



Fig. 1 Inside front cover of an 1848 edition of *The Treasure Box of Greater Learning for Women* (*Onna daigaku takarabako* 女大学宝箱).

LOVE FOR SALE

Hiroshige III's Instructions on How to Be a Good Wife

Freya Terryn

A woman living in pre-modern Japan was, throughout her life, defined by subordination: to her father as a girl, to her husband during married life, and to her son once widowed. This is known as the 'three obediences' (*sanjū* 三従) and ensured that a woman would serve her husband and faithfully perform her duties as a daughter-in-law. In order for Japanese society to regulate women's roles as wives and daughters-in-law, the education of young girls was key. Throughout the Edo period (1603–1868) there was a vast corpus of printed material aimed at female readers, and instructional manuals for women in particular. These manuals (commonly referred to in Japanese as *joshi yō ōraimono* 女子用往来物 or *jokunsho* 女訓書) were produced and circulated in considerable number, often lavishly illustrated. Most famous was the eighteenth-century Neo-Confucian treatise entitled *The Treasure Box of Greater Learning for Women* (*Onna daigaku takarabako* 女大学宝箱; henceforth *Onna daigaku*; Fig. 1), which underwent the release of twelve editions from 1716 to 1863. In its opening passage, the treatise emphasises that the education of young girls is paramount for women to take on their duties as wives and daughters-in-law: 'Seeing that it is a girl's destiny, on reaching womanhood, to go to

a new home, and live in submission to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, it is even more incumbent upon her than it is on a boy to receive with all reverence her parents' instructions'.¹

Moral treatises like *Onna Daigaku* exerted an extraordinary influence on the woodblock print market, pushing the repertoire of ukiyo-e 浮世絵 far beyond the three classic themes of landscapes (*fūkeiga* 風景画), beautiful women (*bijinga* 美人画), and kabuki actors (*yakusha-e* 役者絵). Following the restriction of ukiyo-e's subject material during the Tenpō Reforms (*Tenpō no kaikaku* 天保の改革; 1841–1843), print publishers were urged by the Tokugawa shogunate to produce designs on loyalty and filial piety, as well as to educate women and children. Due to their widespread popularity and regular reissuing, the influence of these didactic texts, grounded in Neo-Confucianism, extended far into the Meiji period (1868–1912).

Meiji-period artists like Utagawa Hiroshige III (三代歌川広重; 1842–1894) designed various print series serving

¹ Basil Hall Chamberlain, *Things Japanese: Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with Japan for the Use of Travellers and Others*, Second edition revised and enlarged (London: London, K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1891), 454.

A 'Good' Wife Versus a 'Bad' Wife

as models for contemporary women's behaviour.² An example is *An Investigation of Women's Morals* (*Onna teikin ana sagashi* 女庭訓穴さがし; Appendix A), issued in April 1874 by Kobayashi Tetsujirō (小林鉄次郎; trade name Maruya Tetsujirō 丸屋鉄次郎; c.1849–1897). In total, Hiroshige III designed ten prints, alternating five designs of a loving wife, dedicated to serving her husband and in-laws, with five designs of an uncommitted wife. In this way, Hiroshige III's prints differ from the familiar definition of 'love' that centres on feelings of deep affection or fondness for someone. Nevertheless, by focusing on her given role rather than such feelings, the wife could actually end up receiving these affections from her husband and in-laws. Ultimately, these prints, alongside the instructional texts they were based on, offered young girls a fixed formula for receiving love within a rigid society, one that valued gender hierarchy. But what kind of love formula was Hiroshige III selling? What prompted the publication of these prints and how do they fit into the vast array of moral treatises such as *Onna daigaku*? It is precisely these questions that this article seeks to answer.

An Investigation of Women's Morals was published at a time when Hiroshige III was a celebrated landscape artist. Around 1874 he was introduced, alongside other popular figures in the art and entertainment world, in a set of four single sheet prints designed by Toyohara Kunichika (豊原国周; 1835–1900). Listed as Ryūsai Hiroshige 立齋広重 and being honoured for 'landscapes' (*keshiki* 景色), Hiroshige III's specialisation was inscribed as follows: 'as expected he only does designs of (famous) places' (Fig. 2). One could speculate that this public accolade might have prompted Hiroshige III to venture outside of his specialisation with the series *An Investigation of Women's Morals*. In terms of his oeuvre, this was his first series not dedicated to depictions of famous places in Japan or of the capital (*meisho-e* 名所絵).

