He specifically examined the role of institutions, people, and the way that power operates within all societal relations in *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973), *Discipline and Punish* (1977), *The History of Sexuality* (1978), and *Power/Knowledge* (1980). Foucault's notion of power moves beyond the basic categorization of the powerful within society oppressing the powerless, and instead examines the everyday relations that repress but also produce power.⁴⁷ In *Power/Knowledge* (1980), for example, Foucault argues: "Power must be analysed as something which circulates,

⁴⁷ Sara Mills, *Michel Foucault* (London: Routledge, 2003): 33.

or as something which only functions in the form of a chain...Power is employed and exercised through a net-like organization...Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its application.”⁴⁸ In this interpretation, power is spread across all of society, carried by all individuals. Power is not simply located within particular institutions, but plays a role in all relationships within a society and is performed according to particular contexts. Foucault views power as productive in that it enables certain behavior and events rather than only constraining individuals.

Foucault states in *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, “where there is power there is resistance.”⁴⁹ This implies that power relations are more complicated than a relationship between the oppressor and the oppressed, but that resistance is inevitably a component. Power is an element of every interaction within society but is also challenged within these interactions, making it insecure. In other words, power must be continually renewed, renegotiated, and maintained within relations.⁵⁰ Resistance is not necessarily evident in a fixed form, but appears in different forms and places as power dynamics change. This point is important to remember when considering shifting gender roles within Japan as well as the schoolgirl figure and her varying relationship with and treatment from societal members.

Theory of Sexuality

In *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I* Foucault discusses how power operates not through the repression of sex, but through the discursive production of sexuality. Foucault argues that sexuality is not an intrinsic characteristic to be repressed or discovered. Sexuality is a social construct that depends on the social meaning and importance we attach to it. The sexuality attached to the schoolgirl figure, therefore, is not a natural preexisting condition, but is created

⁴⁸ Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon. *Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980): 98.

⁴⁹ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I* (New York: Vintage, 1978): 95.

⁵⁰ Mills, 52.

through the societal renegotiation of power. Foucault believes that exercising power leads to a drive to create sexuality in places that it was not previously thought to exist.⁵¹ This sexuality becomes part of the identity of individuals, however is performative in that it must be continually reestablished through societal interaction.⁵² Portrayal of the schoolgirl figure in a specifically sexual manner throughout popular culture and the media is an example of this performative reestablishment of power over the schoolgirl figure.

Theory of Discourse

Another important concept examined by Foucault is discourse, primarily discussed in *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), *Power/Knowledge* (1980), and 'The order of discourse' (1981). Foucault defines discourse as "the general domain of all statements,"⁵³ but his analysis is more concerned with the set of structures and rules that make that domain possible. Foucault views discourse as inherently connected to relations of power:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. We must make allowances for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power, it reinforces it, but also undermines it and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it.⁵⁴

In other words, discourse is a complex system that structures the way we perceive reality and the way power operates.⁵⁵ This complex system is itself regulated: "in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized, and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance

⁵¹ Foucault (1978), 36-49.

⁵² Mills, 95.

⁵³ Michel Foucault and Alan Sheridan, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972): 80.

⁵⁴ Foucault (1978), 100-101.

⁵⁵ Mills, 55.

events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality.”⁵⁶ The systems of discourse, or discursive formations that define reality, provide a framework of representation for understanding subjects. In the context of this research, discourse provides an avenue for representing knowledge about the schoolgirl in the particular context of Japan within this historical moment. Discourse both defines and constructs the schoolgirl figure, determining the way she can be meaningfully discussed and understood. This discursive framework also limits and restricts ways of talking or conducting in relation to this figure.

Foucault argues that people do not possess a fixed identity. People communicate identity to others through interactions and this identity is a shifting, temporal construction. While this point certainly applies to the schoolgirl figure, it is just as important to consider when examining Japanese gender roles and particularly the concept of masculinity. The following sections of this paper examine societal constructions of the Japanese schoolgirl figure, gender roles, and masculinity and demonstrate why fulfilling the expectations attached to these created roles is problematic, particularly in the context of the 1990s. This examination requires reflection on the renegotiation of power and discourse in relation to these figures.

Construction of the Japanese Schoolgirl Figure

The concept of the Japanese schoolgirl in the 1990s produced both intense anxiety as well as fascination. The schoolgirl symbolizes innocence yet is also highly sexualized in images throughout society. She is young and free, experiencing an ephemeral time in her life worthy of nostalgic memories for adults. She connects to the Japanese woman through gender and future identity, yet resides in an in-between state. She is no longer a child, yet has certainly not fully matured into adulthood. This temporal state embodied by the schoolgirl is an idea available and

⁵⁶ Michel Foucault “The order of discourse” in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, ed. Robert Young (Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981): 52.

open for society to influence and shape. This figure itself is a Foucauldian discourse, providing a framework of representation for understanding the subject of the schoolgirl, and real adolescent girls by extension. Within this discursive formation, the constructed concept of sexuality is attached to the schoolgirl, carrying with it specific meaning. This meaning places the schoolgirl in an inferior position of power to Japanese men that must be constantly renegotiated and upheld through societal interaction.

The image and story of good schoolgirls gone bad, embracing their sexuality and leading to the corruption of society is a common one found in Japan. The 1990s produced unlimited media reports surrounding the scandalous behavior of the schoolgirl. Media titles included:

- “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).⁵⁷
- “The Anatomy of Female High School Students,” “Female High School Students – Dangerous After School,” and “Schoolgirls as Sexual Commodities – Their Stories,” (various newspaper headlines).⁵⁸

The proliferation of media scrutiny surrounding the figure of the schoolgirl during the 1990s was substantial, yet this attention was certainly not new. Miyako Inoue traces anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl back to the beginning of Japan’s modernization project during the Meiji Era by examining “schoolgirl speech,” or the language employed by the very first schoolgirls. Schoolgirl speech was viewed as “strange” and “unpleasant,” particularly around the

⁵⁷ Sharon Kinsella, “Female Revolt in Male Cultural Imagination in Contemporary Japan.” *The Fourth Chino Kaori Memorial ‘New Visions’ Lecture* 2006.

⁵⁸ Mamoru, 5.

beginning of the twentieth century when the education of women became a national project of the “modern.”⁵⁹ The role of this education was to train schoolgirls for their future role as the “good wife, wise mother.”⁶⁰ With the beginning of adolescent girl education in the 1870s, the schoolgirl figure materialized within the public sphere, thus creating a new system of discourse. Schoolgirls and their speech emerged as a site of fascination, but also one of anxiety:

Schoolgirl speech was “unpleasant to the ears” because it exposed the shakiness of Japan’s modernity and the extent to which the Japanese (male) modern self as the subject of Japan’s modernity was (and is) inherently fractured with internal contradiction and ambivalence. In the broader sense of Freud’s term, schoolgirl speech was “uncanny” because it revealed “something which ought to have remained hidden but has come to light.”⁶¹

Inoue points out that the schoolgirl emerged within “‘peripheral modernity,’ coming from the margin, and was thus heard as threatening to Japan’s (male) modernity.”⁶² This early anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl and her threat to male modernity is key because it positioned her as not only a subject, but as a constructed object. Inoue states: “What is significant is that male intellectuals were not simply distracted by schoolgirl speech but that they positioned themselves in the act of overhearing.”⁶³ The Japanese schoolgirl, in other words, was not (and is not) understood and appreciated for her true nature, but was filtered into a new construction for viewing. Inoue’s work therefore shows “the semiotic process by which [male intellectuals] converted schoolgirl speech from mere sound or noise into a sign, constructing the schoolgirl as the other by containing her voice metapragmatically.”⁶⁴ Power renegotiation between Japanese

⁵⁹ Miyako Inoue, *Vicarious Language: Gender and Linguistic Modernity in Japan* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 2006).

⁶⁰ Gregory M. Pflugfelder, “‘S’ is for Sister: Schoolgirl Intimacy and ‘Same-Sex Love’ in Early Twentieth-Century Japan” in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, ed. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 151.

⁶¹ Inoue, 41.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid, 38.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 40.

men and the constructed schoolgirl figure is thus evident from her inception, contributing to this new system of discourse.

Further complicating this concept of the schoolgirl as the socially constructed “other” to men, Sharon Kinsella, who has done extensive work on the subject, examines how the schoolgirl construction went from one of pure innocence to one that was sexually charged in contrast to the schoolgirl’s own “other.” The first educated girls belonged to the upper socioeconomic class in Japan and embodied “the idealized attributes of virginity and cleanliness.”⁶⁵ Kinsella writes:

This early conception of girlish asexuality, veering waywardly at times toward androgyny, unconsummated same-sex romance, and later pre-sexual cuteness, was probably constructed in part in contrast to the sexual nature of the fearful opposite: the experience of girls from poor, rural, and lower classes entering into factories, workshops, domestic service, and brothels.⁶⁶

The anxiety surrounding the space filled by the schoolgirl within the public sphere, in other words, was fueled not only by the threat she posed to male modernity, but also by the threat posed *to* the schoolgirl of becoming *her* lower class other and contributed to the constructed figure she came to embody. This constructed figure contributed to the creation of a Foucauldian discourse that represented understanding and reality surrounding this previously nonexistent subject.

Text and images representing the schoolgirl figure also proliferated during this time, further contributing to this discourse. The schoolgirl was a popular figure within paintings, postcards, photographs, novels, and advertising. Inoue writes:

From the beginning, schoolgirls were public beings, objects of visual consumption who were subject to the distanced and objective male-national gaze...in this sense [schoolgirls] were both the first subject and first object of the modern Japanese woman whose experiential realities were interchangeable with a “reality” that was accessible and mediated, imagined, and consumable forms. It was the copies of the schoolgirl that

⁶⁵ Kinsella (2006), 29.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

became “the original” in the process of citational accumulation, and these copies became complexly inscribed on the bodies of living young women....The schoolgirl was, in Marx’s sense, fetishized.⁶⁷

While the fetishism of the schoolgirl reached an entirely new level by the 1990s through her sexualized portrayal in pornography, manga, and other forms of male consumption, its existence at the beginning of the century, emerging with the schoolgirl figure herself, is significant. This fetishism can be traced throughout history, particularly attached to specific aspects of the schoolgirl figure.

The schoolgirl uniform is a primary example of this fetishism. Kinsella, whose work includes an examination of the uniform, tells us: “The military-style uniform is understood as being both distinctively Japanese *and* distinctively modern.”⁶⁸ The school uniform from its inception held strong connections to militarism and nationalism, while presenting schoolchildren as “modern citizens.” Schoolgirls uniforms, known as “sailor suits” and modeled after the Japanese navy uniform (which was modeled after the nineteenth century English navy uniform), were worn by nearly all schoolgirls by the 1930s and have remained a popular symbol of the schoolgirl since.⁶⁹ Postwar pornography featured innocent schoolgirls in sailor suits. The uniformed schoolgirl was a popular figure for novels, erotic manga, illustrations, and magazines.⁷⁰ By the 1980s, aptly titled “Lolita Complex” pornography, featuring schoolgirls in uniform was also prevalent.⁷¹ Kinsella argues that as the popularity of “Lolita Complex” manga grew, it “reflect[ed] simultaneously an awareness of the increasing power and centrality of young women in society, and also a reactive desire to see these young women disarmed, infantilized,

⁶⁷ Inoue, 43-44.

⁶⁸ Kinsella (2002), 216.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 218.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 219.

⁷¹ “Lolita Complex” comes from Vladimir Nabokov’s novel *Lolita*. The protagonist, a middle-aged man, becomes sexually involved with a twelve-year-old girl after he becomes her stepfather. For more information, see: Elizabeth Janeway, “The Tragedy of Man Driven by Desire,” *The New York Times on the web*, Books section, August 17, 1958. <http://www.nytimes.com/books/97/03/02/lifetimes/nab-r-lolita.html>.

and subordinated.”⁷² The societal attempt to renegotiate power over the schoolgirl is once again apparent. During this time, an interest in “real schoolgirls” also emerged. Mori Nobuyuki published the *Tokyo High School Girl Uniform Fieldbook*, which provided voyeuristic detailed drawings of the official uniforms of high school girls throughout Tokyo with maps showing the locations of their schools.⁷³

By the 1990s, the internet also focused on discussion about the Japanese schoolgirl. In 1998, the Mainichi newspaper reported that the topic of schoolgirls and the schoolgirl uniform accounted for approximately 80 percent of “underground” Japanese websites (sites for which a URL is not listed on search engines).⁷⁴

Many schoolgirl “types” emerged in the 1990s, and perhaps the most famous was the *kogal*. The name *kogal*, short for *koukousei gyaru*, or high school girl, represented the schoolgirl who defied traditional norms through dress, speech, and behavior. The *kogal* shortened her uniform skirt and wore the infamous “loose socks” associated with this figure. The media tied *kogals* to *enjo kōsai*, continually criticizing them for scandalous dress and behavior throughout the decade. As Kinsella tells us, many considered *kogal* slang atrocious:

Sexually frank schoolgirl language fit the general image of schoolgirls as lacking in manners, and being sexually voracious, foul-mouthed, boisterous, and selfish. 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.”⁷⁵

Professor Yonekawa points out resistance demonstrated by Japanese *kogals* that exists within every power relationship. By acknowledging this resistance, he reaffirms the existence of a

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid, 226-227.

⁷⁴ Ibid, 225-226.

⁷⁵ Kinsella (2006), 21.

power relationship and demonstrates the need for “masculine society” to renegotiate power over this figure.

Kogals were a figure of intense fixation within media reports, magazines, TV dramas, and movies, often portrayed as rebellious, sexually-crazed, and greedy. They also became a fascinating site of examination for scholars. Novelist and director Murakami (*Love & Pop*) and sociologist Kawai both describe the behavior of kogals as an “unconscious movement.”⁷⁶

Murakami argues that the behavior of the girls was actually consistent with the behavioral patterns of the rest of society:

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*).⁷⁷

Kinsella, however, points out the irony in the overt interest yet limited support granted to schoolgirls by male intellectuals. “A schoolgirl movement and even a [kogal] 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.”⁷⁸ Kinsella believes that the ability of male intellectuals, film directors and producers, writers, and the media to profit off of the schoolgirl figure is particularly due to her “social inexperience and lack of an independent voice.”⁷⁹ As demonstrated, power renegotiation between the schoolgirl figure and society occurs through a multitude of interactions. Everything said by adolescent girls is filtered and interpreted to the point that the schoolgirl identity has been fully constructed by others. In addition, sexualized schoolgirl images fill the environment surrounding adolescent girls. Society consistently leads adolescent girls to believe that their value lies within their sexuality, which is

⁷⁶ Ibid, 36.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 35.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 36.

⁷⁹ Ibid, 39.

only desirable for a limited amount of time. This contradiction between the sexualized schoolgirl portrayal and contrasting societal expectations for the behavior of real adolescent girls provides a problematic environment for adolescent girls to exist within.

In examining the schoolgirl as a figure of anxiety often blamed for societal problems, it is crucial to acknowledge the role of society in the schoolgirl figure construction. Kinsella's arguments surrounding the male controlled construction of the schoolgirl are valid. She falls short, however, in explaining male society's preoccupation with constructing the schoolgirl identity. Kinsella also fails to address why Japanese men are not included in the enjo kōsai discussion. I begin to answer these questions with an examination of constructed gender roles, particularly the ideal form of masculinity.

Constructed Gender Roles and Masculinity

Understanding masculinity in crisis and its contribution to male participation in enjo kōsai requires a deeper examination of the historical construction of gender roles in Japan. R.W. Connell's work on masculinity discusses three intersecting levels, or sites of gender configuration: individual, ideological, and institutional.⁸⁰ In Japan the institutional level of gender configuration, which includes institutions such as the state, workplace, school, and the family, is particularly significant. Connell writes: "*masculinity is an aspect of institutions, and is produced in institutional life, as much as it is an aspect of personality* or produced in interpersonal transactions."⁸¹ This theory certainly applies to Japan, where, I argue, the state's enforcement of specific gender roles led to the institutionalization of the concept of ideal forms of both masculinity and femininity. These forms became problematic for many men unable or

⁸⁰ Connell, Raewyn, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

⁸¹ Connell, Raewyn, and G W. Dowsett, *Rethinking Sex: Social Theory and Sexuality Research* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993): 602, emphasis in original.

unwilling to fill this role. Construction of this ideal form of masculinity embodied the middle-class, white-collar, heterosexual male and began even before postwar enterprise society with Japan's modernization efforts during the Meiji era. Just as the schoolgirl figure represents a Foucauldian discourse, the concept of an ideal form of masculinity is its own discourse. This discursive formation defines how masculine identity can and cannot be understood. The historical construction of this discourse is evident from the beginning of the Meiji era.

Masculinity in Japan has been thoroughly tied to its modernization. Kathleen Uno, in her examination of gender, war, and empire, tells us:

The establishment of new norms, ideas, and behaviors for men and women in the decades following the Meiji Restoration of 1868 reveals that gender construction was an integral part of the genesis of Japanese modernity, whether or not the process of constructing femininity, masculinity, or the relationship of the genders was consciously undertaken.⁸²

The formation of an ideal masculine identity in Japan has been tumultuous, particularly given historical events. Japanese masculinity in the early twentieth century through the end of the Pacific War was embodied by the soldier.⁸³ This masculine identity provided all men, regardless of class, the opportunity and responsibility to serve their country's higher, nationalistic purposes.

This masculine identity attached to the soldier was thoroughly emasculated with Japan's defeat in the war. Japan specialist Yoshikuni Igarashi examines the "foundational narrative" of U.S.-Japan postwar relations by using stereotypical gender roles to explain the position employed by each country. The dominant U.S. took on a masculine role of power, while Japan was placed in a submissive, feminine role. Igarashi's writing, despite oversimplifying its

⁸² Uno, Kathleen, "Womanhood, War, and Empire: Transmutations of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' before 1931" in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, ed. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 513.

⁸³ Cook, Theodore F., Jr., "Making 'Soldiers': The Imperial Army and the Japanese Man in Meiji Society and State" in *Gendering Modern Japanese History*, ed. Barbara Molony and Kathleen Uno (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2005): 260.

examination of gender roles, paints a vivid picture of Japan's position at the end of the war: dominated, defeated, and the victim – all stereotypical feminine roles.

While many memories of the war and the conscious construction of new citizen and gender identities immediately following the war were, as Igarashi tells us, “forgotten,” they were not destroyed. Arguably, the masculine identity attached to the soldier was simply transferred to a new figure worthy of this identity. The “salaryman” figure that emerged in the postwar period took over as the embodiment of this masculine identity.⁸⁴ As James E. Roberson writes, the salaryman became:

The embodiment, real and ideal, of the ideological model of masculine superiority and success, which other men are assumed to aspire to through educational and employment achievements, which parents presumably desire for their sons and which corporations and other state institutions powerfully instill and support.⁸⁵

The salaryman figure does not encompass all Japanese men, but it remains a dominant stereotype of the expected role for men.

Foucault argues that roles, identities, and power must be continually reinforced and renegotiated; set societal roles are not possible. Enterprise society attempted to construct set gender roles and on the surface these roles seemed to work for several decades by contributing to the economic growth Japan achieved in the postwar period. However, this set family and societal structure with predetermined roles for men and women was a direct contradiction to Foucault's theory, and by the 1990s its failure proved inevitable. Japan reached the end of its successful economic growth and modernization period.

Gender division of labor persisted and the bursting of the economic bubble and subsequent recession affecting the nation tested this division, placing significant pressure,

⁸⁴ Molony and Uno, 22.

⁸⁵ Roberson and Suzuki, 127-128.

particularly on men, to cope with a changing economic system. The previous financial stability found in lifetime employment and the seniority system began to disappear. For fathers, financial failure, strongly associated with masculine failure, intensified with their loneliness and disconnect from the household and their families. Work hours, while always long, increased for many men attempting to avoid lay-offs. Death by overwork (*karōshi*) was common, as well as suicide. In 1999, significantly more men died from committing suicide (22,402) than from traffic accidents (9,189).⁸⁶ Scholar Tadashi Nakamura believes that these deaths reflected stress experienced by men under the economic recession, along with a need for change:

Although they continue to be generally privileged vis-à-vis women, many men have become exhausted by these institutional demands and masculine constructions. If we understand Japan as a male-led society, these phenomena suggest its blockade, necessitating the transformation of male roles, institutions and the social system as a whole.⁸⁷

These historical events, the state's attempted enforcement of constructed gender roles, and breakdown of not only the economic system but enterprise society structure itself led to a blockade in the normative formation of masculinity in Japan, resulting in a crisis of masculinity that is arguably still occurring. The ideal form of masculinity institutionalized within modern Japan became unattainable for many and remained undesirable for others. Under this examination, the societal issues that plagued 1990s Japan were not contributing factors to the breakdown of the nuclear family structure and Japanese society as a whole. These issues were instead symptomatic of a crisis of masculinity and represented the effort of many males to renegotiate societal power.

⁸⁶ Nakamura, Tadashi, "Regendering Batterers: Domestic Violence and Men's Movements" in *Men and Masculinities in Contemporary Japan: Dislocating the Salaryman Doxa* Roberson, ed. James E. Roberson and Nobue Suzuki (London: Routledge, 2003): 165.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, 166.

One example of this renegotiation effort lies in the paternalism movement that strengthened in the 1990s, showing an attempt on the part of some men to reclaim their position not only within the family but also within society. As previously mentioned, the paternalists, led by Tokyo's governor Ishihara, believe the challenges faced in the 1990s were caused by not only the youth, but also by excessive maternal presence in both home and society. Paternalists argue that the societal structure created in the postwar period diminished the father role in the family to the point that it led to the destruction of the nation-state. Enjo kōsai is just one example of a problem that paternalists attribute to "a maternal excess."⁸⁸ Yoda writes:

Paternalists' diatribe against maternal excess allegedly appeals to the discontent of middle-aged Japanese men, providing them with reassurances that they do have a unique and indispensable role to play at home and in the society at large, beyond the confines of the workplace. In other words, neoconservative paternalism is said to be gaining an audience by offering a remedy to the wounded male ego, providing an alternative vision of masculine legitimacy in postbubble Japan.⁸⁹

Yoda argues, however, that maternal society is actually in decline, particularly due to the threat posed by paternalists and their attempt to heal wounded masculinity and regain control of their lives and society.

Another example of power renegotiation is evident in the *mizu shōbai*, or "water business," the nightlife of Japan that is often tied to the salaryman figure through work-endorsed socialization. Anne Allison's ethnographic work in a Tokyo hostess club examines the interaction between men and the women who service them.⁹⁰ Allison finds that the nature of the service provides a self-esteem boost for men and that the service purchased "is an eroticization less of the woman than of the man – his projection as a powerful, desirable male."⁹¹ By listening to men and continually building them up, hostesses "replace something in the man that becomes

⁸⁸ Yoda (2006), 240.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Anne Allison, *Nightwork: Sexuality, Pleasure, and Corporate Masculinity in a Tokyo Hostess Club* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁹¹ Ibid, 22.

depleted in other spheres of his life – mainly home and work, where the weight and obligations of his various roles (husband, father, worker) take their toll.”⁹²

Allison utilizes an examination of Marx’s ideas regarding estranged labor to draw parallels between Japanese men and the masculinities they attempt to produce at the mizu shōbai:

That which is for me through the medium of money – that for which I can pay...that am I, the possessor of the money. The extent of the power of money is the extent of my power. Money’s properties are my properties and essential powers...Thus, what I am and am capable of is by no means determined by my individuality. I am ugly but I can buy for myself the most beautiful of women. Therefore, I am not ugly, for the effect of ugliness – its deterrent power – is nullified by money. (Marx 1978: 103)⁹³

Under this system, men effectively buy back their masculine identity. A contradiction exists, however, in that in the mizu shōbai, a man must pay a woman to perform the service. Allison writes: “Take away the female, the service, and the money to pay for both, however, and the male is deprived of his maleness.” The mizu shōbai provides a service that delivers masculinity to the male, yet it is temporary like any other fix. Allison effectively shows how Japanese corporate culture utilizes the mizu shōbai to support a kind of masculinity that maintains male dominance yet depends on the behavior of women, like the previously examined salaryman family model.

Enjo kōsai is like the mizu shōbai in that some men participate in an attempt to reclaim their masculinity. Enjo kōsai also depends on a female to support masculinity by projecting involved men as powerful and desirable. It is different, however, in that the female involved is a schoolgirl. The schoolgirl carries with her new meaning, yet still provides an avenue for the male to renegotiate power and control, supporting his attempt to reclaim masculinity.

⁹² Ibid, 24.

⁹³ Ibid, 194.

Masculinity through Enjo Kōsai

Throughout modern Japanese history, the schoolgirl figure is constructed as a sexualized object that requires constant power renegotiation. Japanese men are threatened by the schoolgirl's potential resistance to the "good wife, wise mother" role created for women by society, upon which the masculine role depends. Japanese men desire the schoolgirl because she is constructed as a sexually controllable object, providing an avenue for men to reaffirm their societal power. The schoolgirl is projected as innocent and sexually inexperienced, making her identity controllable. The schoolgirl's constructed sexuality must be continually reestablished through social interactions. Male participation in enjo kōsai and constant power renegotiation of the schoolgirl figure are symptomatic of the male effort to regain control of their suffering masculinity.

Enjo kōsai fortifies the paternalist and breadwinner roles tied to the ideal version of masculinity. The male involved often treats the schoolgirl like a daughter. The man takes on the role of provider in paying for the schoolgirl's food, drinks, gifts, and numerous other desires. He takes on the role of the substitute father, often scolding her for her actions and lack of interest in what he considers important. She in turn becomes his substitute daughter, through which he can regain his lost connection to the family. By strengthening his paternalistic role through interaction with the schoolgirl in enjo kōsai, the Japanese man is temporarily able to reclaim his lost masculinity and renegotiate his societal power over women.

It is not surprising that Japanese men find the schoolgirl figure sexually desirable considering the rampant sexual fetishism attached to the schoolgirl figure throughout popular culture, the media, and pornography. It is also not surprising when a transition from male fantasy for the schoolgirl figure shifts into reality and involves meeting with actual adolescent girls.

