



Pink Globalization: Hello Kitty's Trek across the Pacific

Christine R. Yano

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In *Pink Globalization*, Christine R. Yano examines the creation and rise of Hello Kitty as a part of Japanese Cute-Cool culture. Yano argues that the international popularity of Hello Kitty is one aspect of what she calls pink globalization—the spread of goods and images labeled cute (*kawaii*) from Japan to other parts of the industrial world. The concept of pink globalization connects the expansion of Japanese companies to overseas markets, the enhanced distribution of Japanese products, and the rise of Japan's national cool as suggested by the spread of manga and anime. Yano analyzes the changing complex of relations and identities surrounding the global reach of Hello Kitty's cute culture, discussing the responses of both ardent fans and virulent detractors. Through interviews, Yano shows how consumers use this iconic cat to negotiate gender, nostalgia, and national identity. She demonstrates that pink globalization allows the foreign to become familiar as it brings together the intimacy of cute and the distance of cool. Hello Kitty and her entourage of marketers and consumers wink, giddily suggesting innocence, sexuality, irony, sophistication, and even sheer happiness. Yano reveals the edgy power in this wink and the ways it can overturn, or at least challenge, power structures.

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