² For an introduction to Hiroshige III, see Freya Terry, 'What's in a Name? Utagawa Hiroshige III and the Art of Reinventing Oneself,' *Wasshoi* 3 (January 24, 2022): 28–41.



Fig. 2 Toyohara Kunichika (豊原国周; 1835–1900). *Unrivalled Worthies of Tokyo (Tōkei busō taichō soroi)* 東京無双當以長揃; c.1874-1877). Published by Gusokuya Kahei 具足屋嘉兵. Ōban nishiki-e. Hiroshige III can be found on the second row, second from the left.

In order to instruct women on how to receive the love and affection of their husbands and in-laws, Hiroshige III adopted two strategies. To begin with, he exploited the prints' format to juxtapose a 'good' wife with a 'bad' wife: the ten designs were printed in pairs on five single sheets.³ By doing so, he thus created a stark contrast between the two opposing concepts. Furthermore, Hiroshige III employed the device of 'good spirits' (*zendama* 善玉) and 'evil spirits' (*akudama* 悪玉). This device originated in the illustrated book *Great Sales Guaranteed: Quick-Dye Mind Study (Daikokujō uke aiuri: Shingaku hayasomegusa* 大極上請合売心学早染草; 1790), which incorporated the misguided belief known as 'Learning of the Heart-Mind' (*Shingaku* 心学).⁴ In this book, 'good and evil spir-

its' were granted material form – loin-cloth-clad and marked with the Chinese character for good (*zen* 善) or evil/bad (*aku* 悪) written on their bubble-shaped heads – to act as independent forces with the power to control the actions of humans.⁵ Hiroshige III, however, did not depict the wife being pulled from side to side by good and evil spirits like the 1790 illustrated book did, but instead clearly separated them: one scene depicts the wife under the influence of good spirits whereas in the other scene the wife is swayed by evil spirits (Figs. 3 & 4). Not only are the good and evil spirits present in their respective scenes, but they are also, while fully dressed, clinging to the title box and the black-lined frame of the prints.

Notes

³ Hiroshige III's prints are in fact *chūban*-sized engravings printed in pairs on five *ōban*-sized single sheets. Both are standard formats for Japanese woodblock prints, with *chūban* 中判 being half the size of *ōban* 大判 and an *ōban* print measuring approximately 39 by 26.5 centimetres.

⁴ This book was a collaboration between the author Santō Kyōden (山東京伝; 1761–1816) and illustrator Kitao Masayoshi (北尾政美; 1764–1824). It criticised the belief of 'Learning of the Heart-Mind' that an individual was originally good and only went astray due to ethical underdevelopment or the conditions under which they were

living. See Julie Nelson Davis, *Partners in Print: Artistic Collaboration and the Ukiyo-e Market* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 150, 176; Shirane Haruo, ed., *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology, 1600-1900*, Translations from the Asian Classics (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 711.

⁵ Julie Nelson Davis, *Partners in Print: Artistic Collaboration and the Ukiyo-e Market* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015), 157.



Fig. 3 Utagawa Hiroshige III (三代歌川広重; 1842–1894). *Good (above): A Wife Showing Devotion to her Mother-in-Law (Zen: Shūtome kōkō suru nyōbō 善: 主の立腹をなだむる女房) & Evil (below): A Wife Being Cruel to the Child of the Former Wife (Aku: Sensai no ko o jaken suru nyōbō 悪: 恠気ぶかひ女房)* from the series *An Investigation of Women's Morals (Onna teikin ana sagashi 女庭訓穴さがし; April 1874)*. Published by Maruya Tetsujirō 丸屋鉄次郎. *Chūban nishiki-e*.

Fig. 4 Utagawa Hiroshige III (三代歌川広重; 1842–1894). *Good (above): A Wife Soothing the Anger of her Husband (Zen: Omo no rippuku o nadamuru nyōbō 善: 主の立腹をなだむる女房) & Evil (below): A Wife Full of Jealousy (Aku: Rinki fukai nyōbō 悪: 恠気ぶかひ女房)* from the series *An Investigation of Women's Morals (Onna teikin ana sagashi 女庭訓穴さがし; April 1874)*. Published by Maruya Tetsujirō 丸屋鉄次郎. *Chūban nishiki-e*.