When enjo kōsai involves sex, the Japanese man plays a sexually dominant role. Japanese men may suffer from feelings of sexual inadequacy reinforced by their failures in society and work and their absence from the home. For Japanese men turning to adolescent girls intimately tied to the controllable schoolgirl figure, it is possible for them to reaffirm their sexual power and masculinity in the process.

Male participation in enjo kōsai is not necessarily a conscious effort to reclaim masculinity. Enjo kōsai enables married men as well as single men to experience the ideal form of masculinity by providing them satisfaction as a provider, as a father figure, and even as a sexually dominant man living out his fantasies. Through enjo kōsai, men renegotiate their power position within the family and society. This position of power, however, is not only finite, but is also continually challenged through schoolgirl resistance. Japanese men must work to continually reassert control over this figure, as demonstrated throughout history from schoolgirl figure's entrance into Japanese society.

In this examination, enjo kōsai (and other societal issues plaguing Japan in the 1990s) is not viewed as a result of the destructive behavior of the materialistic schoolgirl. It is instead an attempt by some men to renegotiate their power and their masculine role within society. While identities continually shift and are negotiated according to social context, the socially acceptable and ideal form of masculinity has not changed since the postwar period. Society still expects men to be the ideal husband and father by financially supporting their families with a successful career. The majority of Japanese men are now unable to attain this ideal. The Japanese schoolgirl figure may be pervasive throughout society, but she masks the real problem: a crisis of masculinity.

Conclusion

The frantic anxiety surrounding the schoolgirl in 1990s Japan masked what was really occurring: a crisis of masculinity. When examined in the context of the Japanese postwar system that created and enforced gender construction under enterprise society, enjo kōsai can be understood as symptomatic of this crisis of masculinity in the 1990s, caused by larger themes with deeper roots. If the issue is not isolated within the recessionary period of the 1990s, it is possible to move beyond the obvious economic explanation to see a possible cause as the societal rupture of masculine identity beginning with its postwar construction. While enjo kōsai is a complicated issue with complex causes, this examination offers one possible contribution to what happened in Japan in the 1990s and continues today. A more in depth study on the complicated construction of masculinity would help to argue further that the crisis of masculinity facing Japanese society in the 1990s runs deep, and is one of the major causes of the societal problems facing the nation.

Rather than blaming the “dangerous” and “materialistic” youth, particularly the schoolgirl, for the perceived societal issues of the 1990s, it is important to continually examine the deeper causes of this anxiety. The figure of the schoolgirl generated intense anxiety and fascination. Her sexually promiscuous portrayal within society has been interpreted as entirely her volition. The schoolgirl has always elicited this reaction from Japanese society, and will continue to do so. As Gregory M. Pflugfelder eloquently sums up in his analysis of the schoolgirl: “Today as yesterday, schoolgirls stand largely at the sidelines, more often spoken about than listened to.”⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Pflugfelder, 177.

Part II: The Schoolgirl Figure in Manga

In February 2009, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) appointed three cultural "Ambassadors of Cute."⁹⁵ Meant to increase Japan's international soft power, the selected ambassadors all represent different adolescent girl figures from Japanese pop culture: the Japanese schoolgirl, a girl wearing "Lolita" fashion,⁹⁶ and a girl representing Harajuku youth fashion.⁹⁷ Tsutomu Nakagawa, MOFA's head of cultural affairs, explained the ministry's objective: "It's all about mutual understanding. We want people abroad to know these kind of people exist in Japan and to feel close to them."⁹⁸ Despite representing fictional characters, Nakagawa's comment regarding the "Ambassadors of Cute" demonstrates the blurred line that separates fictional pop culture and reality and has strong implications for the Japanese adolescent girl in particular. Nineteen-year-old Shizuka Fujioka plays the first schoolgirl ambassador and believes: "I think they picked me because I look good in a uniform."⁹⁹ Even though Fujioka is past her schoolgirl days, she suggests, "If you think school uniforms are cute you shouldn't hesitate to wear them – even if you've already graduated from high school!"¹⁰⁰

The global influence of the "Ambassadors of Cute" through cultural diplomacy is yet to be determined, but their selection by the Japanese government is indicative of their popularity and influence within Japanese popular culture and society as a whole. The Japanese schoolgirl

⁹⁵Japan Today, "Ambassadors of Cute," *Japan Today* (Tokyo, Japan), Jun. 4, 2012. <http://www.japantoday.com/category/picture-of-the-day/view/ambassadors-of-cute>

⁹⁶ "Lolita" fashion comes from *lolikon manga* (derived from the Japanese for 'Lolita complex'). Lolita fashion is a frilly, eccentric, sexualized style displayed by young girls in manga. " Sharon Kinsella, "Cuties in Japan" in *Women, Media and Consumption in Japan*, edited by Lise Skov and Brian Moeran (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1995): 220.

⁹⁷ The Harajuku girl figure is played by Yu Kimura, a singer and actress well known in Tokyo's popular shopping and entertainment district, Harajuku. Kimura has bleached blond hair and wears Barbie-style outfits inspired by manga. Mark Ellwood, "Japan's 'Ambassadors of Cute'," *Financial Times*, March 27, 2010. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/06978f58-384d-11df-8420-00144feabdc0.html>.

⁹⁸ Isabel Reynolds, "Japan Picks 'Schoolgirl' Among Cute Ambassadors." *Reuters*, UK edition. March 12, 2009. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2009/03/12/us-japan-ambassadors-cute-idUKTRE52B4JC20090312>.

⁹⁹ Brian Ashcroft and Shoko Ueda, *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential: How Teenage Girls Made a Nation Cool* (Tokyo: Kodansha International Ltd., 2010): 23.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

figure in particular has reached a cult status within Japan, making her one of the most recognizable figures from the last two decades, particularly as a character within the popular culture medium of manga.¹⁰¹ This section examines the Japanese schoolgirl figure and how her participation in enjo-kōsai is portrayed within manga. The schoolgirl figure is popular within various manga genres and her participation in enjo kōsai is portrayed or alluded to in varying degrees. Portrayal of the schoolgirl figure within manga often differs significantly according to genre. This paper will examine an example from seinen manga, manga marketed toward adult men, and several examples from shōjo manga, manga marketed toward adolescent girls. Seinen manga often portray the schoolgirl as a sexualized, passive object available for domination. Shōjo manga, on the other hand, features both empowering and lesson-invoking portrayals of the schoolgirl. How these genres differ in their portrayal of the schoolgirl is indicative of not only how men and adolescent girls view this figure, but also how the manga publishing industry mediates the public's perception of this figure. Conflicting images of the Japanese schoolgirl serve to both reinforce masculine power over the schoolgirl and to challenge existing beliefs that the schoolgirl is a controllable figure. These examples also serve to complicate the already complex relationship between the adolescent girl and Japanese society.

Japanese Manga

Manga are one of the most widespread popular culture mediums in postwar Japan. Manga differ from Western-style comic books in several important ways. Manga often focus on one main character and provide the reader with a view of the world through that character's eyes.¹⁰² The reader examines manga like a Japanese book, from right to left and top to bottom of each

¹⁰¹ Manga are Japanese comic books.

¹⁰² Johnson-Woods, Toni, *Manga: An Anthology of Global and Cultural Perspectives* (New York: Continuum, 2010): 5.

page. Manga prints are generally in black and white, rather than in color like Western-style comics. Text is often limited in these stories, and the process of reading manga is more akin to “reading pictures.”¹⁰³

Table 1: Manga Genres

Genre	Literal Translation	Description
Gekiga	Dramatic pictures	Adult manga that explores serious topics
Hentai	Sexual perversion	The most explicit material with manga, some is produced in the United States
Josei, Redisu	Ladies’ comics, women’s manga	Adult women’s issues as wives and office workers
Kodomo	Children’s manga	Includes pronunciation guide as children learn to read
Mecha	Mechanical	Robots and transformers
Seinen	Men’s manga	Characterized by more mature story lines than boys’ manga, with more violence, sex, and nudity.
Shōjo	Girls’ manga	Psychological and emotional development of female characters, stories often focus on relationships and love.
Shōnen	Boys’ manga	Variety of themes, including sports stories, action/adventure, martial arts, war, science fiction, horror, and robots.
Shōnen-ai	Boy-love	Male love stories
Yaoi	Acronym for “Yama nashi, ochi nashi, imi nashi”, or “No climax, no point, no meaning.”	Male homosexual stories, primarily male/male love stories written for women
Yuri Shōjo-ai	Girl love	Girl/girl love stories

Numerous manga genres exist to cover a wide field of interests and age groups. Table 1 provides a description of some of the major manga genres.¹⁰⁴ Manga genres generally target specific age groups and genders, but are not exclusive in readership and there is often significant overlap. The “Death Note” series, for example, was marketed as shōnen manga yet gained popularity with men and women from a wide variety of ages.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 6.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 8-9.

Manga influences a variety of other mediums. While anime and manga are often very different in style, themes, characterization, and meaning, manga is the source of 90 percent of Japanese anime.¹⁰⁵ All of the manga examples examined in this paper exist in other forms including anime, TV shows, cellphone novels, and movies. Japanese manga is also popular worldwide and the examples in this paper are no exception. The *Gals!* manga was reprinted and is available in English. The *Chu-bra!!* anime has English subtitles and is available worldwide. The global exportation of manga has fueled the worldwide interest in this popular culture medium. In March 2009, the USA Today bestseller books list included five manga.¹⁰⁶

Given the incredible popularity of manga in Japan and worldwide, it is surprising that academic research examining manga is a relatively new field. Frederick Schodt's *Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics* (1983) was the first non-Japanese academic examination of manga and paved the way for further scholarship.¹⁰⁷ Schodt recently noted that manga are much more than entertainment: "they are an open window onto the Japanese id, a view – not necessarily of reality itself – but of a culture's aspirations, dreams, nightmares, fantasies, and fetishes."¹⁰⁸ This view provides justification for the outpouring of scholarship since the early 1990s. Manga research today includes influential works by Sharon Kinsella, Paul Gravett, and Anne Allison, as well as numerous anthologies providing cultural insights on both the incredibly success of manga within Japan and its global spread.¹⁰⁹

Mark W. MacWilliams's essay collection *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* provides an in-depth examination of contemporary Japanese mass

¹⁰⁵ Mark W. MacWilliams, *Japanese Visual Culture: Explorations in the World of Manga and Anime* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2008): 6, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Johnson-Woods, back cover.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 2.

¹⁰⁸ MacWilliams, vii.

¹⁰⁹ Johnson-Woods, 2.

visual culture and its global influence. The essays in this volume take three different approaches in interpreting manga and anime. The first approach observes how manga produced within specific historical and social contexts are representative responses to their environments.¹¹⁰ Yulia Mikhailova contributes to this interpretative approach with “Intellectuals, Cartoons, and Nationalism during the Russo-Japanese War” through an examination of political manga and its ideological uses within the historical context of the Russo-Japanese War.¹¹¹

The second approach utilized examines the movement of manga across social landscapes, time periods, and cultures. “Opening the Closed World of Shōjo Manga,” by Mizuki Takahashi examines the changes in themes and narrative within the genre of girls’ manga across pre and post-war periods in Japan.

The third approach examines manga and anime as a vehicle for constructing identity.¹¹² Shiro Yoshioka, for example, examines an approach artists employ of furthering their own ideological messages in “Heart of Japaneseness: History and Nostalgia in Hayao Miyazaki’s *Spirited Away*.” This approach resonates most closely with the approach employed in this paper by examining the contribution of popular culture to the identity formation of both the reader and the artist.

Sharon Kinsella also provides a useful interpretation of manga reflecting culture:

So long as manga is perceived only as a finished work, as a discreet cultural object, the temptation to categorize it as another example of self-explanatory cultural exotica will be strong. But manga is not the gauche imprint of a collective Japanese unconscious caught unawares, anymore than are Toyota motorcars or Evisu jeans. Rather than being an accidental reflection of a national, or racial (Japanese) psyche, that just somehow surfaced, manga is the end product of a series of complicated conscious social exchanges and intelligent cultural management. The closer we look at the making of manga the more we see that it is not so much ‘Japanese culture’ as contemporary culture in a modern industrial society.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ MacWilliams, 18

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Kinsella (2000), 14.

In examining manga, only analyzing and interpreting the plot and themes within stories will leave out important components. Jaqueline Berndt criticizes this approach and the tendency of some researchers to suffer from “methodological blind spots” by treating these texts as “mirrors of Japanese culture.”¹¹⁴ Berndt suggests a more complicated interpretation that does not assume a homogenous audience and urges researchers to acknowledge the historical specificity, variety, and unique conditions within Japan’s culture industry, particularly through manga patterns of publication, distribution, and consumption.¹¹⁵ A reflexive process which considers these components is necessary to begin to understand the connection between popular culture and reality.

In academic work on manga, the themes and genres under examination help to determine the methodology while the theory employed drives the interpretation. Anne Allison, for example, in *Permitted and Prohibited Desires: Mothers, Comics, and Censorship in Japan* examines the themes of sexuality and gender within *ero manga* (erotic manga). Allison asks, “(1) How does *ero manga* fashion erotics out of the images and narratives it presents? (2) What role does gender have in this presentation?”¹¹⁶ Her analysis of *ero manga* examines representations and meanings of how these themes are organized, represented, suggested, and evoked through both images and stories. This paper will employ a similar technique by examining both how the concept of the schoolgirl figure is represented in manga and how this influences its societal construction.

Shōjo Manga

Shōjo manga targets girls from elementary school through high school; however, as in all manga categories there is often overlap in readership. Shōjo manga developed in the postwar

¹¹⁴ MacWilliams, 23.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Anne Allison, *Permitted and Prohibited Desires: Mothers, Comics, and Censorship in Japan* (Boulder, Colo: WestviewPress, 1996): 60.

period.¹¹⁷ Previously dominated by both male editors and artists, female artists took over the drawing for shōjo manga in the 1970s and injected the genre with stories focused on relationships and love.¹¹⁸ While the manga industry is still controlled by male editors, women in their early 20s are considered better equipped to identify themes that interest girls and as a result continue to draw shōjo manga today.¹¹⁹ These stories often involve psychological and emotional development of female characters, or what Jennifer S. Prough refers to as “what girls like” – a phrase she notes is used consistently by editors and artists when referring to the production of shōjo manga.¹²⁰ Research specifically focused on shōjo manga was relatively nonexistent before Prough’s recent book, *Straight From the Heart: Gender, Intimacy, and the Cultural Production of Shōjo Manga*. Prough provides an in-depth anthropological examination of the shōjo manga industry. Prough notes that gender is a defining component of shōjo manga, arguing, “it is precisely through gendered content and narratives of human relations that girls are fashioned into their role as consumers.”¹²¹ This paper will build on the work provided by Prough by examining specific examples within the shōjo genre.

Seinen Manga

The largest segment of the manga publishing industry is for boys and men. The genre of men’s manga, known as seinen manga, provides significant overlap with boys’, or shōnen manga. In the 1990s, 76.1 percent of manga published primarily targeted men and boys.¹²² Themes within boys’ and men’s manga often provide common characteristics: sports stories, action/adventure, martial arts, war, science fiction, horror, and robots frequent both genres.

¹¹⁷ MacWilliams, 20.

¹¹⁸ Johnson-Woods, 95.

¹¹⁹ Prough, 96.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 3.

¹²¹ Ibid, 2.

¹²² Sharon Kinsella, *Adult Manga: Culture and Power in Contemporary Japanese Society* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2000): 45.

Seinen manga are characterized by more mature story lines that include more violence, sex, and nudity.¹²³

For example, seinen manga include the *lolikon* manga genre, named for Vladimir Nabakov's Novel and short for "Lolita complex." This genre refers to men's manga featuring pre-pubescent girls. One of the MOFA cultural ambassadors mentioned in the introduction of this paper comes from this manga genre, indicating the level of popularity within Japan. Sharon Kinsella writes, "themes of [Lolikon] manga written by and for men express a complex fixation with young women, or perhaps the idea of young women (shōjo)."¹²⁴ Kinsella argues that as the popularity of lolikon manga grew during the 1990s, it "simultaneously reflect[ed] an awareness of the increasing power and centrality of young women in society, as well as a reactive desire to see these young women infantilized, undressed, and subordinate."¹²⁵ This societal desire to control Japanese girls, the schoolgirl figure in particular, is further explained through an examination of Foucauldian power and discourse analysis.

Foucault: Power and Discourse in Manga

Power is an element of every interaction within society but is also challenged within these interactions, making it insecure. Power must be continually renewed and maintained within relations.¹²⁶ This point is important to remember when considering the schoolgirl figure and her varying relationship with society, demonstrated in these manga examples. Discourse both defines and constructs the schoolgirl figure, determining the way she can be meaningfully discussed and understood. The schoolgirl figure's discursive framework also limits and restricts ways of talking or conducting in relation to this figure. Prough employs Foucault's examination of discourse in

¹²³ Johnson-Woods, 68.

¹²⁴ Kinsella (2000), 122.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Mills, 52.

her research to examine the entire shōjo manga industry, noting how “discourse is a system of representations that in the guise of describing a subject actually define it; rather than merely listing the characteristics of a subject, discourse creates the very thing it is trying to describe.”¹²⁷ Prough is referring to the manga industry and how editors attempt to allow girls to decide the themes and issues covered in their manga, however the stories and images published by the manga industry are heavily influential on girls’ culture and real adolescent girls in the 1990s. While Prough’s use of Foucault’s discourse theory is certainly useful for examining the shōjo manga industry as a whole, it is also applicable to individual themes and issues within shōjo manga and seinen manga specifically related to the schoolgirl figure, as well as the phenomenon of enjo kōsai. While the manga industry is attempting to describe the issue of enjo kōsai as it is occurring within Japanese society between schoolgirls and men, it is actually defining the subject and creating the various understandings which exist within society. Prough’s application of Foucault is incredibly useful for understanding discourse, but falls short in explaining the important component of power. For Foucault these two concepts are inherently connected. This paper will therefore examine both power and discourse in analyzing the complex relationship between the Japanese schoolgirl figure and society.

The selected manga examples show the schoolgirl figure and her participation, referenced participation, or misunderstandings surrounding her participation in enjo kōsai. Based on these examples, this paper will examine the schoolgirl figure itself. What contributes to this highly sexualized, fetishized figure? Why is the schoolgirl figure so prominent in Japan? Why is the schoolgirl figure now a cultural ambassador for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Japanese society as a whole? What implications does this have for real adolescent girls? These are

¹²⁷ Prough, 128.

questions that this paper will begin to answer through an examination of several pieces of contemporary manga targeting both Japanese adolescent girls and men.

The methodology employed in this paper will follow the examples set by previous manga research. The specific examples chosen are not representative of the medium of manga as a whole. This paper is also not attempting to argue all Japanese girls and men read these selected examples. The examples used simply fall within genres marketed toward Japanese men and girls. The manga examples selected fit within the following criteria:

1. The schoolgirl figure is the main character and focus of the story.
2. The phenomenon of enjo kōsai is somehow included in the story, albeit in varying degrees.
3. All of these examples have high popularity and sales among Japanese readers.
4. Their popularity and sales have inspired the production of these stories in other popular culture mediums.

Using the examples selected under this criteria, this paper is an examination of how the schoolgirl figure and the phenomenon of enjo kōsai are presented within Japanese manga, and how these stories contribute to the discursive framework surrounding the Japanese schoolgirl figure.

Gals!

“Gals!”¹²⁸ is a popular shōjo manga by Fujii Mihona, published in 10 volumes in Shueisha’s Ribon manga magazine from 1999 through 2003.¹²⁹ The characters are all high school girls, but fans includes girls from elementary school through adulthood. The story takes

¹²⁸ When I taught public high school in Yamanashi prefecture from 2006-2008, “Gals!” was incredibly popular among my female high school students. In the summer of 2010 when I conducted 20 interviews with Japanese women, ages 18-38, many of the interviewees had read this manga series during their time in high school.

¹²⁹ Prough, 110.

place on the streets of Shibuya in the late 1990s when “kogyarū” or “kogat” culture was at its peak. The term *kogat*, short for *koukousei gyaru*, or high school girl, was attached to the schoolgirl figure who defied traditional norms through dress, speech, and behavior. The kogal was known for her uniform’s shortened skirt and loose socks and was intimately tied to *enjo-kōsai* when she was criticized for her scandalous dress and behavior within the media.

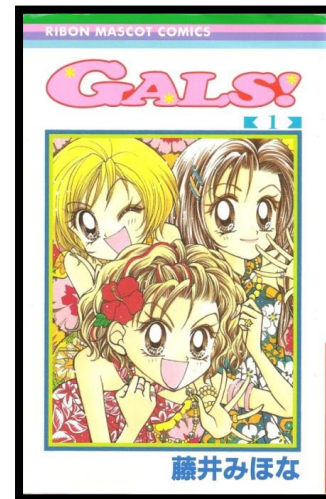


Figure 1: "Gals!" Book 1 Cover

“Gals!” provides a useful example for examining this constructed schoolgirl figure and gives an interesting backdrop for considering “what girls like”¹³⁰ vs. what society teaches them to like. “Gals!” follows kogal culture through the main character Ran Kotobuki and her best friends Miyu and Aya. These girls focus on maintaining the luxurious kogal lifestyle throughout the story. They are always looking for ways to get money to obtain various highly sought after items. Maintaining a certain image and buying luxurious items is paramount for the life of a kogal.

The characters in “Gals!” all embrace the kogal style with their fashion choices. When wearing their school uniforms, they roll up the waists on their skirts to make them as short as possible. They wear the infamous loose socks. Both of these tactics elongate and draw the reader’s attention to their legs. The characters are obsessed with accessories. The most discussed accessories in the first part of Book 1 are school bags belonging to boys within Tokyo high schools, ranked according to popularity. Obtaining a bag from one of these boys is a luxurious status symbol and shows that the owner either purchased the bag from the highly sought after boy, or is involved in a relationship with the boy. This obsession is interesting because it

¹³⁰ Prough.

demonstrates the often-objectified schoolgirl figure herself treating male characters as material objects. Materialism is paramount in the world of the schoolgirl figure, even in ironic forms.

Ran is a sixteen year old and in her first year of high school. She comes from a family of police officers including her great-grandparents, grandparents, her parents, her (twenty-something) older brother, even her younger sister is determined to follow in their footsteps. Ran is expected by her family to not only become a police officer someday, but to follow the law and not get into trouble. She is resentful of this preselected role and as a result takes every opportunity to pursue the rebellious kogal lifestyle. Ran has shoulder length curly hair that appears blonde with brown and red streaks on the color cover (Figure 1: “Gals!” Book 1 Cover).¹³¹ The characters all have a “Western” look characteristic of shōjo manga. They have large eyes, often blonde or dyed hair, and white skin.

Ran is considered tough, a hothead, and considered a “tomboy.” She regularly gets into fights with other girls invading her kogal territory or even men who solicit her on the street for sexual services. The opening page provides a clear example (Figure 2: “Gals!” Opening Scene). In this example, a man on the street with shoulder length hair and a suit propositions Ran. While not the middle aged salary man figure that enjo kōsai stereotypically involves, this man insinuates that Ran is the type of schoolgirl to have sex with him. Ran is wearing kogal style clothes. She has on a long jacket with leopard print fur around the collar and cuffs. Her black leather platform boots also have leopard print fur. Her miniskirt is a similar length to the shortened schoolgirl uniform skirt. Ran’s look screams kogal and is perhaps responsible for her frequent propositions from men on the street. She refuses to change this look, however, even though these assumptions frequently infuriate her.

¹³¹ Mihona Fujii. “Gals!” Japanese Version, *Ribon Mascot Comics*, Shueisha Inc., Volume 1, 1998.



Figure 2: "Gals!" Opening Scene

The man propositioning Ran says: "Do you like what you see/do you want to get a piece of this?"

Ran responds with a comment translatable to "You sleezeball, what do you take me for?"

The bottom frame shows a furious Ran clobbering the man. A message in the bottom left corner states: "Let me bring you back to reality!"¹³²

¹³² Fujii, 3.

This empowering message opens and sets the tone for the book: Ran will not sleep with men on the street and neither should readers. Kogals should have self-respect and should value their bodies.

Ran's friends Miyu and Aya have incredibly different personalities from Ran. Both of them are less quick to temper and connect more quickly with others emotionally. Miyu in particular creates strong emotional connections and is in love with Ran's older police officer brother. When Miyu was involved in her "rebel" phase, Ran's brother hauled her in off the streets and helped her to change by treating her nicely and respectfully. This seemed to be a changing moment for Miyu, who then became a sweet and

agreeable young girl, persistent in her pursuit of his attention. In her first scene of the manga, Miyu shows up at the police station wearing an oversized reindeer sweater to bring Yamato dinner (See Figure 3: "Gals!" Miyu¹³³). Everything about her look screams cute and cuddly – she is tamed by her love for Yamato. Her eyes are often drawn in a rainbow shape to demonstrate her utter happiness.

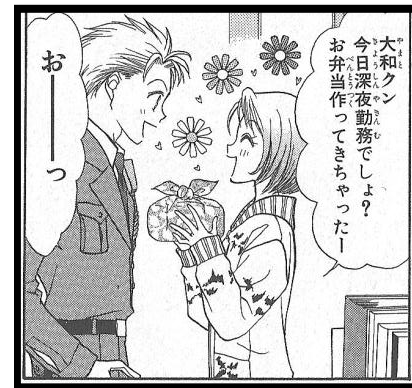


Figure 3: "Gals!" Miyu

Miyu has a blonde, chin-length bob that is usually very neat and clean. When the plot provides flashbacks to her rebel days, however, it shows her same haircut but spiked and sticking out to insinuate crazed rebellion.

