



Kickboxing Geishas: How Modern Japanese Women Are Changing Their Nation

Veronica Chambers

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Kickboxing Geishas: How Modern Japanese Women Are Changing Their Nation Veronica Chambers Forget the stereotypes. Today's Japanese women are shattering them -- breaking the bonds of tradition and dramatically transforming their culture. Shopping-crazed schoolgirls in Hello Kitty costumes and the Harajuku girls Gwen Stefani helped make so popular have grabbed the media's attention. But as critically acclaimed author Veronica Chambers has discovered through years of returning to Japan and interviewing Japanese women, the more interesting story is that of the legions of everyday women -- from the office suites to radio and TV studios to the worlds of art and fashion and on to the halls of government -- who have kicked off a revolution in their country.

Japanese men hardly know what has hit them. In a single generation, women in Japan have rewritten the rules in both the bedroom and the boardroom. Not a day goes by in Japan that a powerful woman doesn't make the front page of the newspapers. In the face of still-fierce sexism, a new breed of women is breaking through the "rice paper ceiling" of Japan's salary-man dominated corporate culture. The women are traveling the world -- while the men stay at home -- and returning with a cosmopolitan sophistication that is injecting an edgy, stylish internationalism into Japanese life. So many women are happily delaying marriage into their thirties -- labeled "losing dogs" and yet loving their liberated lives -- that the country's birth rate is in crisis.

With her keen eye for all facets of Japanese life, Veronica Chambers travels through the exciting world of Japan's new modern women to introduce these "kickboxing geishas" and the stories of their lives: the wildly popular young hip-hop DJ; the TV chef who is also a government minister; the entrepreneur who founded a market research firm specializing in charting the tastes of the teenage girls driving the country's GNC -- "gross national cool"; and the Osaka assembly-woman who came out publicly as a lesbian -- the first openly gay politician in the country.

Taking readers deep into these women's lives and giving the lie to the condescending stereotypes, Chambers reveals the vibrant, dynamic, and fascinating true story of the Japanese women we've never met. *Kickboxing Geishas* is an entrancing journey into the exciting, bold, stylish new Japan these women are making.

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