Hiroshige III's Love Formula

Through the above-mentioned strategies, Hiroshige III and his publisher Kobayashi were selling an 'old' love formula: the formula that had been successfully promoted by *Onna daigaku* and its numerous reissues. A comparative analysis of the definition of a 'good' and 'bad' wife in Hiroshige III's prints and in *Onna daigaku* reveals that the 1874 prints relied heavily on the filial actions of exemplary women, as described in the 1716 moral treatise (Table 1).

Definition of a 'good wife' based on the prints' title	Overlap with <i>Onna daigaku</i>
A wife soothing the anger of her husband	Should her husband be roused at any time to anger, she must obey him with fear and trembling, and not set herself up against him in anger and frowardness (sic). [...] Should her husband act ill and unreasonably, she must compose her countenance and soften her voice to remonstrate with him; and if he be angry and listen not to the remonstrance, she must wait over a season, and then expostulate with him again when his heart is softened. Never set thyself up against thy husband with harsh features and a boisterous voice!
A wife showing devotion to her mother-in-law	A woman shall be divorced for disobedience to her father-in-law or mother-in-law. [...] After marriage, her chief duty is to honor her father-in-law and mother-in-law – to honor them beyond her own father and mother – to love and reverence them with all ardor, and to lend them with every practice of filial piety. [...] As a woman rears up posterity, not to her own parents, but to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, she must value the latter even more than the former, and tend to them with all filial piety.
A wife who properly offers her opinions	In her dealings with her husband, both the expression of her countenance and the style of her address should be courteous, humble, and conciliatory, never peevish and intractable, never rude and arrogant; – that should be a woman's first and chiefest care.
A good wife who loves all of things	In her capacity of wife, she must keep her husband's household in proper order.
A wife who is kind to her sister-in-law	As brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are the brothers and sisters of a woman's husband, they deserve all her reverence.

Definition of a 'bad wife' based on the prints' title	Overlap with <i>Onna daigaku</i>
A wife full of jealousy	Jealousy is a reason for divorce. [...] Let her never even dream of jealousy. If her husband be dissolute, she must expostulate with him, but never either nurse or vent her anger.
A wife being cruel to the child of the former wife	Ever attentive to the requirement of her husband, she must [...] rear his children.
A wife who carries on with other men	Lewdness is a reason for divorce. [...] strictly adhere to the rule of separation between the sexes; and on no account whatever should she enter into correspondence with a young man.
A wife who boasts about the money she holds	A woman shall be divorced, who, by talking overmuch and prattling disrespectfully, disturbs the harmony of kinsmen and brings trouble on her household. [...] In everything she must avoid extravagance, and both with regard to food and raiment must act according to her station in life, and never give way to luxury and pride.
A wife who does not surrender to the head of the household	A woman has no particular lord. She must look to her husband as her lord, and must serve him with all worship and reverence, not despising or thinking lightly of him. The great life-long duty of a woman is obedience. [...] When the husband issues his instructions, the wife must never disobey them. [...] A woman should look on her husband as if he were Heaven itself, and never weary of thinking how she may yield to her husband, and thus escape celestial castigation.

Table 1 Comparison between Hiroshige III's prints and *Onna daigaku*. The excerpts from *Onna daigaku* derive from the translation provided in Basil Hall Chamberlain, *Things Japanese: Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with Japan for the Use of Travellers and Others*, Second edition revised and enlarged (London: London, K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1891), 456-60.

Although more than 150 years had passed since the publication of *Onna daigaku*, Hiroshige III and Kobayashi were still endorsing its general sentiment that the only qualities befitting a 'good' wife were gentle obedience, chastity, mercy, and quietness. Consequently, four of the professed Seven Reasons that allowed a man to divorce his wife were depicted: if she disobeyed her parents-in-law; if she was lewd; if she was jealous; and if she was prattling on and speaking disrespectfully. Although this was never explicitly stated, readers familiar with the 1716 moral treatise could grasp the underlying meaning behind these illustrations. Alongside *Onna daigaku*, the prints' moralistic voice reminds us of the 1692 encyclopedic text *Great Treasure for Women* (*Onna chōhōki* 女重宝記; Fig. 5), as both warned women against being unfilial to their mothers-in-law, despising their stepchildren, being lustful, being jealous, talking too much, and showing off.