Aya is the "smart" girl of the group. She is portrayed as the perfect and ideal Japanese teenage girl. She receives good grades, has long hair that is kept her natural dark brown color, and is sweet and innocent. Interestingly, in the beginning of the book Aya is the only character who participates in enjo kōsai. This shocks all of the characters because she does not seem "the

¹³³ Ibid, 13.

type” – she is a “good girl” and her perfection leads the reader and the other characters to assume she would never make such a decision. When the other characters are gossiping about Aya’s participation in enjo kōsai, the reaction is: “You wouldn’t think...I mean, look at her! She’s the type that wouldn’t hurt a fly!”¹³⁴ This representation of Aya both contributes to the discursive formation surrounding enjo kōsai and demonstrates an exception. In support of the discursive formation, all of the characters believe that “good” girls do not do enjo kōsai. Also in support of this framework, Aya is talked out of doing enjo kōsai and comes to her senses. As an exception, Aya participating in enjo kōsai as a “good” girl doesn’t make sense to the reader or to the other characters. While her participation is presented as wrong, and going against common discourse, making it difficult to understand, it is still occurring and thus shows the reader that “good” girls doing enjo kōsai is a possibility.

The characters have several key features that are representative of both kogals and shōjo manga characters. Their eyes, for example, are huge in relation to their faces. Deborah Shamon in *Japanese Visual Culture* manga anthology notes:

The huge, starry eyes of both male and female characters are one of the most important generic traits of shōjo manga. The large eyes not only impel the reader to identify and empathize with the characters, but also signal a thematic interest in the characters’ emotional lives. Both visually and narratively, the large eyes are another example of the attempt to add depth to shōjo manga.¹³⁵

All of the characters in “Gals!” have huge exaggerated eyes that convey an emotional message. When characters are angry, their eyes become somewhat narrower to convey frustration through squinting. When they are frantic, their eyes are simply drawn as dots on their faces. When they are sad, their eyes are drawn wetter looking to convey added emotion. Before Ran confronts Aya for participating in enjo kōsai, the reader often sees Aya’s eyes as closed or hidden because only her back is shown, cutting off her connection with the reader. The reader is left to wonder what

¹³⁴ Ibid, 18-19.

¹³⁵ MacWilliams, 151.

Aya is thinking and why she is behaving in this particular way. She is a mystery. During the enjo kōsai confrontation between Ran and Aya, Aya's eyes are wide and surprised, conveying confusion and innocence. This frame with Aya's emotion conveyed through her eyes shows the reader that Aya is indeed a "good" girl, erasing any previous questions in the reader's mind.

Another signature look for the kogal is tan skin. While it is difficult to tell if Ran and her friends are tan given the black and white drawings, when they encounter rival kogal groups on the streets of Shibuya these girls are often drawn with darker skin, signifying frequent use of a tanning salon. Kogals must have a steady income to maintain tanning salon use, yet another necessity for maintaining this lifestyle. While Ran and her friends do not carry the dark tan skin signifying frequent tanning use, they still lust after this materialistic aspect of the kogal lifestyle. In one scene where Ran is plotting how to obtain the schoolbag of a highly ranked boy, she laments "I'm so poor I can't even go to Hi Saro!"¹³⁶

While glorifying materialism, "Gals!" presents an empowering message for adolescent girls regarding their bodies. The overwhelming "Gals!" message regarding sex is that kogal bodies should be valued, and that selling your body is always wrong, regardless of the price. Whether with older men or adolescent boys, kogals should only be intimate if they are in love.

Ran's reaction to being sexually propositioned can be viewed throughout the series, as seen in the previously examined opening frame. In another example (Figure 4: "Gals!" Shibuya Scene), Ran and her friends are walking through Shibuya discussing cellphone stickers when Ran is approached by an adolescent boy. He says to her, "Remember how the last time we spent time together I took you out to a fancy restaurant? Well, I was thinking, why don't we go to a love hotel right now?"¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Hi Saro is a popular tanning salon in Shibuya.

¹³⁷ Fujii, 118-119.



Figure 4: "Gals!" Shibuya Scene

Ran's reaction is exemplary of the "Gals!" message regarding adolescent girls' bodies. Her eyes narrow slightly and her arched eyebrows and clenched mouth convey her anger. She furiously hits the boy with the back of her fist and exclaims, "Don't touch me! You think that just because I let you buy me dinner that I'm going to sell you my body like a cheap ho?!" In the next frame it shows Ran kicking him while a crowd gathers to watch. She yells "It's a privilege to eat with me you idiot!" Her friends have finally noticed what is going on and are shocked at what occurred in

the brief second their backs were turned. Ran sets an example for adolescent girl readers with her self-confident (although humorously violent) behavior and the value she places on her body.

At the beginning of the “Gals!” series, Aya is participating in enjo kōsai and Ran helps her to see the error of her ways. Jennifer Prough also examines this particular scene in her work and provides the following translation of the confrontation between Ran and Aya Hoshino (called Hoshino in this scene, see Figure 5: “Gals!” Aya and Enjo Kōsai, 1):¹³⁸



Figure 5: "Gals!" Aya and Enjo Kōsai, 1

¹³⁸ Ibid., 42-43

Ran finds Hoshino on the street in Shibuya and asks, “Are you waiting for an *oyaji*?¹³⁹ Stop doing *enjo kōsai*. It’s not worth it.”

Hoshino yells, “leave me alone. It’s my choice so no one can complain.”

“Why do you want money,” Ran replies.

Hoshino, looking sad and embarrassed, explains, “My parents are really strict, my curfew is six and I am not allowed to have an after school job. Plus my grades have to be the top or else they get really mad. I just want to hang out like everyone else, and go shopping too!”

We see a close-up of Ran’s face with a sparkle of sympathy in her eyes, “...sold your body already?”

Hoshino, also up close, replies, “...not yet, until now I have only gone on dates. But maybe today...I think I will have to...”

“It’s fun being a *kogyaru* even if you don’t have money,” Ran pleads. “Don’t you have any pride?”

“I don’t really care anymore,” Hoshino resignedly explains. “I felt so guilty at first, but now I don’t feel anything. Anyway, it’s fine as long as I don’t sell my heart.”

(See Figure 6: “Gals!” Aya and Enjo Kōsai, 2)¹⁴⁰

“...So, except for your heart, you are nothing less than a thing?” Ran queries.

“Exactly, is that so wrong?” Hoshino answers.

Exasperated, Ran slaps Hoshino. In the next frame she exclaims, “Don’t be so childish! Things don’t feel any pain!! Aren’t you alive!? If you don’t feel pain, it’s as if your heart is dead as well. Go try to cut apart your own body and sell it, if you can’t do that, you shouldn’t talk so big!”

The scene ends with Ran’s friend Miyu telling Hoshino, “Having fun with me and my friends will be much better than hanging out with some *oyaji*. We will listen to your troubles too, you know.” Hoshino, now called by her first name, Aya, becomes one of Ran’s *kogyaru* sidekicks. (Fujii 1999, 42-46)¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ *Oyaji* is a derogatory term for “old man” often employed by adolescent girls referring to male *enjo kōsai* participants.

¹⁴⁰ Fujii, 44-45.

¹⁴¹ Prough, 123-125.



Figure 6: "Gals!" Aya and Enjo Kōsai, 2

This example provides an interesting look at the enjo kōsai phenomenon and its discursive formation. Aya argues that participating in enjo kōsai is her choice. Prough points to a survey published by Non-no, a popular fashion magazine during this time, which supported this position. The survey asked readers: “Do you think that to participate in enjo kōsai or not is an

individual's freedom?" 74 percent responded yes, and 26 percent responded no.¹⁴² Aya also wants to do fun things with her time, like go shopping. Her parents are incredibly strict and she has no other alternative but to earn money through enjo kōsai. Ran counters that kogals can have fun without money, an interesting statement given that the kogal lifestyle revolves around materialism. Prough also points out this contradiction: "In 'Gals!' the practice of enjo kōsai itself is condemned, but the materialism that underlies it is exalted."¹⁴³

Prough's interpretation of "Gals!" within these particular pages is useful. She discusses how the manga artists and industry is continually navigating between "'what girls want,' 'what girls should want,' and 'what will sell,' all of which are as productive as they are descriptive."¹⁴⁴ The discussion of enjo kōsai and the schoolgirl figure with this example and others is contributing to the discursive formation of the schoolgirl. It is both describing this figure while also constructing this figure for readers. "Gals!" provides the empowering message for adolescent girls that they do not have to sell their bodies to lead a luxurious and fun lifestyle. This message is also limiting, however, in how the schoolgirl figure can be discussed and meaningfully understood.

While Prough's examination is helpful in examining the discursive formation of the schoolgirl figure, she does not include Foucault's notion of power, which is intimately tied to discourse. The characters in "Gals!" demonstrate some interesting group power dynamics. Ran is the ringleader of their group and frequently dominates others with her decisions. While spontaneous and wild, her decisions overwhelmingly demonstrate the self-esteem and confidence that all adolescent girls "should" employ. Her power assertion over Aya leads Aya to give up the practice of enjo kōsai. The power Ran exerts over adolescent boys in Shibuya helps her to gain

¹⁴² Ibid., 162 notes.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 126.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 128.

the highly coveted school bag of the high school boy ranked number one. Ran is a new kind of schoolgirl figure: powerful and self-confident, continually reasserting this position throughout her societal interactions.

The schoolgirl characters within “Gals!” are also resistant to power in many ways. Rebellion shapes the kogal lifestyle that these girls embrace. These girls attempt to resist the predetermined roles inflicted on them by society. This resistance itself assumes that girls are part of a power relationship. The characters’ resistance to enjo kōsai in particular implies a power relationship between schoolgirls and older Japanese men. Adolescent girls are encouraged to say “NO!” to certain societal pressures in “Gals!” and by extension in real life. The message banner on the left-hand side of Figure 5: “Gals!” Aya and Enjo Kōsai, 1 shows a schoolgirl saying “NO!” to enjo kōsai. The text below provides a declaration from the City of Tokyo: “Enjo kōsai, ‘zero.’” While enjo kōsai may be reality, the Japanese government does not sanction this phenomenon. The existence of these pressures assumes an ongoing power relationship between adolescent girls and adult men. “Gals!” is contributing to this discourse by producing this story for its readers that places the schoolgirl in an inferior, albeit resistant, position to adult males.

Deep Love: アユの物語

In contrast to the empowering message presented to the girl reader in “Gals!”, “Deep Love: the Story of Ayu” presents a tragic view of enjo kōsai and schoolgirls who are caught up in this lifestyle. The main character, Ayu, is a 17-year-old high school girl. Ayu’s misguided attempts to find meaning in life through enjo kōsai show the reader a lonely and sad main character with no family and few real friendships. Ayu’s character supports and contributes to the discursive formation of enjo kōsai by fueling the assumption that girls who do enjo kōsai are in a “bad” place.

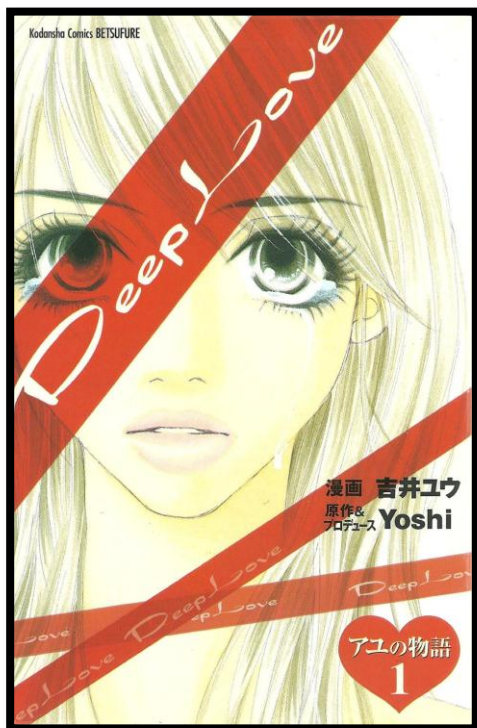


Figure 7: "Deep Love" Book 1 Cover

“Deep Love” was originally published as the very first cell phone novel in 2001 by the author known as “Yoshi”.¹⁴⁵ The story was incredibly well received and paved the way for many other cell phone novels. “Deep Love” itself became a movie, a TV series, and the Kodansha Comics manga series from 2003 to 2004.¹⁴⁶ The first manga in this series tells the story of Ayu, while following books tell the story from the perspectives of other characters.¹⁴⁷ The story of Pao, Ayu’s puppy, is even shared in the final book. “Deep Love: The Story of Ayu” provides the incredibly dramatic and horrific experiences faced by

schoolgirls who engaging in enjo kōsai. “Deep Love” includes dramatized components of not only enjo kōsai, but also rape, STDs, drug use, anorexia, and eventually the death of several characters including Ayu herself.

Ayu is drawn with the same large eyes featured in other shōjo manga (see Figure 7: “Deep Love” Book 1 Cover), but they also convey an extreme sadness. The cover, for example, shows her eyes both brimming with tears, with a single tear pouring down her cheek. She has the Western look popular for female characters in shōjo manga, including blonde hair, large eyes, and white skin. Pictures in “Deep Love” primarily tell the story, with conversation between characters limited to only the necessary utterances, providing an impression for the reader of

¹⁴⁵ Macwilliams, 6.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Yoshi, “Deep Love,” *Kodansha Comics BETSUFURE*, Volume 1, 2003.

shallow, meaningless relationships. The narrative often switches from sexual scenes with Ayu to everyday scenes such as in the following example (Figure 8: “Deep Love” Ayu and Kenji):¹⁴⁸

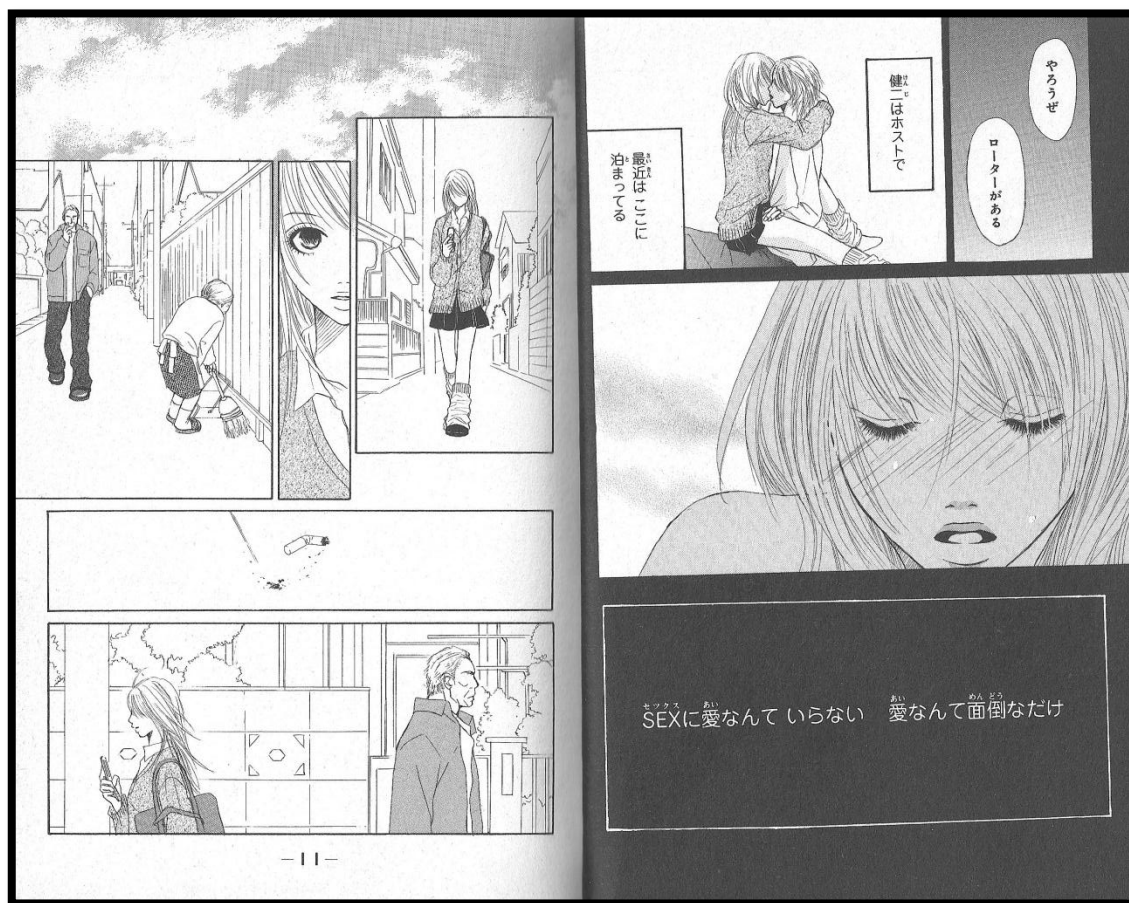


Figure 8: "Deep Love" Ayu and Kenji

In this scene, Ayu is having sexual relations with her “friend” Kenji. The text at the top explains that Kenji is a male host and that lately Ayu is staying at his place, insinuating that to do so she must have sex with him. Ayu’s face has several beads of sweat or tears, but does not show any emotion or enjoyment of the moment. The text reads: “You don’t need love to have sex with

¹⁴⁸ Yoshi, 10-11.

someone. Love just gets in the way.” The left-hand page provides an interesting juxtaposition with the previous and shows Ayu walking while reading her cellphone. She is wearing the infamous schoolgirl uniform with the shortened skirt and the loose socks exemplary of the same kogal style from “Gals!” In the following frames, Ayu passes a man who throws his cigarette on the ground next to an old woman sweeping up garbage. This thoughtless act conveys the harsh reality of Ayu’s uncaring world.

Ayu manages to develop a deeper relationship with several of the other characters. Reina, a classmate at school, idolizes Ayu and as a result is sucked into the world of enjo kōsai as well. Enjo kōsai remains a central component to the storyline throughout the book and heavily influences Ayu’s bleak outlook on life. In one scene, she and her friend Reina meet a man together and earn money through enjo kōsai with him (See Figure 9: “Deep Love” Ayu and Reina).¹⁴⁹ The frame shows both Ayu and Reina pleasuring the man, both partially wearing their school uniforms – a shirt, a skirt, and loose socks are visible. The frame below shows the 100,000 yen (approximately \$1,000) they earn for this encounter spread across the floor. The text simply states: “This is the age we live in.” This evident postmodern meaning and tone are present throughout the book. The message presented to girls through this shōjo manga series is clear: enjo kōsai is bad. If you participate in enjo kōsai, you will end up like Ayu – lonely, with no deep human connections, and pessimistic.

Ayu meets and befriends an old woman who eventually succeeds in helping her to view the world differently. Ayu’s relationship with this old woman leaves her determined to lead a better life. She faces many dramatic setbacks as the story unfolds despite her efforts to change. While Ayu is eventually able to overcome this state and develop stronger relationships with

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 22.

others by giving up enjo kōsai, in the end she tragically dies. True happiness always remains an obstacle just beyond her reach.



Figure 9: "Deep Love" Ayu and Reina

“Deep Love” contributes to the same discursive framework as “Gals!” in several ways. Enjo kōsai is understood as “bad” for the schoolgirl. Schoolgirls, and the adolescent girl reader by extension, should say no to this horrific lifestyle or they will end up like Ayu. “Deep Love” encourages schoolgirl resistance through the lesson of Ayu. While Ayu in the beginning of the

story views resistance as pointless and presents an extremely pessimistic, postmodern view of the world, she is able to overcome this low place by eventually giving up enjo kōsai.

The Japanese schoolgirl figure is again assumedly involved in a power relationship. When male characters are present in the story, they are often placed in a position of power over Ayu. The opening scene of the manga provides one example (Figure 10: “Deep Love” Opening).



Figure 10: "Deep Love" Opening

In this frame, Ayu is with an enjo kōsai customer. She is sitting in a submissive position on a bed while he towers over her. The only time the male customer's face is visible it is shadowed, making it difficult for the reader to emotionally connect with his feelings or position as a character. He controls the situation, yet his emotions remain unclear. When Ayu fellates the customer, she is on her hands and knees and his hand is gripping her head, another submissive position. Her eyes go blank in these frames, signifying indifference and lack of emotion. Ayu is cut off emotionally from the reader and from her own reality. The final frame on the left shows the money she earned raining down, and finally being stuffed into her school uniform skirt, the ultimate image of schoolgirl sexuality.

This portrayal of the schoolgirl figure contributes to the discursive formation that controls how this figure is meaningfully understood. The adolescent girls who this manga is created for are learning both that Ayu is in a bad place and that the schoolgirl figure is a sexual object within this particular context. Given the rampant onslaught of sexualized schoolgirl imagery within Japanese popular culture, it is unsurprising that real adolescent girls are by extension participants of enjo kōsai. While the media often vilifies adolescent girls for this behavior, the messages presented in “Deep Love” portray schoolgirl participation as natural, even if it makes them in a bad situation. The everyday relations in “Deep Love” contribute to the discursive formation surrounding the schoolgirl figure and her submissive role to men within Japanese society.

Chu-Bra!!

“Chu-Bra!!” is written and illustrated by Yumi Nakata and was first published in the seinen manga magazine *Comic High!* in 2007 by publisher Futanbasha. “Chu-Bra!” also includes an anime adaptation available with English subtitles and streamed throughout North America,

Australia, New Zealand, and the U.K.¹⁵⁰ The cover of “Chu-Bra!!” (Figure 11: “Chu-Bra!!” Cover) provides an image representative of the general plot, showing a schoolgirl figure with pigtails, her skirt blowing up in the wind and unbuttoned on one side with her underwear exposed, and her shirt undone.¹⁵¹ Referencing back to Kinsella’s interpretation of *lolikon* manga, she is disarmed and infantilized in every possible way.

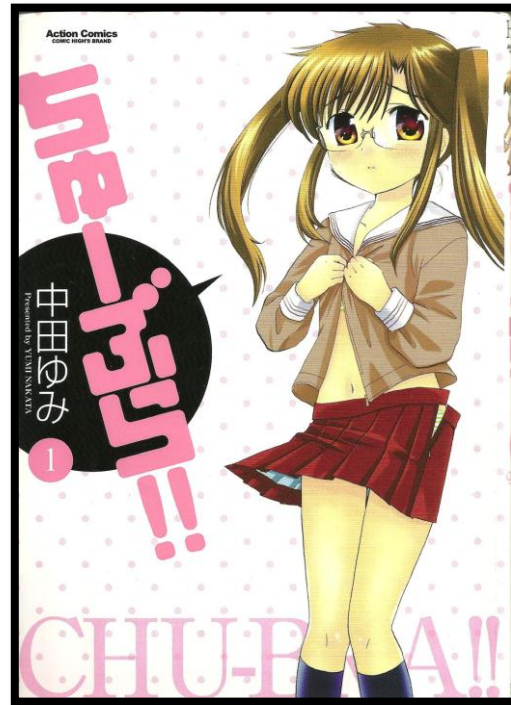


Figure 11: "Chu-Bra!!" Cover

“Chu-Bra!!” tells the story of a junior high school girl named Nayu who is attending a new school. On the first day of school during the opening ceremony, she embarrassingly trips and falls, exposing her undergarments to the entire school (Figure 12: “Chu-Bra!!” Nayu). She is wearing “adult panties,” causing a rumor to circulate that she is engaging in *enjo kōsai*. Several of her classmates, Yako and Haruka, decide to investigate the situation and learn that Nayu is actually working as an “underwear monitor” who tests new products. Nayu knows a wealth of information about the underwear that people should wear and is happy to share this information with others to make their lives better. Nayu eventually starts an underwear club at the school with the mission of helping all young girls find the right undergarments.

¹⁵⁰ Anime News Network, "Yumi Nakata's Chu-Bra!! Gets Anime Green-Lit (Updated)." Last modified June 20, 2009. Accessed April 13, 2012. <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/news/2009-06-20/yumi-nakata-chu-bra-manga-gets-anime-green-lit>.

¹⁵¹ Yumi Nakata, “Chu-Bra!!” *Action Comics*, Volume 1, 2007.

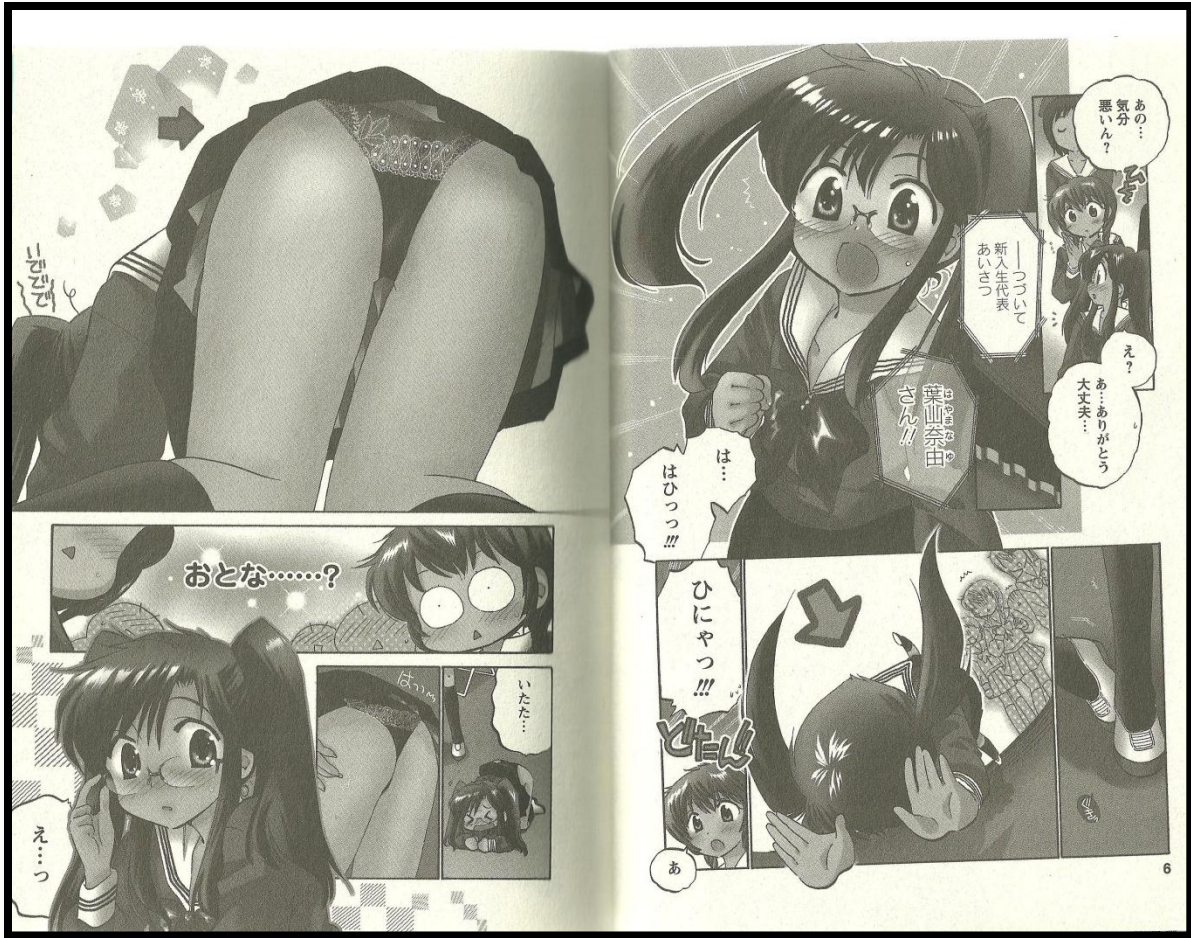


Figure 12: "Chu-Bra!!" Nayu

The three main characters in “Chu-Bra!!” embody various male sexual fantasies (Figure 13: “Chu-Bra!!” Characters).¹⁵² All three portray highly sexualized junior high school characters, always wearing the schoolgirl uniform. Nayu, the main character (right), always wears adult underwear or lingerie of some form, often the type of black lacy underwear demonstrated in Figure 12. Haruka (left, Figure 13) is a busty girl who developed breasts in elementary school and is in need of a good bra to support her chest. Haruka is often objectified by boys at school, contributing to her discomfort with her large chest. Yako (center, Figure 13) represents the lolikon fantasy of the undeveloped, pre-pubescent girl. These characters are often displayed in

¹⁵² Ibid, 8.

highly suggestive poses, available for the reader to view from an angle slightly above (suggesting the reader's power over the figure) or below (making it possible to almost see up their skirts). The reader is often placed at skirt level with a breeze making the skirt move ever so slightly, leaving little to the imagination of the reader.

