

Allison

Permitted and Prohibited Desires

Mothers, Comics, and Censorship in Japan

This provocative study of gender and sexuality in contemporary Japan investigates elements of Japanese popular culture including erotic comic books, stories of mother-son incest, lunchboxes—or obentos—that mothers ritualistically prepare for schoolchildren, and children's cartoons. Anne Allison brings recent feminist psychoanalytic and Marxist theory to bear on representations of sexuality, motherhood, and gender in these and other aspects of Japanese culture. Based on five years of fieldwork in a middle-class Tokyo neighborhood, this theoretically informed, accessible ethnographic study provides a provocative analysis of how sexuality, dominance, and desire are reproduced and enacted in late-capitalistic Japan.



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