Sweep *shanyela* (Z) Hands, as if holding a broom, make sweeping action.
Talk *ringa* (Is) Fingers and thumb open and close in front of the mouth.
Thin (She or he is thin) *O slenda* (Is) Arms are held straight down in front of the body with hands extended and palms facing each other and held close together.
Thought *Umcabango* (Z) First finger moves in and out against side of head.
Tie (Little tie) *Ntanjana* (Is) One hand makes grasping action as if holding a tie at the front of the neck.
Time *isikhathi* (Z) First finger or first and second finger tap top of wrist.
Tomorrow *kusasa* (Z) Hand, at head height, in front of the gesturer makes a small arc toward the front.
Toughie *Mathafana* or *Tougho* (Is) Hands, slightly curved and fingers splayed, are held over the chest.
Trouble (You're in trouble) *G'thing* (Is) Hands, fingers loosely splayed and palms toward gesturer, are held at chest level and moved up and down.
True (It's true) *Strue* (Is) Arms are crossed over each other and first fingers linked at about face level.
Two *two* First and second finger held up in V shape. Palm faces inward to gesturer.
Unity *hlanganani* (Z) Hands, with fingers splayed and palms toward gesturer, move toward each other so that fingers cross over and go out again.
Urinate *six nine* (Is) First finger is waved sideways in front of crotch.
Volume (Turn down or up the volume) *Hafola* or *phahamisa* (S) Hand as if holding dial is turned counterclockwise or clockwise.
Vomit *gabha* (Z) First and second fingers move in and out toward mouth.
Wait *ema* (S) Hand is held up at face height with palm away from gesturer and fingers splayed.
Walk or go *hamba* (Z) *tsamaya* (S) First and second fingers imitate walking action.
Wash [oneself] *splasha* (Is) Hands imitate action of splashing water on face.
Wash [clothes] *washa* (Z) Fists, one facing up and the other facing down, are rubbed together.
Wristwatch *iwashi* (Z) Second finger and thumb grasp wrist.
Write or pen *skryfa* or *pene* (Is) Hand, with first finger and thumb as if holding a pen, imitates action of writing.
Yes *ya* (Z) Head nods.
You *wena* (Z)(S) First finger points outward.

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Those Naughty Teenage Girls: Japanese Kogals, Slang, and Media Assessments

This article examines Kogals, young Japanese women who challenge dominant models of gendered language and behavior through linguistic and cultural innovation. The article describes the linguistic resources Kogals use to construct female-centered subcultural identities and the condemnation and fetishistic interest they provoke in mainstream media. Media focus on these "misbehaving" girls places them at the center of an ongoing struggle over female self-definition and autonomy. The study of Kogals contributes to scholarly analysis of youth subcultures and to understanding of linguistic diversity and cultural heterogeneity in Japan. [adolescent subculture, gender, slang, representations, Japan]

Introduction

Among the many subcultural identities available to Japanese youth, perhaps none has become the focus of such mainstream anxiety and voyeuristic interest as the young women known as Kogals (*kogyaru*). This article examines critiques and displays of the Kogal, with a particular focus on the way her gender-transgressing identity and language style challenge longstanding norms of adolescent femininity. In addition to providing evidence of Japanese heterogeneity and documenting the current struggle for female self-definition, I argue that Kogal subculture is significant as an unusual case of female-centered coolness at the forefront of cultural and linguistic trend setting.

A few years ago, a Japanese journalist decided to work against the model he characterized as "girls created by the old-guy press" by documenting, from her own perspective, the everyday life of a 17-year-old high-school student named Asuka. He asked Asuka to write down her activities and thoughts during a one-week period and subsequently published her unfiltered journal as the "diary of a *kogyaru*" (Yoshidô 1998). *Kogyaru*, which is not a term that belongs to those it describes, is usually rendered in English as *Kogal*. It is the mainstream media label used to describe young women between the ages of 14 and 22 who project new types of fashion, behavior, and language. Asuka writes about meeting friends in the hip Shibuya section of Tokyo, going to restaurants, spending time in karaoke boxes (private rooms for rent by the hour for karaoke singing), getting photos taken, and shopping. Asuka also expresses hatred of her teacher and school and worries about how to juggle two boyfriends, one of whom she accompanies to a "love hotel" for sex. The journalist's effort to unpack the behavior and philosophy of the Kogal is one of many attempts by the media to make sense of Japan's vibrant new female subcultures. In this article I approach the Kogal from two directions—as an identifiable subcultural group with distinctive

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cultural and linguistic practices, and as the object of media attention. Asuka's diary, the actual words of a Kogal embedded in male-authored media, represents both foci.

My goal is to examine Kogals with respect to the language and resistant practices used by women labeled as such and to trace how their challenges to dominant conceptions of gender and sexuality are critiqued by their parents' media. My aim is not to specify how Kogals speak, but rather to describe some of the linguistic resources they draw on to fashion their identities, to paraphrase Penelope Eckert and Sally McConnell-Ginet (2003:2). The media serves as an impetus for attention to such "aberrant" girls, but media formulations in turn are shaped by the behavior and language of real girls. Contemporary Japanese media is not simply a tool of hegemonic mainstream culture but is extensively diversified into numerous micromarkets, including Kogal-oriented and Kogal-produced media. These new media micromarkets help establish and maintain youth subcultures, which in turn contribute to a stronger sense of subcultural identity. As Angela McRobbie states, there is a "labyrinthine web of determining relations which now exist between social groups and the media, 'reality' and representation" (2000:181).

The importance of the Kogal phenomenon lies not in numbers, for there has never been a large percentage of the teenage population who followed the style, but in how Kogals symbolize the ongoing redefinition of women in late capitalism. During the 1990s the mainstream media incited a moral panic over Kogals, amplifying their perceived deviant behaviors and language. Women have often been at the center of societal fears, and the Kogal debate was preceded by fevered worries in earlier decades. At various times in Japanese history, modernizing women and girls have been categorized and denounced in ways that attempt to deflect their efforts to attain autonomy and self-definition. One of the earlier types who engendered moral anxiety was the Meiji-era (1868–1912) *daraku jogakusei* ('degenerate schoolgirl'), who flouted social rules for acceptable courtship behavior (Czarnecki in press). Most similar to the Kogal, however, was the prewar Moga (derived from *modan gâru*, 'Modern Girl'). Moga were a new social class of working women who shocked Japanese society with their independence, fashion, and suspected promiscuity (Silverberg 1991). In a precise adumbration of the later characterization of the Kogal, the Moga was described as decadent, hedonistic, and superficial (Sato 2003:65). The Moga was a challenge to Japanese society because she sought autonomy and economic self-sufficiency, thus signifying a transition in state policy toward women's position within the family system. Contemporary public claims about the moral and linguistic deficiency of Kogals likewise suggest that a major change in women's cultural position is also under way. Each time they appear, these new types incrementally destabilize and modify normative gender ideologies.

For data on Kogal slang, I draw on observations and field notes from informal conversations I had with Kogals in 1999, when I frequented some of their favorite bars and nightclubs in the Roppongi section of Tokyo. I also rely on girls' street magazines such as *Egg*, which includes Kogals on its editorial staff. *Egg* started out in 1995 as a venue for schoolgirls to submit photos, essays, and drawings. It eventually changed publishers and evolved into a product-oriented monthly, but each issue still includes pages of uncensored girls' letters, e-mail messages, open-forum commentaries, amateur essays, minipolls, self-help columns, and annotated photographs. The explosion of sentiment found in such media occurs in a girl-generated sphere beyond parental or institutional sanction. In addition to these sources of data, mainstream popular culture sources such as television, film, newspapers, and journal articles are also explored for how the older generation understands the socially disruptive implications of young women like Asuka. The speech and behavior of these new female identities challenge prescriptive norms of gendered talk, yet despite the condemnation of the parent culture, young women continue to create and use exuberant new forms of expression.

