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Bodies of Evidence: Women, Society, and Detective Fiction in 1990s Japan

Amanda C. Seaman

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The publication in 1992 of Miyabe Miyuke's highly anticipated *Kasha* (translated into English as *All She Was Worth*) represents a watershed in the history of Japanese women's detective fiction. Inspired by Miyabe's success and the increasing number of Western mysteries in translation, women began writing mysteries of all types, employing the narrative and conceptual resources of the detective genre to depict and critique contemporary Japanese society?and the situation of women in it.

Bodies of Evidence examines this recent boom and the ways in which five contemporary authors (Miyabe, Nonami Asa, Shibata Yoshiki, Kirino Natsuo, and Matsuo Yumi) critically engage with a variety of social issues and concerns: consumerism and the crisis of identity, discrimination and harassment in the workplace, sexual harassment and sexual violence, and motherhood.

Bodies of Evidence moves beyond the borders of detective fiction scholarship by exploring the worlds constructed by these authors in their novels and showing how they intersect with other political, cultural, and economic discourses and with the lived experiences of contemporary Japanese women.

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