The dialogue and body language employed by these three main characters can generally be categorized as “kawaii,” or “cute.” They often stutter or get nervous, causing them to react with immature speech and movements. Figure 12, for example,

shows Nayu feeling incredibly uncomfortable due to the underwear she wore to school that day. When Haruka asks her in the school ceremony if she is feeling ok, Nayu responds, “What? Oh...umm thank you...I'm fine...” and then mistakenly bows at the wrong moment, exposing her adult underwear. Haruka's eyes get huge and round, with her questioning, “Adult...?”¹⁵³

This moment leads to the frames in Figure 14, where the students are discussing Nayu's underwear and the rumor of her participation in enjo kōsai is spreading. Haruka and Yako's discussion of Nayu and the preceding events creates an image in their minds that is shown in the bottom two thirds of the page. Nayu is clutching money in her hand and bills float down around



Figure 13: "Chu-Bra!!" Characters

¹⁵³ Ibid, 6-7.

her. The word bubble to the right of Nayu says, “She’s doing enjo kōsai!!!” Haruka’s wide eyes in the bottom of the frame show concern, while Yako’s sharp eyebrows look judgmental.¹⁵⁴



Figure 14: "Chu-Bra!!" Enjo Kōsai Rumor

This seinen manga example provides an interesting difference from the shōjo manga examples when touching on enjo kōsai. In this case, Nayu participating is simply a misunderstanding, causing the reader to wonder and perhaps even visualize this scene as Yako and Haruka do. The characters in this story are junior high school age, making their participation in enjo kōsai even more scandalous than the high school girl characters in “Gals!” and “Deep

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 11.

Love.” If Nayu were participating in enjo kōsai, the male involved would hold even more power over this schoolgirl figure than he would for an older girl due to her younger age and increased innocence.

The power relationship between the reader and the schoolgirl characters throughout this manga is clear. These girls are pictured as cute, clumsy, and often helpless. In one scene, all three girls fall down the stairs due to Nayu losing her balance and pulling the other two down with her (Figure 15: “Chu-Bra!!!” Stairs Scene).¹⁵⁵

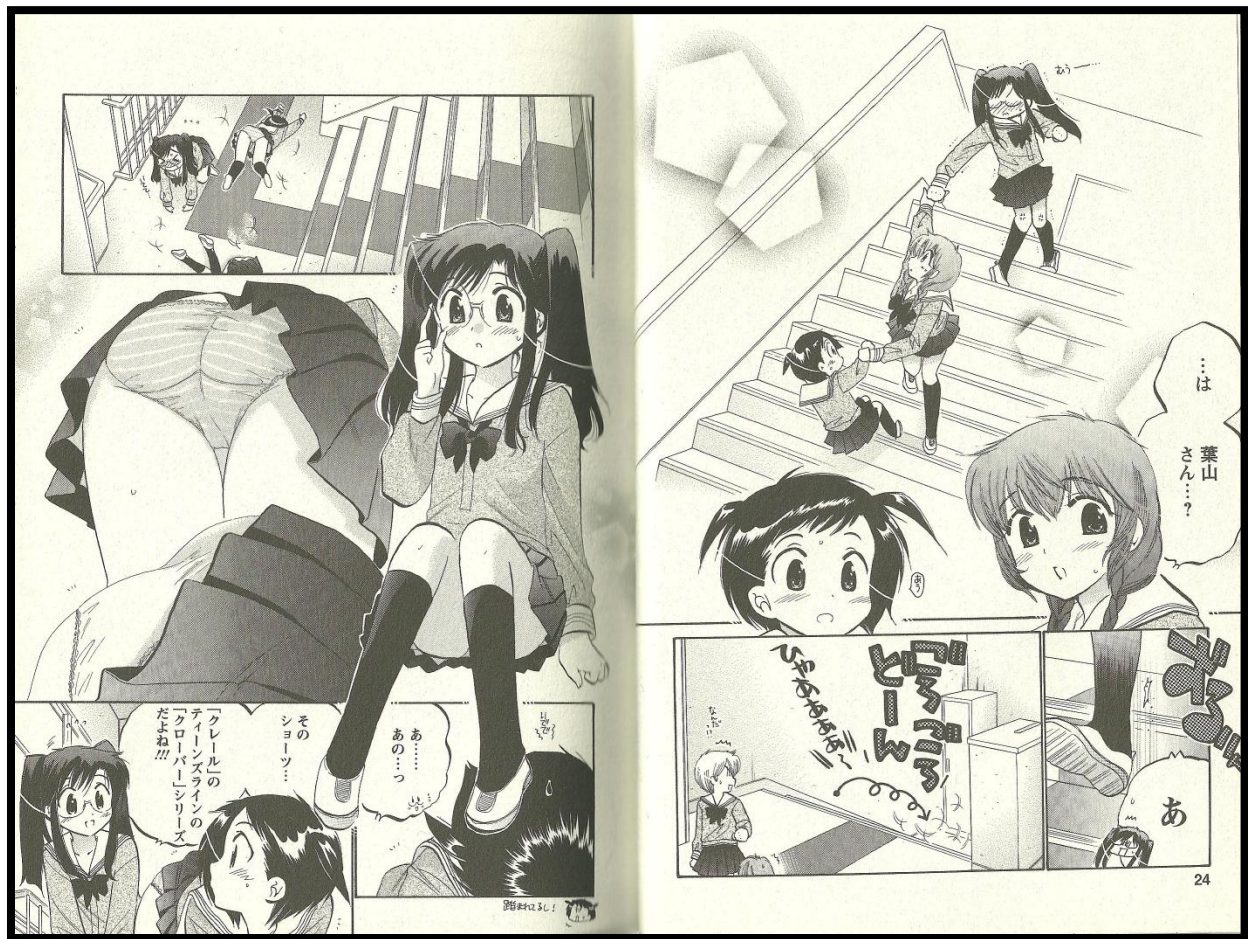


Figure 15: "Chu-Bra!!!" Stairs Scene

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, 24-25.

In this scene, Haruka and Yako both land at the bottom of the stairs, prostrate with their skirts flipped up and their underwear exposed. Nayu is able to examine and even comment on the underwear of the other girls. “You’re wearing the teen line clover series underwear!!!” she exclaims to the shock and confusion of the other two girls. Nayu then explains to the girls the merits of various types of underwear. The reader is allowed to participate in this personal moment between these three girls due to their accidental fall, Nayu’s exposure to their undergarments, and the conversation that it spurs. Assuming that this manga is produced for the male reader, this frame shows both the manga industry’s interpretations of what men want and the discursive formation of the schoolgirl figure to which this seinen manga example contributes.

This particular example serves to uphold the dominant form of male chauvinism often provided within seinen manga. This representation of the Japanese schoolgirl overpowered by masculinity sends a strong message and serves to both renew and maintain the power relationship between these figures and the (assumedly male) reader. The reader, as a result, is and able to perceive the discursive formation surrounding the schoolgirl figure in this particular sexualized, subordinated, and infantilized manner.

Conclusion: Differing Schoolgirl Portrayals

These manga examples provide an interesting examination of the schoolgirl figure, her participation in enjo kōsai, and the continual renegotiation of power influencing this figure’s discursive framework. Shōjo manga and seinen manga provide significantly different interpretations of this figure. Manga produced for girls provides both an empowering message that schoolgirls should value their bodies by not selling them for sex and a lesson-invoking message that enjo kōsai will destroy your life. Shōjo manga demonstrates both “what girls like” and the shōjo manga industry’s mediation of “what girls should like.” In the process, this

interpretation contributes to the construction of the schoolgirl figure as it is understood by shōjo manga readers.

Seinen manga, on the other hand, and particularly the “Chu-Bra!!” example, provides an infantilizing, disarming, and sexually objectified image of the schoolgirl. Foucauldian discourse analysis is also applicable to this example: this image represents both “what men want” and what the manga industry believes men want. This schoolgirl depiction also contributes to the discursive framework surrounding the schoolgirl figure. While these two genres provide contradictory portrayals of the schoolgirl, they are indicative of societal discourse as a whole. The Japanese schoolgirl figure serves to both reinforce masculine power and to resist control, thereby threatening this power. A continual power struggle therefore exists between the schoolgirl figure and Japanese society. This struggle is unlikely to end anytime soon, especially now that the schoolgirl figure is a global cultural diplomat, representative of Japanese society as a whole.

Part III: The Lives of Japanese Adolescent Girls: Interviews with 20 Japanese Women

I lived in Japan and taught high school English with the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program from 2006 to 2008 in Yamanashi Prefecture. During this time, I met and interacted with many Japanese women. I played on a women's soccer team called the "Yama Mamas." I spent time with Japanese friends and colleagues on the weekends. Most importantly, I became familiar with many of my female students and observed the everyday pressures that they faced, often different from the pressures faced by male students. I saw how the treatment and the experiences of these girls during high school shaped their lives and influenced their future as Japanese women. All of my interactions with women in Japan during this time inspired me to learn more about the social reality of adolescent girls.

My experiences teaching adolescent Japanese girls generated impressions significantly different from the conventional image of adolescent girls presented by Japanese society. The adolescent girl is visible everywhere in popular culture and the media through the schoolgirl figure, but this figure is not necessarily indicative of reality. The schoolgirl figure has been the recipient of intense anxiety and fascination throughout Japan. She is young and free, experiencing an ephemeral period in her life worthy of nostalgic memories for adults. In images, the schoolgirl figure elicits innocence yet is also highly sexualized. While fictional, the schoolgirl figure bleeds into the portrayal and lives of actual adolescent girls. Perhaps the most prominent example of this convergence between the schoolgirl figure and the lives of real adolescent girls is *enjo kōsai*. *Enjo kōsai* is associated with the sexualized schoolgirl figure yet is also practiced by real adolescent girls; the portrayal of this issue in popular culture reflects the deep connection between the two.

The sexualized schoolgirl figure is now commonplace within Japanese society, yet it is not socially acceptable for the behavior of the actual adolescent girl to match her sexualized schoolgirl portrayal. The media vilifies adolescent girls participating in enjo kōsai, labeling them responsible for society's moral degeneration. As demonstrated in the manga section of this paper, however, the schoolgirl figure participating in enjo kōsai is a subject covered in manga read by both girls and men. The sexualized schoolgirl figure is visible everywhere – in manga, anime, on TV, in movies, advertisements, and magazines – behaving scandalously and acting freely. The adolescent girls I taught in high school, on the other hand, were severely controlled and punished for less striking behavior. This paradox between appropriate adolescent girl behavior and schoolgirl figure portrayal sends a contradictory message to Japanese adolescent girls and is one that I continually witnessed during my time in Japan. In my opinion, adolescent girls in Japan seemed severely misunderstood.

This section represents my efforts to understand the experiences of real Japanese women through the analysis of twenty qualitative interviews I conducted during the summer of 2010. Using impressions from my experiences in Japan and through interviewing these women, I suggest a portrait of the adolescent girl different from conventional opinion. Adolescent girls in Japan, while often considered sexually rampant, deviant, and materialistic, particularly due to their association with the fictionalized schoolgirl figure, cannot be fit into one simple mold. The broad spectrum of women I spoke with largely did not come close to fitting the schoolgirl figure stereotype. The treatment they received within society, however, and particularly in their high schools, often said otherwise.

These interviews were also an attempt on my part to learn more about the subject of enjo kōsai. A realistic portrayal of Japanese women and their opinions on this phenomenon is

nonexistent within both popular culture and academic literature. My goal is to contribute toward existing research by providing the thoughts and stories of these 20 women. How does enjo kōsai fit within the social world of real adolescent girls? What are their thoughts and feelings on the subject? The information on enjo kōsai provided by the media, popular culture, and even academia often leads to the assumption that all girls are participating in enjo kōsai and that their primary motivations are materialistic. Out of all twenty interviews I conducted, only one woman admitted to doing enjo kōsai in high school. Her experience, however, did not fit the materialistic mold. She came from a broken home, faced verbal abuse on a daily basis growing up, and more than anything wanted to feel loved. Her story in particular will provide a different picture of enjo kōsai and the social world of adolescent girls.

Finally, this paper will examine the information gathered in my interviews through a Foucauldian perspective that considers both power and discourse. For Foucault, power is not simply located within particular institutions, but plays a role in all relationships within a society and is performed according to particular contexts. Foucault views power as productive in that it enables certain behavior and events rather than only constraining individuals. I will attempt to examine the interview stories through this lens. Closely related to power for Foucault, discourse surrounding a subject is both descriptive and constructive of its reality. I will therefore examine how discourse surrounding the schoolgirl figure and the subject of enjo kōsai is both describing and creating understanding on these topics. Throughout this paper, I will attempt to answer the question: How does the schoolgirl figure influence the real adolescent girl and the Japanese woman she becomes?

Interview Methodology

During the summer of 2010, I spent nearly 3 months in Japan studying Japanese at the Yamasa Institute in Okazaki City, Aichi Prefecture. At the end of my time studying, I took advantage of the opportunity to interview Japanese women about their experiences as high school students. To prepare for this process I spent significant time formulating my questions and establishing connections for possible interviews. I used the snowball effect to find interviews by sharing the purpose of my research with all of my contacts in Japan and asking them to pass my information along to their friends. I made the same request of each interviewee. As a result, some of my interviews were women I had previously met and established a relationship with, while others I met for the first time. I was lucky in the fact that all of the women I met with and interviewed seemed to take an interest in helping to further my research by sharing their own stories and sometimes putting me in touch with other potential interviewees. I had many women contacting me to meet and eventually ran out of time to fit everyone into my schedule. I was able to complete 20 interviews during this period.

The interviews took place primarily in coffee shops in Nagoya, Tokyo, and throughout Yamanashi Prefecture. The women I spoke with were 18 to 38 years old. They had all graduated from high school within the last 20 years, the period in which enjo-kōsai became prevalent. Due to the potential difficulty in gaining IRB approval for interviewing minors, I did not speak to any current high school students about my research, but instead relied on my understanding and experiences teaching Japanese high school to ask women about their time in high school. I recorded audio of the interviews and took notes on my feelings and thoughts during the interviews. It was helpful to not worry about writing down verbatim responses, but my reactions to the discussion in the moment instead. The majority of the interviews were conducted in

Japanese. Several of the women were fluent in English and preferred to speak in English with me. In nearly all cases, I let the interviewee choose which language they preferred. Even if we were conducting the interviews in English, I still asked the questions in Japanese to make sure that the understanding of each question remained consistent across all interviews. Within 24 hours of each interview, I listened to the recording, transcribed our conversation and my notes from the interview, and wrote down my thoughts. This proved helpful and often triggered further thoughts and feelings of the moment. At the time, this process was incredibly tedious and time consuming. I often felt as if I was including more information in my fieldnotes than I would ever need. In going back through my work now, however, I see the need for even further detail. Many of my thoughts and feelings at the time were perhaps taken for granted as obvious and were not written down as extensively and richly as I would now like. Qualitative research is certainly a learning process and if I ever conduct interviews in the future I will remember these experiences and will work to build on the richness of my descriptions.

My interview style was what Michael Quinn Patton refers to as “combining approaches.” I began each interview with informal conversation that included small talk about topics like the weather, the coffee shop or location in which we were conducting the interview, or any mutual friends or acquaintances we were introduced through. If we already knew each other, I asked the interviewee about their life since I was last in Japan. I then shared a little bit of information about myself and asked the interviewee to do the same. After this initial conversation, I moved into a set of standardized, open-ended questions. I did not strictly follow these questions in order, but attempted to move with the flow of the conversation. I used probes and follow up questions when appropriate or necessary to learn more about an important subject. The women I spoke with came from a variety of backgrounds and often had unique stories to tell regarding their

experiences in high school. I chose not to limit the direction of the interviews with an overly structured process. I made sure, though, to discuss the topic of enjo kōsai at the end of each interview if it had not yet been discussed. The interviews lasted anywhere from 30 minutes to two hours.

I asked quite a few questions about the history and background of the interviewees, focusing particularly on relationships with their family, friends, and teachers. I learned about the environment of their high schools, their homes, how they spent their free time, how much money they had at their disposal, how close they were with their families, and what magazines they read. This background information helped me to better understand their opinions and choices related to enjo kōsai. It also helped me to get to know the interviewee and seemed to help make her more comfortable with our conversation. I chose to not directly ask women about their personal experiences with enjo kōsai unless they volunteered this information first. While only one admitted to participating in enjo kōsai, her story, while tragic, was particularly insightful into this phenomenon. All of the interviewees provided useful perspectives on the issue. (See Appendix 1 for a list of all interview questions, Appendix 2 for interview coding descriptions and frequencies, and Appendix 3 for vignettes of all 20 interviews).

As I gained more experience conducting interviews, I learned certain ways to ask questions that yielded more detailed responses. For example, asking “Why do you think high school girls choose to participate in enjo kōsai?” almost always received the response, “for money.” On the other hand, adding the question “Do you think there is a difference between girls that do enjo kōsai and girls that don’t do enjo kōsai? What is that difference?” provoked deeper reflection on the part of the interviewee and often led to detailed, more nuanced responses. The question “Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?” often resulted in the

response “because men like young girls.” My probe for this question quickly became its own interview question, “Why do you think men like young girls?”

All of my interviews were one-on-one with the exception of one interview that included three women. Two of these women were new interviewees and one had previously conducted an interview with me. These women all had limited time to meet with me and there was not enough time to conduct two individual interviews. Rather than only speak with one of the women and lose the opportunity with the other, I decided to interview them together. At first I was wary of this approach and regretted betraying the consistency I had worked hard to establish. I had to push for more detail during the first part of the interview and several times doubted that I would learn anything useful in this situation. By the end of the interview, however, and particularly for our discussion of enjo kōsai, this approach seemed to work well. Comments made by one interviewee would remind another of a relevant experience. The group dynamic actually stimulated the conversation and proved helpful. If given the opportunity in the future I will consider group interviews as an option, however will attempt to remain consistent in my approach across all interviews.

Interview Challenges

Conducting the interviews in Japanese was at first intimidating but quickly became more natural. I have advanced speaking ability but am not fluent in vocabulary on all subjects. I preferred to not use a translator because my Japanese is good enough to carry on informal conversations. I wanted to establish a rapport with the interviewees and to develop my own interpretation of our conversation. I was concerned that a translator would filter the information collected and/or generalize material. Using a tape recorder to capture the entire conversation and at times struggling my way through the Japanese worked out well for me. If an unfamiliar term

was used, I asked the interviewee to rephrase the statement. I often understood the explanation the second time and then later while transcribing I looked up the unfamiliar term. This gave me several ways to evaluate the conversation and the second explanation often provided additional insight into the interviewee's meaning.

Allowing the interviewee to decide whether to conduct the interview in Japanese or English generally worked well. The women who spoke English fluently seemed to prefer this language, probably because our interviews were conducted in public coffee shops. Some of the responses they provided were incredibly personal and when speaking in English the people sitting near us in the coffee shop were unlikely to fully understand our conversation. In one situation, however, the interviewee chose to speak in English to “practice” and her speaking ability was low. I had a difficult time understanding her responses and she often provided one or few word answers. I began responding to her answers only in Japanese and constantly asked for clarification in Japanese until she eventually switched languages as well. While I preferred to let the interviewee choose the language they felt most comfortable with, in this situation I found it more important to fully understand her thoughts.

As a woman in the same age group as most of the interviewees I felt that I connected directly with them as women and was able to receive and understand their responses on a deeper level as an “insider.” As an American, however, I am a “gaijin” in Japan, which literally translates to “outside person.” However, I attempted to use this outsider status to my advantage. I let the interviewee know that I taught high school in Japan for two years and was relatively familiar with the Japanese educational system. I acted interested in the subject of enjo kōsai but also curious, confused, and somewhat naïve. Joseph Hermanowicz refers to this strategy as

“playing the innocent.”¹⁵⁶ The women I interviewed had to “teach” me about the phenomenon of enjo kōsai. They were often eager to help me to understand this issue. They provided more detail in their descriptions than they likely would have with a Japanese interviewer because of my outsider status.

The snowball method helped me to reach my 20 interviews, but did not provide a random selection of women. My starting point was primarily women who I already knew or the friends of people I knew. Everyone I started with came from specific categories:

- English language learners (former high school students, former private lesson recipients, current college students).
- Acquaintances of my English teaching friends.
- Friends of the international community (my former soccer team, friends of friends).
- Sophia University students, put in touch with me by Professor David Slater.

In addition, the interviews I gained from interviewee referrals came from the following categories:

- Anyone the interviewees knew in the 18-38 age range (perhaps random).
- Candidates who the interviewees felt appropriate for the interview given their understanding of my research (not at all random).

This latter category included candidates who perhaps knew something about my topic.

Interviewee #1, for example, put me in touch with interviewee #6. Interviewee #1 was from Yamanashi and certainly had many friends in the appropriate age range for my interview.

However, she only chose to put me in touch with this one woman. Interviewee #6 turned out to be my only interviewee who admitted to participating in enjo kōsai. While I acknowledge that this sampling method was certainly not random and in some cases led to a biased selection of candidates, given the preliminary nature of my research and my lack of time in the field I went

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Hermanowicz, “The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed,” *Qualitative Sociology*, 25, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 486.

forward with all interview possibilities. I felt there was something useful to learn from these women, regardless of any selection bias.

The responses of the interviewees were not necessarily representative of their feelings of their time in high school. They had all already graduated from high school, some as many as 18 years prior. These women had all had time to process their feelings and thoughts about high school. Their retrospective responses were potentially influenced by certain social or cultural factors. I considered this point when conducting my analysis.

Foucault: Power and Discourse in Societal Relations

Michel Foucault examined the concept of power throughout much of his work. For Japanese adolescent girls, like all societal members, power produces their social world and enables certain forms of behavior. The educational system as institution in particular controls adolescents and determines their experiences and behavior during their time in high school as well as what comes after. Adolescents are not simply repressed, but also support this system through their behavior to conform or resist its requirements. This is not always a natural or an easy process. Interviewee #15, for example, details her struggle with not being the average “kawaii” (cute) girl:

Interviewee #15:

In Japan, men have an image of women that they should be kawaii. So they created this image for women to look like that.

My male teachers sometimes were annoying. They never got angry at cute girls, but I was not a cute girl. I always got scolded. Kawaii means looking kawaii, but also acting kawaii. Kawaii girls should say things like, ‘Hai, Hai. Sumimasen.’ (‘Yes, Yes. I’m sorry, I didn’t know.’ She uses a high pitched voice showing feminine innocence.)

I was always the opposite. I didn’t do anything wrong, but why did they get angry at me? I was a bit aggressive, and male teachers didn’t like it. But it wasn’t a big deal.

Interviewee #15 struggled with power dynamics throughout her time in high school. She frequently questioned authority and pushed boundaries, more so than other girls around her.

There is a Japanese proverb that states: “the nail that sticks up gets hammered down.”

Interviewee #15 referred to herself in the interview as the nail, not only in her struggles to conform but also in her acts of resistance:

Interviewee #15:

My hair was naturally curly hair, but in high school, they don't allow us to have curly hair. So first, I had to tell my homeroom teacher that my hair is natural. I had to fill out a paper saying that my hair is natural. Still, we have the custom [of filling out this form], so after that I feel so uncomfortable. Why do I have to ask permission?

Then I wanted to make my hair curlier, but I knew that I could not get a perm, so I did it myself. I braided all of my hair at night and in the morning I undid the braids. I did that once, and first the teachers were like, “chotto dame.” (Don't do that – it's a little bit bad). I was like, “gomene.” (I'm sorry). Each day I did it again and it got bigger. The teachers then said “Dame. Zettai dame!” (Don't do that. That is ABSOLUTELY not allowed!). I said ok and quit doing that but then my high school went to koshien (the national high school baseball tournament). On that day, we went there on the bus and in the bus I did braids. At koshien, my hair was like boom, like that (motions with her hands to show how huge her hair was), because I knew there was a TV. I had really big hair. Then my teacher came to me with the big hair and made me put on his hat. He told me, ‘Your hair is the shame of our school. Because everyone in Japan will see you and think our high school is so bad because it has the girl with that hair. So you are the shame of our school.’ I was like, but I did my best! I had to wear his hat. I did my best.