Although language variation is a core theme in linguistic anthropology, it is only recently that research from East Asian language communities has stressed linguistic

heterogeneity. In Japan, the notion of a singular women's language was a longstanding ideological construct stemming from Meiji-era social and educational reforms (Endo 1997; Inoue 2002). The examination of adolescent girls' subcultural language and behavior contributes to an expanding investigation of diversity, a trend marked by two recent volumes on Japanese language and gender (Okamoto and Shibamoto-Smith 2004; Stanlaw and Adachi in press). The role of language in identity negotiation is also a primary area of interest for linguistic anthropologists, and yet the part played by language in East Asian subcultural identity-making has received little scholarly attention. A study of Japanese adolescents whose marginal personae are achieved through a combination of behavior, attitude, and language therefore complements studies of Western youth and their linguistic practices (Eckert 1989; Mendoza-Denton 1996). Kogals also provide an opportunity to think about the gendered implications of the linguistic practices of youth subcultures. They offer an arresting counterpoint to the great cultural and linguistic innovation usually attributed to male subcultures elsewhere.

Kogals are ushering into Japanese cultural history new ideas about femininity and gender, and their linguistic innovations seep into mainstream speech, contributing to general changes in the Japanese language. Kogals are a convincing example of how speakers might interrogate cultural forms and social relations through language. Their critique of gender conformity is expressed through language and other original and provocative cultural products, including fashion, comics, and new script styles. These endeavors provoke mainstream censure, and Kogals have been the objects of intense scrutiny and social commentary. This article tracks how cultural processes are at work in the representation and self-representation of these "misbehaving" teenagers.

Girl Typologies

The English word *girl*, transliterated as either *gyaru* or *gâru*, is a vintage loanword in Japan. In addition to the prewar Moga, during the 1920s there were Kiss Girls and Boat Girls who exchanged kisses for a modest fee (Nakayama 1995), as well as movie theater ushers called Cinema Girls (*kinema gâru*) and female clerks known as Shop Girls (*shoppu gâru*, Kitazawa 1925). As the 1950s drew to an end, independent and pleasure-seeking postwar young women were called Mambo Girls (*mambo gâru*) (*Time* 1959:24). By 1956, as Jan Bardsley (2000) notes, there were types called Salary Girls (*sararii gâru*), women who focused on their work lives instead of making plans for marriage. Salary Girls prefigured the postwar Business Girls (*bijinesu gâru*), later renamed Office Ladies or OL (*ôeru*) in the 1980s when women's magazine editors realized there might be an unintended negative meaning for the earlier term. They discovered that *Business Girl* was used in American slang to refer to prostitutes and were concerned that foreigners and Japanese men involved in sex tourism might confuse an office worker with a sex worker. Other Girls of the era were the Body-Conscious Girls (*bodikon gyaru*), young women who worked hard at creating sexy and fit bodies, and the flamboyant Stage Girls (*otachidai gyaru*) who danced in nightclubs. By the 1990s there was the Three Negatives Girl (*san nai gyaru*), who did not work, did not get married, and did not bear children (*hatarakanai, kekkon shinai, kodomo o umaranai*). The Old Guy Girls (*oyaji gyaru*) were young women who affected middle-aged male pastimes such as playing golf and going to pachinko parlors and race tracks. Akihiko Yonekawa (1996:151–153) also lists the 1986 term Three-*Beru* Girl (*san beru gyaru*), derived from the word for *three* combined with the verbal ending *beru*, for girls who think only about eating, talking, and getting into trouble (*taberu, shaberu, toraberu*), and the 1991 term Old Bag Girl (*ofukuro gyaru*), which refers to a young woman who is totally dependent on her mother. A recent type is the Pajamas Girl (*jinbei gyaru*), a young woman who lazes around the house wearing old-fashioned old-men's-style pajamas.

The unrestrained and creative hybridity of Kogal language and fashion, in which diverse global elements are freely incorporated, is viewed as irresistibly cool by some Japanese observers. Catherine Driscoll (2002:293) suggests that *Kogal* is derived from

Figure 1
The Kogal aesthetic. Photo from *Egg* magazine, August 2000.

English *cool girl*, with the "inflection of 'colored girl' as well," but this does not accord with Japanese phonology. If the source were *cool girl*, the form would be *kûru gyaru*; if *colored girl*, it would be *karâdo gyaru*. It has also been suggested that *Kogal* is derived from the morpheme *ko* ('small') (Jolivet 2001; Watrous 2000). I prefer another candidate etymology—that it was coined around 1990 by workers at discos and music clubs, who called the under-18 crowd *kôkôsei gyaru* ('High School Girls'), a term that was later clipped to *kogyaru*.

The label *Kogal* is most often elicited because of a girl's appearance and consumption patterns, which may overshadow her linguistic construction of a subcultural identity. The Kogal aesthetic (see Figure 1) is not straightforward, for it often combines elements of calculated cuteness and studied ugliness. The style began in the early 1990s when high-school girls developed a look made up of "loose socks" (knee-length socks worn hanging around the ankles), bleached hair, distinct makeup, and short school-uniform skirts. Kogal fashion emphasizes fakeness and kitsch through playful appropriation of the elegant and the awful. Kogal tackiness is also egalitarian because girls from any economic background or with any natural endowment may acquire the look, which is not true of the conservative, cute style favored by girls who conform to normative femininity.

Kogal taken to an extravagant limit yields the *ganguro* ('blackface') style. The deeper saddle-brown tan of this style accentuates the use of thick, garish white lipstick and eye shadow. The *ganguro* presumptuously challenges female beauty norms with her anticute aesthetic that questions the naturalness of gender stereotypes. Some U.S. media pundits confound the *ganguro* look with another variation on Girl subculture, the "black" vogue of the B-Girls, who model their appearance after African American celebrities. B-Girls study imported American videos and read domestically

published magazines such as *Hip Hop Style Bible* and *Black Music Review*, to locate cool Americanisms. One is the concept of "real," now used in phrases such as *riaru de tadashi* ('keep it real'). The hip-hop context is referred to as the *shiin* ('scene'), and many speak of the importance of *risupekuto o suru* ('showing respect') and *nori ga ii* ('having a good groove').

Most Kogals and *ganguro*, however, are not trying to look African American, or like anything ever seen before. They have created their own suprahistorical syncretisms, using retro and borrowed styles to assemble a unique look. Dusty Springfield–style chartreuse and yellow shifts might be combined with oversized jackets or denim along with orange hair in spiky abandon. Kogals are adept at stylistic sampling in order to achieve an aesthetic of *mukokuseki* ('stateless globalism'). Their mixing echoes that seen in the recombinant white British punk subculture of the 1970s, which incorporated black diasporic Caribbean themes (Hebdige 1979). The Kogal's racial and temporal hybridity, in which styles from different places, ethnic groups, and eras are exuberantly appropriated, disturb mainstream notions of national identity and represent metastatements about the supposed purity and homogeneity of the Japanese. The *mukokuseki* aesthetic is present in other contemporary Japanese cultural products, such as anime (animated cartoons), popular music, and television, which have achieved success in Asian markets outside Japan (Iwabuchi 2002).

A Kogal variation is the Surfer Girl (*sâfa gyaru*), who self-consciously adopts chintzy accoutrements such as aloha-print fabrics, koa-seed necklaces, and plastic leis. With regard to appearance, language, and consumption of magazines such as *Fine Surf & Street Magazine*, there is no rigid boundary between pseudo–Surfer Girls who do not ride the waves and bona fide surfers who authentically participate in the sport. However, only surfers use terms such as *hômu pointo* ('home point'), the main beach where one hangs out and surfs, and *ii nami o meiku dekita* ('be able to ride a good wave').

Regardless of style, young women are at the heart of contemporary Japanese cultural interest and vigor, and it is girls who have been the impetus for many recent technological innovations. Japan's civic and economic woes have shifted attention away from the once-glorified male salaryman and toward youth culture, which now drives many salient culture industries.

