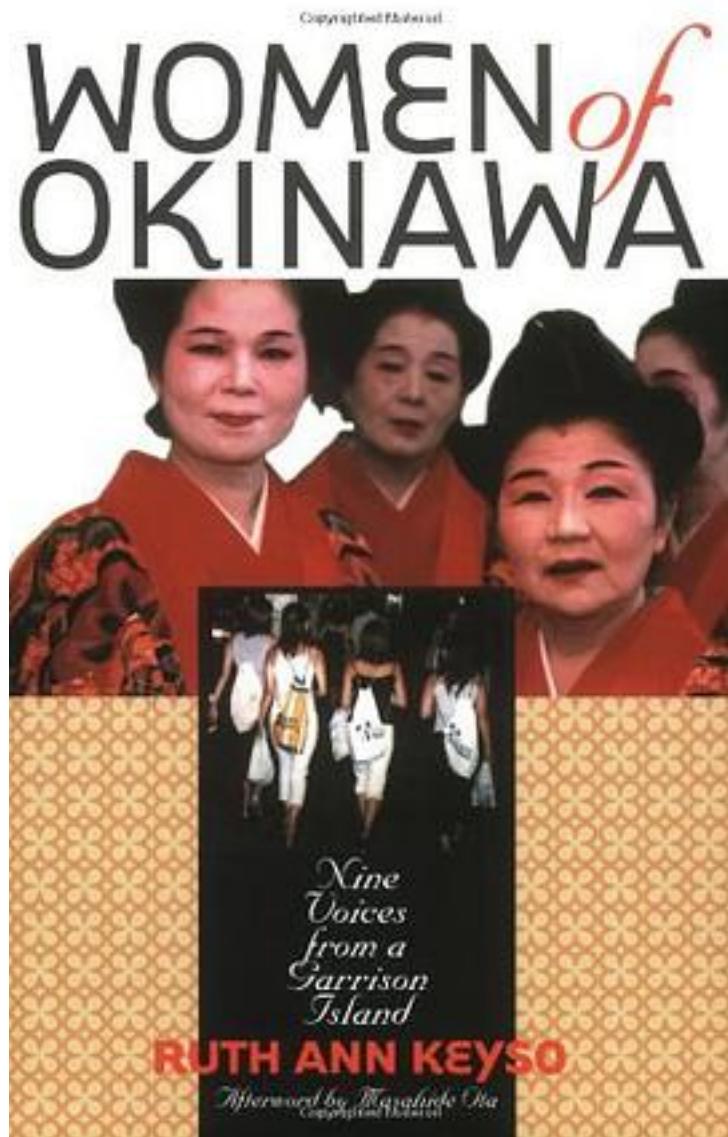


Women of Okinawa



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Since World War II, Okinawa has been an intimate stage where the United States and Japan have acted out dramatic changes in their relationship. The story of that tiny island and its interactions with an enormous U.S. military presence is told here by women from three distinct generations, each with a different account of Okinawan life and the ways that international affairs have transformed the island and its people. Three of the women were born before the Pacific War, and their first memories of Americans are of troops coming ashore with bayonets fixed. A second group, now middle-aged, grew up in the 1950s and 1960s, when massive American bases were a fixture of the landscape. The youngest women, for whom the bases are a historical accident, are in their twenties and thirties, raised in a country increasingly confident of its status as a world power. In conversations with Ruth Ann Keyso, these nine Okinawan women reflect on their lives on a garrison island: on relations with mainland Japan; on their dreams and ambitions for themselves and for their home; on Japanese treatment of ethnic minorities; on the changing role of women in Japanese and in Okinawan society; and on the frictions and pleasures that come from living side-by-side with tens of thousands of U.S. military personnel and their families. Ruth Ann Keyso's compelling account sheds light on contemporary Okinawa, United States-Japan relations, and the small truths revealed by life stories clearly told and well reported.

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