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How Otakus Have Populated Japanese Masculinity Space

Through an analysis of the hit story *Densha Otoko*, we expose the theme of the otaku in Susan Napier’s “Where have all the salarymen gone?” As Japan shifts away from the iconic salaryman who previously embodied the proud “symbol of Japan’s postwar success” to other symbols of masculinity, there seems to be no place for the otaku (Napier 64). After some gross incidents involving murder, Japanese society placed disgust and an undesirable view of the otaku. However, *Densha Otoko* helped shed light that those who identify as otaku have a sensitive side and aren’t harmful in nature.

It seems that the otaku was introduced in post-bubble Japan. In what ways did the economy force young men to become sexual herbivores? Additionally, how might one argue that the modern girl image is partially responsible for this result?

In Everett Yuehong Zhang’s “China’s Sexual Revolution,” we learn that sexuality was not well-defined in China until an explicit definition was posed by scholars and sociologists. We also discuss the prospect that China’s sexual revolution has “made people happier, freer, and more capable of realizing their human potential,” though there is no clear answer yet (Zhang 144). However, one thing is for sure: people in China definitely saw sexuality no longer solely as a function of reproduction, as was the case in Mao China, but now as a source of pleasure and desire.

A question to ponder now is what kind of reaction Americans would have to an implemented one-child policy. Now, I understand that there is no specific need for a policy that invasive, but a lack of resources is imminent and currently threatening some places in the world. Perhaps there might be a sexual revolution among conservative Americans, just as there was among people in China.

Works Cited

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