Moen, Darrell Gene. 1997. "The Japanese Organic Farming Movement: Consumers and Farmers United." *Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars* 29, no. 4.
———. 2000. "Grassroots-Based Organic Foods Distributors, Retailers, and Consumer Cooperatives in Japan: Broadening the Organic Farming Movement." *Hitotsubashi Journal of Social Studies* 32:55–76.
Mulgan, Aurelia. 2006. *Japan's Agricultural Policy Regime.* New York: Routledge.
Ortner, Sherry. 2006. *Anthropology and Social Theory.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Polanyi, Karl. 1957 [1944]. *The Great Transformation.* Boston: Beacon Press.
Rosenberger, Nancy. 2001. *Gambling with Virtue: Japanese Women and the Search for Self in a Changing Nation.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
———. 2009. "Global Food Terror in Japan: Risk Perception in Media, Nation and Women." *Ecology of Nutrition and Food* 48, no. 4 (July–August): 237–262. doi: 10.1080/03670240903001100.
———. Forthcoming. *Dilemmas of Adulthood: Japanese Women and the Nuances of Long-Term Resistance.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
"Trade." 2012. USDA Economic Research Service, updated November 15. Www.ers.usda.gov/ topics/international-markets-trade/countries-regions-japan/trade.aspx. Accessed January 6, 2013.
Ueno, Chizuko. 2005. "Datsu aidentitī" (Beyond identity). In *Datsu aidentitī no riron* (Theory of beyond identity), ed. C. Ueno, 1–42. Tokyo: Keisō Shobō.
Williams, Raymond. 1994. "Selections from Marxism and Literature." In *Culture, Power, History,* ed. N. Dirks, G. Eley, and S. Ortner, 585–608. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
"Yūkinōgyō 12,000 ko: Heikinnenrei wa 59 sai" (Organic farm households 12,000: Average age 59). 2011. *Nihon nōgyō shinbun* (Japan agricultural newspaper), July 14, 1.

CHAPTER 5

Shelf Lives and the Labors of Loss

Food, Livelihoods, and Japan's Convenience Stores

GAVIN HAMILTON WHITELAW

A Vignette: The Evening Shift

AT 8 P.M. in Daily, a *konbini* (convenience store) in central Tokyo, a young clerk places a shopping basket at his feet and begins examining the prepared foods arranged inside the store's open refrigerated cases (see figure 5.1).[1] His task is to comb the shelves and remove all "loss" *(rosu)*—food products nearing expiration. The clerk starts with the packaged rice balls *(onigiri).* He turns the first item over and scrutinizes the consume-by date *(shōhikigen)* printed in bold on the white label stuck to the back of the package. Methodically but with considerable speed, he works his way through shelf after shelf of sandwiches, *obentō* (rice- and noodle-based lunch boxes), single-serve salads, and chilled desserts. Each item gets inspected. Most items remain on the shelves, but some do not. When the clerk's mission concludes at a heat-lamp-warmed case incubating deep-fried snacks, there are two shopping baskets filled with nearly ¥8,000 ($88) in perishable food products resting at his side.[2] Combined, the baskets are worth about as much as his take-home pay for a double shift. Gripping one basket in each hand, the clerk staggers behind the counter and into the back room, or backyard *(bakkuyādo),* of the store, where Wakamatsu, Daily's senior manager *(senmu)*, sits at a desk in front of the store's computer. The clerk deposits the baskets on the floor beside Wakamatsu and returns to the counter.

Wakamatsu is a heavyset, middle-aged man and the youngest son of a shop owner family. He is also a fifteen-year veteran of the convenience business. Reaching into the basket closer to him, he plucks a fried noodle *(yakisoba) obentō* out and presses a barcode reader to the label. *Beep!* The item appears on the monitor, and Wakamatsu strikes the "enter" key with his index finger, officially registering the unsold product as "food waste" *(shokuhin haiki)*. Although on the computer screen the *yakisoba* lunch box moves with digital seamlessness from the world of commodities into the realm of trash, the product itself does not go directly into the garbage. Wakamatsu places it into an empty basket on a chair to his right and grabs another product from the stack of food to be processed. The beeps of the scanner and the clicks of the keyboard are punctuated by short grunts as Wakamatsu bends in his chair to scoop up item after item. Upon recording the contents of the first basket, he pauses to stretch. After staring for a moment at the growing pile of decommissioned food, he reaches over and selects a fried pork cutlet sandwich. He tears the package open, takes a few bites, swallows, and then turns back to face the next basket of loss waiting at his feet.