The interviewee seemed regretful when telling this story in that she really was trying to fit in.

Her actions, however, particularly in the context of a Japanese high school where male teachers are the ultimate power figures in charge of discipline, said otherwise. Acting in this defiant manner, particularly after her male homeroom teacher told her “*Zettai dame*” was a significant act of defiance to the system of conformity that she found so oppressive.

Another important concept examined by Foucault is discourse, or the set of structures and rules that make a specific domain possible. Foucault views discourse as inherently connected to relations of power. In other words, discourse should be understood as a complex system that structures the way we perceive reality.¹⁵⁷ In application to this paper, discourse provides an avenue for representing knowledge about enjo kōsai in the particular context of Japan within this

¹⁵⁷ Mills, 55.

historical moment. Discourse both defines and constructs the phenomenon of enjo kōsai, determining the way it can be meaningfully discussed and understood. This discursive framework also limits and restricts ways of talking or conducting in relation to this subject.

Discourse is also productive of subjects it covers. My interviews supported this constructivist perspective in that the story presented by many of the women when discussing enjo kōsai coincided with the story presented in popular culture and by the media. The two shōjo manga series previously examined that featured enjo kōsai were brought up in several interviews – “GALS!” and “Deep Love.” Several of the women mentioned that this was where they learned about enjo kōsai.

Interview #17:

I didn't really know what enjo kōsai was at first. I read about it in the manga Gals! One of the girls was doing enjo kōsai. A really clever girl. Her friends stopped her from doing this.

When I read this I didn't really know what was going on. I didn't know that it was kind of like an affair type of thing.

As I grew up and people were gossiping I realized that it was a really big deal. It was a big deal at my school because it was a big private Catholic school.

I don't know if any of my classmates were doing it. It was just something they gossiped about.

For many of these women, the subject of enjo kōsai was constructed for them by what they witnessed in popular culture and in the media.

Interviewee #7:

Young girls read keitai (cell phone) novels such as Deep Love – these are very popular, many people talk about this book. This is the book read the most by young people. The actual situation, however, is that many young people want brand name goods, especially in Tokyo, so do enjo kōsai in order to get them.

Interviewee #7 had never herself experienced enjo kōsai herself, yet she was insistent that girls only do it for money to buy brand name goods. She insinuated that many people read “Deep Love” and believe that enjo kōsai is tragic, like the story of Ayu who has no family or emotional support system, but they are wrong. Enjo kōsai to interviewee #7 is only about materialism. The

opinions of interviewee #7 may oppose the story presented by “Deep Love,” but they are fully supported by the story presented by the media.

Power and discourse are only two of the many themes covered throughout these interviews. The following section provides an examination of my interview results and the enjo kōsai discussion.

Interview Results

Family Relationships

Given the traditional “good wife, wise mother” role often expected of women in Japanese society, the mother-daughter relationship is considered particularly important. The majority of the interviewees had a strong relationship with their mother and their father, although more of them were close with their mothers. Only two women out of the twenty had a difficult relationship with their mother. These two women both expressed how lonely they were without this important relationship.

Interviewee #6:

My mother was really quiet – otonashii hito (an obedient, docile, quiet person). She didn't talk much. Whenever my father scolded her she never responded. She never had a response. She didn't smile very often. I wanted to be close with my mother...I just wanted her to look at me. But my mother was really busy. Busy with work, cooking, cleaning. I also had a grandmother – my father's mother. She wasn't very nice. She is gone now. Sometimes she was mean to my mother.

The other women, however, valued and relied on a close relationship with their mothers, more so than with their fathers.

Interviewee #18:

I was very close with my mother growing up and could tell her everything. I was even able to talk to my mom the time that I had an affair with a married man...

My dad was fairly indifferent to me growing up. I felt like he didn't care about the family.

Four of the women interviewed experienced a difficult relationship with their fathers. Two other interviewees grew up without a father. In Japan, the divorce rate is rising but is still not as high as other developed countries. A stigma is still attached to single parent households. Both of the women that grew up without a father, however, found their family structure acceptable.

Interviewee #9

I saw my father only twice after [my parents] divorced. I was completely ok with this. My family was more successful without him and I didn't feel lonely without him.

Eleven of the women spent a significant amount of time with their families during high school, including eating dinner together or spending time together on the weekends. Five of the women spent nearly no time with their families for various reasons – they were too busy with school, or their families were not close.

School Experiences

The twenty women interviewed attended a variety of high schools and responses about their experiences as a result differed significantly. A majority of the women (16/20) were required to wear school uniforms to their high schools. These school uniforms generally included a skirt, a collared shirt (long sleeved in winter, short sleeved or polo in summer), a vest or jacket, a ribbon around the neck, knee-high socks, and black shoes. Four of the women had a choice on the clothing they wore to school. Most of the schools were incredibly strict with student attire, and had frequent clothing checks to make sure that skirts were not too short, and that students had no piercings, makeup, or hair extensions. These clothing checks would often involve measuring the skirts of the female students to make sure that they were the appropriate length. “Loose socks,” a popular fashion trend during the 1990s, were banned at school. Short skirts and loose socks were associated with the schoolgirl figure throughout popular culture. Many of the interviewees told me stories about immediately rolling their skirts up to shorten them and

changing into loose socks at the end of the day when they left school. I asked these women why they liked loose socks. Interviewee #15 explained:

I believed that loose socks made my legs look skinny. Loose socks were really popular in high school. Everyone wore loose socks as 1st year students. After that the school prohibited them, so the students changed into loose socks on the train or after school. When we went to our snack shop, we put on the socks.

13 of the 20 women enjoyed their time in high school.

Interviewee #1:

High school was the best time of my life so far. I spent three years with the same classmates. I had many friends, I participated in folk song club and that was really fun. There were about 22 people in this club. Remioramen was a 3rd year student when I was a 1st year! He was a famous singer from Isawa High School.

Many of the women liked high school for the social aspect. Some women remembered time spent outside of school with friends with fondness. Several interviewees discussed influential teachers they had who were supportive of them and really changed their lives. Male teachers who were sensitive and passionate about their work in particular provided special memories for these women.

Other girls were not so lucky in their high school experiences. Three of the women mentioned being treated differently because they were female. Their dreams were discouraged because they were told as females they were too soft or weak to pursue certain goals.

Interviewee #4:

When I decided to go to university in California, everyone told me 'No' because I am a female. They told me it is too dangerous, and that I was not strong enough. My dad was ok, but my mom worried so much and my teachers worried too. In the end I'm so glad I went...It was a great experience, not only studying but living in California.

Interviewee #3:

I was never close with my teachers. They were very strict and only thinking about sending the students to good universities. They didn't care about our personalities. I went to university but didn't like it. I told them I wanted to go to a special school but they wouldn't allow it. My parents were also strict and made me go to university. They tried to brainwash the students. Japanese education is brainwashing the students. Some people do not question the educational system. There is no space for people to think about their lives.

Both of these women were significantly changed by their time spent abroad. Interviewee #4 attended university in California for five years and interviewee #3 moved to Australia to learn English and then lived in South Africa for several years. They now both recognize the extreme gender inequality that women face in Japan. Their opinions represented here are likely heavily influenced by their experiences since high school.

Financial Capabilities

Living in Japan is incredibly expensive, particularly in Tokyo and other large cities. It is often assumed that girls participate in enjo kōsai primarily for money. I therefore asked the women about their income as high school students to learn more about their financial capabilities. 11 of the 20 women had part time jobs while in high school. Many high schools forbid students to work while attending school. Some women chose to work anyway. Many of the women who did not have jobs said they were too busy, particularly preparing to attend college. These women attended cram schools in the evenings for extra study time and preparation for college exams. 18 of the women received some sort of an allowance from their families. This ranged from a set monthly amount to the women asking their parents for money when they needed it. Overall it seemed that the majority of the women had enough money provided for them by their families. Interviewee #6 was the exception to this. Her father was an alcoholic and took all the money that he earned in their family business and kept it for himself. She was therefore forced to work from the age of 17.

Interviewee Knowledge of Enjo Kōsai

Five of the women personally knew a female student doing enjo kōsai. Eight of the women heard rumors of other female students doing enjo kōsai. Interviewee #6 was the only woman who admitted to participation. Here is a description of our interview:

Interviewee #6 was 36 years old at the time of the interview and grew up in a small town outside of Kofu in Yamanashi. I did not know her before the interview; she was introduced to me by interviewee #1. She worked at a museum in Yamanashi.

At the beginning of the interview when I explained my research topic to her I noticed a flicker of emotion pass across her face. It happened so quickly that I barely noticed and did not even write it down until later when reflecting on our entire conversation. She agreed to do the interview and remained very composed throughout. She was dressed very neatly in a pretty brown dress with a collar and a bow tied around the waist. She wore a brown lacy tank top underneath the dress but nothing very revealing. Her hair was long, halfway down her back, and styled neatly.

As she began answering questions it became apparent that she had many painful memories. She came from a family with an abusive father – certainly verbally abusive although I sensed that it went beyond that. He ran a barber shop with her mother and took all of the money for himself and didn't share any with the family. She had to earn her own money to get by. Her father was always drunk and yelling at them. When he yelled at her mother she never responded. Her mother was a very quiet person and literally shut down when the father yelled. Her mother never smiled. She wanted more than anything for her mother to look at her and see her for who she was, but her mother was lost in her own world. Her mother was too busy cooking and cleaning to pay attention to the interviewee. The father's mother also lived with them and was often mean to her mother too.

The interviewee was extremely lonely for most of her life and felt empty inside. In elementary school some of the boys bullied her and would hit her. They would often slap her bottom. Between this and the abuse from her father at home she had a hard time trusting males. On the other hand, she wanted to be loved. By the time she was in high school, in addition to numerous other jobs, she began working as a hostess. Then she began doing enjo kōsai. At that time, however, (she graduated from high school in 1992) it was not called enjo kōsai. There was no name for it.¹⁵⁸ She began having sex with a member of the yakuza. He paid her about \$1,000 a month. She did it for money but also for companionship. He let her try doing some drugs. She tried marijuana and heroin a few times, but didn't get addicted. These drugs mostly just made her feel emptier inside. Her work with this man lasted for about six months.

She didn't go to school often. She had no close friends. She went into more detail about the other hostess jobs she worked in Isawa (close to where I lived in Yamanashi) which is known for its red light district. She would have likely continued down this path, however as an adult she knew she needed a change. She moved to Vancouver, Canada and worked as a nanny for several years. This completely changed her.

At the end of the interview she left quickly and our brush with one another was over. I am still not sure if she is indicative of the experiences of other enjo kōsai participants, or if she is more of an exception. She clearly had an extremely painful life that led her to

¹⁵⁸ The media officially coined the term “enjo kōsai” in 1994.

seek love and attention from older men. Although she came from a very poor family, she stated that she did not do enjo kōsai for the money. She was trying to overcome the emotional and perhaps physical abuse that she had been tormented with her entire life and was looking for love in all the wrong places.

The experiences of interviewee #6 do not match the stereotypical schoolgirl figure doing enjo kōsai in order to earn money and buy designer goods. While many of the opinions and thoughts gathered from women inexperienced with enjo kōsai aligned with and supported popular discourse, this woman's actual experience did not. This interesting contradiction perhaps provides the representation of enjo kōsai closest to reality, yet remains incompatible with the discursive framework surrounding the schoolgirl figure.

Why do some high school girls participate in enjo kōsai?

Nearly all of the women (16/20) said that girls do it for money. The next highest reasons provided (12/20) were family problems and no communication in the home. Several of the women also noted that girls might do enjo kōsai because they want to be loved (6/20), have low self-esteem or confidence (4/20), or that they are doing it simply for fun or interest (6/20). Only two women specifically said that girls do NOT do enjo kōsai for money. Interviewee #6 was one of them:

Me: Looking back on your experiences, what do you think now of your time in high school?

#6: It was a terrible, terrible time in my life but I overcame that time, the hard time. And I think that because of that experience I can understand people's hearts. Those people who suffer or who have problems I can understand. Some people talk to me about their problems...family problems or boyfriends and I can relate. Just listening is the only thing that I can do.

Me: Why do you think high school girls do enjo kōsai today? Is it different from your experience or the same?

#6: I think it is the same. I said I had relationships for money, and maybe now high school girls will say it is for the money, but really the problem is that girls want to be loved. Maybe they have family problems. They want to find love.

Me: What do you think the difference is between girls who do enjo kōsai and girls who don't?

#6: Girls that have found themselves do not do it. Girls with no confidence will do it.

Me: *Did you have confidence when you were in high school?*

#6: *No, not at all. I was trying to look like a normal high school student. And maybe I was. But I had two lives. Confidence can be gained when people say good things about you. Childhood is really, really important. At this time, you are you....you learn to respect yourself and have confidence. But if your childhood is difficult and your parents tell you things like you are bad and stupid, it is hard to fix yourself.*

Most of the women provided a negative opinion of adolescent girls that choose to participate in enjo kōsai. They made an effort to distance themselves from the phenomenon when describing the type of girls who participate. Only interviewee #6, however, demonstrated a deeper understanding of what goes on for some adolescent girls participating in enjo kōsai. Her difficult and painful experiences are truly helpful for examining this complex and misunderstood phenomenon.

Why do some men participate in enjo kōsai?

When answering questions about men, the women overwhelmingly provided a dismissive attitude toward men's behavior that contrasted with their negative opinion of adolescent girl participants. Several interviewees believed that men choose to do enjo kōsai because it is the nature of men to love sex (5/20) or to like young girls (9/20). Some women attributed men's behavior to stress (7/20), a desire for entertainment (5/20), or problems at home (7/20). Interviewee #5 even suggested that men do enjo kōsai because "their wives are loud and demanding."

This question provided some interesting insights into the way that Japanese women view gender roles. The group interview in particular produced an interesting conversation:

Me: *Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?*

#13: *They have yoku yoku – a sexual appetite, a desire.*

Me: *Is this normal?*

#14: *Yoku. Just a desire. Hentai (a sexual perversion).*

#13: *Young girls are so attractive and pure.*

Me: *In Japan, do men have more yoku than women?*

#13: *Of course. Because they are men.*

Me: *I don't understand. It is not like this in America.*

#12: *I think women want to hide their feelings inside.*

#13: *As much as possible.*

#12: *Women keep their feelings inside.*

#13: *That is why there is enjo kōsai. Nihonjin no (Japanese) human nature.*

My interpretation of this conversation is that the three women believed that men do enjo kōsai because they need to satisfy their rampant sexual desire. Adult Japanese women hide their feeling inside. Young girls, however, are inexperienced at hiding these feelings. They are also weak and vulnerable, or “pure.” This both provides an avenue for men to explore their sexual desire and fuels the desire that men have for young girls. While adult women are closed off sexually, young girls are still available, as well as innocent. They view Japanese men desiring young girls as Japanese human nature.

Why do men like young girls?

This was not originally a question that I planned to ask, but after many of the women expressed the opinion “men like young girls,” I turned this from a probe to a set question. Quite a few answers were provided by the women. Young girls are inexperienced (5/20), young girls are *kawaii* (cute) (6/20), and young girls provide an unequal relationship where men are in control (6/20). The group interview again proved insightful:

Me: *Why do Japanese men like young girls?*

#13: *They are pure, and attractive, more so than older women.*

Me: *Why are young girls attractive?*

#13: *They [men] try to teach them, this is exciting.*

#12: *They [girls] don't know anything.*

#14: Recently women are becoming stronger. So men go for young women that are still weak and soft.

The last comment by interviewee #14 stuck with me after this interview. This comment was made as a matter of fact statement. To me, this conversation was rather shocking. To these three women, however, their answers were not strange at all. “Recently women are becoming stronger” meant that women are in general becoming more assertive and more opinionated, perhaps due to the increase in lifestyle options for women. Men like to feel in control of situations, particularly in sexual encounters. By turning to young girls for these encounters, they are more likely to maintain power in the relationship. Young girls are conditioned to be submissive and are sexually inexperienced, providing men full control of these encounters.

Opinions and Feelings About Enjo Kōsai

Some of the women were disgusted and even ashamed that enjo kōsai exists within Japan. Others were less bothered, and viewed it as a mutually beneficial relationship. My impression from the interviews was that the women judged girl participants more harshly than men. Girl participants were overwhelmingly viewed as materialistic and selfish. They were in a bad place and this behavior was not good.

Interviewee #4:

Me: Why do you think high school girls choose to participate in enjo kōsai?

#4: Girls really want money, this is the main reason. But I don't know what they do with the money. If they can have money they can have fun but I still think it is stupid.

Me: Do you think there is a difference between girls that do enjo kōsai and girls that don't do enjo kōsai? What is that difference?

#4: Their environment makes them different – their friends, parents, etc. There aren't many people that do it on their own at the start. They do it with their friends for money. Their parents don't care about their kids, they're not close like my family. They don't talk much with their families. Their friends are bad influences on them. They are not independent and strong.

Me: Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?

#4: *Their wives and their homes are not good. They are lonely, don't have good conversations at home, have a lot of stress at work. There are prostitutes and enjo kōsai, they are different but I don't know why men choose one or the other.*

Me: *Why do you think men like young girls?*

#4: *Probably because they like the difference in status, they are not equal. Strong men like to show their strength. Muzukashi! (This is difficult!) I don't understand men.*

As interviewee #4 demonstrated, it is possible that women judge girl participants more harshly because they can relate to them more. It is harder for them to understand the behavior of men, and therefore it can't be helped that men participate. Male participants were viewed as sad and lost. Their behavior was understood as "the nature of men" and their actions were not as harshly judged. This double standard was even more apparent in my conversation with interviewee #5:

Interview #5

Me: *Why do you think high school girls choose to participate in enjo kōsai?*

#5: *They want money. For shopping – brand name bags for example.*

Me: *Do you think there is a difference between girls that do enjo kōsai and girls that don't do enjo kōsai? What is that difference?*

#5: *Those that don't do it are majime (diligent, serious, honest). I think doing enjo kōsai is sugoku yada! (really, really disgusting).*

Me: *Why?*

#5: *Going on dates with men you don't like, having sex with them, and receiving money is disgusting. I really never even considered it. It is dirty. Yada! (Never!)*

Me: *Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?*

#5: *They want to meet and play with lots of young girls.*

Me: *Why do you think men like young girls?*

#5: *Men have difficult lives with lots of stress at work. Young girls are kawaii (cute). Perhaps when they return to their houses their wives are loud and demanding.*

Interviewee #5 also strongly related herself to girl participants, yet distanced herself from their behavior. Her answers show her personal reasoning for not participating, demonstrating her identification with the adolescent girl participants. She was particularly forgiving of male participants, however, even going so far as to blame their wives for their behavior.

Interviewee #11 also had a difficult time judging male participants. She provided an interesting opinion of male participants, followed with a contradicting “shocking memory”:

#11: My image of the guy [who does enjo kōsai] is one with no family. I cannot imagine that the guy has a family and still does enjo kōsai. I cannot imagine that.

#11: I have one shocking memory. It's not this kind of thing but my closest friend's father...I used to go to her home to have dinner and hang out. She was always with her family so I was really close to all of them and had all of their phone numbers. One day her father texted me and he said, why don't we go out on a date sometime. I was like, 'What? What are you trying to say?' He said just don't tell anybody in my family. I thought, if I really commit I'll be messed up. All of my relationships will be ruined. So I just ignored it after all. It just happened.

Me: Did you tell your friend?

#11: No, I couldn't! I didn't know what to tell her.

Me: Did your friend's father contact you again?

11: No that was it. I still go over there sometimes but he never mentions it.

I found this story incredibly ironic. Interviewee #11 refused to think of male participants as having families. Yet her best friend's father propositioned her to “go on a date.” The interviewee said “It's not this kind of thing,” but my impression was that it was exactly this kind of thing. I didn't mention this in the interview out of respect for interviewee #11, but I still wonder whether she was trying to convince herself that her friend's father wouldn't actually do enjo kōsai, or if she truly believed that this proposition was different.

The interviewees rarely pointed out that the male participants were adults and the girls were only adolescents. This was the largest thought in my mind, perhaps based on my upbringing and background in the U.S. where the age of sexual consent is much higher and more strictly enforced. Enjo kōsai in the media and popular culture in Japan is framed as a schoolgirl phenomenon, often leaving the male participants invisible and forgotten. Only interviewee #3 pointed out this connection between the media and the schoolgirl figure. These opinions likely resulted from her time spent living in South Africa.

Me: Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?

#3: *They are immature. Too much stress. They want to escape from something. And of course they are men. (laughs)*

Me: *Why do you think men like young girls?*

#3: *Not all men....just some. Immature. Too immature. The Japanese media controls a lot....magazines lead men to do it. In Africa, to be naked, to show the whole body is not sexy, it's just us. When the man sees a [naked] woman, they don't automatically think, it's sexy, it's just a body. No sexual appeal. More progressive countries have media control so they show images that influence the viewers. This is sexy, and this is not. The media started this high school girl craze with images.*

While interviewee #3 has many atypical experiences compared to many Japanese women, her experiences in Japanese high school combined with her international perspective helped to frame her answers in a manner incredibly accessible to me as a researcher. Her explanation of the media's responsibility in constructing the sexualized schoolgirl figure particularly resonates with this research.

Conclusion: From Adolescent Girls to Japanese Women

The 20 women I interviewed were all heavily influenced by their time in high school. For some, it took moving outside of Japan to outgrow certain experiences from their time as adolescent girls. Many of these women still struggle with expectations to conform to societal roles, but in different ways. Interviewee #15 still carries her rebellious nature as an adult and demonstrates her continuing resistance to power:

Interviewee #15:

Have you ever heard of konkatsu? (Activities searching for a marriage partner)

When I arrived back from Nicaragua 2 years ago all of my friends were obsessed with going on blind dates to meet men to marry. They went out on dates with 3 men and 3 women and they learned about each other's qualifications. There are companies to introduce people too. Women always need to think about the salary of the man and their occupation. Women also tell their occupation or salary, but it is better for the woman to have a lower salary.

Sometimes women might lie to say that their salary is lower. They also have to act kawaii (cute). It's weird to me because I thought women are now more powerful and have more of a chance for jobs like men, even if it's not like the United States. Then women are looking for men with high salaries. I didn't understand. So many people were crazy about that. On the other hand, there

are women that don't care about salary and don't want to get married. There are 2 types of Japanese women now.

Once my friend insisted that I go on one of these blind dates. Every guy had a high salary and they talked about only this. It was so boring! My friends were like 'Oh really, you are so great!' I was like, 'eh??!' There were free drinks, the men paid, so I drank a lot of drinks. My friends didn't because they know that men don't like girls that drink a lot. So I kept drinking. After that my friends told me, you should not have drunk so much. But I didn't know. I also didn't pretend to be interested in them and their stories.

Interviewee #15's konkatsu experience demonstrates the current difficulty for both men and women searching for a suitable partner. Salary plays an interesting and important role in this process. Women have higher salaries today than in previous decades and many have successful careers, yet for marriage it is still important and expected for the husband to provide a steady, and higher salary. Interviewee #15 mentioned that "It is better for the women to have a lower salary," and that some women even lie by saying that their salary is lower. This process represents an interesting yet increasingly realistic renegotiation of power between men and women searching for life partners. Interviewee #15's resistance to these expectations shows the growing power of women in society driven by increasing possible life paths. Men, however, still have one ideal and expected path: husband and breadwinner. This role is increasingly problematic and contradicts many of the new lifestyle options for women.

Japanese men are not the only ones to struggle with societal expectations. While it is now much easier for women to pursue careers, this path is not necessarily easy or even equal to the male career path. Interviewee #3 started her own company to avoid the inherent gender inequality present in Japanese companies:

Interviewee #3:

Now when I think about the status of women in Japan I see lots of issues – Japan is still very backwards culturally and socially. It is very difficult for women to get good careers in a company.

I am doing well but I hated the companies because men and women were never equal. This is why I started my own company because I hated this inequality. So I am working for myself. I know what men think about me – I am like a man to them. I am too strong, so they want to push me down. It is a hard part of my life and my work.

Interviewee #3 demonstrates the power struggle continually occurring in Japanese society between Japanese men and those who threaten the ideal version of masculinity. Adolescent girls are not the only members of society dealing with power renegotiation; it is present in every societal relationship. Adolescent girls are associated with the schoolgirl figure, however, and remain particularly susceptible this renegotiation, as evidenced by the stories of these 20 women.

Part IV: Shifting the Spotlight: Combating Sexual Exploitation in Japan through Demand Focused Legislation

Japanese adolescent girls in the 1990s fueled societal anxiety. The media focused on enjo kōsai, pegging all adolescent girls to the stereotypical schoolgirl figure characterized by materialism, consumerism, and unchecked sexuality. This behavior marked a new societal trend: sex work was no longer limited to the economically disadvantaged. Middle and upper class schoolgirls were now participating and earning large amounts of money.¹⁵⁹ These girls, viewed as the future wives and mothers of Japan, produced a moral panic for many already decrying Japan's societal collapse.

Also during the 1990s, Japan faced increasing international criticism for its failure to address several issues of growing importance to the international community: child pornography and sex tourism.¹⁶⁰ International pressure to adopt policy on these issues ironically became the primary catalyst for legislation on enjo kōsai. The Japanese parliament passed the resulting Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography and for Protecting Children (CPCPL). This bill, by primarily focusing on the domestic issue of enjo kōsai, effectively sidestepped the international community's call to eradicate global sexual abuse of children by only partially addressing sex tourism and child pornography.

Before the adoption of the CPCPL, legislative discourse surrounding enjo kōsai focused primarily on the actions of the schoolgirl. Legislation, therefore, was surprising in that it punished the often-overlooked participants involved – men who were usually considered the

¹⁵⁹ Adolescent girls can earn several hundred dollars per encounter. Sparrow, William. "Sex in Depth: The Young Ones." *Asia Times Online*, May 10, 2008. <http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Japan/JE10Dh01.html>.

