



Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture

By Patrick W. Galbraith, Jason G. Karlin

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Spend even a day in a major Japanese city like Tokyo or Osaka and you won't be able to ignore them: 'idols,' or heavily produced and promoted men and women who perform across media genres and platforms. They appear in magazines and advertisements, perform on TV and on stage, recorded and live. Though central to the workings and experience of media in Japan, idols have unfortunately had only a marginal place in the scholarship. This collection offers the most complete and compelling account of one of the most fascinating and least understood aspects of Japanese media culture today. It brings together a group of interdisciplinary scholars who engage the study of media, gender and celebrity. Sensitive to history and the contemporary scene, essays cover male and female idols, production and consumption, industrial structures and fan movements.

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Editorial Review

Review

'Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media is a wonderful anthology that offers an overview of media culture, idols, and celebrity in Japan through intriguing case studies whose topics range from the entertainment industry to idols to otaku to the digitally created idol. The book's greatest strength is that, despite its narrow focus on Japan, the authors' insights and discussions can be applied to other countries in the global context of the ongoing intensification of capitalism and consumerism. Overall, the book provides an excellent introduction to the social, cultural, and economic issues intertwined with media culture.' - Jungmin Kwon, *International Journal of Communication* 8 (2014)

From the Back Cover

This volume is masterful in treating Japanese idol culture with the seriousness it deserves. Scholarly and astute, the essays massage all the edges of a phenomenon that is capitalism's celebrity image: idols valued for an aura that trades between authenticity and the artifice of media/commodity production. From scandal to spectacle, Johnny's to AKB48, the K-wave to virtual games, Japanese idols breed interest-affective as much as economic. This volume beautifully captures the complexity with which Japanese idols have been produced and consumed, loved and spurned, in postwar (and now post postwar) Japan.

--Anne Allison, Professor of Cultural Anthropology at Duke University, USA, and author of *Millennial Monsters*

Idols and Celebrity in Japanese Media Culture goes beyond the terrain of female idols as well as critically analyzing fans and otaku. Alert to omnipresent consumerism, this volume deftly navigates realms of virtuality and fantasy. Overseen by editors Galbraith and Karlin, the celebrity-fetish intersects here with ideology and intimacy, advertising and activism, sexuality and scandal. An informative and compelling take on Japanese media culture.

--Matt Hills, Reader in Media and Cultural Studies at Cardiff University, UK, and author of *Fan Cultures*

About the Author

PATRICK W. GALBRAITH is a researcher at the University of Tokyo, Japan. He is the author of *The Otaku Encyclopedia* (2009), *Tokyo Realtime: Akihabara* (2010) and *Otaku Spaces* (2012).

JASON G. KARLIN is an associate professor in the Interfaculty Initiative for Information Studies at the University of Tokyo, Japan, where he teaches courses on gender and media studies. He is the author of *Gender and Nation in Meiji Japan: Modernity, Loss, and the Doing of History* (2014).

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