

Waseda Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies Colloquium Series

2022 Migration Lecture Series

(co-sponsored by Waseda Institute of Asian Migrations)

Hilary Holbrow

Indiana University

LOW MIGRATION, GENDER SEGREGATION, AND GENDER INEQUALITY



Time: April 21 (Thursday),
9:00-10:30 AM JST

Venue: Online via Zoom

Registration: Please click
[here](#) to register to receive a
Zoom link prior to the event,
and [here](#) more info about
this event.

Hilary J. Holbrow is Assistant Professor of Japanese Politics and Society at Indiana University. A sociologist by training, her scholarship examines social and economic inequality, work and organizations, immigration, and the intersections of gender, race, and ethnicity. She is an International Research Fellow at the Canon Institute for Global Studies in Tokyo, an Associate in Research at Harvard's Reischauer Institute, and a member of the US-Japan Network for the Future. Her research has been funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and the Fulbright Program.

The World Economic Forum claims that "Japan's gender gap can be solved through equality from the top!" Acting on this belief, the Kishida government is aiming to fill 30% of leadership positions with women by 2030. These actions and arguments can be traced to the idea that, when women enter management in greater numbers, attitudes towards and treatment of women improve. But what if this has it backwards? What if our attitudes come not primarily from whom we see when we "look up" the organizational hierarchy, but from whom we see when we "look down"? Using novel data from a large Japanese manufacturing firm, Holbrow shows that attitudes towards women are less favorable where women are overrepresented among low-status job holders. She argues that, therefore, low rates of migration likely contribute to Japan's unusually high levels of workplace gender inequality. In most post-industrial societies we see native, minoritized people and immigrants when we "look down" organizational and occupational hierarchies; in Japan, we see Japanese women.