Scenes such as this are commonplace among Japan's forty-seven thousand convenience stores, or *konbini*, as these shops are popularly known. Japan's major chains are concerned about freshness and food safety and stipulate that store franchisees must adhere to a strict policy of collecting, recording, and disposing of unsold food products on or nearing their consume-by date. Such practices contribute to staggering statistics about Japan's annual food waste. According to a 2013 newspaper editorial, Japan discards between 17 million and 23 million tons of food each year; 23 million tons of food is worth ¥11 trillion, equivalent in yen to Japan's total annual agricultural output ("An Appalling Waste of Food" 2013). In just a single twenty-four-hour period, Tokyo alone generates six thousand tons of food waste (ibid.). This is enough food to sustain approximately one-third of the city's own population for an entire day. Household food waste and loss resulting from the production and distribution process are also included in these statistics. The convenience store is readily singled out, however, for the role it plays. In 2003, Japan's Ministry of Agriculture reported that six hundred thousand tons of Japan's food waste were "loss" recorded by convenience stores and supermarkets. The amount of food waste generated annually by this segment of the retail industry alone can feed a city

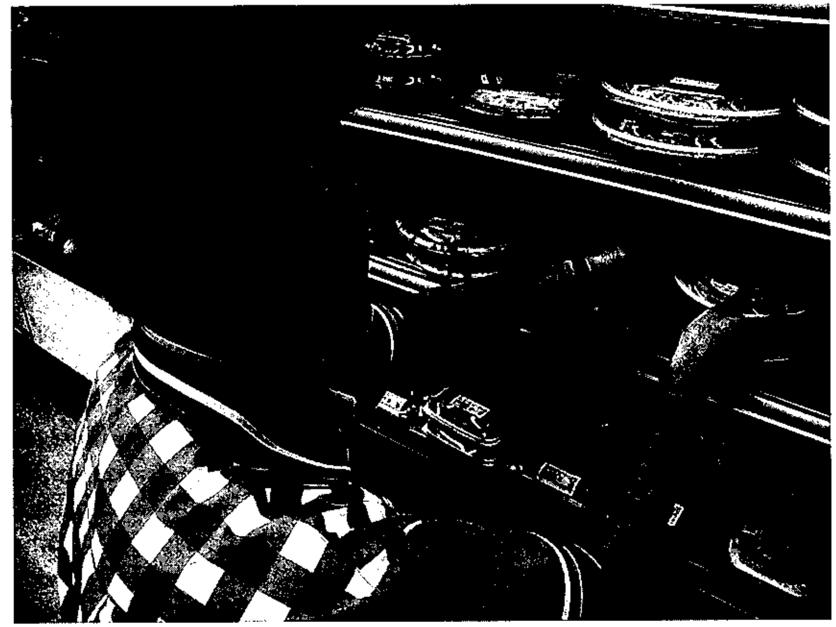

FIGURE 5.1

Gavin Whitelaw arranging and checking store lunch box selections

of 3 million people for a year at the minimum daily nutritional requirement levels set by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Ōsako 2005, 1).

Sobering data on unsold products and food waste expose the darker side of convenience culture and are a sharp counterpoint to media-driven depictions of convenience stores as rationalized retail cornucopias. But while these stores may epitomize "disposable society" *(tsukaisute shakai)* in Japan, a significant portion of unsold convenience store food does not wind up in the garbage. Many store owners and workers take issue with the rules regulating how food products are to be treated in their post-shelf lives. Franchise operators, like Wakamatsu, are disturbed by the sheer wastefulness of throwing out perfectly edible products that they are essentially buying from the chain headquarters. They ignore corporate directives and turn to eating their losses—literally. Although recorded as waste, a wide range of prepared and packaged convenience foods—rice balls, *obentō*, sandwiches, salads, *oden* (hot stews), desserts, bread products, milk—actually make their way into the mouths of owners, their families, their staff, and others. In this chapter, I explore food—unsold yet edible food—as a site of uncertainty, discomfort, and even negotiation for those running one of the most rationalized and efficient retail systems on the planet. Digging deeper into issues of disposability that are so readily associated with the convenience store, I examine post-commodity consumption practices and behind-the-counter gleaning to understand how store owners and staff struggle with and informalize a highly formal retail system.

Convenience Stores, Shelf Life, and the Logistics behind Loss

Convenience stores are a ubiquitous component of Japan's neighborhood commercial landscape. Based on an American convenience store franchise model introduced to Japan in the late 1960s and early 1970s, these stores have transformed Japan's distribution system and modernized its small shop sector by turning aging mom-and-pops into state of the art minimarts—late modern iterations of the general store *(yorozuya)* that offer an ever-evolving array of products and services meticulously tuned to the changing needs of consumers. But unlike the rural general store, convenience stores are a formidable commercial force. Currently, the industry generates ¥9 trillion ($96 billion) in sales annually (JFA 2012), outranking Japan's department store sector in terms of profitability. From only a few chains and a small number of stores in the 1970s, Japan has reached convenience store super-saturation *(hōwa jōtai)*. According to 2007 statistics from the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI), Tokyo is one of the most *convenienced* landscapes in Japan, with one store for every 2,300 people. Nara Prefecture, on the other hand, is near the bottom of the list, where there is still only one store for every 4,000 residents.

