In this innovative and engaging study, Mire Koikari recasts the US occupation of Okinawa as a startling example of Cold War cultural formation, in which women's grassroots activities involving homes and homemaking played a pivotal role in reshaping the contours of US and Japanese imperialisms. Drawing on insights from studies of gender, Asia, America, and post-colonialism, the book analyzes how the occupation sparked domestic education movements in Okinawa, mobilizing an assortment of women – home economists, military wives, club women, university students, homemakers – from the US, Okinawa, and mainland Japan who went on to pursue a series of activities to promote “modern domesticity” and build “multicultural friendship” amidst intense militarization on the islands. As these women took their commitment to domesticity and multiculturalism onto the larger terrain of the Pacific, they came to articulate the complex intertwining among women, race, domesticity, empire, and transnationality in the Cold War.

Mire Koikari is Associate Professor of Women’s Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa.
Cold War Encounters in US-Occupied Okinawa

Women, Militarized Domesticity, and Transnationalism in East Asia

Mire Koikari

University of Hawaii at Manoa
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Note on Japanese names

Japanese names are presented in the conventional Japanese fashion, family names first and given names second. For the Japanese authors who have published in English, their names appear in the Western convention in which given names precede family names. In US-occupied Okinawa where the ruler’s language predominated, many Okinawans, including home economists, frequently produced English-language materials with their names written in Western order. For the sake of readability, Okinawan names appear in the Japanese order. Macrons are used to indicate long vowels. All translations from Japanese-language sources are mine unless otherwise indicated.
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