EDITOR’S NOTEPAD

Here is a guidemap to the GALE FALL 2003 NEWSLETTER. This is a special issue focusing on the voices of Japanese youth and gender issues. We hope this issue gives readers a chance to find out what Japanese young people think about gender and society.

STUDENT VOICES features four female university seniors writing on eating disorders, care of the elderly, gender-based job discrimination, and discrimination against Korean residents in Japan.

SCHOOLHOUSE gives a brief description of Spencer Kagan’s approach to cooperative learning, including how his approach is consonant with the goal of equality. (Dr. Kagan’s Japan tour in 2003 is co-sponsored by GALE.)

GATHERING PLACE announces gender issues-related presentations at Peace as a Global Language 2003 in Tokyo. Participants are invited to submit reports of these and other presentations for future issues of this newsletter.

THE GALE SIG (Gender Awareness in Language Education Special Interest Group) of JALT (Japan Association for Language Teaching) holds an important place in the community and in our profession. We exist as a force to promote respect, understanding and rights for all persons regardless of gender in Japan and internationally.
GALE Newsletter has an open submission policy. Please feel free to write with comments or send submissions in any of the above categories or other categories in English or Japanese. Submissions in other languages are also being considered. GALE welcomes writing in traditional and nontraditional literary and academic genres by teachers, students and activists related to gender issues and gender equality.

Thank you for reading our newsletter.

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STUDENT VOICES

AYAMI ANDO, 4th year student, Aichi University of Education

"The reason why there is still sex discrimination"
Ayami Ando

Recently a male member of the Diet (the Japanese law-making body –ed.) said that a man who committed rape was healthy, and some female members protested against what he said. After the protest he apologized. In general it is said that now male and female are equal, but there are still many sex discriminations. Why are there still sex discriminations?

During children grow up boys and girls are treated differently. The colors of clothes are different, for example, boys wear blue, green and black clothes and girls wear red, pink and white clothes. Toys are also different. Many parents give toy cars to their son and dolls to their daughters. If the son is active parents speak well of him, conversely if the daughter is active they think that she is a bit too active for a girl. So boys learn that being active is good and manly, and girls learn that being active is not good for a girl so they have to behave more graceful and womanly.

In school, boys and girls are divided in some ways. The uniform, the hat and the shoes are different between boys and girls. When students stand in a row boys and girls line up separately. Boys’ names are put on the top of the list and girls’ names are followed. The leader of a class and the leader of a student council is boy, and girls are always assistants. Through these divides we make up the consciousness that boys and girls are different and boys are better than girls.
Almost all people have been experienced these educations so it is not easy for them to change their mind even if the low forbid to treat men and women unequally. According to the "Women's Date Book", 24.3% of junior high school make a list of names without distinction of sex, but 66.2% of them still make the list separately in 1997. There is no need to separate man and woman on the list of name, these needless separations between man and woman in the childhood is the beginning of the sex discrimination.

When I had an interview for a job the interviewer asked me "If your colleagues and your boss ask you to make tea, can you obey them at any time which includes when you are very busy?" This company is very famous and superior company in Japan, but it has the consciousness that making tea is women's job. In fact same companies still believe that woman's job is assist man's job and if they get married women should quit their job to do housework and child care because it is woman's role. It is true that some women think doing housework for husband and bringing up their children make them happy, however it does not mean only woman should do housework and child care. According to the survey in 2002, the number of Japanese women who oppose the conventional notion that the husband should work and the wife should stay home marked a 57.3%, but this is much lower than the ratios in other countries, including 93.2% in Sweden. In the point of child care, while 56.4% of Japanese women take maternity leave, only 0.4% of the men take paternity leave. During the child-rearing period, a husband in Japan spends 48minutes per day doing housework, far shorter than around three hours in Europe and the U.S. (The Japan Times ONLINE Friday, July 14, 2003).

