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Chelsea Szendi Schieder

Coed Revolution:

The Female Student in the Japanese New Left

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Chelsea Szendi Schieder's *Coed Revolution: the Female Student in the Japanese New Left* is an articulate and colorful contribution to understanding the gendered contours of Japan's 1960s–1970s student movement. Szendi Schieder's book offers a corrective to existing representations of a male-dominated movement by providing a counter-history that focuses on the figure of the female activist. She presents her work as a partial rejoinder to Oguma Eiji's *1968* (2009) and Suga Hidemi's *1968 nen* (2006). While shifting our attention to women is important, this work can be simultaneously illuminating yet harmful when undertaken without adequate care and citation.

One of the book's original contributions is an analysis of the family background of well-known figures such as Kanba Michiko (1937–1960) who is remembered as a martyr of the 1960 Anpo struggle. Szendi Schieder's historiography illuminates the fraught family dynamics of women activists, and particularly how parents' variously viewed their daughters' activism and, on occasion, shared their opinions in the media. The opening chapter focuses on Kanba and unfolds a diachronic history of female activists. The second chapter title derives from Tokoro Mitsuko's book, *My Love and Rebellion* (*Waga ai to hangyaku* 1969), a posthumously published collection of this Todai graduate student's writings. The author discusses Tokoro's criticisms of the capitalist logic of productivity versus horizontality and women's logic, which informed many of the principles of the Zenkyōtō movement. Here, Szendi Schieder draws on many insights from Guy Yasko's excellent dissertation on Tokoro and Zenkyōtō.

One of the primary aims of *Coed Revolution* is to analyze the mass media's impact on the movements, while exploring the themes of vulnerability, violence and voice as it

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relates to the agency and representation of female activists. The author's analysis of activists such as Kanba and Tokoro are welcome contributions to our understanding of their lasting contributions to the history of communist and leftist postwar activism.

A wonderful dimension of Szendi Schieder's book are the photographs that provide a rich visual representation of the era. These include photos from inside the university barricades (92), images of women injured (88) and arrested (144) and making *onigiri* (rice balls) (98). *Coed Revolution* contains a valuable photo of Kashiwazaki Chieko, the activist who was apparently nicknamed "Gewalt Rosa" (138). The mass media used this term for some Zenkyōtō women activists, which combined the German word *gewalt* (meaning violence and force) and Rosa, after Rosa Luxemburg (1871–1919), the Polish revolutionary who was an inspiration for many Japanese students. These women were considered distinct from the negative stereotype of the sexualized activist women who were (mis)treated like "public toilets" or the more common role of female activists who willingly offered what is considered feminized support work such as making food, doing domestic labor, providing first aid, mimeographing flyers, and handbills, etc.

While Schieder provides more depth and richness to figures such as Kanba, Tokoro and includes voices of feminist activists such as Yonezu Tomoko and Mori Setsuko in Chapter Three, titled, "Is the Personal Political?" and Chapter Four, "When you Fuck a Vanguard Girl"—it is unfortunate that the author fails to properly cite published works. There are certainly expectations and pressures in academia to appear original; however, there are also established referencing practices to cite works that have analyzed the same subject matter. For example, the context and content about Kanba in Chapter One has been published in *Organizing the Spontaneous* (2001), and arguments in Chapters Two, Three, and Four about New Left sexism and masculinist practices have been extensively addressed in my book *Scream from the Shadows* (2012) but appear without citation. Moreover, it is concerning how patterns of citation and appropriation can maintain the racial dynamics in Area Studies/Japan Studies whereby Euro-American authors are privileged as knowledge producers due to a history of global white supremacy and colonialism.

The most original content is in Chapter Five, but is framed with a problematic subtitle: "the Creation of the Terrifying, Titillating Female Student Activist." This chapter discusses Kashiwazaki and Katō

Hiroko, the activist known as "Kikubashi 101," who became a model of resistance following her refusal to reveal her identity to police while incarcerated. It is unclear how these women are "terrifying or titillating;" however, these words reimpose a sexist and sexualized framing of women who are ostracized and abjected for not being nurturing, peaceful, and appropriately sexual, modest, and chaste. Such terms reinscribe Japanese women activists as frightening and alluring and reinforces the media's dominant perspective. While this approach is not exclusive to this author, it is symptomatic of how often non-Japanese scholars extract from Japanese history and claim expertise but may fail to realize the unintentional harm of their scholarship. In this chapter, the author also addresses Nagata Hiroko (1945–2011) and Fusako Shigenobu (1945-), who are arguably the two most well-known women activists of this era. In addition to restating the media's misogynist portrayal of the "ugly" Nagata (155), the author reproduces the vilification of Shigenobu, the leader of the disbanded revolutionary group, the Japanese Red Army, without engagement with their writing, thought, philosophy, and praxis. The author reinscribes the dehumanizing framing of Shigenobu as a "terrorist" (155–6), a racialized and even racist term (especially when used in the US), without critical contextualization. In addition, she mistakenly blames Shigenobu for helping organize the Lod Airport operation (155) without evidence, and thereby validates both the mainstream media and the colonialist (US-Israel-Japan) states' master narrative. Fortunately, thanks to digital publishing technologies, authors can repair such mistakes and harm to demonstrate an ethics of care toward the subjects that they are rewarded for representing. As scholars, we can adapt our practices to address past mistakes to avoid replicating gendered and racialized harm.