Unregulated Cultural Production

Since the 1990s, teenage girls in Japan have dominated the market for brand-name goods, cell phones, cameras, and a variety of other photographic products. According to the Nomura Research Institute, 95.7 percent of Japanese women under the age of 20 had a cell phone or a pager in 2003 (Asahi Shimbun 2003:176). Kogals' heavy use of technology has resulted in some interesting script innovations. One is the development of novel emoticons, combinations of punctuation marks and accent marks to express affect in telephone text messages and e-mail. The emoticons, called *kao moji* ('face characters'), are more extensive and complex than the American "smiley-face" emoticons typically created with a colon and a closing parenthesis to resemble a sideways face, and are processed differently: American emoticons are read horizontally; Japanese ones are read vertically. A few examples are *wai* ('wow') \(8o8)/, *itai* ('ouch') (>_<), *hakushu* ('applause') (^^)/ /, and *kikoenai* ('I can't hear you') <<(-.-)>>.

Kogals are also credited with creating a unique text message code for their cell phones, now referred to as *gyaru moji* ('Gal characters'). It is a basic substitution system, in which parts or combinations of characters, mathematical symbols, or Cyrillic letters are used in place of the Japanese syllabic characters; there are several alternatives commonly used for each syllable. For example, rather than being written in either the Japanese *katakana* or *hiragana* syllabaries, the syllable *ni*, normally written as に in *hiragana* or ニ in *katakana*, is written as (=, |=, L=, or I=. The following chart lists three expressions in standard script and in *gyaru moji* versions:

Standard Script	Gal moji
超 かわいい *chô-kawaii* (totally cute)	千ょカゝワゝ
チビポラ *chibi-pora* (mini-Polaroid camera)	千ヒ〃ホ ○я a
なかよし *nakayoshi* (good friends)	ナょカゝよU

One of the more noteworthy examples of Kogal consumption is the phenomenon of *purikura* booths, from *purinto kurabu* ('print club'), that manufacture strips of small photo stickers, which are used to decorate objects and are exchanged with friends as a form of social currency. Over time, Kogals began to amend their photos with colored ink captions, taboo words, and unusual script elements. Other girls also create graffiti photos, but Kogals are more risqué in their textual expressions. Their graffiti photos contain a remarkable mix of spoofed cuteness and burlesque freakishness that defies gender normativity. Examples 1 through 3 illustrate their unique characteristics.

1. Hがうまい人
   H ga umai hito
   (People good at sex)
2. ♡ my boardリペア中! ♡
   ***my board** ripeachû*
   (While repairing my surfboard)
3. 初めての海外トリップin カルフォルニア
   *hajimete no kaigai torippu **in** karuforunia*
   (Our first overseas trip in California)

In Example 1, underneath a photo of two Kogals, the boastful phrase *H ga umai hito* (people good at sex) is written in outlined blue characters and a fat letter *H*. The capital letter *H* stands for the term *eitchi*, which has both adjectival and nominal uses. It has been popular since the late 1970s, when it originally referred to *hentai seiyoku* ('abnormal sexual desire') and meant 'kinky' or 'sleazy'. Over time it has come to simply mean 'naughty' or 'sexy'. *Eitchi* is also used as a noun for sexual activity and is often paired with the verb *suru* ('to do'), as in *eitchi ga suru* ('do the wild thing, have sex').

The graffiti photos also contain many instances of script mixing. Because it has four writing systems to exploit—Chinese characters, two syllabic scripts (*hiragana* and *katakana*), and the Roman alphabet—Japanese orthography permits extensive expressiveness. In Example 2, written on a photograph of two Kogals sanding a surfboard, the English phrase *my board* is written in the Roman alphabet rather than in *katakana*, whereas part of the word *ripeachû* ('repair') is written in *katakana* (the suffix *-chû* 'while' is written in *kanji*). Working on surfboards is usually a male activity, so this writer is also proclaiming her bold gender transgression. In the third example, found on a photograph of three teenagers, the loanword *torippu* ('trip') is transliterated into syllabic *katakana*, yet it is followed by the English preposition *in* written in the Roman alphabet. Perhaps these and similar examples constitute a new genre of writing that is the counterpart of oral code-switching. In any case, their polygraphic juxtaposition presents an aesthetically pleasing balance and contrast, something seen in many Japanese writing genres (Miller 2003a; Stanlaw 2004). Beginning in the mid-1980s, young women began to audaciously use many unconventional orthographic practices. They continue to substitute Roman letters in novel places and liberally use stars, hearts, emoticons, Roman script, and nonnative punctuation such exclamation points, ellipses, ampersands, and word spacing in their writings (Horiuchi 1985; Ishino 1985; Kataoka 2003, 1997). Japanese texts originally contained little punctuation, but during the early 20th century, writers began to experiment with borrowed Western forms and eventually created their own marks (Twine 1984). Kogals use both Western and Japanese punctuation in their writing and graffiti photos.

Kogals highlight the importance of categories of youth in Japan's culture of advanced consumerism, yet Kogals themselves determine how the products of the culture industries are used to articulate their own identities as Girls. Not only in their consumption patterns and writing practices, but also in their use of language, Kogals are creatively contributing to their society.

Kogalesque Speech Style

It is in relation to mainstream expectations for female language use that the Kogal is set off as deviant. According to the dominant ideological model, girls' speech should reflect qualities of innocence, modesty, docility, and deference. Kogals' disdain for these societal expectations surfaces in the use of nonstandard forms, novel coinages, and explicit reference to sexual or taboo topics. Of course, young women do not materialize as prepackaged types, but select from a menu of possibilities from which they craft their own self-presentations. Age-based styles, cultures, and identities are achieved at the local level through language, interaction, and context (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 1992). Kogal is not just a fashion but a performance that encapsulates various forms of resistance, from language use and behavior to body display. Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1992) note that linguistic resources are called on to construct styles in order to place individuals within their social worlds. In looking at the features usually associated with Kogal speech, I am not suggesting that there is a strict correlation of Kogal identity with bits of language. Categories such as Kogal do not simply reflect a priori social locations but are socially constructed through a combination of showy style and consciously selected language. The playwright Ai Nagai allows her Kogal character to explain her choice of language: "My identity is to use contemporary speech that I've finally attained after studying things and making adjustments. These words signify my lifestyle. They express my humanity" (2000:116). Susan Gal has written that "Resistance to a dominant cultural order occurs in two ways: first, when devalued linguistic forms and practices.... are practiced and celebrated despite widespread denigration and stigmatization. Second, it occurs because these devalued practices often propose or embody alternate models of the social world" (1995:175). Japan's Kogals are a good example of exactly these processes of resistance. They maintain their own language forms in the face of negative sanctions and openly endorse a denigrated philosophy that celebrates the self above any other social concern, rejecting the premium put on female self-sacrifice in mainstream Japanese culture.

An interesting feature of Kogal speech is their practices of self-reference. In a manner similar to how the Riot Girl network in the United States appropriated punk style for confrontational feminist ends in the 1970s, adopting the denigrating label *Girl* and reinvesting it with new power, Kogals usually refer to themselves and others in their subculture as *gyaru* ('Girl'). In a graffiti photo, two Kogals with orange hair confront the camera with impudent poses; over the top of the photo is written *gyaru desu!* ('We are Girls!') in pink ink. Kogals also use *gyaru* as a prefix, suffix, and all-purpose descriptor that celebrates their positive energy. A few of these are *gyaru-ko* ('Girl Kid'), used as a sort of endearing diminutive; the plural form *gyaru-tachi*, used in the sense of 'Girl Buddies'; *Naniwa gyraru* ('Osaka Girl'); and *onê gyaru* ('Older Sister-Like Girl'), usually used for someone over 20 years old. There are increasingly large numbers of young women who decide to have children on their own, and those with new babies are termed *gyaru mama* ('Girl Moms').[1] Others are *gyaru yûjin* ('Girl Friend') and *shôjiki gyaru* ('Authentic Girl'). A *yangyaru* is a Girl who likes *Yankii*-style men instead of *ikemen* ('cool dudes'), *Yankii* ('Yankee') being the derogatory term for belligerent female or male subcultural types who are said to emulate brash Americans. *Gyaru*

is also used as a modifier, as in *gyaru-kei shoppu* ('Girl-style shop'), *gyaru-fuku* ('Girl clothes'), and *oshare gyaru na onna no ko* ('trendy Girl type of girl'). *Gyaru* also appears in other constructions, such as *gyaru-do appu no tame ni* ('in order to increase the degree of Girlness') and *gyaru yatte* ('do the Girl thing'). These examples illustrate that Kogals have a sense of themselves as different from others. Some Kogals also use the term *sâkuru* ('circle') to describe a small group of Kogals who frequently interact with one another. There is no symmetric male counterpart to the Kogal. A boyfriend of the Kogal may have dyed hair, tanned skin, and trendy clothing, but the common label used for the Kogal partner is *ikemen* ('cool dude'), which may also be applied to young men not part of the Kogal's orbit. Although the term *gyaru otoko* ('Girl Man') originally meant a feminine man (Yonekawa 1996:73), I have sometimes heard it used to refer to the young men who hang out with and date Kogals.