In these didactic texts, and in the 1874 print series, considerable importance was attached to the young wife maintaining good relations with her parents-in-law. Not only was this crucial for a wife to keep her place within the family, but any form of disobedience allowed her husband to divorce her. Hence, caring for the elderly was an important aspect of the definition of a 'good' wife (Fig. 3: top part). If the wife showed devotion to her parents-in-law, for example, by giving her mother-in-law a 'neck-and-shoulder-rub' (*kata-momi* 肩もみ), she would receive praise from her father-in-law: 'Grandmother, we are so blessed because our daughter-in-law is truly sweet.' In this illustration, the wife is surrounded solely by 'good' spirits

who are applauding her loving actions with words such as 'Good job!' and 'Well done!'

The illustration that corresponds to and contrasts the 'good' wife caring for her parents-in-law is a 'bad' wife who despises her stepchild (Fig. 3: lower part). Here, we see a wife about to hit her stepson with a smoking pipe (*kiseru* 煙管) while her husband attempts to stop her. This is in vain, however, as the wife is aided by two 'evil' spirits: one halts the husband from interfering and the other is ready to hit the child with a stick while shouting, 'Hit him! Hit him! What an insufferable brat!' Although the wife is surrounded by 'evil' spirits, 'good' spirits are coming to the rescue of the child as one holds his hand and says, 'Come on, now! Let's quickly run away!' This stark contrast between the 'bad' wife and the 'good' stepson, respectively aided by 'bad' and 'good' spirits, accentuates that here the wife alone is at fault and thus becomes the epitome of a 'bad' wife.

A similar representation of a 'bad' wife returns in Hiroshige III's illustration of jealousy (Fig. 4: lower part). Here as well, the wife, identified as Okami, is surrounded by 'evil' spirits who shout, 'Okami, you cannot lose! Pull yourself together!' With these encouraging words, she turns to her husband: 'So, where did you sleep last night? Let me hear your answer! Ah, I'm so pissed and frustrated!' Despite her agitation, *Onna daigaku* warned its readers that even if the husband was lacking restraint, a wife was never allowed to vent her anger towards him. Thus, because Okami vented her anger, she was to be labelled



Fig. 5 Inside front cover of the 1692 edition of *Great Treasure for Women* (*Onna chōhōki* 女重宝記).

as a 'bad' wife. Still, some compassion for her jealousy is detectable in the words of the female attendant on the far left: 'They've started again. What a nuisance! However, I'm more disgusted by what the husband is saying.' The husband, however, never cared to explain his absence as he was only concerned about his wife letting go of her hold on his kimono while failing to calm her down with the words 'I am so sorrowful that I cannot speak.' Although the husband did not exactly wear his heart on his sleeve, his heart's spirit is sitting to his left, with the Chinese character for heart (*kokoro* 心) written on its bub-

ble-shaped head. It is here that the husband's true emotions are to be found as the lines read: 'I screwed up again. How vexing!' *Onna daigaku* did alert women not to vocalise their jealousy or to unleash their anger, as this would alienate their husbands from them. This is what was happening to Okami: because she was venting her anger, her husband's true emotions were estranged from her, and were only present in spirit.

Why Were These Prints Published?

Hiroshige III's prints were thus built on moral treatises like *Onna daigaku* that described and illustrated the actions of 'good' and 'bad' wives, with the hope of inspiring contemporary women to learn from these models. For this, the words accompanying every character – whether real or imaginary – were essential. The text allows us to grasp the essence of the prints' narrative and to understand what love formula Hiroshige III and his publisher were selling: a formula that remained awfully close to *Onna daigaku*'s. Therefore, the target audience of the prints was similar to that of instructional texts: women of all ages, from young girls learning about wifely duties to women who were already married. These commercially produced prints and instructional texts were a means to both edify and amuse young girls, as they were chiefly written in the phonetic syllabary (*hiragana* 平仮名) to cater to low reading levels, whilst being heavily illustrated. Parents were also potential consumers, as were men, because, in the end, didactic texts and these prints in particular were created by men, for the benefit of men.