One day I found a book that shows how to write a letter in formal style. The content is good but I cannot agree with the title of the book "Josei no teganibun hyakka (The encyclopedia of writing letters for women)". Why is it for women? It is natural for not only women but also men to write letters. The contents include letters of celebration, thanks, greetings and notices. These events happen quite often in daily life and people think making contact is woman's work. There is a common point among the jobs which are considered as woman's job. Those jobs are all done inside of the house. In the historical point, in the past women were dominated by men. Women had to obey men. Women had few rights in the society and in the house. It was natural that men worked outside of the house and women did inside of the house. Children had seen these parents' roles that their father worked harder in the company for his family and did nothing in the home, and their mother did every housework by her own and obey her husband. By seeing parents children make up the rule that man works outside of the house and woman work inside of the house and assist man. Now those children are adults and many of them are directors in the company. Because many of them still believe that women should work inside of the house and men do not need to work inside of the house like their parents, many female workers cannot get adequate jobs. What is worse some female workers receive sexual
harassment from their boss. In many cases of sexual harassment, almost all wrongdoers do not take the problem seriously and do not understand why it is bad. We often hear among the conversation between man and man one man says to other man "It is sexual harassment isn't it?" In a surface impression these men seem to understand sexual harassment, but in fact, many men use the word "sexual harassment" as a joke.

Now many people try to remove sex discrimination. As I said above now many directors of companies have wrong notion about man and woman's role, but the situation has been changed little by little and many young people study that sex discrimination is bad so I hope there will be no sex discrimination in the future.

References


<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/getarticle.pl5?%20nn20030614a5.htm>

SAYAKA ANDO, 4th year student, Aichi University of Education

I had the pleasure of listening to a speech by university student Ms. Ando on women and beauty standards. During the speech she asked audience members, all of whom (other than myself) were young Japanese females, a number of questions. One of those was "Do you feel uncomfortable when you see a woman who is thinner than you?" Every hand went up.

Seventeen year old Sara Shandler, the editor of the American female teen-authored “Ophelia Speaks” published in 1999 (Harper Perennial, ISBN 0-06-095297-0) received more submissions on eating disorders and media pressure on girls to be thin than any other topic.

A glance at Japanese magazines aimed at young girls shows the same penchant for using skinny models that young American girls complain about in Shandler's book.

According to an article on sports clubs published in the Tokyo magazine Metropolis (#486, July 18, 2003)
Both [Japanese] men and women tend to shy away from serious weight training.....For men it is seen as vaguely homosexual to build up muscle.

For Japanese women, well-defined muscles contradict ideals of feminine beauty, which stress slimness and cuteness (p. 11)

Please enjoy Ms. Ando’s essay.
(-ed.)

Women and Eating Disorders
Sayaka Ando

How many women do they think, “I’m the most beautiful woman” in the world? Probably, any women hardly think that. Most of them have some problems or dissatisfaction with their bodies, looks and especially their weight. According to studies into diet, weight loss and body shape, many individuals feel dissatisfied with their body shape, for example, 80 per cent of American women claim to be dissatisfied with their appearance and shape, and 1 in 2 American women are on a weight loss diet. (Statistics on Eating Disorders in “Anne Collins Diet”) Many women are interested in diet and try to lose weight in several ways because they think that a more slender woman is more beautiful. Japanese people also have a same tendency that slenderness is in proportion to beauty, so that many young women have a strong desire to be slender. They usually look for the best way of diet.

However, diet often causes serious problems, for example, “Eating Disorder.” Eating Disorder (=ED) means having several troubles in eating. Recently, people having ED are increasing and it is a serious problem in the society. Symptoms of ED are deferent depending on person. Main symptoms are Anorexia Nervosa (=AN) and Bulimia Nervosa (=BN). Binge Eating Disorder is also included in ED, but I explain AN and BN simply here. AN is characterized by self-starvation and excessive weight loss and BN is characterized by a cycle of bingeing and compensatory behaviors such as self-induced vomiting designed to undo or compensate for the effects of binge eating.