Kogals and other young Japanese are accused of destroying their language or of having forgotten how to speak it (Sakurai 1985). Linguists, however, believe that it is not linguistic decay but new dialect formation that is under way. They believe that lexical, grammatical, and phonological changes are evidence of emergent *shinhôgen* ('new dialects') and pidginlike sociolects generated among the younger generation (Inoue 1986a, 1986b; Maher 1997). Kogal speech, as one of these new dialects, is a style of speaking that overlaps with youth language in general, but is still marked as different with its own notable lexical forms.

Enduring Youth Slang and New Kogalisms

Although much of the Kogal lexicon is tossed aside as quickly as last year's Hello Kitty keychain, it also includes slang dating back several decades and used by most youth. The reliable *dasai*, along with its variations *dassê* and *dashâ*, has been in steady use since the 1970s with the meaning 'uncool', 'frumpy', or 'decidedly nerdy' (Yonekawa 1996:1051). A word from 1979, *wanpatân* ('one pattern'), meaning 'repetitive' or 'boring', as in *kare wa wanpatân da ne* ('He's a real drag'), is still around and surfaces in Kogal speech, but now in the clipped form *wanpa*. Other popular words and expressions are *mukatsuku* ('nauseating' or 'disagreeable'), used as a qualifier in many sentences and often suggesting an underlying note of anger or disgruntlement, and *yabai* ('stupid, no good'). Asuka's diary published by the journalist Hiroe Yoshidô is overflowing with common youth slang as well as Kogal-specific words such as *bakkure* ('play innocent'), *uzattai* ('fussy, strict'), and *katarui* ('wiped out').

A characteristic feature of Kogal speech is the liberal use of emphatic prefixes and other intensifiers. One is *maji*, the clipped form of *majime* ('serious'), to mean 'really', 'honestly', or 'no shit', in circulation since 1983. Another is the prefix *meccha*, used in constructions such as *mecha kyûto na* ('awesomely cute'). There is also the unavoidable *chô*, an emphatic prefix used since 1988 to mean 'super' or 'ultra', found in phrases like *honto chô yabai* ('really ultra-idiotic'), *chô maji de mukatsuku* ('really super nauseating'), and *chô gyaru shita ko* ('a girl really into the Girl thing'). When *chô* is combined with abbreviations, it becomes especially opaque to older Japanese. An example is the expression *chôSW* ('super bad personality'), formed with the initial Roman letters for the words *seikaku* ('personality') and *warui* ('bad'). The English loanword *sûpâ* ('super') used as a prefix is also quite common, but the infectious *chô* remains the preeminent Kogal intensifier.

In addition to novel words, Kogals are known for widespread lexical truncation. Some forms are created by clipping the initial syllable, such as *panion* from *konpanion* ('companion') and *riiman* from *sarariiman* ('salaryman'). Place names for areas of Tokyo are often shortened: *Bukuro* for Ikebukoro (see Figure 2), and *Bûya* for Shibuya. There is also clipping of back syllables, as in *hazui* from *hazukashii* ('embarrassing'), *urui* from *urusai* ('noisy, fussy, picky'), *muzui* from *muzukashii* ('difficult'), *mendoi* from *mendokusai* ('pain in the ass'), and *kimoi* from *kimochi warui* ('creepy, repellent, gross'), with the Kansai region variant *kishoi*.

Figure 2
A comic Kogal uses the clipped form *Bukuro* for Ikebukuro. Image from *GALS!* ©1998 Mihona Fujii/Shueisha Inc. Used by permission.

Compounding is thought to be one of the most productive word-formation processes in Japanese. An example of a new compound used by Kogals is *shibutaku*, formed from the name *Shibuya* and the term for the public lottery, *takarakuji*. The term emerged when a new outlet selling lottery tickets opened in 2001 at the east exit of Shibuya Station, and Kogals began buying tickets there with dreams of winning it big. Another new compound, *kimuta-ko* ('Kimutaku Kid'), is used to refer to young men who imitate the appearance of handsome celebrity Takuya Kimura, known by his nickname Kimutaku.

Kogals and others also create new words through affixation of the Japanese verb-class suffix *-ru*. Everyday nouns are changed into verbs by attaching *-ru*, found at the end of the dictionary form of many verbs. In these cases, the first two syllables of the

noun are used with the *-ru* suffix, eliminating the object maker *o* or the locative particle *ni*. Examples given by Yonekawa (1996) are *tako-ru* ('eat octopus fritters'), *maku-ru* ('go to McDonald's'), *oke-ru* ('do karaoke singing'), *râme-ru* ('eat ramen noodles'), and *deni-ru* ('go to Denny's'). Yukiko Hayami (2000) also mentions *kyodoru*, a clipped form of *kyodô fushin* ('act suspicious').

Such a form is also used to refer to a particularly distinctive Kogal behavior that goes against the cultural model of women as cute and dainty, a sort of self-parody in which Kogals make ugly, screwed-up faces for the camera. This behavior is called *uni-ru*, for *kao ga uni no yô ni gocha-gocha ni naru* ('make your face scrunched up like a sea urchin'). Yonekawa (1996:63) notes that there are precedents for *-ru*-constructed words in earlier girls' lexicons and gives the example of *enbi-ru* ('to envy'), found in Meiji-era (1868–1912) schoolgirl speech.[2]

A new derivation process in Japanese is to attach the suffix *-â*, transliterated from the English morpheme *-er* 'doer of *x*', as in *player* or *drinker*, in order to create new words for types of people. For example, a common term used to describe a slacker who casually works at a low-level temporary or part-time job after graduation from high school or college is *furiitâ* ('freelancer'). New Kogal forms based on this process include *gêmâ* ('gamer, player of video games'), *messhâ* ('one who has a *messhû* ['streaked'] hair style'), *kurabâ* ('club-goer'), and *chiimâ* ('team member' or 'teamer'), the latter referring to scruffy, semidelinquent boys who hang out on the street in areas such as Shibuya.

In Japanese, number is not an obligatory category and sentences do not require an indication of whether nouns are plural. However, plural forms for some human nouns and pronouns may be created with the suffixes *-tachi* and *-ra*. For example, *gakusei*, which may be understood as either 'student' or 'students', can be marked as plural with either suffix: *gakusei-ra* or *gakusei-tachi* ('the students'). Although analysts believe some new coinages for human nouns derive from the agentive *-â* suffix described above, there are cases that may also be derived from the *-ra* plural suffix.[3] A few that Kogals have used are *narurâ* ('narcissists'); *kitirâ* ('those who love Hello Kitty goods'); and *semerâ* ('Seimei followers'), that is, fans of the historical figure Seimei Abe, a tenth-century Taoist shaman famous for yin–yang philosophy and prophecy. Seimei recently became popular among Kogals after a crop of books, comics, and movies about him were released. Similarly, an agoraphobic condition of young Japanese, in which they shut themselves up in their rooms for weeks or years, is termed *hikikomori* ('shut-in syndrome'); those suffering from this new epidemic of disconnectivity are called *komorâ*. Another new type of affixation is to attach the English suffix *-ing*, rendered as *-ingu*, to the base form of a Japanese verb, creating a new hybrid verb. An early and rare instance of this was the 1960s verb *kanningu suru* ('to do cunning, to cheat'). In 1979 I occasionally heard the verb *osharingu* ('being fashionable'), from *oshare* ('trendy, fashionable'). Yonekawa (1996:66) documents many of these new verbs used among young women. A few are *komaringu* ('being troubled'), *nemuringu* ('going to sleep'), *bentoringu* ('eating a box lunch'), and *wakattingu* ('is understanding').

