

The Evolution of Feminist Identities in Pre-Digital Japan and Their Lessons for Inclusive Activism Today

Junxiao Leng

PhD Candidate

Interfaculty Initiative for Information Studies at the University of Tokyo

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15:30–17:00

Room 6019

Kanagawa University, Minatomirai Campus

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Direct Link: <https://zoom.us/j/97656281835?pwd=8DU9DSasSGGQGeUqQJbsgx7arkaX1x.1>

Meeting ID: 976 5628 1835 Passcode: KUMMC

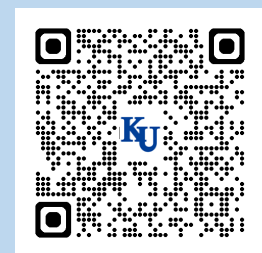
Abstract: Who is a “feminist,” and does the “feminist” identity still matter in the post-#MeToo era? These bigger questions often dominate debates but can detract from addressing concrete women’s issues in specific contexts. This talk examines the evolution of feminist identities in Japan, focusing on the Women’s Lib movement, which emerged in the early 1970s and addressed women’s autonomy, and the Shelter Movement, which emerged in the 1990s and has addressed domestic violence. It explores how the political, social, and cultural contexts of these periods shaped distinct feminist identities, each with varying effects. Women’s Lib forged a revolutionary feminist identity by symbolically aligning with marginalized women such as Asian/Okinawan sex workers, comfort women, and mothers who killed their children, while distancing itself from conventional norms and the patriarchal system. The talk will explain how this identity offered a poignant critique of male-dominated society while also alienating potential supporters, limiting the movement’s sustainability. The Shelter Movement, on the other hand, has been sustained for over three decades by strategically collaborating with domestic violence survivors, transnational feminists, female lawmakers, and sympathetic bureaucrats whose ostensible alliance is to institutional patriarchy but whose presence within government institutions weakens their patriarchal effects. The analysis shows how the Shelter activists adapted their identities to maximize social and political impact while enduring institutional backlash. Finally, this talk will illustrate how the identity-building strategies of these two movements can provide valuable historical insights for fostering more inclusive and intersectional feminist activism in Japan today.



Preregistration at least a day in advance for those coming **in person** from outside the KU community is greatly appreciated. Regardless of whether you preregister, if you are coming from off campus, **please register as a Guest at the Information counter** near the entrance before coming up to the room. Preregistration is not necessary to join us via Zoom. Simply log in via the above Zoom link or Meeting ID and Passcode.

ご来場の方：神奈川県関係者は事前登録不要です。学外の方は前日までにQRコードにて事前登録をお願いします。当日は1FのInformationカウンターでGuest登録を済ましてから、部屋までお越しください。Zoomでのご参加は事前登録不要です。当日は上記のリンクまたはZoomミーティングIDとパスコードでログインしてください。

Inquiries・お問い合わせ: James Welker jrwelker@kanagawa-u.ac.jp



Leng, Preregistration