[Anorexia Nervosa]
Symptoms include:

- Refusal to maintain body weight at or above a minimally normal weight for height, body type, age, and activity level
- Intense fear of weight gain or being “fat”
- Feeling “fat” or overweight despite dramatic weight loss
- Loss of menstrual periods
- Extreme concern with body weight and shape

[Bulimia Nervosa]
Symptoms include:
- Repeated episodes of bingeing and purging
- Feeling out of control during a binge and eating beyond the point of comfortable fullness
- Purging after a binge, (typically by self-induced vomiting, abuse of laxatives, diet pills and/or diuretics, excessive exercise, or fasting)
- Frequent dieting
- Extreme concern with body weight and shape

(National Eating Disorder Association)

AN and BN are related each other closely, for most of patients of ED have both Anorexia and Bulimia. They repeat these symptoms one after the other. It is hard to cure patients of ED because it is a mental illness and the causes are complex and different depending on person. If ED lingers for many years, it may bring about death at worst. At least, ED affects the human body badly, so we should not neglect ED.

Generally, young women and adolescent girls tend to suffer from ED. Of course, there are some cases that men and boys are in ED. According to US estimates from The National Institute of Mental Health, between 5 per cent and 10 per cent of girls and women (i.e. 5-10 million people) and 1 million boys and men suffer from ED. (Statistics on Eating Disorders in “Anne Collins Diet”) But I would like to focus on women here. And also estimates suggest that as many as 15 per cent of young women adopt unhealthy attitudes and behaviors about food. In addition, an estimated 10 per cent of female college students suffer from a clinical or sub-clinical (borderline) eating disorder, of which over half suffer from BN. And 15 per cent of young women have significantly disordered eating attitudes and behavior. (Statistics on Eating Disorders in “Anne Collins Diet”) As I mentioned in paragraph 1, Young women usually want to be slender and they are on a diet because social pressure that slender people are beautiful is increasing recently. And there are many kinds of diet in the society now, for example, low-insulin diet, beer ferment diet, various exercises and trainings, medicine, and so on. Some methods of diet are proper and safe, and others are wrong and dangerous. People are buried in too much information about diet and sometimes believe them whether true or not because the media such as TV, magazine, advertisement and so on, informs people plausibly and attractively. As a result, they continue wrong diet and injure their bodies.

In my opinion, it is normal for women to hope to be beautiful, to be honest, I hope so too. And I also have a feeling that slender women are beautiful in my mind slightly. Actually, slender people look good and are dressed well rather than stout people. However, I do not think just thin people are beautiful, for example, some fashion models, actors or TV personalities look unhealthy rather than beautiful. Nevertheless, the common women misunderstand they are so beautiful and cling to severe diet to become like them. The prevailing standards of body weight and shape, as revealed in the use of abnormally thin models in the media, continue to emphasize the idea that “thin is beautiful” and (one suspects) only make things worse for adolescents and adults with ED. What do you think about it? Anyway, health is more important than the figure and it has no
problem if people eat healthy food properly and feel good. It is not good physically and mentally to endure eating strictly because eating is a basis of life. People cannot live without food. I hope for young women to think that and take care of their bodies. Of course, although I do not think diet is bad, it should go with their bodies. Before diet, people should have a real standard for beauty and beware that they are not deceived by attractive catchphrases in advertisement and choose proper way. Shall we get healthy and well-balanced body? I believe that physical and mental health can lead us into the real beauty. Not only women but also the society should think about it. What is real health? What is real beauty?

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ANRED Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders, Inc.
http://www.anred.com/
ANAD American Nervosa and Associated Disorder
http://www.alttrue.net/site/anadweb/

REMI ITO, 4th year student, Aichi University of Education

Traditionally in Japan, women have been the caretakers of the elderly; especially, the wife of an eldest or only son has been expected to take care of her husband’s aged parents. The struggles of these female caretakers are described in a book entitled Japanese Women Now II (published in 1996 by Women’s Bookstore Shoukadoh, ISBN 4-87974-8) in a chapter called “no victim in the family” (pp. 114-117).

Remi Ito’s report depicts changing attitudes toward caretaking of the elderly in Japan. (-ed.)