In addition to making up their own vocabulary, Kogals and other young women are said to violate language structure itself. Shigeko Okamoto and Shie Sato (Okamoto 1995; Okamoto and Sato 1992) describe the parent culture's distaste for women who use putatively "masculine" language forms and who also fail to use correct honorific speech. However, unlike the college-age women they studied, Kogals do not qualify their use of "strongly masculine" forms by giggling or using hedges or quotatives in order to indicate a lingering discomfort in breaking gendered language norms. Kogals are not attempting to be masculine; they are changing the definition of femininity, a point Yoshiko Matsumoto (1996) has made about women's changing speech in general.

An example of Kogals' structural changes to Japanese is found in the avoidance of certain infixes. In prestige dialects, the potential form of a verb is formed by infixing the two morphemes *ra* and *re*. Thus, the verb *miru* ('to see') becomes *mirareru* ('can be seen'), and the verb *taberu* ('to eat') becomes *tabereareru* ('can be eaten'). Although the derivation process is different, the potential and the passive forms for the class of verbs that have the dictionary endings *-eru* or *-iru* will both end in *-rareru*. But Kogals often

drop the *ra* morpheme, saying *mireru* or *tabereru* instead. This practice is called *ra-nuki* ('*ra*-deletion'). Although *ra*-deletion is often associated with Kogals, it is not unique to them; it is common in many regional dialects and is found in various age groups. However, the media has singled out *ra*-deletion as one of the worst transgressions of youth speech, and this association with youth is widespread. In 1997 the Ministry of Education Award for Artistic Person of the Year went to playwright Ai Nagai, who wrote an intellectual comedy about generational friction over language use entitled *Ra-Nuki no Satsui* ('Intent to Kill Dropped *Ra*') (Nagai 2000). The play revolves around a middle-aged man who detests the speech of young people in his office. They engage in *ra-nuki*, misuse honorifics, insert too many English loanwords, and if women, "talk like Kogals" or use forbidden masculine forms.

English Hybrids

The slang used by Kogals provides a test of the frequent claim that Japanese have a propensity to assimilate the foreign. To begin with, the type of English-derived language material they use is not the result of a normal contact situation. Kogals are not using English because of a lexical gap or for social prestige. Instead, they are exploiting the linguistic resources at hand for their own aesthetic, humorous, visual, and affective projects. The English found in Kogal speech is often a combination of two or more English words that were formed in Japan with new meanings, with novel blends that have unique semantic and phonological histories (Miller 1997). Syncretic forms such as these are not unique to Japanese (Hill 1999). Kogal examples are *dotakyan* ('to cancel plans at the very last minute'), from *dotanba* ('last moment') and *kyanseru* ('cancel'); and *ikemen* ('cool dude'), from *iketeru* ('cool, hip') and *men* ('men'), the young men desired by Kogals. (However, some suggest that *men* is the Japanese term for 'face' or 'visage'.) Even though the loanword is *men* rather than *man*, the term *ikemen* is unmarked for number and can refer to one or more cool dudes. I have often heard Kogals say *ikemen getto suru* ('I wanna get a cool dude'), in which they pair English *get* with the verb *suru* ('to do'), a new construction that now has a firm foothold in youth speech and advertising (Horie and Occhi 2001). In the unusual sentence *ikemen-gûrûpu ni nampa sarete karaoke e go* ('We were picked up by a group of cool dudes and taken to karaoke'), the suffix *gûrûpu* ('group') makes it clear that there was more than one cool dude involved in the action; additionally, in place of a Japanese verb, the English verb *go* is used.

Once Kogals have manufactured a hybrid compound, they often truncate it, as in *hisaro* from *hiyake saron* ('tanning salon'), *domebura* from *domesutekku burando* ('domestic-brand goods'), and *misepan* for *miseru pantsu* ('visible underwear'). *Misepan* are special underwear intended for the male gaze. They are fancy decorated panties similar to bathing-suit bottoms, worn over normal underwear. The telephone pager, called *pokeberu*, clipped from *poketto beru* ('pocket bell'), spawned numerous offspring (including the internationally popular cartoon characters called Pokemon, clipped from *poketto monsutâ*, 'pocket monster'). Although the pager has been almost completely replaced by the cell phone, new words using the *beru* morpheme continue to be created. *Karaberu* ('empty bell' or 'no message'), combines *kara* ('empty') with *beru*; the new Kogal term *berunan* ('phone pickup'), for telephone-based blind dating, combines *beru* with *nampa* ('pickup'). The clipping process is explicitly seen in a short piece that appeared in *Egg* magazine (2000a). A Kogal culture writer created her own hybrid compound to describe her set—*supesharu musume* ('special daughters'), which she clipped to *subemusu* within the same text. The term is a play on the popularity of the perky mainstream all-girl singing group Morning Musume and is used satirically given that Kogals have an anti–Morning Musume aesthetic.

Because of the specific history and use of English in Japan, Kogal English is not the same as Punjabi teens using Creole, white teens using Punjabi, or other forms of "crossing" (Rampton 1995). Although Kogals similarly treat ethnicity as a performance, seen in their manipulation of "racial" markers such as hair, skin, and eye color

or shape, they do not consider the English-based Japanese they use as something that belongs to another group of people. They and their parents grew up with Japan-made English. Leo Loveday writes that, with few exceptions, English words in Japanese always appear in "long-established and sanctioned switching sites of grammatical entry" (1996:137). That may have been true once, but in Kogal speech, English-derived words now follow native inflectional patterns and manifest a new level of linguistic integration. Due to the presence of so much English in Kogal speech, foreign journalists (Chow 2001; Kristoff 1997) often describe it as intended to be a secret code, but this is a misunderstanding. Kogals want to linguistically distance themselves from the parent generation and from uncool nerd girls, but they do not care who understands them. Because they are rarely under parental surveillance or control, the obscuring function of slang seems less important to them than the playful display and creation of novel expressions.

Kogals defy contemporary demands of adolescent femininity by speaking in raw, outspoken, and unexpected ways. They usurp male privilege by exercising the freedom to use language in any way they please. Their novel speech style and cultural production enable them to simultaneously express their own focal concerns while contesting compulsory femininity.

Asserting Selfhood

Kogal discourse reflects an ideology that runs counter to mainstream prescriptive norms of gendered talk. Instead of restraint, there is self-assertion; in place of modesty, there is self-confidence. Kogal is a relational category established through comparison with others. In this case, it is the well-bred, well-mannered daughters of the middle class who are the counterpoint, since many Kogals are from working-class backgrounds. Kogals often attend less-prestigious schools or are dropouts who work as freelancers, convenience store clerks, tanning salon workers, beauticians, shop clerks, barmaids, or low-paid office temps.

Kogals talk about *kurabu de ôru suru* ('doing an all-nighter at a club'), something middle-class girls find hard to pull off. Drinking with a group of Kogals in a bar, I asked them about their late hours. (Even though the legal drinking age in Japan is 20, clubs and bars do not check identification.) What did their parents say when they got home after 3:00 a.m.? One said she had left home and was living with an older brother who did not care; another said her mother often was not home herself because she was working in the *omizu* (*mizushôbai* or 'water trade', the euphemism for nightlife that ranges from homey drinking establishments to seedy sexual-service venues). Others said their parents did not care as long as they were with friends and did not get involved in any naughty business. There are some "weekend Kogals," middle-class girls who aspire to the cool rebellious life of the Kogal, but they usually confine their emulation to fashion. Kogals occasionally travel from outside Tokyo or from the far suburbs to hang out on the streets and in the clubs for a few days at a time, a behavior that is known as *puchi iede* ('petite runaway'). They are not actually runaways, however, and have every intention of returning home as soon as the fun stops.

