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Oshi-katsu, Supporting activity

Recognition and Intimacy as Commodities from the Anthropological Study of Japanese *josei-muke* Adult Video Fan Communities

A virtual *u:japan* lunch lecture by Maiko Kodaka

Thursday
2022-05-05
12:30~14:00



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Oshi-katsu 押し活 (*oshi* signifies an object of support while *katsu* is an activity), or supporting activity is a popular Japanese term to signify an act of support or to cherish on someone or something that one really likes. *Oshi-katsu* is often viewed positively because it provides mental welfare for those who engage (NHK news January 18th 2022); however, such activities heavily depend on the financial capacities of those who do the supporting.

sites and captures heterosexual women who had been neglected as audiences as a new market. Despite the media attention that the new genre has garnered as a female sexual emancipation, the phenomenon is supported by “fans” of *Eromen* and *Lovemen*.

Based on fieldwork at a series of *Eromen* and *Lovemen* fan events and interviews with those self-identified fans, it has become apparent that

female fans look for intimate interactions with male actors at these events in order to be recognized as feminine and have their confidence restored. Axel Honneth’s theory of recognition (1995) argues that recognition has to be mutual in order to work socially; however, in this case, the monetary



Maiko Kodaka is a PhD candidate in Anthropology and Sociology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. Before joining SOAS, she was awarded a BA in Art from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies in 2014. Born and raised in Tokyo, her main academic interest is gender, sexuality, and power dynamics in Japanese mass media. Her doctoral research is an anthropological study of the fan culture of pornography aimed at women in Japan, which is funded by the Sasakawa Studentship Programme and a JRC Fuwaku Scholarship. She also works as a freelance writer for Japanese web magazines.

My research exploratory looks at female fans of male porn actors in *josei-muke* Adult Videos (AV) in Japan, as a form of *oshi-katsu* in order to explore its gendered dynamics. The genre of *josei-muke* is a form of pornography aimed at heterosexual women that features good-looking male porn actors; *Eromen* and *Lovemen*. This new genre has emerged in reaction to the decline of mainstream porn studios due to the popularity of porn streaming web-

transaction changes the intentions of each actor (female fans / *Eromen* and *Lovemen*). For *Eromen* and *Lovemen*, it is about money and fame. On the other hand, female fans gain recognition even though they have to pay for it. The research draws on conversations with female fans to elucidate the expectations fans have regarding their interactions with *Eromen* and *Lovemen*, and how this fan community influences their everyday lives.

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