Older people in Japan
Remi Ito

I live with my parents and grandparents. My grandfather is so old that he can’t do anything by himself. My family faces the problem of nursing care.

According to a recent Asahi news article (6/10/2003), the elderly population of
Japan is 23,630,000 or 18.5% of the population. It also states that the percentage of the population that is elderly is expected to be 26% in 2015. Japan is rapidly aging and I think there are many older people who need care like my grandfather in Japan. What kind of care do they need? Who takes care of them?

According to a book I read (Koreishakai to anata fukushi shigen wo do tsukuruka; by Kaneko Isamu, published by Nihon Hoso Shuppan Kyokai, 1998), family members who care for the elderly think that it is very hard to help with eating, bathing and toileting. Moreover, they can't get away from home, they don’t get enough sleep and they are getting stressed out, so their “suffering” gradually changes to “hatred” for the elderly. In my family, my grandmother always cares for my grandfather, but it is very hard for her because she is also old and her physical strength has begun to decline. In addition, if my grandfather can’t understand what my grandmother says, she has to say the same thing again and again for him, so she is very tired and is stressed. For this reason, my family decided to use nursing-care facilities.

Nowadays, there are some kinds of nursing-care services in Japan. For example, the elderly can use nursing home, nursing and personal care facilities and elder-care taxi. They can receive skilled nursing care at home by home care workers depending on certification of long-term care need. My grandfather uses the local nursery care center for day service three times a week and receives bath service and walking training there. This facility offers transportation service, so it is convenient for the elderly to go there. By using this facility, my grandmother has private time and goes out. Nursing-care services are very useful, but unfortunately, some people still hesitate to use these facilities because of public image and others still have prejudice against home care workers. I think family members who care for the elderly should depend on experts and cooperate each other. This is a good way to reduce the burden on the family.

By the way, how do the elderly want to spend their old age? According to the information from the book mentioned above, many older people think they want to receive nursing care at their home. Then, do they want to live with their family? That’s not necessarily the case, because if they move out to join their family living in different area, they are confused about new place and new people. It is the most important thing for the elderly to adopt an active lifestyle. For example, some people enjoy talking with their family or friends, and some people join community groups or clubs for the elderly, and others are into their hobbies. In any case, they can relate to the community or people around them. They can take part in society in various ways and they have a right to choose what they want. We sometimes think the elderly are dependent on others, but it is prejudice. I think it is important to understand older people’s feeling.

The other day, I read a Mainichi news article (12/312002) about the development
of nursing-care robot. The robot will be designed to help older people and even to be conversation partner. I think it is very useful and relieved for the elderly who live alone. But it isn’t real communication with robot.

I hope every older person maintains good personal relationship with their family, friends and neighborhood. In doing so, older people keep their active lives in people-to-people exchange, and if we, especially young people, exchange with older people, we can get various things from talking with them. So I think real communication is the best way to cope with aging society.

RIEKO NAKAGAWA  4th year student, Aichi University of Education

Rieko wrote the following paper for an English as a foreign language course that focused on the notion of culture and identity. Bases for culture and identity explored in the course included gender, sexual orientation, class, age, differently-abledness, (non) possession of a home, and others.

In this paper Rieko explores continuing discrimination against Koreans in Japan.

The poetry anthology other side river (ed. lowitz and aoyama, 1995, stone bridge press, ISBN 1-880656-16-7), used in the course, features poems exclusively by Japanese women in English translation whose work treats the notion of identity including simultaneous membership in various cultural groups such as female, Japanese, Korean, lesbian, ‘burakumin’ (a Japanese underclass) and others. Some of the poets are Koreans living in Japan, such as Chuwol Chong and Kyong Mi Park. Rieko’s essay is excellent background for those outside of Japan who wish to make sense of these poems.

As an example here is an excerpt of a poem called "Two names" by Chuwol Chong, a “zainichi” (Korean resident of Japan) from the anthology (p. 40):

fr. TWO NAMES by Chuwol Chong

... I have always run away to crowds of strangers,
Where sleeves rub against each other
Mixing, fighting, gasping for breath.
...
That was ‘zainichi’: "Resident of Japan."

