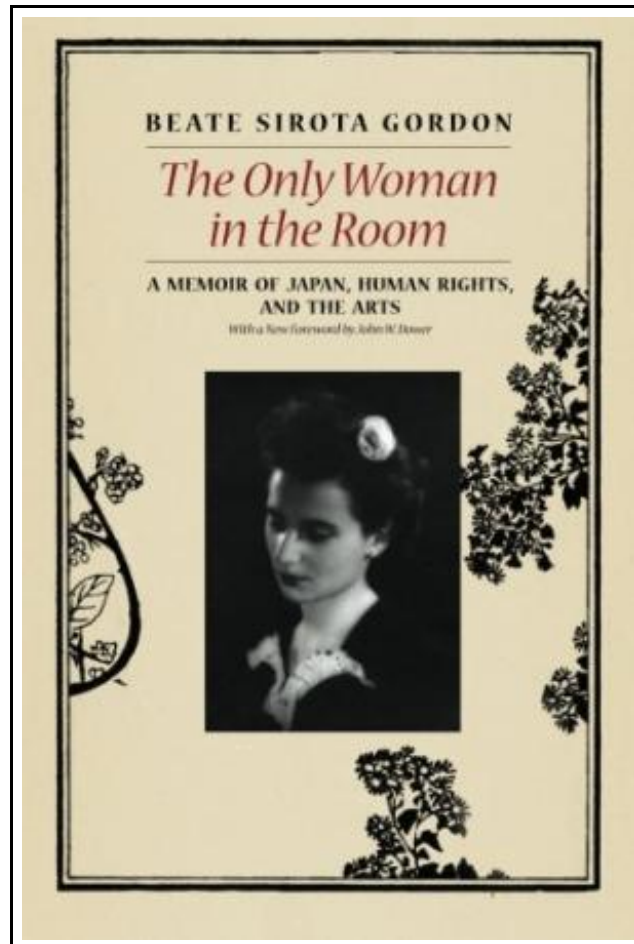


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THE ONLY WOMAN IN THE ROOM: A MEMOIR OF JAPAN, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THE ARTS

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The University of Chicago Press, United States, 2014. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 226 x 152 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In 1946, at age twenty-two, Beate Sirota Gordon helped to draft the new postwar Japanese constitution. This memoir chronicles the unlikely string of events that led her to that role: how a daughter of Austrian Jews became the youngest woman to aid in the rushed, secret drafting of the constitution; how she almost single-handedly ensured that the rights of Japanese women would be enshrined therein; and how, as the most fluent speaker of Japanese and the only woman in the room, she helped persuade the Japanese to accept the new charter. Gordon was born in Vienna, but in 1929 her family moved to Japan so that her father, a noted pianist, could teach, and she grew up speaking German, English, and Japanese. The formal declaration of World War II cut Gordon off from her family, and she supported herself by working for a CBS listening post in San Francisco that would eventually become part of the FCC. When the war ended, she became the only woman in the team of experts sent to Japan to help the army with the American occupation. General MacArthur gave the team four days to draft the constitution. When Colonel Roest casually said to Gordon, You re a woman, why don t you write the women s rights section?, she seized the opportunity to write into law guarantees of sexual equality unparalleled in the US Constitution to this day. Illustrated throughout with stunning photographs, The Only Woman in the Room captures two cultures at a critical moment in history when global politics and sexual mores were in flux, all contained in the story of a single life lived with purpose and courage.



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