¹⁶⁰ Child pornography distribution was legal in Japan at the time, therefore making Japan a prime target of blame for its global existence and spread. Some argued that 80 percent of the world's child pornography originated in Japan in the late 1990s. Also unflattering, wealthy Japanese businessmen developed a reputation for traveling throughout Asia as sex tourists, exploiting poor women and children. David Leheny, *Think Global, Fear Local: Sex, Violence, and Anxiety in Contemporary Japan* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006): 89.

targets of schoolgirl materialistic desires. What followed was a sudden and surprising shift in discourse: schoolgirls were now considered the victims of sexual exploitation.

This section examines the domestic environment and international players involved in the CPCPL policy adoption, along with the resulting shift in discourse about the schoolgirl. While the CPCPL requires modifications to fully address child prostitution and child pornography, this law set an unusual and important precedent by punishing demand rather than supply for child prostitution, something never before criminalized within the Japanese sex industry. Finally, this paper recommends that Japan should apply this standard throughout the sex trade to adequately combat sexual exploitation of both children and adults, particularly by targeting the human trafficking industry.

Enjo Kōsai Policy Context and Overview

Initially, the Japanese parliament demonstrated a lack of commitment to policy adoption focused on enjo kōsai, particularly policy protecting adolescent girls. The age of sexual consent within Japan remains thirteen nationwide, rendering the illegality of enjo kōsai in the 1990s questionable.¹⁶¹ Many in society believed adolescent girls chose to participate and therefore did not require any legal protection. The Prostitution Prevention Law (PPL) of 1956 rendered prostitution illegal, yet only focused on punishing supply. The law defines prostitution as vaginal intercourse but does not prevent the *sale* of sex or other sexual services, rendering it both unclear and difficult for police to enforce.¹⁶² In addition, the PPL and Japan's Child Welfare Law and Criminal Code do not include provisions specifically applicable to child prostitution.¹⁶³ While

¹⁶¹ Local laws in many prefectures have raised the age of sexual consent, however the official national law remains 13. Leheny, 90.

¹⁶² Shared Hope International, *Demand. A Comparative Examination of Sex Tourism and Trafficking in Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States* (Vancouver, WA: Shared Hope International. 2007): 137.

¹⁶³ Jennifer Chan, *Gender and Human Rights Politics in Japan: Global Norms and Domestic Networks* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2004):

police reprimanded many adolescent girls for enjo kōsai under local obscenity laws in the 1990s, male participants were legally exempt. Public attention therefore focused on the behavior of adolescent girls, rather than their need for protection against predation.

International attention on Japan was also increasing during this period, specifically for the global sexual exploitation of children. In 1996, the international NGO End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) joined with UNICEF and the Swedish government to hold the First World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm. This conference focused primarily on child prostitution in India, Thailand, and the Philippines and how individual governments could combat sex tourism, the spread of child pornography, and trafficking of children. The conference specifically discussed the responsibility of all industrialized nations to prohibit and punish their own citizens for sexual child exploitation, an area in which Japan in particular was lacking.¹⁶⁴ Before the conference, Japan did not intend to send an official delegation, however significant lobbying by ECPAT's Japan office and other local NGOs forced its participation.¹⁶⁵ Japan, along with 122 of the participating countries at the conference, signed the resulting ECPAT Declaration and Agenda for Action.

While many Japanese politicians resisted acknowledgment of these issues, some did press for reform. Sumiko Shimizu, a socialist member of Japan's parliament, lobbied for policy adoption, arguing: "The key problem in this country is that the sexual exploitation of children is socially permitted."¹⁶⁶ Masako Owaki, another female legislator, visited Thailand in 1996 to investigate the claims about Japanese sex tourism. After meeting with young Thai girls and hearing their stories in fluent in Japanese about Japanese sex tourists, Owaki was compelled to

¹⁶⁴ Until the mid-1980s, Japanese travel firms openly described their available sex tour packages. Wealthy Japanese businessmen were well-known as huge sex-tour clientele throughout Asia. Leheny, 89.

¹⁶⁵ Chan, 66.

¹⁶⁶ Cameron W. Barr, "One Solution: Tighten Japan's Lax Laws," *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 2, 1997. <http://www.csmonitor.com/1997/0402/040297.intl.intl.2.html>.

bring about change.¹⁶⁷ In January 1997, Shimizu and Owaki submitted an ECPAT petition to the Japanese Diet demanding legislation against child pornography and child sexual abuse.

By 1997, international pressure on Japan to deal with sex tourism and child pornography as well as rampant public discourse focused on enjo kōsai brought all of these issues to the forefront of legislative discussion. Initial parliamentary discussions for nationwide policy on enjo kōsai focused on schoolgirl immorality, linking it to educational problems and the growing fear of juvenile crime.¹⁶⁸ In contrast, ECPAT's pressure to confront global sexual exploitation demanded legislation that guaranteed the rights of the child and effectively punished male perpetrators. The result was a combined bill that took ECPAT's human rights violation framework and applied it to all three issues. Without the child sex tourism and child pornography issues paralleling the enjo kōsai discussion, resulting legislation would have likely focused on punishing adolescent girls. ECPAT's localized pressure combined with international attention, however, combined international human rights norms into Japan's new law on child prostitution and child pornography.

Analysis of the CPCPL

In 1999, the Japanese parliament unanimously passed the CPCPL. The law applies to children under the age of eighteen, posits the adult customer as the criminal party, and bans:¹⁶⁹

- Sexual intercourse and similar acts between adults and children through offers or promises of compensation to the child, both in Japan and overseas.
- The production, distribution, and sale of child pornography.
- The trafficking of children for the purpose of prostitution or pornography.

The law, however, does NOT:

¹⁶⁷ Leheny, 103.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 102.

¹⁶⁹ Japanese Ministry of Justice, *Law for Punishing Acts Related to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and for Protecting Children*, Act No. 52, May 26, 1999.

- Ban the possession of child pornography.
- Provide adequate enforcement measures to deal with Japanese sex tourist behavior outside of Japan.¹⁷⁰
- Provide adequate measures to deal with the rapid expansion of the Internet and subsequent spread of child pornography worldwide.¹⁷¹

The CPCPL places all blame on the male participants of enjo kōsai. Considering that legislative and public discourse for nearly a decade focused primarily on schoolgirl behavior, this change is significant in that it treats adolescent girls as victims, rather than agents. While considerably shifting the focus for domestic child prostitution, the CPCPL fails to provide adequate enforcement measures for Japanese sex tourists, allowing the National Police Academy (NPA) the ability to overlook the issue. For child pornography, the NPA cannot legally punish the buyer at any point or confiscate material after the sale has occurred. In addition, Article 3 of the CPCPL cautions that in application “care should be exercised so as not to infringe upon the rights of the people without due cause.”¹⁷² This vague statement provides the NPA discretion to determine appropriate application of the law. The NPA is notorious for blaming Japanese youth for societal problems.¹⁷³ In application to enjo kōsai, this article provides the NPA the ability to determine whether legal justification exists to punish male participants, or whether offering “guidance” to the adolescent girl participants is more appropriate.

Regardless of its downfalls, the CPCPL set an important precedent by punishing demand for prostitution when it involves children. This adoption incorporated international human rights norms and reframed the issue to treat children as victims of sexual exploitation rather than sexual agents. Before the CPCPL, only adolescent girls were reprimanded while men were legally

¹⁷⁰ From 1999 to 2004, the NPA pursued five cases involving children overseas – two pornography cases and three prostitution cases. Leheny, 112-113.

¹⁷¹ UNICEF, “Emergency Statement: Child Pornography is Recorded Sexual Abuse on Children,” *The Japan Committee for UNICEF*. http://www.unicef.or.jp/osirase/back2011/pdf/Emergency_Statement.pdf

¹⁷² Japanese Ministry of Justice.

¹⁷³ Leheny. 107-110.

protected. Since 2000, the NPA has arrested 600 to 1,200 men annually for prostitution with adolescent girls.¹⁷⁴ By punishing demand in this case, Japan effectively changed the focus of the issue to the buyers of prostitution, rendering them visible and accountable. The next section of this paper will address measures to improve the CPCPL.

CPCPL Policy Recommendations

International pressure on Japan to address sexual exploitation proved effective in the adoption of the CPCPL. Additional pressure via ECPAT, other international organizations, and governing bodies is required for important CPCPL revisions that further address enjo kōsai and effectively deal with sex tourism and child pornography. The international community should continue to push for CPCPL amendments that:

- **Ban child pornography possession.** Over 70 countries worldwide already ban “simple possession” of child pornography. In August 2011, the Japan Committee for UNICEF submitted a petition with 1.17 million signatures to the Japanese parliament requesting a similar ban within Japan.¹⁷⁵ Japan’s leniency on this issue is contributing to a growing global problem, spread via the Internet.
- **Eliminate Article 3.** This article provides the NPA significant power to subjectively interpret and implement the CPCPL. The law should instead uphold its purpose by forcing the NPA to punish demand for prostitution involving children.
- **Provide specific mechanisms of enforcement for sex tourism.** Japan should allow international prosecution of its citizens for sexual exploitation of children outside of its borders. It should also provide a specific process for dealing with Japanese sex tourists that both strictly enforces current violations and serves as a deterrent to future sex tourists.
- **Support child victims of sexual exploitation.** Currently no government plan exists to care for victims through counseling and other support services. The Japanese government should care for the victims immediately after the event occurs and provide follow up to ensure adequate recovery.

¹⁷⁴ National Police Academy Police Policy Research Center, *Crimes in Japan in 2009*, Volume 14, 2010.

¹⁷⁵ Schieffer, J. Thomas, “Japan Must Penalize Possession of Child Porn,” *Asahi Shimbun* (Japan), Jan. 1, 2009. Available at U.S. Embassy in Japan’s website, <http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/p/tp-20090105-72.html>.

Japan's CPCPL changed the discursive and policy framework for enjo kōsai: adolescent girls believed to be acting willfully became protected victims. Given that the Japanese parliament passed policy protecting subjects previously not considered victims, one would assume that policy protecting victims forced into Japan's sex market is a next step. The Japanese parliament, however, has not applied the CPCPL's demand-focused precedent elsewhere. The following section provides an examination of the human trafficking problem within Japan and recommends extending the demand-focused precedent set by the CPCPL to adequately target this and other issues.

The Human Trafficking Reality

Japanese schoolgirls are not the only exploited victims of the Japanese sex industry. Japan has an estimated 100,000 foreign sex workers, many of them victims of the human trafficking industry.¹⁷⁶ Japan is a major destination country for trafficked victims, who primarily include women and girls from Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe.¹⁷⁷ In the early 1980s the yakuza, Japan's organized crime syndicate, began trafficking foreign women to Japan. Traffickers often promise their victims lucrative jobs and money in foreign countries. They also provide transportation and frequently false documentation to get victims to their destination. Upon arrival, the traffickers demand large sums of money as payment from their victims, often forcing them into a lifetime of sexual servitude.¹⁷⁸ By the late 1990s in Japan, one session with a foreign sex worker cost approximately \$200, meaning foreign sex workers earned \$7.3 billion per year for their industry operators including recruiters, middlemen, immigration fixers,

¹⁷⁶David E. Kaplan, and Alec Dubro, *Yakuza: Japan's Criminal Underworld* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003): 239.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Kimberley L. Thachuk, *Transnational Threats: Smuggling and Trafficking in Arms, Drugs, and Human Life* (Westport, Conn: Praeger Security International, 2007): 39-40.

translators, forgers, travel agents, pimps, bar owners, and the yakuza traffickers.¹⁷⁹ The size of the industry has only grown since.

Public awareness of the human trafficking problem in Japan is low. Many believe that foreign women come to Japan for the opportunity to earn large amounts of money as hostesses or other sex market work and are then able to send money back to their families in their home countries. Thai women, for example, can save up to \$3,000 per year, the starting salary of a Thai economics professor.¹⁸⁰ While the economic opportunity for poor women is undeniable, women in the sex industry are only keeping a fraction of the money they bring in and are often unprepared for the brutal conditions that await them.

Human Trafficking Legal Framework

Anti-trafficking legislation did not exist in Japan prior to 2005. Prior to this policy, the NPA dealt with trafficking by arresting and prosecuting traffickers when sufficient evidence existed in violation of the following laws:

- Employment Security Law (Article 63, placement in harmful work)¹⁸¹
- Immigration Control Law (Article 73.2, facilitation of illegal work)¹⁸²
- Prostitution Prevention Law (Article 12, managed prostitution)¹⁸³

Victims, however, were treated as illegal immigrants with no legal protection and were generally deported to their home countries at their own expense. Convicted foreign brokers were also deported and arrested upon arrival in their home countries.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Kaplan and Dubro, 242.

¹⁸¹ Penalties range from one to ten years or a fine of 200,000 to 3 million yen. International Labour Office. "Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation in Japan." Geneva: Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour. 2004. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/tokyo/downloads/r-japantrafficking.pdf> . 46.

¹⁸² Penalties up to three years imprisonment and/or a fine up to two million yen. Ibid.

¹⁸³ Penalties up to ten years imprisonment and/or fine of up to 300,000 yen. Ibid.

Increased international pressure steered Japan toward taking initiative on anti-trafficking measures, including the signing of the protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons in December 2002 (supplementing the U.N. Palermo Protocol), and ratification of the Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography in April 2004. These limited efforts, however, were not enough. In 2004, the U.S. downgraded Japan to the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report Tier 2 Watch List, harming Japan's reputation within the international community and highlighting its extreme human trafficking problem. Japan is the only G8 and advanced industrialized country to receive the Tier 2 Watch List placement.¹⁸⁴ The 2004 report states: "Considering the resources available, Japan could do much more to protect its thousands of victims of sexual slavery."¹⁸⁵ In addition to this negative ranking, in 2004 the U.N.'s International Labor Organization (ILO) conducted a study funded by the Japanese government on human trafficking within Japan. The study provided embarrassing detailed information on Japan's failure to punish human traffickers along with its negative treatment of victims.¹⁸⁶ This report drew further international attention to the severe sexual exploitation through human trafficking within Japan.

By June of 2005, trafficking people into Japan became a criminal offense. The law, however, only punishes those responsible for the supply side of the market. Much like the PPL, the demand for sexual services from trafficked victims is not criminalized. While legislation criminalizing human trafficking is a step in the right direction, Japan remains one of the primary destination countries for the trafficking of sexually exploited women and girls. Increased legislative efforts to end human trafficking are essential to deal with this problem.

¹⁸⁴ United States. "Trafficking in Persons Report." Office of the Under Secretary for Global Affairs. Washington, D.C., 2004. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/34158.pdf>. 96

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ International Labour Office.

Supply and Demand of the Sex Market

Japan's entertainment industry includes the largest sex market for women in Asia and accounts for 2-3% of its GDP.¹⁸⁷ The yakuza run the sex market and maintain a high level of acceptance within Japanese society not seen with organized crime in other countries.¹⁸⁸ Meryll Dean, Oxford professor of Japanese law, notes, "The institutionalised nature of their business organization and structure in a society that both demands and accepts sexual exploitation of women makes the yakuza involvement one of the major obstacles to tackling the problem of human trafficking in Japan."¹⁸⁹

Human trafficking preys on the economically vulnerable within impoverished societies. The subordination of women continues worldwide and as a result leaves many women disadvantaged and more likely to be tempted by false economic promises and lured or sold into the human trafficking market. The global supply of disadvantaged, vulnerable women and girls fueling the Japanese sex market is never-ending due to global economic and societal conditions. Human trafficking suppliers, while now liable when caught in Japan, are also endless as well as replaceable. Due to the demand driving Japan's massive sex market, the sexual exploitation and supply of foreign women and children will continue.

Demand-Focused Legislative Necessity

The only solution to combat Japan's human trafficking problem, given the institutionalization of both the yakuza and the massive sex industry, is to target demand, specifically for prostitution:

- **The Prostitution Prevention Law (PPL).** Punishing the buyer under the existing prostitution law, the PPL, would effectively target the often-ignored demand side of the

¹⁸⁷ Dean, Meryll. "Sold in Japan: Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation." *Japanese Studies*. 28.2 (2008). 169.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., 171.

sex market. Just as the CPCPL reframed the issue focused on adolescent girls to the men involved, punishing demand under the PPL would place the focus on buyers rather than the often-exploited sellers. Sweden provides an exemplary model: in 1999 it passed legislation rendering the buying of sexual services illegal.¹⁹⁰ By 2009, this law in Sweden effectively reduced street prostitution by half and provided a significant deterrence to sex traffickers.¹⁹¹ Japan should apply this standard to the PPL, thereby strengthening the law to actually prevent and deter prostitution. Deterring demand within the sex market would serve to decrease the overall size of the market, effectively decreasing the need for the supply of human trafficking.

Shift in Discourse

The adoption of demand-focused legislation requires a shift in discourse about women trapped in the sex market. Although it took over 10 years, policy on enjo kōsai that recognizes and prosecutes demand was adopted when the issue was reframed to a global human rights issue. For an effective solution for human trafficking, a similar shift needs to occur.

Currently, human trafficking victims are viewed throughout Japanese society as foreign women coming to Japan to earn large amounts of money working as hostesses or prostitutes. Popular belief in Japanese society views these women as loose, immoral, and even lucky to be earning such large sums of money in a wealthy country to support their impoverished families in their home countries. Realistically, these women are far from lucky. This local definition must be reframed to the global definition: human trafficked victims are held in sexual slavery.

In addition, the Japanese public needs to be educated on the full extent of the human trafficking issue. Current discourse presented to the public by the Japanese Government Inter-ministerial Liaison Committee, created to coordinate anti-trafficking initiatives, frames the issue as one affecting “foreign women.”¹⁹² This discourse entirely leaves out the demand side of the market, rendering Japanese men who buy the services of foreign women unaccountable.

¹⁹⁰ Raymond, Janice. "Prostitution: Sweden Punishes Buyers to Target Demand." *Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres*, Sept. 7, 2010. <http://www.casac.ca/content/prostitution-sweden-punishes-buyers-target-demand>.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Shared Hope International, 138.

Adoption of demand-focused legislation throughout the sex industry would shift discourse away from the victims to the buyers of sexual services. Until this issue is treated as a human rights violation driven by the demand of Japanese citizens who frequent the sex market, however, change is unlikely to occur.

Conclusion: Demand Focused Legislation

The CPCPL set an important precedent by punishing demand, effectively reframing the issue of enjo kōsai. Adolescent girls, initially viewed as perpetrators, became protected victims. Most importantly, the law removed the luxury of protection for the buyer, rendering the buyer publicly visible and accountable. Just as the CPCPL shifted the focus from adolescent girls to adult men by targeting demand, demand-focused legislation elsewhere in the sex market would effectively shift the spotlight on prostitution from the often-exploited workers to the invisible buyers.

Human trafficking remains a severe problem in Japan, particularly for sexually exploited women and children trafficked into the sex market. Demand-focused legislation is crucial in targeting this issue and effectively decreasing the size of the market. For political support and adoption of such legislation, however, human trafficking must be reframed to a problem of sexual slavery. The international community must exert increased pressure on Japan to further adhere to global norms on this issue, particularly by adopting the global definition of human trafficking.

If applied elsewhere, the important precedent set by reframing enjo kōsai to a human rights violation could have important consequences for all women in Japan and worldwide. Women in general within Japan and many other areas of the world are treated as sexual objects, available for domination. Women are not treated as equal human beings in even the most basic

settings. A change in discourse addressing the demand side of the sex market that condemns the actions of buyers could lead to a substantial change for the future for all women.

Conclusion: Global Exportation of the Schoolgirl Figure

Societal construction of the schoolgirl figure began with her emergence, yet was particularly intensified during the societal upheaval of the 1990s. Enjo kōsai gave the already sexualized schoolgirl figure entirely new meaning: commoditization of this figure shifted beyond the sale of schoolgirl articles to include the schoolgirl herself. Adolescent girls, by extension, are also sexual objects available for purchase throughout Japanese society. Commoditization of the schoolgirl figure and adolescent girls by extension plays an important role in the power renegotiation process for Japanese men attempting to reclaim masculinity blocked from its normative formation. This research establishes construction of the schoolgirl figure and the phenomenon of enjo kōsai as symptomatic of a crisis of masculinity.

Another scene from *Love & Pop*, the film discussed in the introduction of this research, effectively demonstrates this argument:

Two schoolgirls are walking through Shibuya together, taking photos, and laughing. A middle-aged Japanese man suddenly catches up with them.

“Hey you guys, do you want to have lunch with me?” he asks. “I’ll give you some cash. 10,000 yen each.”¹⁹³

“Can I see your business card?” One of the girls responds.

“Wow, you play it safe,” he says, and hands her a card.

The girl examines the card. “Ok,” she says.

The scene switches to a small, private restaurant room. The man is sitting opposite the two girls. They are cooking shabu-shabu, a popular hot pot dish.¹⁹⁴

“Shabu-shabu tastes better when you eat with more people,” he says. “Eat, eat!” he motions to the food. All three eat in silence for several moments.

“So, what grade are you two in?” the man asks.

“Juniors in high school,” one girl responds.

“One year older than my daughter,” the man says.

¹⁹³ Approximately 87 U.S. dollars on July 19, 1997, the day represented in the film.

¹⁹⁴ The name “shabu-shabu” is derived from the “swish swish” sound of moving the meat around in the pot.

“You have a daughter?” one girl asks.

“Yeah, I do.”

“In high school?” the other girl confirms.

“She goes to Seishinjo Academy.”

“Wow...a famous school!” one of the girls exclaims. The other girl says, “She’s really smart, isn’t she?” Both girls continue eating while attempting to feign polite interest at this conversation.

“She’s only a sophomore, but she took second place at nationals for the English speech contest.”

The girls now seem visibly bored, “Wow...what an achievement.”

The man continues, “On top of that, like me, she’s really good looking. She gets told at school that she looks like Ryouko Hiromatsu. You know Hiromatsu, right?”

The girls are no longer paying attention, but instead talking to each other. “Squid! This restaurant’s sauce is great, isn’t it?” one girl exclaims.

“Yeah, it really is,” the other girl responds.

The man continues speaking about his daughter. “Every now and again, we go out for a special elite dinner. It’s great!”

The girls are still not listening. “Let’s order another glass of Oolong tea,” one girl says.

“Ok.” The other girl gets up and pushes the order button, shouting into a speaker. “Excuse me! 2 Oolong teas, please.”

The man notices the girls are not listening and becomes angry. “You guys...” he says in a reprimanding voice. Then he begins yelling angrily. “You guys! You guys!! It’s wrong not to seriously listen when other people are talking!!”

“Oh come on, have another drink,” one girl responds gently, as she pours some more beer into his glass. “Are we wrong?”

The man quickly drinks his entire glass and responds, still angry. “Yeah, you’re wrong! You don’t understand at all how important the end of your teenage years are!” He continues to yell, now more in a lecturing tone, “Will you just seriously search for something to make of your lives?! If you don’t do anything about it now, you’ll end up going to a bad college, get a bad career, and get into a bad marriage!”

The man continues, “When I was younger...I just thought that I didn’t want to be told that by someone like you.” Both of the girls are sitting quietly, staring at him.

The scene switches to elsewhere in Shibuya, later in the day. One of the girls says, “What the guy was saying wasn’t completely false.”

This scene from *Love & Pop* demonstrates the frustration many Japanese men feel with their current social situation. Written and directed by middle-aged Japanese men well attuned to

this societal frustration, this film demonstrates the context of the 1990s and the power renegotiation between Japanese men and adolescent girls. The man in this scene is clearly lonely and yearns for a deeper connection with his family. He speaks fondly of his daughter in high school, however does not see her often. The anger he focuses on these two girls reflects frustration with his own life, as well as disconnection from his family. One line in particular sums up the anxiety and fear Japanese society demonstrates for adolescent girls: “Will you just seriously search for something to make of your lives?! If you don’t do anything about it now, you’ll end up going to a bad college, get a bad career, and get into a bad marriage!” This statement demonstrates the societal concern that adolescent girls are destroying the nuclear family structure by resisting the future path of housewife and mother that ultimately supports the ideal version of masculinity.

As demonstrated in this examination, blame and anxiety focused on the Japanese schoolgirl masks deeper societal issues. This research provides a deeper examination of the source of this anxiety through an analysis of the historical construction of the schoolgirl, popular culture examples featuring the schoolgirl figure, interviews with 20 Japanese women, and policy directed at enjo kōsai. Further research is certainly necessary to understand fully the roots of this issue as well as future implications for Japanese society.

The societal role for adolescent girls and Japan’s future women is certainly changing. At the beginning of the Meiji era, adolescent girls were protected and hidden within the household. Their emergence into society as schoolgirls in the early 20th century led to the creation of the schoolgirl figure and the start of anxiety surrounding her. In postwar Japan, prominence of adolescent girls throughout society increased and construction of the schoolgirl figure intensified. By the 1990s, the sexualization of the schoolgirl figure contributed to the increasing

anxiety surrounding real adolescent girls. Many believed that the emergence of enjo kōsai signaled society's moral degeneration; schoolgirls were viewed as the primary culprits.

Policy focused on enjo kōsai is surprising in that it punishes males involved, despite nearly a decade of negative discourse surrounding the schoolgirl figure's participation in enjo kōsai before policy adoption. This policy is effective in both protecting adolescents and shifting the spotlight from the schoolgirl to the adult male demanding her services. However, policy fails to address the deeper roots of enjo kōsai: the sexual fetish attached to the schoolgirl figure symptomatic of a crisis of masculinity. An effective solution addressing the sexual fetish attached to the schoolgirl figure must target the unreasonable and increasingly unattainable societal expectations for men. A solution is unlikely to come from any policy, but requires deeper societal reflection and understanding of all members. The fetish attached to the schoolgirl figure is effectively distracting attention from other societal members and problems with deeper roots.

In conclusion, it is important to acknowledge and examine implications of the socially constructed schoolgirl figure for real adolescent girls, both in Japan and worldwide. Japanese popular culture, the media, and even Japan's cultural "Ambassadors of Cute" contribute to the global exportation of this figure. The Japanese schoolgirl figure is now well known worldwide, even playing a role in international blockbusters such as *Kill Bill* and *Babel*. Japanese manga and anime are also growing in popularity, resulting in the further spread of the schoolgirl figure through stories such as those examined in Part II of this research. Throughout the world, the schoolgirl figure is treated as a sexual object, intimately connected to real adolescent girls. This figure contributes to the construction of a Foucauldian discourse, or a way of understanding,

constructing, and interpreting girls and women worldwide. The schoolgirl figure is now a global phenomenon.