Similar to *Onna daigaku*, the prints propagated that in order to receive love, a wife was solely responsible for preserving harmony in the family and that under no circumstances was she justified in disputing anything with her husband or parents-in-law. A small difference can be found in Hiroshige III's approach, as his illustrations are more embellished than the instructional manuals that focused only on statements about how a 'good' wife should feel and behave. By visualising the juxtaposition of a 'good' wife with a 'bad' wife, Hiroshige III reinforced the ideal of a submissive, but loving, wife who needed to act in accordance with

her husband and in-law's wishes. Despite this small difference, Hiroshige III's prints are part of a body of work involving many revisions and reissues of Edo-period moral treatises, which remained extremely popular across the Edo-Meiji divide. In other words, as manuals for women were continuously published, the demand for more variation on moral instructions for women remained high even throughout the 1870s and 1880s. On occasion they even embraced changes in the expectations placed on women. In contrast to the representation of the 'classic' love formula in Hiroshige III's prints, which centered on educating girls in submissiveness, the mid-1870s saw new importance being placed on virtues relating to motherhood. Only one year after the publication of Hiroshige III's prints, Nakamura Masanao (中村正直; 1832–1891) pointed out in the *Journal of the Meiji Six Society* (*Meiroku Zasshi* 明六雑誌) the importance of 'creating good mothers' (*zenryō naru haha o tsukuru* 善良なる母を造る) to benefit the nation. Although this concept gained a stronger foothold from the 1890s onwards under the twin ideals of 'good wife, wise mother' (*ryōsai kenbo* 良妻賢母), it was only after one of the most famous male intellectuals of the Meiji period, Fukuzawa Yukichi (福澤諭吉; 1835–1901), published *On Japanese Women* (*Nihon fujinron* 日本婦人論) in 1885 that general interest in women's issues was piqued.⁶ That being said, it is important to remember the disconnect between the ideals for a 'good' wife, as presented in Hiroshige III's prints, and the actual lived experience in the 1870s.

In the end, Hiroshige III only suggested values to which wives were expected to conform and to which women may have compared their experiences. The love formula that Hiroshige III and Kobayashi were offering was in essence a set of practical and moral guidelines for personal and public life: a promise to receive love and, in a way, advice on how to utilise the few powers 'good' wives had.

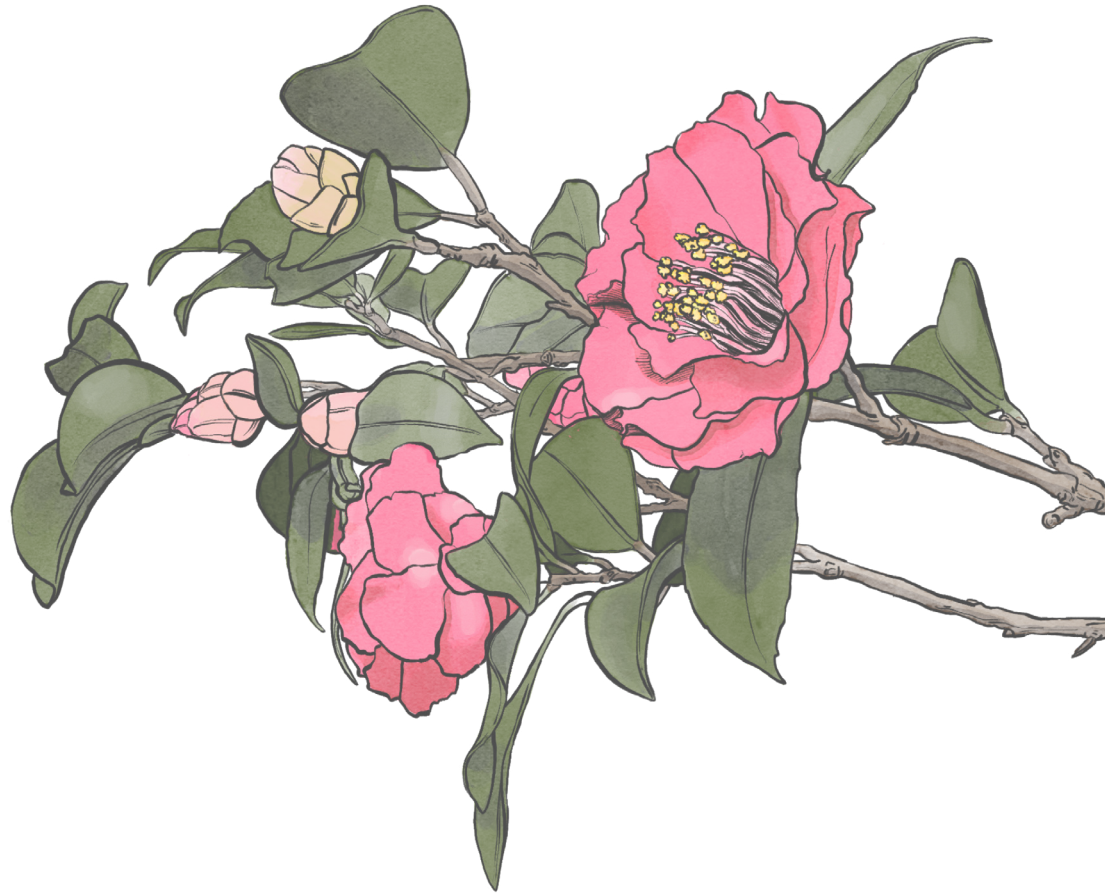
6 For more about the discourse on women and the involvement of the state and non-state actors in the nineteenth century, see, for example, Hiroko Tomida and Gordon Daniels, eds., *Japanese Women: Emerging from Subservience, 1868-1945* (Folkstone: Global Oriental, 2005); Shizuko Koyama, *Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother' in Modern Japan* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2015); Marcia Yonemoto, *The Problem of Women in Early Modern Japan* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016).