Kogals' hedonistic energy surfaces in language that holds nothing back and freely expresses feelings and desires. This is especially apparent in the ways they openly talk about and critique sexuality. It is not only heterosex that interests them; their conversations and writings are filled with descriptions and longings of all types. A favorite Kogal celebrity is Hiromi, a well-known Osakan *nyû hâfu* ('new half'), the term used for transgender or transsexual individuals. Hiromi tells all about her affairs and sexual history in regular interviews and feature articles in magazines, where Girl interviewers grill her for gritty details.

Kogals have claimed taboo words such as *manko* ('cunt') as their own, using it in new forms such as *mii man*, which combines the English *me* with *man* to mean 'my (very own) pussy'. *Mii* also shows up in *mii feichi* ('my own fetish'), used to describe special likes and obsessions, not necessarily just sexual ones. Kogals casually use the term *teman*, which combines the word for hand (*te*), with *man* to mean 'female masturbation'. The morpheme *man* in *teman* could be from *manko* ('cunt'), or else it is derived from *manzuri*, another word for female masturbation which means 'to rub one thousand times'.

In popular conduct literature, women are told that expressing their ideas too directly is bad etiquette. For instance, one manual suggests that bland generalities be produced in place of one's actual opinions (Tanaka 1993). But Kogals like to read about one another's opinions. *Egg* magazine carries monthly mail-in surveys asking opinion questions such as "What goes through your mind when you are getting oral sex?" "What is your own obsession?" and "Where have you had sex?" (Answers to the last question included school, cars, shrines, temples, hospitals, parks, elevators, and public restrooms.) A question in the August 2000 issue was "When you are having sex with a guy who has a really small penis and he asks, 'It isn't small, is it?', what do you say?" Respondents wrote or e-mailed their answers. One reader sent her print-club photo with a note saying, "If it were me, I'd say 'Yeah, it really is. I mean, that's what the service here is all about.'" Over ten percent of the poll's respondents thought this was a good response.

In a similar fashion, Kogals openly denigrate older men whom they often find repellent. Some Kogals refuse to have their clothing washed with their father's soiled clothes and will not sit on a subway seat recently vacated by a salaryman. In conversations and writing, men are often referred to as *ketchi jijii* ('cheap old sod'), *kuso jijii* ('shitty old geezer'), *mania-kei no dasai otoko* ('shabby pervert guy'), and *chibidebu no kimochi warui oyaji* ('short fat creepy old fart'). *Chibidebu* is a new Kogal term combining *chibi* ('shrimp') with *debu* ('fatty'). Describing her teacher, our diary-keeper Asuka says:

> And then there's that Mr. Pain-in-the-Ass teacher at my school. Why is it that even though everyone else chews gum and stuff, like, he only gets angry at me for some reason. I can, like, understand it if he accuses me once, but day after day he says the same thing. Seriously, what's with that?? I feel like telling him, "Stop pestering me, you jerk!" Seriously, no shit, when it comes to my school, it's putrid. It's the worst. [Yoshidô 1998:48]

Although Kogals are not the only women who disparage the postwar salaryman icon (Miller 1998a), they seem much more open and virulent in their expressions of disdain.

Similar to the Bedouin women studied by Lila Abu-Lughod, who participate in "sexually irreverent discourse"(1990:45), Kogals are also expert at lampooning male behavior, appearance, and sexual skill. But while Bedouin women and other Japanese women do this behind the scenes, Kogals revel in open explicitness. In a magazine targeted at high school and college-age men, Kogals display their artistic contributions to the "penis art gallery" (*Men's Egg* 2000:90). Kogals are photographed holding the amateur drawings they have made, showing penises decorated with hair, bows, eyes, and written sound effects. Each artist's entry is accompanied by commentary, one of which reads, "If the balls are too big, the penis is too scrawny! I definitely hate that kind of penis!" (*Tama deka sugita shi, chinko hososugi! Konna chinko zeitai yada!*). Similarly, in the Kogals' *Egg* magazine (2000b:38), readers are asked, "If you compared your boyfriend's penis to something, what other thing would it be?" The answers Kogals contributed do not necessarily demonstrate a respectful attitude. Among the responses: "An overgrilled pink frankfurter" (*Yakisugita pinku furanku furuto*), "When the skin is pulled back, it's exactly like a turtle" (*Kawa muku toki kame ni sokkuri*), "A lifeless caterpillar" (*Shinu ni sô na imomushi*), "My boyfriend's penis is definitely a zombie" (*Kareshi no chinko wa zettai zombi da ne*), "A ten-thousand yen bill. Recently, I haven't seen either a ten-thousand yen bill or his penis" (*Ichimanen satsu. Chinko mo ichimanen satsu mo saikin mitenai kara*).

The Kogals' Hello Kitty bags contain both condoms and chewing gum. The incongruence of their "innocent" age and their adult behavior and language simultaneously

fascinates and offends, and their impudent displays are obsessively tracked by the media.

Kogals in Mainstream Media

Media pundits are fascinated yet disturbed by the way Kogals talk, and exposés of their language have appeared in weekly magazines such as *Josei Seben* and the national newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun*. Some commentators have placed Kogal speech in the same exotic category as other denigrated dialects. For example, although it is not the case at all, some hold the theory that Kogal intonation is very much like that of some northeastern dialects (Kurata 1998:42). The term *shiriagari*, or 'rising intonation', is also used to describe their pitch pattern. The media's metalinguistic objectification of Kogal speech reached a peak when newspapers, magazines, and television programs latched onto the term *chôberiba* ('ultra very bad'), formed with the intensifier prefix *chô*, English-derived *beri* ('very'), and clipped *ba* from *baddo* ('bad'). Newscaster Tetsuya Chikushi, in puzzlement, once shared the term with his audience as a perfect specimen of *kogyaru-go* ('Kogal speech'). According to Yonekawa (1996:217), however, it is debatable if *chôberiba* was ever a real Kogal word. Instead, it seems to have begun among college-age girls and then spread among youth in general. Although the Roppongi Kogals I spent time with never used it, I received numerous e-mails from friends in Japan asking if I knew the "Kogal word *chôberiba*." In an article first published in the *New York Times*, journalist Nicolas Kristoff asserts that Kogals' speech is most characterized by its use of English "loanwords" and says that their language is "a secret code by which they can bond and evade surveillance by hostile forces, like parents" (1997:3). Ignoring at least four decades of domestication and reworking of English (see Stanlaw 2004), he attributes the popularity of Kogal speech to a simple fascination with American popular culture. Japanese linguists and pundits including Yoshisato Suzuki (2002) also bemoan the use of too much borrowing. However, made-in-Japan English has little to do with cultural imperialism because it is more likely to index the cool or the modern rather than the foreign.

Kogals are the focus of intense public concern, and media discourses reflect an ongoing obsession with locating and delimiting them.[4] Of course, this sort of surveillance of women is longstanding. Today's tensions about women's roles and aspirations, expressed through satire or heated polemic over Kogals, are not really new at all but have antecedents in prewar and postwar media, in which women have been debated, stereotyped, fictionalized, and caricatured. Common descriptions of Kogal are that they are impertinent, vulgar or indecent, egocentric, lacking manners, absurd or devoid of common sense, garish, and without perseverance. They are said to have brash, self-assured, and loud voices that can slice through tofu. Men complain that they are doing abuse to the "heart" (*kokoro*) or spirit of language. Kogals can be found sitting on the street pavement and on the floors of trains, actions viewed as slovenly and dirty. The increase in this behavior has led to the coinage of a new term to describe groups of squatting or sitting youth, *jibetarian*, a combination of *jibeta* ('squat on the ground') and English *battalion*.

