

Editor's Introduction

The methods we use to transmit our ideas are undergoing sweeping changes. Even in Japan the majority of intellectuals are now using the "QWERTY" keyboard to produce messages, essays, and articles in the Japanese language. In my high school days, I belonged to the school newspaper club, in which my colleagues and I handwrote manuscripts on rough quality paper with a pen or pencil. In the final stages of editing the paper, we took special leave to be absent from class in order to work among the letterpress printers at a local newspaper factory. Type-set publication had a special meaning in those days, and we had a sense of privilege as the editors of small newspapers. But as every individual or group can send messages worldwide now through the Internet in ever more sophisticated ways, attention is being increasingly paid to the quality of the content of messages and observations.

"The Media and American Society" has been selected as the main theme of this ninth issue of the *Japanese Journal of American Studies*. A session on "Mass Media and American Politics" at the 1997 annual meeting attracted a great deal of interest and two of the panelists contributed their papers. Reimei Okamura's article, "US-Japan Relations and the Media in the Information Age: Coverage of the American Bases Issues in Okinawa," deals with the touchy issue of the military relationship of the two countries as it was abruptly highlighted after the rape of a local schoolgirl by three marines in Okinawa in September 1995. The author suggests that the prompt coverage of the incident by local newspapers channeled the course of arguments there-

after in the media in both countries, leading to the redefinition of the US-Japan Security Treaty. “Public Journalism: Controversies over the Media’s Role in 1990s America,” by Hiroshi Fujita approaches the topic from several different perspectives. He pays attention to public journalism in the United States in the 1990s, within which the voices of local readers and viewers have an active role to play in newspaper making. The author finds considerable criticism of the experiment, especially on the question of objectivity and editorial independence; however, he foresees a potentially brighter future for public journalism because of the malfunctioning of more traditional methods. In addition to the two panelists, Nobuo Kamioka contributed the essay, “Cyberpunk Revisited: William Gibson’s *Neuromancer* and the “Multi-media Revolution.” Investigating the futuristic fiction *Neuromancer*, published in 1984 by the science fiction writer William Gibson, he shows how accurately this novel predicted the coming multimedia revolution. But Kamioka also points out that some of the discrepancies between the present real world and Gibson’s image can be attributed to Gibson’s lack of physical context. In “Doubleness: American Images of Japanese Men in Silent Spy Films,” Daisuke Miyao explores the transformation of ambivalent images of Japanese men in the American silent spy films in the early twentieth century. The author discusses the double image of Japanese men, an image at the same time favorable, exotic and attractive, and threatening to the Western world.

There are three more articles submitted by the members of the JAAS. In “Josiah Collins III, A Successful Corn Planter: A Look at his Plantation Management Techniques,” Tsutomu Numaoka delves into the records of an antebellum Southern plantation in North Carolina, and finds a far more efficient commercial corn production and more rational use of slave labor than historians had previously assumed. “A Democracy at War: The American Campaign to Repeal Chinese Exclusion in 1943,” by Xiaohua Ma analyzes the driving forces toward the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act. The author stresses the importance of the U.S. campaign against the Japanese “emancipation of Asiatics” propaganda, and also China’s future role in the New World Order designed by the State Department. In “*Dine bi Olta* or School of the Navajos: Educational Experiments at Rough Rock Demonstration School, 1966–1970,” Yumiko Mizuno elucidates the development of Rough Rock Demonstration School in Arizona. The author

acknowledges many innovations in curriculum as well as administration in the first such project managed by native Americans, and explains how the school inspired similar educational experiments in other communities.

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Editor