Popularity surrounding the schoolgirl figure has serious implications for adolescent girls and women worldwide. The global exportation of the schoolgirl figure strengthens and spreads with it a discourse treating adolescent girls as sexual objects. Power negotiation is present in all societal relationships, and as Foucault's theories demonstrate, sexuality constructed and attached to a specific figure is a form of power and control over that figure. As a result, adolescent girls worldwide face this constructed sexual identity. Adolescent girls therefore enter a societal power struggle that shapes one of the most formative periods of their lives. The Japanese schoolgirl case, while specific to Japan in many ways, represents a small piece of a much larger worldwide puzzle. The schoolgirl figure establishes a specific discourse and a harsh reality for the future of all women.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

<p><small>しゅっしん</small> 出身はどこですか。あなたの出身地について教えてください。</p> <p>Where are you from? Tell me about your hometown.</p>
<p><small>こうこうせいかつ</small> あなたの高校生活について教えてください。</p> <p>Tell me about your high school experience.</p>
<p>あなたの高校の先生について教えてください。</p> <p>Tell me about your high school teachers.</p>
<p>あなたの高校の友達について教えてください。</p> <p>Tell me about your high school friends.</p>
<p>学校がない時、友達となにをした？</p> <p>When you weren't in school, what did you do with your friends?</p>
<p>高校生の時、<small>たいへん</small>大変だったことは何ですか。</p> <p>What was difficult about your time in high school?</p>
<p>高校生の時、<small>じょせい</small>女性としてどんな問題がありましたか？</p> <p>In high school did you experience any problems as a female?</p>
<p>Did you have an allowance?</p>
<p>Did you have a part time job?</p>
<p>高校生の時どんな雑誌を読みましたか？どんな雑誌か教えてください。</p> <p>In high school what kind of magazines did you read? Tell me about these magazines.</p>
<p>高校生の時、<small>せいふく</small>制服がありましたか。<small>せいふく</small>制服を着ることが好きでしたか。あなたにとっての<small>せいふく</small>制服は何ですか。</p> <p>In high school did you wear a school uniform? Please describe it. How did you feel about it?</p>
<p>I asked what style was popular at the time because they all wore the same uniform – what was the style?</p>
<p>高校生のとき、どんな映画とテレビ番組をみるのが好きでしたか？</p> <p>When you were in high school, what movies and tv shows did you like to watch?</p>
<p>高校生の時、<small>も</small>ケイタイを持っていたか？<small>つか</small>ケイタイを何に使っていましたか？教えてください。</p> <p>Did you have a cell phone in high school? What did you use it for? Tell me about how you used it.</p>
<p><small>こうこうせい</small> 高校生の時、<small>とき</small> 援助交際<small>えんじょこうさい</small>のことを聞いたことがありますか。</p> <p>When you were in high school did you hear about enjo kōsai?</p>
<p><small>えんじょこうさい</small> 援助交際とは何ですか。教えてください。</p> <p>What is enjo kōsai? Please explain.</p>
<p>どうして<small>こうこうせい</small> 高校生の女子は<small>えんじょこうさい</small> 援助交際をしようと思うと思いますか。</p> <p>Why do you think high school girls choose to participate in enjo kōsai?</p>
<p>する女の人としない女の人の違いは何だと思えますか？</p> <p>Do you think there is a difference between girls that do enjo kōsai and girls that don't do enjo kōsai? What is that difference?</p>

どうして ^{おとこ}男 ^{ひと}の人は ^{えんじょこうさい}援助交際をしようと思うと思いますか。

Why do you think men choose to participate in enjo kōsai?

どうして男の人は ^{わか}若い ^{じょせい}女性が ^す好きですか？

Why do you think men like young girls?

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Appendix 2: Interview Coding

Interview Coding			
Code	Meaning	Interviewees	Frequency (out of 20)
Hometown			
HT-T	In Tokyo or Chiba	8 9 10 11 13 16 17 19 20	9
HT-Y	In Yamanashi Prefecture	1 3 4 5 6 7 12 14 15	9
HT-A	In Aichi Prefecture	2	1
HT-M	In Miyagi Prefecture	18	1
Family			
F-D	Difficult relationship with father	3 6 8 18	4
F-G	Good relationship with father	1 2 4 5 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 19 20	14
M-D	Difficult relationship with mother	6 8	2
M-G	Good relationship with mother	1 2 3 4 5 7 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	18
FAM-T	Spent time with family	1 2 4 5 10 12 14 16 17 19 20	11
FAM-NT	Spent no time with family	3 6 7 8 11	5
School			
SU-Y	Wore a School Uniform, or certain required clothing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 16 19 20	16
SU-N	Didn't wear a School Uniform	9 10 18 17	4
GL-HS	Liked High School	1 5 7 9 10 11 12 13 15 16 17 18 20	13
GL-HSN	Didn't like High School	3 4 6 8 14	5
T+S	Heard of Teacher having relationship with Student	15	1
S, GL-MS S, GL-MP	In School, Girls like Male Teachers who are Sensitive or Passionate	1 13 15	3
S, PD	In School, Pushed Down Because Female, discouraged because told soft or weak	3 4 8	3
Money			
A-Y	Arubaito, yes (Yes, part time job)	1 4 5 6 8 9 10 13 14 18 19	11
A-N	Arubaito, no (No, part time job)	2 3 7 11 12 15 16 17 20	9
FAM-ALL	Received Allowance from family (even sometimes)	1 2 3 4 5 7 8 9 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	18
Popular Culture			
PC, GL-MP	In Popular Culture, Girls Like Men who are	1	1

	passionate and sensitive		
PC, R-G	Mentioned that have read GALS!	13 17	2
PC, R-DL	Mentioned that have read Deep Love	7 13	2
PC, T+S	Mentioned popular culture story of teacher having a relationship with student	5	1
Code	Meaning	Interviewees	Frequency (out of 20)
Enjo Kōsai			
EK-G, A	Knew girl acquaintance doing enjo kōsai, know someone doing enjo kōsai	3 5 9 12 16	5
EK-G, R	Heard a rumor about a girl doing enjo kōsai	3 12 13 15 16 17 18 19	8
EK-GD	Admitted to doing enjo kōsai	6	1
Reasons That Girls Do Enjo Kōsai			
Personal Fulfillment			
EK-RG, F or I	Fun or Interest	2 7 8 14 15 19	6
EK-RG, M	Money or brand name goods	1 2 3 4 5 7 8 9 10 12 14 15 16 17 19 20	16
EK-RG, P	Practice (sex)	10 16	2
EK-RG, S	Status	3 16	2
Emotionally displaced			
EK-RG, IF	Identity formation	3 9	2
EK-RG, D	Dependence	3 4	2
EK-RG, L	Want to be loved	6 11 12 14 19 20	6
EK-RG, W	They are weak (lacks self-control)	4	1
EK-RG, LSE	Low self-esteem, No confidence	6 12 16 18	4
Problems at home			
EK-RG, PS	Parents are strict	9 17	2
EK-RG, FP	Family problems	2 4 6 7 11 13 14 18 20	9
EK-RG, NC	No communication in the home	4 9 20	3
Other			
EK-RG, FB	Friends are bad influence	4 15	2
EK-RG, CT	Can't trust others	8	1
EK-RG, NM	Do NOT think the real reason is money	6 11	2
EK-RG, BA	Want to be an adult	14 12	2
Reasons Men do Enjo Kōsai			
Personal problems			
EK-RM, S	Stress	3 4 5 15 16 17 19	7
EK-RM, I	Immature	3	1
EK-RM, L	Lonely	4 16	2
EK-RM, A	Alone (no family)	8 11	2
EK-RM, LSE	Low self-esteem, no confidence	18	1
Personal desire for something			
EK-RM, E	Escape (they want to escape from their lives)	3	1
EK-RM, COM	Want Companionship	1 16	1

EK-RM, ENT	Want Entertainment	1 7 12 15 19	5
Problems at home			
EK-RM, LC	Lack of conversation at home	4 16 20	3
EK-RM, WNG	Wives are not good (men are unhappy with their wives in general)	4 17	2
EK-RM, WL	Wives are loud and demanding	5	1
EK-RM, HNG	Homes are not good	17	1
Nature of men			
EK-RM, SEX	Men love sex	10 13 16 18 20	5
EK-RM, Y	Men like young girls	2 5 7 9 10 12 13 17 19	9
EK-RM, B	Men like business deals and transactions	8	1
EK-RM, SHO	Shouganai (it can't be helped). They are men.	3 9 13	3
Code	Meaning	Interviewees	Frequency (out of 20)
Reasons Men like Young Girls			
Girls are lacking something			
YG-RM, I	Immature (young girls are immature)	1 3 15	3
YG-RM, NE	No Experiences - Young girls are inexperienced	1 12 13 18 20	5
YG-RM, W	Women are becoming too strong but young girls are still weak	14 15	2
Girls provide something			
YG-RM, INN	Young girls are innocent	11 18	2
YG-RM, SEXY	Young girls are sexy	10	1
YG-RM, K	Young girls are かわいい (cute)	5 7 8 9 12 20	6
YG-RM, FRESH	Young girls are ピチピチ (lively, energetic, spunky)	13	1
YG-RM, PUR	Young girls are pure	6 12 13	3
Men gain something			
YG-RM, S	Status (for men to date young girls – shows their status)	4 16 17	3
YG-RM, C	Unequal relationship, men are in control	4 6 12 13 15 19	6
YG-RM, PER	Girls treat man like person, not object	11	1
Nature of men			
YG-RM, SHO	Shouganai (it can't be helped). They are men.	12	1
Other			
YG-RM, M	Media fuels sexy image, gives ideas to men	3 12	2
Feelings and Opinions About Enjo Kōsai			
EK-G, D	It is bad for girls to do enjo kōsai	4 5 7 19 20	5
EK-G, OK	It is OK for girls to do enjo kōsai	10 12 14	3
EK-M, D	It is bad for men to do enjo kōsai	2 7 19	3
EK-M, OK	It is OK for men to do it	10 12	2

Appendix 3: Interview Vignettes

Interview #1

History/background of interviewee:

I knew this woman from Yamanashi when I lived there – we had a few mutual friends. It turned out we were both living in Aichi prefecture this summer. She contacted me to meet for coffee and I took advantage of the opportunity to conduct my first interview. She is the same age as me (26 at the time of the interview), recently married, and a stay at home wife. Her husband works for Toyota. While this interview did not necessarily prove to be insightful on my research topic, it was really good practice for me. She loved the opportunity to talk with someone about her life. I got the impression that she was lonely as she was new to the area and did not have many new friends. She was eager to talk with me about everything. After the interview, she set me up with one of her friends to interview in Yamanashi. This friend turned out to be the one interviewee who admittedly participated in enjo kōsai. I think this interview setup was purposefully to help my research, but I will never know for sure.

Interview:

She loved talking about her high school experiences and admitted that this was the best time of her life. She didn't know of anyone doing enjo kōsai in high school but heard about it in the news a lot. At the time, loose socks and short skirts were incredibly popular. This style was associated with enjo kōsai in the media. Her favorite TV show in high school featured a middle-aged man who was a high school teacher. She loved him because of his passion. I asked her to clarify what type of love. She was quick to tell me that it was not sexual in nature, she just admired his passion for teaching and found that attractive. From what I have witnessed in Japan, particularly recently, it seems that men able to express their emotions are becoming increasingly popular and desirable to women.

She believed that girls participate in enjo kōsai only for money. Men participate because they have no opportunity to communicate with young girls. I asked, "Couldn't they communicate with their daughters?" and she clarified that it was a different kind of communication. It was sexual in nature. The men were able to play sexual games with the girls and it was fun and enjoyable for them. During her time in high school (1997-2000), it was new and exciting and people were interested in this behavior. Now it is not such a big deal. I asked her why she and her friends didn't do it and her response was "Yada!!!" (They never considered it for a moment).

Interview # 2

History/background of interviewee:

I have been friends with this interviewee since I was an undergraduate in college. She studied abroad at my university and I was her English language partner for a year. When I studied abroad in Tokyo, I stayed with her family for a week. It is a huge honor for a person to be invited into a Japanese family's home and this was a big deal. She grew up in a small town outside of Nagoya. After graduating from college, she worked as a flight attendant for ANA Airlines, an extremely desirable career for many Japanese women. She was married last year and was 5 months pregnant at the time of the interview. She had quit her job and is now living with her husband, a few blocks from her parents in her hometown. She comes from a wealthy family.

Interview:

Given the history and background I have with this interviewee, I was disappointed with the resulting interview. She seemed emotionally distant for the majority of our day spent together, not just for the interview. Her responses to questions were always short and I had to push hard to get more details. In retrospect, I think that the interviewee's pregnancy and numerous life changes had something to do with her distance. I visited with her a year after this interview and she was much more open, as well as content with her new life. She did express to me a desire to return to her career.

She went to an all-girls high school. She was incredibly busy and had to commute over an hour each way. Short skirts and loose socks were very popular but were banned at school. When she and her friends got to the train station to commute home her friends would change their socks in the bathroom. They thought that loose socks made their legs look skinnier. There were no boys around, however they all liked this fashion. The interviewee, however, couldn't be bothered to change her socks or shorten her skirt. She didn't care if she was boring or tasteless. Her mother was very strict with her and would always check in to see when she was coming home. She did not have a lot of free time.

She didn't think that enjo kōsai happened at her school. But they did have lesbians. She knew one lesbian couple there. My impression was that to the interviewee lesbians were stranger than enjo kōsai.

Interview # 3

History/background of interviewee:

I was good friends with this woman in Yamanashi when I lived there. She was friends with women on my soccer team. She learned to speak English fluently in Australia and earned a degree as a massage therapy practitioner in South Africa. I've never understood how she affords to move and live abroad for extended periods of time. Her parents are financially well off from what I have heard, but she told me that they cut her off when she decided to move to South

Africa. She now lives in Yamanashi again and works on her parents' farm. She has also started her own business selling new-age products from South Africa. She operates this business in both Yamanashi and Tokyo. She is incredibly open-minded and really seemed to enjoy the interview. She set up interviews for me with a few more of her friends.

Interview:

Her high level of self-confidence was apparent in her answers. I remember thinking that she is not at all the type of girl to participate in enjo kōsai, however I was very interested to hear her opinions on the subject having grown up in Japanese schools and then lived abroad for a significant amount of time.

The most interesting part of this interview was hearing about her family and her relationship with them. She did not get along well with her father growing up. She saw him as domineering and sexist. He didn't support anything that she wanted to pursue because she was a woman and he saw her as therefore being too weak. They clashed a lot as she was growing up. She also resented her mother for not standing up for her more. She believes that her mother has been brainwashed by Japanese culture and that she does not see how oppressive it is towards women (these were her actual words).

She also struggled in school. She was incredibly smart and at the top of her class. She played basketball. However, she never felt like she fit in to Japanese society and wanted to break free from the mold she felt she was being forced into. She always questioned everything and this was not appropriate behavior for an adolescent girl in Japanese society. She wanted to study art and move abroad. The teachers at her school told her this was not possible and that she should pursue a goal more appropriate for a woman. This made her very angry, and led to her leaving Japan for periods of time to study.

She is now living at home with her parents again and has a new found respect for them. She can understand somewhat where they are coming from, however she has made it her goal to open up her mother's mind. She wants her mother to learn to stand up for herself and to be a stronger woman.

The reason she started her own company was because she hated the idea of working for a Japanese company with all of its gender inequality. She feels that the Japanese educational system is brainwashing the students.

She did not know anyone doing enjo kōsai when she was in high school (she graduated in 1997). However, in her younger brother's generation there are many (he graduated from high school recently). His girlfriend broke up with him and started doing it. She thinks that girls do enjo kōsai because they are in the process of forming their identities and they are very dependent upon others. The girls that participate do not have strong families that help to build their self confidence. She does not think that strict families like the one she grew up in are better...she

believes that families that help their daughters to find their way and support them in their endeavors are the best. She believes that men participate in enjo kōsai because they are immature, have too much stress, and want to escape.

I asked why she thinks that men prefer young girls when they do enjo kōsai. She responded that we are all taught what is sexy. In Africa where she lived, for example, men and women were naked, and this was not considered sexy. It was just normal. These were just their bodies. Women and men know sexual appeal, but she thinks more through the media. More progressive countries have media control so they show images that influence the viewers. They create what is sexy, and what is not. The media started this high school girl craze with images.

Interview #4

History/background of interviewee:

Interviewee was 31 years old at the time of the interview. She graduated from high school in 1996. We played soccer together for 2 years in Yamanashi and were good friends. She has always been a very reserved person, so I was surprised how much she opened up in this interview. She went to college in California so is fluent in English. She also uses English in her job every day. She works for a company that does technological importing and exporting. She is a very practical person and is incredibly athletic. I have never known her to have a boyfriend or significant other.

Interview:

She had a difficult time in high school. There were two school options in her area, but the year that she entered students were not allowed to choose which school they attended – it was all based on test scores. She went to the lower level school and all of her friends went to the other school. She was very upset about this and cried a lot. The rules were later changed so her younger sister and brother were allowed to go to the other high school. She hated her teachers and didn't feel that they were supportive of her in any way. When she was getting ready to graduate, she decided she wanted to attend university abroad. Her teachers all told her that because she was a woman she wasn't strong enough to do such a thing. Even her mother discouraged her, because she was worried. The only person that truly supported her was her father. Because of him she was able to go to school in California.

She never heard about enjo kōsai when she was in high school (graduated in 1996) but thinks it has become more prevalent in the last ten years. She thinks it is disgusting, and that many girls will do anything for money. She seemed to have a very low opinion of girls that do this and believes that they have no self control. She also believes that they do not come from supportive families, their friends are a bad influence on them, and they are not independent and strong.

She thinks that men do enjo kōsai perhaps because they are lonely, have stress at work, and do not have good conversations at home. She recognized the fact that men can get prostitutes for cheaper than adolescent girls. She had a hard time figuring out why men would choose young girls. She suspected that it had something to do with difference in status. Men like to feel strong and show their strength. She doesn't understand men.

Interview #5

History/background of interviewee:

She is the younger sister of interviewee #4 and graduated from high school in 2003. We played soccer together in Yamanashi for 2 years. She is a very fun person, although unreliable at times. She is very interested in dating foreign men and dated an American for one of the years I was in Yamanashi. They recently broke up and she seemed to be dealing with that still. He moved on quickly to another Japanese woman and this makes her angry.

Interview:

This interview was not incredibly detailed – her responses were generally short and she didn't put as much thought and consideration into her answers as the previous two interviewees.

She really enjoyed her time in high school and loved her classmates and teachers. She was a tomboy and played a lot of sports. She hated wearing dresses at the time but loved her sports jersey. (She is completely different now – she loves dresses, Hawaiian flowers, and jewelry with a lot of color). She came from a very good, close family that spent a lot of time together. Her parents were somewhat strict, especially her father. If she didn't come home when she said she was going to she would get in a lot of trouble.

There was one girl she knew doing enjo kōsai at her school. The teachers found out about it and the girl quit school. The words she used to describe this event showed that it was a really big deal for this to happen. She didn't know if any of her other classmates were doing this, she only heard about the one. She thinks that girls do enjo kōsai to get money so they can buy things like designer handbags.

She thought participating in enjo kōsai is “sugoku yada” (really disgusting and wrong). I asked why. Going on dates with men you don't like, having sex with them, and receiving money is disgusting. She really never even considered it. It was dirty. Yada!

She believes that men do it because they want to meet and play with lots of young girls. Men have difficult lives with lots of stress at work. Young girls are kawaii (cute). Perhaps when they return to their houses their wives are loud and demanding.*

*Her description here really stuck with me. I found her opinion on why men do enjo kōsai to be unexpectedly forgiving of the behavior of men. Perhaps this stuck with me as it was such a contrast from the previous two interviewees.

Interview #6

History/background of interviewee:

36 years old, grew up in a small town outside of Kofu in Yamanashi. I did not know her before the interview; she was introduced to me by interviewee #1. This was the hardest interview for me to get through emotionally. I almost starting crying several times, but managed to hide my emotion and just let her talk. I was very grateful that she was willing to share such personal details with me.

Interview:

At the beginning when I explained to her my research topic I noticed a flicker of emotion pass across her face. She agreed to do the interview, however, and remained very composed throughout. As she began answering questions it became apparent that she had many painful memories. She came from a family with an abusive father – certainly verbally abusive although I sensed that it went beyond that. He ran a barber shop with her mother and took all of the money for himself and didn't share any with the family. She had to earn her own money to get by. Her father was always yelling at them and when he yelled at her mother she never responded. Her mother was a very quiet person and literally shut down when the father yelled. Her mother never smiled. She wanted more than anything for her mother to look at her and see her for who she was, but her mother was lost in her own world. Her mother was too busy cooking and cleaning to pay attention to the interviewee. The father's mother also lived with them and was often mean to her mother too.

The interviewee was extremely lonely for most of her life and felt empty inside. In elementary school some of the boys bullied her and would hit her. They would often slap her bottom. Between this and the abuse from her father at home she had a hard time trusting males. But on the other hand she wanted to be loved. By the time she was in high school, in addition to numerous other jobs, she began working as a hostess. Then she began doing enjo kōsai. At that time, however, (she graduated from high school in 1992) it was not called enjo kōsai. There was no name for it. She began having sex with a member of the yakuza. He paid her about \$1,000 a month. She did it for money but also for companionship. He let her try doing some drugs. She tried marijuana and heroin a few times, but didn't get addicted. These drugs mostly just made her feel emptier inside. Her work with this man lasted for about six months.

She didn't go to school often. She had no close friends. She went into more detail about all the other hostess jobs she worked in Isawa (where I lived in Yamanashi) which is known for its red light district.

I asked her if she thinks enjo kōsai today is similar to her experiences and she said yes. While girls today may say that it is for money, just as she said while she was participating, it is more than that. Really the problem is girls feel empty inside and want to be loved. Perhaps they come from bad families. Girls that have found themselves do not do it. Girls with no confidence will do it. Confidence can be gained when people say good things about you. Childhood is really important. At this time, you are you learning to respect yourself and have confidence. But if your childhood is difficult and your parents tell you things like you are bad and stupid, it is hard to fix yourself.

At the end of the interview she left quickly and brush with one another was over. I am still not sure if she is indicative of the experiences of other enjo kōsai participants, or if she is more of an exception. She clearly had an extremely painful life that led her to seek love and attention from older men. Although she came from a very poor family, she did not do enjo kōsai for the money. She was trying to overcome the emotional and perhaps physical abuse that she had been tormented with her entire life and was looking for love in all the wrong places.

Interview #7

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2007 and is a 21 year old college student in Yamanashi. She is studying animal therapy and sign language for disabled children. She is a member of my friend's English club in Uenohara.

Interview:

This interviewee seemed fairly open discussing most topics, but became uncomfortable when enjo kōsai came up. She went into detail about growing up with a single mom. Her dad left when she was very young and she doesn't know why. This was difficult for her, especially because this is not as common an occurrence in Japan. She and her mother got along fairly well, however, until she reached high school. Then they fought a lot. Her mother wanted her to prepare academically for a good high academic level college. The interviewee did not want that. She was encouraged by one of her teachers to pursue a nontraditional degree at a lower level school. He was the only person that supported what she really wanted to do. This caused a rift between her and her mother, but now they are ok.

In discussing enjo kōsai, she seemed ashamed that this is occurring in Japan. She seemed hesitant to provide details on the issue, due to her lack of experience with it I think. She also

seemed eager to distance herself from it in the way she described it. She thinks that enjo kōsai involves young girls selling their bodies to get money. Money is absolutely the number one reason. Also, the girls do not value themselves very much. For girls that want to get money that badly, nothing is scary. Some girls might just be curious to see what enjo kōsai is like. However, in the end she thinks that these girls don't do it because their bodies are important to them. So they work at jobs instead to earn their money.

She believes that girls who do enjo kōsai come from unloving families. They do not have much admiration for their children and do not encourage or praise them. The girls that participate do not have many hobbies.

The men that participate are probably dissatisfied with their lives and want new forms of entertainment. They are dissatisfied with sex. Many of the men that do enjo kōsai are old men that have a lot of money. They like young girls with young, cute, fresh bodies.

She seemed to view women/girls participating in enjo kōsai as a very negative, embarrassing thing. However, she also seemed rather tolerant of the actions of men.

Interview # 8

History/background of interviewee:

Interviewee graduated from high school in 2001. She is 29 years old and currently unemployed. She grew up in Tokyo and has lived there her whole life. She previously worked in design, mostly for advertising in magazines. She really liked to talk about herself and her experiences. I think she appreciated just having someone to listen to her. It was the first time we met – the meeting was set up for me by the friend of a friend.

Interview:

I wondered at first if she had done enjo kōsai as a teenager. She talked and talked about how she wants many things and how living in Tokyo takes consumerism to a whole new level. She has never felt satisfied with what she has; she always wants more. It is very expensive to live in Tokyo and to buy new things in order to be and stay popular. The more magazines and manga she read the more she wanted. The more clothes she had the more she wanted. This made me wonder if she had ever participated in enjo kōsai for the money. She never alluded to or discussed her personal participation, but I am still not sure.

She had many different part time jobs while in high school. She didn't get home at night until after 10 pm. She rarely saw her parents during the week as they were both working. She often felt lonely without anyone around at home and her family didn't feel like a family. She had a lot of freedom.

She went to a very strict school. Her teachers were discouraging about her interest in design. She didn't hear about girls doing enjo kōsai at her school, although she heard about it happening at other schools. She heard that people that wanted to try it would. The girls that do enjo kōsai were usually those that wanted many things and didn't get particularly nervous about earning money in this way. They probably thought it was an interesting way to spend their time outside of school – half earning money through enjo kōsai and half spending time with friends. I asked her if this was normal for girls to earn money this way. She responded that if girls wanted an item fast they would do it for money. It was easy to do. She thinks the only reason girls do it is for money. I asked what the difference is between girls that do it and girls that don't. She thinks it is a sense or a feeling that girls have about themselves. Girls that do it can't trust others.