When I came into this world,
My body received two names:
My Japanese name--a 'nom de guerre'
And my real name, collateral for ‘zainichi’,
Printed on a card in a pocketbook with number bestowed
And fingerprints dedicated.
...

Please enjoy Rieko’s essay.
(-Ed.)

Japanese of Korean descent
Rieko Nakagawa

There are many kinds of discrimination in Japan. In fact, some of us used to or still now discriminate against minority groups. For example, against Ainus, disabled person, homosexuals and especially against foreigners living in Japan.

What I wish to talk about is Japanese of Korean descent who are a large group of foreigners living in Japan.

Now, in Japan, there are about 600,000 Japanese of Korean descent. It is guessed that the population of all of them, including naturalized Japanese citizen, is 2 million. The naturalized Japanese citizen means foreigners who acquire Japanese nationality, that’s to say, who become Japanese not foreigners living in Japan.

Why do so many Koreans live in Japan? One reason is that Japan took control of Korea by force in 1910, then they were robbed of their property foods, resources, workers and land. They became poorer and poorer.

In the 1940s, Japan forced Koreans to come to Japan to work because of lack of Japanese workers. After this control ended, Koreans had a chance to go back to Korea, but some of them couldn’t because they lost what they had had in their country due to living in Japan for long time. They didn’t have their own homes and jobs in Korea, and Japan didn’t allow them to take their property out of Japan. So they couldn’t live in Korea, and stayed in Japan.

Japanese don’t treat them equally. The discrimination against them still remains now. I found six points about it.

- Japanese of Korean descent pay taxes which are the same as Japanese, but they can’t get enough pension. Pension means the money which pays regularly to the old person or the disabled person. It is hard for them to live on their small pension.
- They can’t rent apartment houses because of their nationality. Japanese don’t trust them, because they are afraid that they may cause problems. They have different customs, cultures and beliefs, and some Japanese have a bad image which foreigners commit crimes.
- They can’t get a job which they want to work. Japanese companies don’t want to employ them. Japanese of Korean descent have two names. One is Japanese name and the other is Korean name. In general, they use Japanese one, so we can’t judge by appearances whether they are Japanese
or Korean. In job-hunting, if Koreans living in Japan tell their Korean name
and nationality, they are canceled the decision of employment and taking
next interview. This is not rare case. Moreover, they can’t be public officers.
Japanese think that they can’t give them responsibility. Therefore, they
have only a few job paths. For example, becoming a doctor, a lawyer or
founding companies, stores independently.
- They don’t have the right to vote, because Japanese were afraid that they
  invade and control Japanese society.
- They must always carry the certificate saying they are a foreigner.
- Their fingerprints are taken, because Japanese police consider them as
dangerous person capable of committing crimes.

Because of these discrimination, recently, many young Korean living in Japan
tend to get Japanese nationality. However, there is a regulation that they must
assimilate with Japanese. So, they must give up their nationality.

I have a friend who is Japanese of Korean descent. He told me that he has
suffered from his identity. He said that “I can’t make out who I am. I’m not real
Korean, but I’m not real Japanese, too.”

To be honest, I can’t understand why Koreans are discriminated against.
Especially, in the second and third generation, they have lived in Japan since
they were born. Therefore, they are almost Japanese, though they have Korean
nationality and their own customs. I think that some Japanese have bad
stereotype not only against Korean but also foreigners in general.

What should we do to get rid of these discriminations and bad stereotypes? I
want you to think about it.

SCHOOLHOUSE

What’s cooperative learning got to do with it?
Dr. Kagan comes to Japan this fall.
By Jane Joritz-Nakagawa(written July, 2003)

Cooperative learning is a pedagogical approach which utilizes structured peer
interactions and incentives. Different approaches to cooperative learning
continue since the 1960s to be developed in many countries including the USA,
Japan, Israel and in Europe.