In the 2000s, industry analysts labeled the intense domestic competition among chains as the beginning of Japan's "convenience store war era" *(konbini no sengokujidai)*. Battle lines still smolder on urban street corners and suburban neighborhoods where chains struggle for dominance by opening multiple stores within a short distance of one another to drive out or ward off competition. Wakamatsu's store was situated in the midst of one Tokyo convenience store battleground. In the spring of 2005, over ten stores competed for customers within a five-hundred-meter radius of Daily's front door. Analysts have a name for this kind of commercial situation as well: *konbini jigoku*, or convenience store hell (Fukunaga 1999, 5).[3]

In the age of cutthroat street corner competition, food remains a critical weapon. Three-quarters of all convenience store sales are either food or drink, with prepared and packaged foods, such as rice balls, *obentō*, and sandwiches, consuming the largest share and offering one of the largest profit margins (Chiba et al. 2005, 11–12). In the case of *obentō*, for example, the stores stock an average of fifteen varieties each day and sell upward of 130 boxes in a twenty-four-hour period (2005, 16). Since the convenience store's humble beginnings in backwater industrial urban neighborhoods, prepared foods like rice balls (Whitelaw 2006) and *obentō* and their constant improvement and reinvention have given chains a means for attracting new customers and differentiating themselves from other stores in the industry.

Taste, freshness, safety, and seasonality are critical ingredients for selling food in Japan's highly competitive and fussy consumer market and convenience store companies pay considerable attention to product freshness and appearance. In compliance with government standards, all prepared foods sold in convenience stores are labeled with a production date and consume-by date and time *(shōhikigen)*. By the time many prepared foods reach the store, they often have less than twenty-four hours of shelf life remaining. In contrast, packaged foods, like instant coffee, *sembei* (rice crackers), and bottled water are stamped with a "best-before" date, or *shōmikigen*. Best-before dates are typically much longer—half a year or more in some cases—and the rules governing the handling and sale of expired products are less strict. Because of the small amounts of packaged products stocked at any one time and the high turnover rate in product sales, owners in the convenience stores where I did my research were typically less concerned about best-before dates. They did, however, keep careful watch over the consume-by dates on prepared foods, milk, and bread products.

The sales window for prepared foods is shortened further still by precautionary measures that particular convenience store chains impose upon themselves. Uncertain when a customer will eventually consume his or her purchases, some chains stipulate that all *obentō*, rice balls, and sandwiches be removed from the shelves two hours ahead of the expiration date printed on the package. Loaves of bread are pulled a day before the expiration date and milk four days before the expiration date. With new products being delivered morning, noon, and night, the task of inspecting expiration dates takes place as frequently as ten times per day.

The management of freshness *(shinsenkanri)* is an important component of and driving force behind the convenience store's highly integrated production and distribution system. The critical synapses and surveillance for the system are Point of Sales (POS) terminals, computerized cash registers connected to a store computer that allow retailers to keep track of sales and profits, manage stock, and gather critical customer marketing data with every transaction. Through product bar codes and the POS system, retail information can be exchanged in real time among stores, the chain headquarters, food manufacturers, and distribution centers. However, for store stock and profits to be accurately calculated, even items that are not sold must still be accounted for. As was seen in the case of Daily above, such products are removed from the shelves and recorded (see figure 5.2). Unlike damaged items that can be returned for credit, loss that results from stealing or products that cannot be sold because their shelf life has expired is the responsibility of the store owner and not reimbursable under the franchise contract. The store owner must bear the entire cost of the product as if he had purchased the item as a customer.

FIGURE 5.2
Convenience store worker decommissioning unsold food in the store's backyard

Although in some stores shoplifting is a major problem, the most common source of loss is food products that have passed their consume-by date. According to one industry insider, most store owners can expect losses to total between 3 and 5 percent of their average daily sales—about ¥10,000–20,000 ($105–215). If a store has ¥400,000 ($4,300) in sales per day, then within a month-long period, approximately one entire day's worth of sales is *lost* to "loss" (Takada and Masumitsu 2009, 1). While owners may carry insurance to guard against devastating losses in the event of a flood, fire, or prolonged power failure, none can afford a policy to compensate for every expired rice ball.

