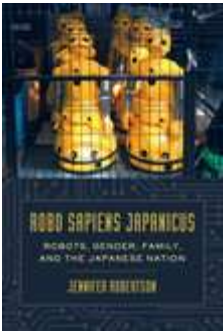


Book Descriptions



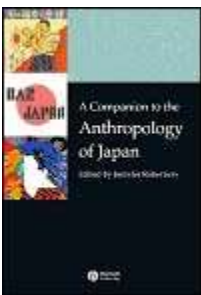
Robo sapiens japonicus: Robots, Gender, Family, and the Japanese Nation. Japan is arguably the first post-industrial society to embrace the prospect of human-robot coexistence. Over the past decade, Japanese humanoid robots designed for future use in homes, hospitals, offices, and schools, have become celebrated in the global mass and social media. *Robo sapiens japonicus* casts a critical eye on press releases and PR videos that (mis)represent actual robots as being as versatile and agile as their science fiction counterparts. An ethnography and sociocultural history of governmental and academic discourses of human-robot relations in Japan, this book explores how actual robots—humanoids, androids, animaloids—are “imagined” in ways that reinforce the conventional sex/gender system and political-economic status quo. The granting of “civil rights” to robots is interrogated in tandem with the notion of human exceptionalism. Similarly, how robots and robotic exoskeletons reinforce a conception of the “normal” body is juxtaposed with a deconstruction of the much invoked Theory of the Uncanny Valley.



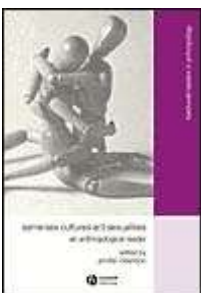
Takarazuka: Sexual Politics and Popular Culture in Modern Japan. The all-female Takarazuka Revue is world-famous today for its rococo musical productions, including gender-bending love stories, torridly romantic liaisons in foreign settings, and fanatically devoted fans. But that is only a small part of its complicated and complicit performance history. In this sophisticated and historically grounded analysis, anthropologist Jennifer Robertson draws from over a decade of fieldwork and archival research to explore how the Revue illuminates discourses of sexual politics, nationalism, imperialism, and popular culture in twentieth-century Japan. The Revue was founded in 1913 as a novel counterpart to the all-male Kabuki theater. Tracing the contradictory meanings of Takarazuka productions over time, with special attention to the World War II period, Robertson illuminates the intricate web of relationships among managers, directors, actors, fans, and social critics, whose clashes and compromises textured the theater and the wider society in colorful and complex ways. Using Takarazuka as a key to understanding the “logic” of everyday life in Japan and placing the Revue squarely in its own social, historical, and cultural context, she challenges both the stereotypes of “the Japanese” and the Eurocentric notions of gender performance and sexuality. University of California Press, 1998, 2001. Japanese translation, Gendai Shokan, 2000.



Native and Newcomer: Making and Remaking a Japanese City. This expertly crafted ethnography examines the ways in which native and new citizens of Kodaira, a Tokyo suburb, have both remade the past and imagined the future of their city in a quest for an "authentic" Japanese community. Blending theories of space and place with historically-grounded data and ethnographic findings, Robertson juxtaposes newly created festivals with centuries-old village structures in describing the contentious politics of heritage shaping local and national identities in Japan, with implications for urban formations elsewhere. University of California Press, 1991, 1994.



A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan is an unprecedented collection of original essays by some of the field's most distinguished scholars of Japan which, taken together, offer a comprehensive overview of the field. Aiming to retire stale and misleading stereotypes, the authors present new perspectives on Japanese culture and society -past and present -in accessible language. Companion covers a broad range of issues, controversies, and everyday practices, including the unacknowledged colonial roots of anthropology in the Japanese academy; legacies of nationalist research; eugenics and nation-building; majority and minority cultures; class and status; genders and sexualities; urban spectacle and rural "undevelopment"; domestic, corporate, and educational ideologies and practices; the mass media, leisure, and "infotainment" industries; women's and men's sports; fashion and food cultures; ideas of nature, life, and death; new and folk religions; and science and biotechnology. Collectively, these chapters not only demonstrate Japan's significance for anthropological research but also help make Japanese society accessible to readers unfamiliar with the country. *A Companion to the Anthropology of Japan* is a reference volume for scholars, but is also designed to serve as a primary text for courses in anthropology and sociology, history, and Japan and East Asian Studies. Blackwell Publishers, 2005.



Same Sex Cultures and Sexualities: An Anthropological Reader demonstrates the centrality of the complicated relationship of sex, gender, and sexuality to theories of human behaviors and practices. Although heterosexuality has been interrogated and demystified, it retains normative dominance. By drawing on the multiple fresh and illuminating perspectives of anthropology, this landmark collection moves beyond other lesbian and gay studies readers by presenting a broader view of the significance of studying same-sex cultures and sexualities and presenting the lives of a range of individuals across cultural and temporal domains. *Same-Sex Cultures and Sexualities* offers reading from all four

subfields of anthropology: cultural, biological, linguistic, and archaeological (along with historical and applied anthropology), and includes discussion of biotechnology and bioethics, health and illness, language, ethnicity, identity, politics, post/colonialism, kinship, development, and policy-making. Blackwell Publishers, 2004.



Politics and Pitfalls of Japan Ethnography: Reflexivity, Responsibility, and Anthropological Ethics. Four anthropologists, Elise Edwards, Ann Elise Lewallen, Bridget Love and Tomomi Yamaguchi, draw on their fieldwork experiences in Japan to demonstrate collectively the inadequacy of both the Code of Ethics developed by the American Anthropological Association (AAA) and the dictates of Institutional Review Boards (IRB) when dealing with messy human realities. The four candidly and critically explore the existential dilemmas they were forced to confront with respect to this inadequacy, for the AAA's code and IRBs consider neither the vulnerability and powerlessness of ethnographers nor the wholly unethical (and even criminal) deportment of some informants. As Jennifer Robertson points out in her Introduction, whereas the AAA's Code tends to perpetuate the stereotype of more advantaged fieldworkers studying less advantaged peoples, IRBs appear to protect their home institutions (from possible litigation) rather than living and breathing people whose lives are often ethically compromised irrespective of the presence of an ethnographer. In her commentary, Sabine Frühstück, who incurred ample experience with ethical dilemmas in the course of her pathbreaking ethnographic research on Japan's Self-Defense Forces, situates the four articles in a broader theoretical context, and emphasizes the link between political engagement and ethnographic accuracy. This book was previously published as a special issue of *Critical Asian Studies*. Routledge 2009.