On the other hand, in some media depictions, Kogal are grudgingly applauded. One male commentator makes it clear that he does not find their style attractive but recognizes that Kogals are nevertheless to be admired for creating their own category of identity (Murakami 2001:169–170). In an episode of the animation series "Super Gals Kotobuki Ran" (*Chô Gyaruzu Kotobuki Ran*), there are amusing scenes in which a pseudoteacher decodes Kogal words by writing them on a chalkboard and "translating" them.[5] Viewers are taught Kogal terms such as *ikemen* ('cool dudes') and *chômuka* ('really annoying'). The anime Kogals get into physical and verbal fights with rival gang Gals, bonk clueless boys on the head, and throw things at them. The main heroine, Ran, also offers up various "Gal rules," such as "Gals never back down from a challenge"; "Gals need eight hours' sleep for good skin, so they may sleep in class if necessary"; "Whatever Gals want, they must get it"; and "Gals never let go of their prey."

Kogals work at appearing brainless and insipid when talking to older men and foreign reporters, producing repetitive inanities and truncated answers to such pithy interview questions as "Until what age will you be a Girl?"; "How many times have you been to a love hotel?"; and "How much money is in your wallet?" (Klippensteen and Brown 2001). They are, however, capable of extended rants concerning older men and the state of their nation. This is what Asuka says:

> I wish they'd [old men] all die at once. Seriously, today's corporations are truly no good. To live in such a world as this, where people are so corrupt. What on earth is the Prime Minister doing?? Instead of worrying about what other nations are doing, he should be thinking about his own political situation. Seriously, if I were the Emperor, I'd fire all those bureaucrats. Fired!! Really, I just don't get it. [Yoshidô 1998:48]

The media exhibits an odd mixture of anxiety and voyeuristic interest in Kogals. One reason for their appeal is that they are frequently associated with a practice known as *enjo kôsai* ('subsidized companionship'). This is the label used for young women who agree to meet strange men for dates, sometimes involving sex, in exchange for money or gifts. In the majority of cases, the pattern is that a group of Kogals go with a few dusty salarymen to a karaoke box for several hours and are paid for their time. They essentially replace the much more expensive bar hostess, who likewise puts up with fumbled gropes and juvenile utterances but for a much higher price. What the media finds most irritating about the phenomenon is that the young women involved feel no shame or remorse at all. According to a 1996 police report on more than 5,000 girls involved in subsidized dating, 39 percent gave "monetary gain" and 34 percent offered "curiosity" as their motivations (Iwao 1997:45). The young women themselves often express disdain, pity, or contempt for the men they see themselves as exploiting, rather than the other way around. Kogals like to have sex with boyfriends their own age, but if they have sex as part of *enjo kôsai*, they say that they "lay there like a fish" (*maguro ni naru*, literally 'become a tuna').[6]

The subsidized dating trend is supported by several related industries, including *terekura* ('telephone clubs'). These clubs provide a space for men who have paid a fee to sit and wait for phone calls from girls who want to arrange dates. Because the girls are able to call at no charge, this is the most common way that *enjo kôsai* operates. Beginning in 1992, programs and documentaries that "exposed" the so-called dark side of Girl culture became regular television fare. Some bore attention-getting titles such as "Is *Your* Daughter Okay?: Subsidized Dating in Japan." Masato Harada's (1997) commercial film *Bounce Kogals* focused on subsidized dating and featured sordid scenes of Kogals selling preworn underwear to specialty sex shops. These days, many older male Japanese writers simply translate *Kogal* into English as "prostitute," a practice mimicked by Western journalists such as Richard Havis (1998). Kogals often complain that men on the street walk up to them and offer money for sex, assuming that they have no agenda other than prostituting themselves. Kogals at times attempt to parody this assumption: "The theme of staged and conspicuous flashiness in kogal culture makes a mimicry of the media image of the mackintosh high-school girl prostituting herself for money" (Kinsella 2002:216).

Male fascination with the Kogal has yielded numerous films, comics, animation, novels, and pornography that focus not only on her supposed carnality, but also on variations in her high school uniform, her most desired brand-name goods, or her favorite hangouts and pastimes. One writer conducted a Kogal survey and presented his findings with a map of their localities in the Tokyo area (Ozaki 1998). He also lists the Kogal "types" (such as surfer or *ganguro*) one would most likely find at each spot, what kind of Kogal activity forms are common there (such as game centers, shops, and beer gardens), and the percentage who are thought to engage in forms of amateur prostitution. Although Kogals do indeed have preferred hangouts and like to identify other Kogals with reference to them, such as *Bukuro no Tanaka-chan* ('Miss Tanaka

at Ikebukuro'), there really is no such clear demarcation of Kogal life in Tokyo. One wonders if Ozaki's "guide" was intended to explain Kogal life or to provide a road map for heated salarymen.

Part of the consternation over Kogals is that they are assumed to be preparatory Office Ladies and salaryman consorts who are being corrupted by the Kogal lifestyle and mentality (Kuronuma 1996). Moral panics about transgressive women in prior decades were partly based on the assumption that it was "pure" middle-class women who were involved. For example, Karen Kelsky (1994) describes the intense media attention devoted to affluent young women who seek erotic adventures in foreign lands, branded "Yellow Cabs" because they are "as easy to ride as a taxi." The idea that Kogals participating in *enjo kôsai* are "normal girls" from "upstanding homes" (Iwao 1997:45) stems partly from the fact that Japanese orient to a model of society in which everyone is thought to be middle-class (Kelly 1986). Although Kogals are not generally destined for lives filled with Parent-Teacher Association meetings and women's volunteer organizations, they nevertheless share in the same cultural ideals for female modesty and virtue. Because there is no strong working-class consciousness, Kogals are judged by the same criteria as middle-class "good" girls.

Similar to the derogatory labeling seen in the case of Yellow Cabs, a method to discredit and contain the power of Girl culture is by calling *ganguro* types with very dark tans and white-rimmed eyes *yamamba* ('mountain ogress'), a figure from Japanese folklore who lives deep in the mountains and is often described as having sparkling or flashing eyes. I suspect that the label as applied to Kogals is in reference to the way *yamamba* was depicted in Noh plays, where she is very tall with disheveled hair and big round eyes.[7] The use of such negative labels and descriptors is meant to tarnish the cool allure of the Kogal. Speaking of the media treatment of a different Japanese subcultural youth group, but just as apt in this case, William Kelly says "social engineering through pre-emptive response has been a major preoccupation of postwar institutions" (1991:566). However, *ganguro* girls have cynically adopted the term *yamamba* and use it to refer to themselves, often in the cheeky form *mamba*. The possibility of the Kogal as enacting a female-centered and gender-breaching subculture is significant for its being overlooked or misinterpreted by the mainstream media and by the parent culture. English-language journalists and writers in particular fail to see Kogals as exhibiting a distinctly Japanese Girl-centered aesthetic or sensibility. In *New Yorker* magazine, Rebecca Mead (2002) interprets their style as nothing more than a failed American or faux Western imitative consumption pattern; Pico Iyer claims their stylistic anarchy is "hardly more subversive than the miniskirts that were popular in Tokyo in the 70s" (2000:60). This attitude is also seen in descriptions of other Japanese youth subcultures. Speaking of Japanese B-Girls and B-Boys, as well as the inappropriately linked *ganguro*, one U.S. scholar simply dismissed them, saying "misguided Yellow Negroes are foolish, childish consumers" (Wood 1997:63).

Popular media representations of Kogals began around 1992, but the pivotal moment of definition was in 1993 with the airing of Asahi's television special *Za kogyaru naito* ('The Kogal Night'). It is difficult to separate Kogals from their media representations, since multiple processes contribute to their identity construction. Kogals are agents in the creation of their own subculture even as it is formed in response to the media (Giddens 1979). A similar pattern is reported by Ikuya Sato (1991) in his ethnography of the *bôzôzoku* ('speed tribes'), hot-rodding packs of reckless youth who speed through towns on motorcycles and in cars without mufflers. Sato describes *bôzôzoku* (called *zokki* by Kogals) as engaged in creative language and identity construction that is meant to distinguish them from the mainstream even as they depend on the media for desired notoriety. *Bôzôzoku* frenzy peaked in the early 1980s, but they remain as one of many contemporary youth subcultures. *Bôzôzoku* and Kogals are both viewed as simply occupying a transitional delinquent life stage they will exit with maturity.