She thinks that men do enjo kōsai if they are alone (not in a relationship). Also, men love business transactions and deals, for example making promises and agreements. If it were their own daughters participating men might be against this, but because it is different people it is ok. Young girls have a cute appeal about them that attracts men.

She concluded that it is nice not to think about enjo kōsai too much. She seemed to get really uncomfortable and was barely speaking above a whisper at a few points. I don't think she liked thinking very hard about the issue – it seemed to make her uncomfortable. It made me wonder, again, if she had participated when younger.

Interview # 9

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2000. She is 29 years old, very bubbly, and a fast talker. She has lived in Tokyo her whole life. She works for a governmental agency in foreign investment. She came to meet with me during her lunch break and seemed incredibly rushed the whole time, although she did stay for 15 minutes longer than we had planned to meet to keep telling me stories. It was the first time we met – this meeting was set up for me by the friend of a friend.

Interview:

Her parents divorced when she was a child so she was mostly raised by her mother and grandmother. This did not seem to bother her. She said they were all happier this way. She had a very high level of confidence. She went to a nontraditional high school and was very involved with cheerleading. They had a lot of freedom at her school. They were not forced to wear school uniforms.

She had a friend that did enjo kōsai when she was in high school. Her friend would find men on the internet and meet up with them in Shibuya. Her friend didn't speak about this much. She

thinks her friend did this only for money. She could have earned money at a part time job, but enjō kōsai was so much faster. Her friend had really strict parents that made her study a lot. They didn't have much communication with her. Her friend didn't participate in clubs and didn't know what she wanted to do with her life.

During high school girls are really establishing their identities. Before this, in junior high school, they are establishing a sense of themselves. Their parents are particularly helpful in this, especially their mothers. They get a lot out of communication with their parents.

I asked why men participate. She answered, "Old men have a lot of money, right? They like young girls. This can't be helped. Young girls have beautiful bodies. The men have wives at home that are not very young. They like their wives, however...."

I couldn't get her to go into more detail on the last part. Other than that, she was very open and sharing.

Interview # 10

History/background of interviewee:

The interview graduated from high school in 2000. She is 28 years old and has lived in Tokyo her whole life. She works for a travel agency and loves to travel. She has been all over Europe and to Vietnam. We ate lunch during our meeting. She ate very slowly and deliberately in a way that made me feel nervous. She was very, very skinny and her eye occasionally twitched. It was the first time we met – the meeting was set up for me by the friend of a friend.

Interview:

She put an incredible amount of thought into the answers she gave me, just like her deliberate eating.

She had a good relationship with her family. She talked some with her parents and her brother every evening. Her parents gave her a fair amount of freedom, but her high school was incredibly strict.

She heard about enjō kōsai a lot in the news. Enjō kōsai wasn't happening much among the people she knew. It was popular in the news when she was in high school because it was a big occurrence at the time. Now it is not in the media so much.

She thinks that girls probably participate in enjō kōsai for money. Young people really want to hang out and have fun and be able to buy anything they want. Girls can earn like \$1,000 a month doing this. They can get like \$300 or \$400 each time. It's the easiest way to make money. Young

people really want brand name items. They do not see anything wrong with going to a hotel with an adult, and are not aware of the fact that this is really bad for them.

She thinks that men love this sort of thing (enjo kōsai). Men love sex. They really like young girls. Young girls are sexy. When a girl and guy get married and grow older they have kids. The mother becomes devoted to the children. Enjo kōsai is just about sex for the men. The men like certain things about the young girls. For example, men like miniskirts.

I asked her if she was nervous that her future husband might do enjo kōsai. She said, No, it will certainly be fine. I am unsure whether she meant that it will be fine for her future husband to participate, or that her future husband will not do such things.

She concluded that she really does not know why she didn't do enjo kōsai when she was in high school. She sees it as a very easy way to have earned money. I think that her not participating had something to do with how close her family was and the time she spent with them.

Interview #11

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2000. She is 28 years old and has lived in Tokyo her whole life. She is an event coordinator/planner for a company that works mostly with pharmaceutical companies. It was the first time I met her – she is good friends with one of my friends. She actually set up 6 of my other interviews and was very eager to help me. She was very social, outgoing, bubbly, and friendly.

Interview:

She went to a very strict high school and was on the track and field team, which basically controlled her life in high school. She was a top runner in Tokyo. Her coaches had many ridiculous rules for them that did not apply to other students, like they were not allowed to use vending machines (pretty hard to do in Tokyo). They were also not allowed to date.

She came from a family with 3 children and was pretty close with her parents, although they worked a lot so she and her siblings went to daycare in the evenings when they were young. When she was in high school her sister developed a tumor on one of her lungs and spent a year in the hospital going through chemo. During this time she did not see her parents very much and often felt lonely. She spent time with her friend's family instead.

She heard of enjo kōsai frequently in high school. Her image is that it involves an old guy picking up a young girl, high school age, for a date. They both agree on the money before they hang out. She doesn't think any of her classmates did it, but she doesn't know, because they don't tell you. It's a secret. She thinks that girls that do enjo kōsai have family problems. The girl

might be very lonely and not close with her parents. She thinks it is caused by mental things. She thinks the girl who has this kind of relationship needs somebody because she feels alone. It is not just a matter of money.

I asked her why men do it. She thinks that if they choose a prostitute they are very professional, so treat the man as a customer. A normal girl doesn't know how to act professionally. She sees the man as a person, not just as a customer or object. Men need somebody too. I asked her: don't the men sometimes have families at home? She said that her image of the guy is one with no family. She cannot imagine that a man has a family and still does enjo kōsai.

She thinks that men like young girls because they are really shiny and innocent. They don't deceive you, right?

She had one shocking memory from growing up that she clarified was not this kind of thing (enjo kōsai) but might be helpful to me. She used to hang out a lot at her best friend's house, particularly when her sister was ill. She would frequently have dinner there and spend time with her friend's family. She had all of the family members' numbers in her phone. One day her friend's father texted her and said "Why don't we go on a date sometime?" She said "What? What are you trying to say?" and he responded "Just don't tell anybody in my family." She thought this situation was messed up and didn't want to ruin the relationship with her friend. So she just ignored him.

I found it interesting that she was so insightful about why girls might do enjo kōsai. However, she could not picture the men having families that participated. And her shocking story (involving a married man with a family) that she specifically labeled as "not enjo kōsai" could have been exactly that.

Interview # 12

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2008. She is 21 years old, and grew up in Yamanashi. She is now attending university in Chiba and majoring in English. She was one of my students at Isawa High School. She was one of the smartest students in the school. She spent the last year studying abroad in Vancouver.

Interview:

Knowing her so well made it easier to understand the context from which she is coming from, but also made it harder to press for more details on some of the more difficult questions. She seemed to do her best to answer honestly though, and the whole interview felt very comfortable.

She was always very close with her family. They always tried to understand what she wanted to do in life, and let her study abroad in Canada.

She heard a rumor while in high school that one of her classmates was doing enjo kōsai, but she didn't know the girl well enough to ask her about it. I got the impression from this interview that while some girls may choose to do enjo kōsai, it is not something that is talked about with friends. It is kept very secret. She saw it as being a personal choice and mutually beneficial to the parties involved. While she would have never done it, she was ok with knowing that a classmate had decided to. She did seem to feel uncomfortable that they were from her class. She did not want me to know who the person was. I did not push her for a name or more details on this person, so she seemed ok with talking about it.

The student from her class doing enjo kōsai most likely did it to earn money. But she doesn't know specifically. Of course high school students want more money. And if they sell their bodies they can get money easily. Old men like to have sex with young girls because they are sick of their wives. They need some excitement and can find that with younger people. It's really a Japanese business. She thinks it will continue because it's good for students that want more money and for men that want to do enjo kōsai.

Girls that do enjo kōsai have no morals. It's not a good way to earn money. She earned money from a part time job, working hard. But if somebody wants to have money easily they do enjo kōsai. They don't think about morals or anything, they just want to earn money.

Men do enjo kōsai because they want excitement. Some men like to have that with younger girls. It's like it is a custom. It can't be helped.

Young girls are fresh, cute, and pure. They are pristine. They are inexperienced, so men can show them what to do sexually.

There are a lot of adult videos about enjo kōsai that men watch. Men want to have experiences like in the videos. And there are so many ways to contact girls through the internet. So many girls want money. It's a nice circle. It will not end any time soon.

While I am curious which of my students were participating in enjo kōsai, especially from her class, I am also somewhat relieved to not know. If students in this high level class were doing it, I think that it is highly likely that lower level class students were as well. The lower level classes had much more free time and did not have to work as hard academically because most of them did not go to college. They had more freedom and ability to engage in such activities for money. Also, I know that this is not always the case, but often students that came from "good" families that encouraged them and supported them were more likely to excel in school and progress on to university. They were less likely to participate in enjo kōsai I believe.

Interview #13

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2008. She is 20 years old and grew up in Tokyo but went to high school in Chiba. She is now going to university in Chiba and is studying English. She spent the entire last year studying abroad in Vancouver. She was introduced to me by interviewee #12. She is very friendly and sweet.

Interview:

Overall she loved high school and had a very good experience. She did, however, have some problems with other girls gossiping about her. She had one very good teacher. He always listened to her and talked with her about her future. He gave good advice. He was like a father and a teacher to the students.

She was very close with her mother and her younger twin sisters. They ate dinner together every night. But her father lived in another prefecture for work, so she rarely saw him. Her mother was very strict with her curfew. She had a long commute to and from school and if she was ever late getting home she would get in a lot of trouble.

In high school she sometimes heard about enjo kōsai. She heard “don’t do that” from her friends. As far as she knows, her friends didn’t do it either. Her teachers never talked about it. It wasn’t so common at her school. She didn’t think about it too much. She heard once that a classmate was doing it, but she doesn’t know if it was true or not. She mostly heard about it from comics, like Gals! and Deep Love. These comics scared her and didn’t make her want to do it.

Girls that do enjo kōsai have lots of problems. Like with their family and friends. If girls are enjoying high school, they will not do it.

Men do enjo kōsai because they have a sexual appetite, a desire. Young girls are attractive and fresh. I asked if men in Japan have a higher sexual appetite than women. She responded, “Of course. Because they are men. Women keep their feelings inside as much as possible. That is why there is enjo kōsai. It is Japanese human nature.”

Men like young girls because they are fresh and attractive, more so than older women. They can teach young girls, which is exciting to them.

Interview #14

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2008. She is 21 years old and grew up in Yamanashi. She now lives and attends college a little bit outside of Tokyo. She attends a technical school in Hachioji where she studies digital sound and computers. She was one of my high school students and one of the first ones I met in Yamanashi. She is very energetic and outgoing. She seems unhappy with her degree as it is boring and filled with otaku (Japanese nerds). She is single and told me several times that she doesn't have a boyfriend. She seemed indifferent to the interview and did not give very detailed answers. She has always been a very unique individual and liked to do her own thing. For example, she was in a rock band in high school.

Interview:

She didn't like many of her high school teachers because they were too strict. She was always getting in trouble because she didn't fit in. Her hair is naturally brown (lighter than most Japanese people) and the teachers didn't believe her. They wanted her to dye it black to fit in with everyone else. She constantly had to bring in childhood pictures to prove that it was her natural color. Her mother and father both had to come in to the school on several occasions to speak with teachers about her hair. She was very close with her parents. They sometimes took trips to Korea together in the summer.

Her image of enjo kōsai is that it happens in Tokyo, in places like Shibuya. It's in Yamanashi too, and she hates that. If one of her close friends had been doing enjo kōsai and she liked it, and she loved the man, then it would be ok. She wouldn't tell her to stop. However, if one of her close friends did do enjo kōsai, she would no longer be her true friend.

Girls do enjo kōsai because they have an interest in it and they want money. They might have problems with family and friends. They just want money and love. They want to feel satisfied.

Men do enjo kōsai because they have a desire for it. They are hentai (perverted). Recently women in Japan are becoming stronger. So men go for young girls because they are still weak and soft.

Interview #15

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2001. She is 28 years old and grew up in Yamanashi in the inaka (countryside). She is now an elementary school teacher. She is friends with many of my friends from Yamanashi, although I didn't meet her when I lived there because she was living and volunteering in Nicaragua. She seemed very much like a rebel and had a wild streak growing up. In Japan she never fit in, and didn't like that she was expected to either. Her hair style is even unique – the sides of her head are shaved. When teaching kindergarten she has

to have her hair down to cover the sides, but the rest of the time likes to show it off. Living abroad clearly changed her perspective on many things, but it was apparent that she has always been the nail that sticks up.

Interview:

Until high school she was in class with the same 12 students all the time. She went to a big high school with a long commute. She wanted to leave Yamanashi for college but because her older sister and brother already had left her parents couldn't afford to send her too.

Her male teachers were annoying. They never got mad at cute girls, but she was not a cute girl. She always got scolded. Girls had to not only look cute, but also act cute. She was always opposite, and was a little bit aggressive. Male teachers didn't like it.

Her mom was strict teaching her how to eat, use chop sticks, how to act politely, how to behave. But for other things her parents let her do what she wanted. She just had to take responsibility for herself. Now she thinks her mother regrets this leniency and thinks this is why her daughter isn't married yet and has no babies. The interviewee has a good relationship with her father though – he tells her to do what makes her happy.

The interviewee's hair is naturally curly, but in high school they didn't allow curly hair. She had to tell her homeroom teacher that her hair was natural and also had to fill out special paperwork. She didn't like having to ask permission to have curly hair. When her high school went to the high school baseball tournament, she knew that they would be on TV so she made her hair really big by braiding it the night before and then teasing it on the bus. When her teacher saw her with big hair he made her put on a hat. He told her that she was the shame of their school.

When she was in junior high, enjo kōsai started to be a big problem in Tokyo. She saw it on TV. At that time, she and her friends would joke around with enjo kōsai. For example, after P.E. class they joked about selling their underwear to old guys. She didn't take it so seriously because enjo kōsai wasn't real for them. Maybe this was because they lived in the inaka. She doesn't think that any of her classmates were doing it. They heard at the time that in Kofu (capital city) there was a place to meet guys that wanted enjo kōsai.

Now she is a teacher. Recently a male teacher in Yamanashi City was arrested for participating in enjo kōsai (this event occurred in the summer of 2010, around the time of this interview). He was known as a “good” teacher. When she was in junior high and high school she didn't think about enjo kōsai seriously because it wasn't a big deal to her. They made jokes, or got excited to hear rumors. If they had teachers they didn't like in high school, they said that maybe he was doing enjo kōsai. But it wasn't serious. Now that she has grown up and is working as a teacher she has heard real things about teachers doing it or students she taught doing it. She's started to think about it more seriously now. She feels upset with the situation.

Sometimes girls just do it for an interest. It's easy to do. They just want money. One of her students that she taught in junior high school was a good student. When she got to high school, she learned how fun it was to use money in Kofu and Tokyo. She got new friends that did enjo kōsai for money and talked with her about it. It was so interesting to her, so she thought that she could do it too. Then she did it in Tokyo and realized how easy it was to make money. She didn't quit. Her parents then contacted the junior high school asking for help because the high school teachers didn't do anything. She heard this from a teacher she used to work with.

Japanese men like women, but women who don't know a lot. High school students are kind of kids. Men can feel superior to them. When men are with women, they like to feel powerful and in-control. Many people said that the teacher who was recently arrested for enjo kōsai with students was too stressed out from his work. But a teacher always should be good. People said he did it because he was under too much pressure. That teacher also has a daughter in elementary school. かわいいそう (It's really sad, she feels badly for his family).

Interview #16

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2008. She is 20 years old and a student in Professor Slater's class at Sophia University. She mostly grew up in Tokyo, although lived in Mexico for kindergarten and New York for 3 years in junior high. She is studying Sociology and Anthropology. She seemed like a very smart girl. She was raised with high academic expectations from her parents, but seemed to have even higher expectations for herself.

Interview:

She went to a big high school in Shibuya. It was a typical Japanese big school. Most of the students were already friends when she arrived, but she managed to fit in despite her different background. In high school she started to think about what she wanted to do for her career and she realized there is gender differentiation in Japan. She saw her dad working for an international corporation and he told her about the gender gap in his company and all companies. It is harder for women to enter these companies. She thinks that her dad wants her to enter a company like this though. Her parents were strict growing up but they had her best interest in mind. She also put a lot of pressure on herself because she wanted to get into Sophia so badly.

She had a friend in her class who she heard was doing enjo kōsai. She actually saw her in Shibuya station with an old man once. She and her friends weren't sure if it was the girl's dad, but it didn't seem like her dad. They all wondered why she was with this old man and if the rumor was true. There was another girl in her class that was doing it too. She thinks high school girls do it for money. But they also need attention. The girl she saw in Shibuya was not very

popular, she was a quiet person. She thinks that the girl wanted to get attention. Many girls are in a rush to grow up. And some want to fit in.

Girls also might do it to get sexual experience. Maybe girls that do enjo kōsai have self esteem issues. If they are doing it for money she thinks there are other ways to get money that don't involve selling their sexual figures to men they barely know. Both girls and men benefit in this situation, but she wouldn't do it. She just doesn't want to have sex with a smelly oyaji (derogatory word for old man).

Men do it because they are tired from work and want to get attention. Some men want sexual attention. Perhaps they don't get attention from their housewives. They like young girls because they feel a higher status with them. She also feels this way when meeting a male sempai (superior), like when she is getting advice for job hunting or something. She feels that she is meeting someone really special and can get really good information from him. Young girls see older men as having a higher status.

Interview #17

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2008. She is 21 years old and a student of Professor Slater's at Sophia University. She is studying Sociology and Anthropology. She was friendly, warm, and very fluent in English. She defined herself by her experiences as a returnee (meaning she had lived abroad for several years and had returned to Japan). She seemed to be defined more by her experiences as a returnee than by her experiences abroad. She acted very young and seemed somewhat naïve. She was very proud of her experience working at Duncan Doughnuts and her ability to adapt with the "pure Japanese." "Pure Japanese" are something she and her classmates used to label those Japanese people that had no international experience. The way she described "pure Japanese" made her seem as if she felt intellectually superior to them. She was eager to discuss her knowledge of enjo kōsai, yet seemed to not actually know much about it. Everything she did know was from manga and anime.

Interview:

In high school she had to study very hard to catch up with other students, especially when it came to Japanese because she lived abroad for several years and fell behind. In the evenings she spent a bit of time with her family. She usually got home around 8. She was always tired and her parents knew it was hard for her to adjust. She would come home and eat, shower, and then go to her room and collapse on the bed. Her hair would still be wet so her father would come and dry it for her. She didn't know about this at the time, her parents told her afterwards. She was too tired to notice.

She had a lot of fights with her parents because they are different from her. They are not returnee students so she felt they didn't understand her. She wanted to spend time with her friends. It was her adolescence phase. Her parents scolded her for not studying.

She heard about enjo kōsai in middle school. One of her sempais (superior, upper classman) was doing it. But she didn't really know what it was at first. She read about it in Gals! One of the characters was doing enjo kōsai in this story. This character was a really clever girl. The character's friends stopped her from doing this. When she read this she didn't really know what was going on. She didn't know that it was kind of like an affair type of thing. As she grew up and people were gossiping she realized that it was a really big deal. It was especially a big deal at her school because it was a big private Catholic school. She doesn't know if any of her classmates were doing it. It was just something they gossiped about.

She thinks girls do it for money. It's a really easy way to get money. And they're too young to know that it's not a proper way to get money. It's like smoking and alcohol...some students think they have to go through it to grow up. Sometimes girls might do it to get out of reality somehow. For example if they are in strict house and don't like their family and are sick of it and want to get outside. If they don't have many friends that might be something they would do.

She thinks men do it because their wives are too strict. Lately she had been listening to a lot of radio counseling sessions. Some men call in and say that they have a problem with their wife, household, their children, their jobs. Getting out of those stresses is the main reason. They want to get in touch with the younger girls because that would make them forget about their problems. She thinks enjo kōsai is a social phenomenon where both sides involved have a problem in their lives.

Interview #18

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2005. She is 23 years old and was introduced to me by a friend of a friend. She grew up in a large city in Sendai and moved to Tokyo when she turned 18 for college. She has lived on her own ever since.

Interview:

She went to an all-girls high school. Many high school students were interested in sex, but she didn't want to do have sex because she didn't feel ready. Her boyfriend pressured her, and when she told him she wasn't ready he broke up with her. She didn't want to end up having children and wanted to go to college. In college she changed her mind and decided it is ok to have sex with a man if she could trust him.

She was very close with her mother growing up and could tell her everything. She was even able to talk to her mom the time that she had an affair with a married man. Her dad was fairly indifferent to her growing up. She felt like he didn't care about the family.

One of her best friends in high school, Ellie, was a really fun girl, but slept with about 40 men in one year. Most of the guys were high school students but she doesn't think that her friend remembers every guy. Ellie was crazy but so much fun. She and her girlfriends were worried about Ellie so they had a talk with her and convinced her to stop. She thinks Ellie was really lonely and needed someone to have a connection with. Her family wasn't horrible or anything, they were quite normal. But her mother didn't realize that her daughter was doing such things. Her mother thought that she was a good girl. When Ellie had to go to the women's clinic because she was having problems and the doctor said she was having too much sex, her mother didn't believe him because she believed that Ellie was a virgin. They didn't talk very much. Maybe that was where her loneliness came from.

She heard of one classmate doing enjo kōsai in high school. That was how this girl got money to buy Louie Vuitton bags. She thinks girls do enjo kōsai maybe because they are lonely. It's not only for money. They are like her friend Ellie, they are trying to have a connection with someone.

I asked if Ellie did enjo kōsai. "No, but some old men did try to seduce her. They did like this...do you know what this means?" (She held up her hand to show 1 finger, 3 fingers, or 5 fingers - meaning 1 man (\$100), 3 man (\$300), or 5 man (\$500)). "But Ellie thought, oh he is trying to do janken!" (Japanese rock, paper, scissors). "But then he did this and she was like, oh that's different. She talked about it at high school and we told her 'that's not janken! He's trying to have enjo kōsai with you!' And she was like 'Oh my gosh!' She definitely needed us."

The interviewee thinks that men do enjo kōsai because they just want to. She thinks that Japanese men like to have sex with virgins, perhaps because younger girls are inexperienced. This excites men. She thinks that prostitutes know everything, and perhaps this scares men. She thinks that Japanese men are very different from American men in that they have low confidence. Perhaps because compared with American men they are short and small. She thinks low confidence in men is the cause of enjo kōsai.

Interview #19

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2003. She is 23 years old and is the kohai of #11 (subordinate – she was a freshman at the company and had just started in April). I think she felt somewhat pressured into doing the interview to please #11, although she seemed interested

enough in the whole interview. She studied abroad during college at Spokane Falls Community College for one year. She grew up in Chiba and now commutes to Tokyo every day.

Interview:

Her parents were not very strict in high school. They ate dinner together in the evenings but not when she entered university because she had a job. They didn't do very much together on weekends. If she had free time she wanted to see her friends.

She did hear about enjo kōsai in high school, but her friends didn't do it. She heard rumors of other schools. Some girls were dating teachers. It was not for money, they just they liked each other perhaps.

When she was walking at the station in high school there were sometimes men that would chase her and her friends. They wanted to have their socks, or their clothes.

She thinks girls do enjo kōsai for money. High school students don't have much money but like to go out and have pretty clothes. And she supposes they want some excitement. Perhaps these girls sometimes feel lonely. They have no one that loves them. They feel that getting money is love.

She thinks men do it because for them every day is the same. Men want to have excitement, different from everyday life. Sometimes they are tired with their work. They want to show young girls things. They have wives but they don't have any chance to meet young girls like high school students. Enjo kōsai is a good chance to meet high school students.

I tried to get the interviewee to elaborate on these points, but she still didn't provide very much detail.

Interview #20

History/background of interviewee:

The interviewee graduated from high school in 2001. She is 28 years old and is married to an African man. She has been married since she was 20. She has an 8 year old son and a 3 year old daughter. I think she might have gotten married because she was pregnant because she hinted that their marriage was rushed and unexpected. She seemed regretful she had missed out on things like traveling. I wasn't sure why she was dressed so professionally for our interview because she recently quit her job and is currently not working. She spoke only in Japanese for the whole interview. I actually didn't even know that she could speak English as well as she does until after the interview when we both took the train to Shinjuku. She said she was shocked at how good my Japanese was after such little time. Her husband has lived in Japan for 10 years

and still cannot speak Japanese. He is an assistant chef and cooks for them a lot. She has lived in Tokyo her whole life.

Interview:

She was very busy in high school studying and spending time with her boyfriend. She had the same boyfriend for three years (not her husband now). Looking back, she wishes she had more freedom in high school. Her boyfriend had a lot of control over her and that wasn't good.

She had a good relationship with her parents. They ate dinner together every night. Her father in particular was very nice to her.

She heard about enjo kōsai in high school, but she never thought about doing it herself. She never really talked to anyone that was doing it. She thinks it's scary. She doesn't know very well but thinks that all the girls at her high school were fairly rich and didn't need to do enjo kōsai. Girls that do enjo kōsai want money, but this wasn't the main reason. She thinks their families were the main reason. For example, girls would do enjo kōsai if they came from families with bad communication. These girls didn't feel love from their families and were lonely. Girls are desperate for love. Girls that did enjo kōsai also weren't educated well on the risk to their bodies.

Men do enjo kōsai for sexual satisfaction. These men also don't have much communication with others, so they meet up with young girls to get a different type of communication. Men like young girls because they don't have much experience. They are pretty.

I asked her how she feels about the issue, particularly as a mother. "It's really sad. For girls especially. Women have many problems in society. This is just one of them. But this is for children, so it's bad." She has been thinking about this lately. It is important for parents to tell their children that they love them. The girls have no sexual experience, so the men teach them. It's dirty. She's embarrassed about it...it's a societal problem.

As a mother she thinks of such things more often. She wants to be there for her children and to communicate with them in order to prevent such things. She frequently tells her children that she loves them.

