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Editor's Note

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We are honored to publish the fifty-first issue of the *U.S.–Japan Women's Journal (USJWJ)*—complete with special features to commemorate the previous fifty issues—and to launch a new phase in our history. Founded in 1988, *USJWJ* is the world's oldest scholarly journal devoted to the study of gender and Japan. We are a peer-reviewed, biannual publication, available in print and online, that promotes scholarly exchange on social, cultural, political, and economic issues. We encourage comparative study among Japan, the United States, and other countries, and feature articles about women's lived experiences and media representations. Our mission is to foster the work of young researchers and to ensure that the achievements of established scholars are not forgotten.

We dedicate this commemorative issue to the previous editors who have cultivated generations of feminist scholars: Drs. Sally A. Hastings, Jan Bardsley, Noriko Mizuta, and Yoko Kawashima. In their introductory essays, Drs. Bardsley and Hastings offer highlights from their decades with the journal and explain how *USJWJ* continually supported their teaching and research and helped them engage both deeply and broadly with the field.

In this issue, we explore the power of periodicals to construct notions of gender, transnationalism, and the nation-state and to expand women's worldviews. We reprint two articles

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that exemplify how the content of *USJWJ* extends across time periods and academic disciplines, and how the journal publishes research by scholars at different stages of their careers. In “The Croissant Syndrome and Yellow Cabs” (no. 19, 2000), Aki Hirota analyzes how lifestyle magazines of the 1970s through 1990s promoted travel, particularly to the United States, to women who aspired to life courses outside the norms of marriage and motherhood; while showing possible ways to escape mainstream social constraints, journalists advanced unobtainable ideals and destructive stereotypes that women tried to counter through popular literature. In “Maiden Martyr for ‘New Japan’: The 1960 Ampo and the Rhetoric of the Other Michiko” (no. 23, 2002), Hiroko Hirakawa investigates how the popular weekly magazine *Shūkan Asahi* depicted the death of Kanba Michiko in a confrontation between Ampo protesters and the Japanese police in June 1960 as a “case of thwarted motherhood.” Hirakawa argues that media reports made the middle-class nuclear family a central element in Ampo protests and limited definitions of women’s political activism. We pair these articles with Susan Westhafer Furukawa’s new study of historical fiction about women associated with military leader Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–98). In their novels, authors Ariyoshi Sawako and Nagai Michiko dramatize the challenges women in Hideyoshi’s inner circle faced, capturing aspects of medieval political life omitted from patriarchal histories that focus on military victories. These three articles examine how women throughout history have negotiated complex identities of wives, mothers, workers, and national subjects.

Literature by contemporary writers expresses how this negotiation influences women’s daily lives. *USJWJ* is proud to offer the first English translations of Akutagawa Prize winner Shibasaki Tomoka’s short story “Right Here, Right Here” (Koko de, koko de, 2011) and works by five poets who came of age in the 1980s and 1990s: Misumi Mizuki, Fuzuki Yumi, Nagae Yūki, Saihate Tahi, and Ishiwata Kimi. Representative of what translator Kendall Heitzman deems Shibasaki’s “literature of location,” “Right Here, Right Here” depicts a woman’s emotional quest to feel at home in Osaka, as she traverses seemingly ordinary places that encourage reflections on memory and history. Writing free verse that intersects with digital media, machinery, mathematics, and live performance, the five poets whose work Jordan A. Y. Smith introduces and translates expand the parameters of the Japanese literary world and convey how small gestures and events present larger insight into gender and sexuality.

This issue also introduces our new cover (designed by elle + elle), featuring a detail from Kiyokata Kaburaki’s (1887–1972) “Fujibitai” (Widow’s Peak—Beautiful Woman Doing Her Makeup, courtesy of the Mizuta Museum of Art, Jōsai Educational Corporation). This *bijin-ga* (beautiful-women genre of painting) captures the optimism, potential, and humility of a woman preparing to enter the public sphere, and shows how the past resonates in the present.

USJWJ welcomes contributions from all academic fields in the social sciences and humanities, and proposals for special issues. Submission guidelines and information about back issues are available on our website, at <http://www.josai.jp/jicpas/usjwj/>.