One of the early aims of cooperative learning was to promote equality among
students in multicultural classrooms. In the USA for example, cooperative
learning was implemented in an attempt to foster positive interpersonal
relationships between members of different “racial” groups in newly “racially”
integrated classrooms, and in classrooms where differently-abled students were
being “mainstreamed” into classes (i.e. integrated into classrooms) with non-differently-abled students.

An essential characteristic of cooperative learning is called positive interdependence. Positive interdependence means a relationship between students where they need each other in order to succeed. Other than task design and curricula to foster positive interdependence, other facets of cooperative learning, according to Kagan (1994), are equal participation of students, individual accountability of students (e.g. a procedure to check that students are doing their fair share of a collaborative project), and simultaneous interaction of students (all students interact simultaneously, for example as pairs or groups talking all at once).

Research reports positive outcomes of cooperative learning to be such things as higher achievement, better attendance, lowered levels of prejudice, and increased liking for other students in the course (see for example the results summarized in Johnson and Johnson, 1989 or Sharan, 1990).

Kagan’s approach to cooperative learning emphasizes the use of contentless “structures” (structured activities) which contain all four of these elements of cooperative learning—positive interdependence, equal participation, individual accountability, and simultaneous interaction.

Kagan’s cooperative learning structures can mitigate against factors leading to unequal student participation including gender. For example, in unstructured interactions there could be a tendency for male students to dominate, while female students engage more in turn-taking behaviors (see for example Wade and Tarvis, 1994, Williams and Best, 1994 or Wood, 1994).

One example of a very simple Kagan structure is one called “Timed Pair Share.” For this structure, students are paired. Then, they number off 1-2. The teacher chooses a number, 1 or 2, as the person to speak first. This student speaks about a specified topic (e.g. sexual harassment, female rock stars, etc.) for a specified length of time.

The other student listens, nods and smiles but is instructed not to speak. After the allotted time has elapsed, now the other student speaks for the same specified length of time on the same or other stipulated (or student-chosen) topic, with her or his partner in the listener role. After both partners have had an equal chance to speak, the teacher randomly chooses students (say, by pulling name cards from a deck of such cards students prepare for this purpose) to tell about or summarize what the partner had said.

This structure requires equal participation, positive interdependence and simultaneous interaction of students. Individual accountability is present in the
last step which requires students randomly chosen to report the results of the interaction. (If all students will not be selected to report, since the selection procedure is random, all students will be encouraged to prepare in the event they are one of the persons chosen.) Teacher observation/monitoring of students engaged in activities or student observation/monitoring of other students can also be an accountability or checking procedure.


References


About the author

Jane is a teacher, activist and poet who has lived and worked in Japan since 1989.
GATHERING PLACE

Following is a list of some of the gender issues-related presentations at Peace as a Global Language Conference 2003, September 27th - 28th, Seisen University (Gotanda, Tokyo).

For further information please visit <http://www.eltcalendar.com/PGL2003> (compiled by Jane Joritz-Nakagawa)

Learner Narratives of Immigrant Women in California
Menard-Warwick, Julia

Masculinities and Violence in Schools: The Key Issues
O’Mochain, Roibeard

The Language of Female Power: Peace in Prehistory
Reimer, Katherine

White Ribbon Campaign to Abolish Violence Against Women
Michael Kaufman

Creating A Feminist Women’s Clinic
Ako

Gender Issues Through Rock Music
Joritz-Nakagawa, Jane

Protecting the Peacemakers: Teaching about HIV/AIDS
Haynes, Louise

Multiple Identities, Multiple Presentations: Our Own and Others’
Beebe, Jackie

Women in the Peace Movements After WWII
Nakamura

Homo is a Four Letter Word
Raj Rao

What is Subsistence Feminism?
Sakakibara et al

GALE is on the Web at http://members.at.infoseek.co.jp/gender_lang_ed/
The site contains past newsletters, articles of interest, news of upcoming events, and information on joining the GALE SIG. We’re also looking for articles, lesson plans, poetry and other contributions. For further information, contact the GALE cybrarian at aidsed@gol.com.