Media rhetoric about Kogals achieves two things. It classifies young women into manageable boxes, and it reduces their struggles to create new selves to nothing more than comic endeavors that will eventually blow over once they "grow up." Labels

such as *Kogal*, which has come to denote greedy, witless shoppers, is one way to "record" girls' resistance and then to "recuperate" it through redefinition (Hebdige 1979:94). When famous Kogals do abandon the fashion associated with the subculture, the media celebrates this as proof that the trend is only a transitional adolescent stage. For example, when well-known *Egg* magazine model Buriteri adopted a more conservative look when she turned 20, giving up the *ganguro*'s extreme tan and eye makeup, the weekly scandal magazine *Shukan Bunshun* published an interview with her about the transformation (Connell 2001). Buriteri claimed that she changed her style mainly because she was fed up with the negative responses she got from strangers on the street, such as being called a cockroach or told she was disgusting. That Buriteri is still active in underground culture and even produced an adult video, however, suggests that she has not in fact defected back into the ranks of aspiring Office Ladies or would-be salarymen wives. The revealing term *datsu gyaru* ('give up being a Girl' or 'Girl-culture dropout') indicates that being a Kogal is a lifestyle or an identity and is not simply fashion.

Most Japanese and foreign critics reject the suggestion that Kogals are seriously challenging prescribed ways of enacting gender. They claim that Kogal is only a fashion trend of nonsensical, self-centered youth. Gordon Mathews and Bruce White (2004) note that generational conflict in Japan can be seen as a problem of either history or lifecourse. If it is only a lifecourse issue, the tension between young and old is similar to that in all societies and will not result in any real social change. If it is a matter of history, young people are indeed different from their parents in ways that will produce a changed Japan in the future. The lifecourse approach to generational friction has dominated the field of Japanese studies, and scholars often point to the fact that 1960s student radicals eventually became proper salarymen and salaryman wives. Yet even as generations of middle-class Japanese move into approved age-based categories, they carry new ways of thinking with them (Miller 1998b). Kogals may give up their extreme subcultural identities, but when they enter their adult years they are unlikely to live only for the sake of their husbands and children, as women in Japan have always been taught to do. I believe that Kogals will continue to have a strong sense of self; as Kogals say, *biba jibun* ('Viva the self!').

Conclusion

As a response to a stagnated male-centered society, Kogals have been effective in making ripples on the surface representation of Japanese homogeneity and consensus. By saying this I admit to a certain romanticization of resistance (Abu-Lughod 1990). I believe that Kogal language and behavior undermine patriarchal models of propriety used to evaluate and control women. This is not to say that Kogals subscribe to radical or feminist politics, to which they seem rather indifferent. Yet, to borrow from Abu-Lughod (1990:47), not having any feminist or political agenda nevertheless does not strip Kogal transgressions of value. As members of Japanese society they are enmeshed in the same cultural gender system and its code of sexualized femininity as other women, and regardless of their nature, their rebellions point to a struggle over self-identity and sexual autonomy; resistance "is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power" (Foucault 1978:95–96). Yet as Kogals use language, fashion, and behavior to set themselves apart from the parent culture, they increasingly entangle themselves in a culture of escalating consumerism and materialism. Their particular forms of resistance tie them to beauty work that requires increased consumption (Miller 2000).

This article has presented an unusual example of the centrality of young women in cultural and linguistic trend setting, highlighting assumptions about the gendered nature of subcultural coolness. Describing Euro-American male-dominated youth subcultures, Michael Brake (1980:141) notes that "no distinct models of femininity, which have broken from tradition, have evolved." Even Lauraine Leblanc's (1999) recent study of punk girls' gender resistance places its occurrence firmly within a male

subcultural context. According to linguists such as J. K. Chambers (1995:102), cross-culturally women rarely use stigmatized and nonstandard forms. In contrast, Japanese Kogal art forms, styles, and linguistic creations all arise from a female-centered milieu. The material presented here offers a needed counterpoint to Western geisha fixation and popular linguistic science as found in textbooks, in which Japanese women are usually depicted as well-behaved custodians of honorific and indirect speech.

One reason for Kogals' cultural power is that they present a sort of "symbolic inversion" (Babcock 1978), behavior that inverts cultural models or presents an alternative to them. Perhaps more than young men, Kogals have great flexibility in generating risky innovation and in manipulating images that will contrast with the once culturally celebrated salaryman. Their force in part derives from their negation of what the salaryman had come to symbolize during the postwar decades of economic affluence: the unmarked category of the "typical" Japanese person. A collapse of faith in Japan's male-centered economy and government during the 1990s deflected cultural interest onto women and young people. Although rejection of the salaryman also characterizes young men's styles (Miller 2003b), envy and anger over the economic and cultural power of youth in contemporary Japan is most often channeled into censure of the Kogal and other young women.

Abu-Lughod (1990:46) reminds us that male privilege often operates through codes of sexual propriety and an ideology of natural female modesty and restraint. Male dominance in Japan no longer operates primarily through the family system or through legal prohibitions, but rather through rules of behavior and propriety and the sanctioning effectiveness of the eyes of society (*sekentei*). Good women are supposed to be sensible, modest, nurturing, and respectful. They are thought to naturally speak in nonassertive and hyperpolite ways (Ide 1979). A teenage girl ought not to know about certain things, let alone assume the right to talk about them brashly and openly. The naughty Kogal is possible only because of the ideology of women as repositories of restraint, docility, modesty, and elegance.

I have tried to show that mainstream disapproval of Kogals reflects more than customary intergenerational scorn. Understanding media images of Kogals is important because through them we apprehend the public response to the critical role of women in sustaining capitalist consumerism, and to women's struggles for autonomy and independence. Deborah Cameron (1995) observes that controversies over English language use often serve as a cover for other obsessions, particularly moral and sociopolitical concerns. She suggests that panics about grammar may be interpreted as the metaphorical expression of persistent conservative fears that society is losing the values that underpin civilization. Likewise, Japan's mainstream society, forgetting the prewar Moga debates and the other *furyô shôjo* ('delinquent maidens') sensationalized in women's magazines, views Kogals as exhibiting an unprecedented depravity. Their casual and exploitative attitudes about sex are considered special evidence of the collapse of Japanese culture. It is clear that Japanese anxiety over women's changing roles is often deflected onto bits of language. Dropped *ra*s become a proxy for dropped panties, and published debate about Kogal speech and behavior is aimed not so much at understanding it, but at controlling and curtailing it. The media's angst over the Kogal is really a battle over the redefinition of female body display, sexuality, and selfhood.

What has been argued here is that the Kogal poses a threat to the gender order through her embodiment of criticism of contemporary society. Kogal aesthetics and images have had significant popularity in other parts of Asia, and it will be interesting to see what the consequences will be in the future. Real and media Kogals create a middle ground that could ultimately contribute to a redefinition of girlhood. Even in their marginality, they offer a model for Japanese (and possibly other Asian societies) to imagine the potential for change and for alternative ways of manifesting female identity. Kogals loosen the hold of a mythology of "natural" female restraint, modesty, and delicacy. These misbehaving girls may provide a requisite force for changing Japan's gender ideology.

Notes

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1. A related but older term is *Yanmama*, for young mothers considered part of the *Yankii* ('Yankee') subculture.
2. Long (1996) provides an example from gay slang, *ritsuru* ('manipulate someone to get gifts from them').
3. In 1995, a term arose to describe young women who emulated the distinctive appearance of techno–dance artist Amuro Namie: they were dubbed *amurâ*. Initially I identified this as deriving from the *-â* suffix to mean 'Amuro-ers', but I now think that it is the *-ra* plural suffix, so that the form means 'Amuros' (Miller 2000:201 n. 7).
4. Kogals are just one of many types of disobedient women who have become the focus of media attention (Miller 1998a).
5. "Queen of the Gals" episode aired January 4, 2001, on TV Tokyo. The series is based on the comic by Mihona Fujii (1999).
6. The term *maguro* ('tuna') is also used as a nickname for a female porn star, as well as to mean 'a lousy lay'.
7. Artists in the Edo period (1603–1868) loved to use the *yamamba* as a motif but represented her as a younger, sexy widow with black hair and pale skin.

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