Appendix A

Detailed overview of the ten prints illustrating ‘how to be a good wife’ in the print series *An Investigation of Women’s Morals (Onna teikin ana sagashi 女庭訓穴さがし*; published in April 1874 by

Maruya Tetsujirō). The print series actually consists of twenty engravings. Next to the ten designs on ‘how to be a good wife’, another ten designs are dedicated to the good and bad relations between a wife and her landlord. For the purpose of this paper, only the ten designs detailing ‘how to be a good wife’ are listed below.

Number	Title
1	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Good: A Wife Soothing the Anger of her Husband (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Omo no rippuku o nadamuru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:善:主の立腹をなだむる女房)</i>
	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Evil: A Wife Full of Jealousy (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Aku: Rinki bukai nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:悪:恠気ぶかひ女房)</i>
2	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Good: A Wife Showing Devotion to her Mother-in-Law (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Shūtome kōkō suru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:善:姑孝行する女房)</i>
	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Evil: A Wife Being Cruel to the Child of the Former Wife (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Sensai no ko o jaken suru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:悪:先妻の子を邪見にする女房)</i>
3	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: A Wife Who Properly Offers her Opinions (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Misao tadashiku iken suru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:善:貞操たゞしくいけんする女房)</i>
	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Evil: A Wife Who Carries on with Other Men (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Aku: Maotoko o suru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:悪:間男をする女房)</i>
4	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Good: A Good Wife Who Loves All of Things (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Banji aisō no ii nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:善:万事あいそうのい女房)</i>
	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Evil: A Wife Who Boasts about the Money She Holds (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Aku: Mochishūkin o hana ni kakeru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:悪:持集金を鼻にかける女房)</i>
5	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Good: A Wife Who is Kind to her Sister-in-Law (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Zen: Kojūto o itawaru nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:善:小姑をいたはる女房)</i>
	<i>An Investigation of Women’s Morals: Evil: A Wife Who Does not Surrender to the Head of the Household (Onna teikin ana sagashi: Aku: Teishu ni makenu nyōbō 女庭訓穴さがし:悪:亭主にまけぬ女房)</i>



Suggested Readings

Chamberlain, Basil Hall. *Things Japanese: Being Notes on Various Subjects Connected with Japan for the Use of Travellers and Others*. Second edition revised and enlarged London: London, K. Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co., Ltd., 1891 (especially pp. 456–60).

Terryn, Freya. 'What's in a Name? Utagawa Hiroshige III and the Art of Reinventing Oneself.' *Wasshoi* 3 (January 24, 2022): 28–41.

Yabuta, Yutaka. 'The Greater Learning for Women and Women's Moral Education in Tokugawa Japan.' In *The Tokugawa World*, edited by Gary P. Leupp and De-Min Tao, 965–82. London; New York: Routledge, 2021.

Yonemoto, Marcia. *The Problem of Women in Early Modern Japan*. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016 (particularly chapter 2).