The Real Pain of Loss

Convenience store owners accept loss as part of the risk they take in this line of work. Profit and loss are two sides of the same coin. Shelves must have products to attract customers, and freshly packaged foods offer one of the highest profit margins among convenience store commodities. While the store's computerized ordering and marketing system is designed to take much of the guesswork out of retail, often it is the owner's local knowledge, attention to factors such as weather, and willingness to take risks by ordering more or less of a given product that push a day's sales into the black.

Store owners get support and advice (known in the industry as "backup") when it comes to things like food ordering. Through the use of sales representatives (or SVs), store chain headquarters work with individual franchisees to analyze the buying habits of their customers and adjust product ordering to boost store sales and profits. SVs visit stores several times a week and are likely to encourage owners to order more product rather than less. The store's computerized ordering and sales system permits owners to know almost immediately if a product sells out before a new shipment arrives. The chain headquarters knows as well. The SV may then chide the owner for missing a valuable sales opportunity due to lack of stock, known as "chance loss." From the company's perspective, as competition among rival chains grows more fierce, empty shelves and missed sales opportunities are a greater threat to brand image and chain profit than unsold food. Under the chance loss logic, only by having some loss can the owner and the chain be certain that the store reached its potential of selling as much as it could of a particular product during a certain period of time. Despite the postindustrial efficiency of the just-in-time distribution system, loss is not simply unavoidable, but also desirable and, in fact, healthy for the bottom line. For the store owner, negotiating a balance between possible chance loss and the more visible loss due to product overstock is a daily struggle. For some franchisees, edible loss is the harsher of the two to swallow. Moral discomfort with food going to waste is part of the reason. But the unsold food is also a tangible sign of how little risk the chain headquarters will accept. The store owner pays for the unsold product and its disposal; the company still takes its portion of the profit.

Franchisees are willing to accept the responsibility for loss, but as store owners, they often harbor resentment concerning the policies that franchise headquarters take toward unsold products. One issue is with the way in which loss is calculated. Ambiguity in most contracts leaves the franchisee bearing the brunt of the cost for unsold food products. When a store owner pays for loss, he also pays the headquarters a royalty fee that is embedded in the selling price of the item. Critics of the convenience store system refer to this fee as a *rosu chāji* (literally "loss charge"). Ishii Itsurō, a Tokyo lawyer fighting the loss charge practice, argues that the system of embedded fees on food is "convenient for the corporation that desires to minimize its risks by charging the store owner for an item whether the product is sold or not" (Ishii 2006, 12). The corporations counter such a claim by pointing out that the fee—to their eyes a penalty—is necessary to keep owners mindful of their ordering practices and safeguard against owners selling merchandise under the counter for a profit. Similarly, chains also frown upon and in some cases forbid the practice of discounting product that is near its consume-by date, also called "time sale reduction" *(mikirihanbai)*. Large chains have been some of the most adamant opponents to this practice, which is common among independent shops and large supermarkets sometimes owned by the parent companies of these same chains. Corporate spokesmen claim that the practice is detrimental to store profits and undermines a guiding principle of the convenience store—customers' willingness to pay a small premium for the convenience of "twenty-four-hour, year-round" *(nenjūmukyū)* access to products and services. Slashing the price on food products would hurt store owners and the company alike by further stoking the flames of competition, altering customer expectations, disrupting established buying patterns, reducing food sales, and adding even more tasks to the workload of the convenience store management. Japan's largest convenience chain, 7-Eleven, told one group of questioning store owners that if all 7-Eleven stores nationwide (some 14,883 units in 2013) began practicing time sale reductions, the company "would go bankrupt" (Takada and Masumitsu 2009, 1).

Chains' rules that all unsold food should be thrown away further aggravate owners. Chains make efforts to ensure that food freshness standards are strictly maintained by all franchises. The store headquarters is concerned about the potentially damaging effects that a food poisoning case would have to the chain's brand image and individual store sales. To prevent old food from being sold and eaten, the chains maintain that the safest policy is for unsold food to be taken off the shelves, removed from its packaging, and disposed of in the trash. The rigorous multi-week owner-training courses that new franchisees must undergo reinforce the importance of properly discarding food. Course instructors will point out that an owner seen eating expired food or engaging in the practice of giving away loss to store employees risks setting a dangerous precedent among the store staff that may lead to workers taking food for themselves.

Owners are not blind to the fact that by "properly" disposing of all unsold food, they ensure that their workers will be more likely to become their customers and buy store food. Despite corporate appeals to consider brand protection, store liability, and the potential for profit, the sheer waste of throwing away thousands of yen in edible food a day weighs heavily on the consciences of many store owners. The term that owners most commonly used to sum up this feeling was *mottainai;* the term means "waste," but it also carries connotations of shame, even disgrace, for not giving a material object the proper respect it deserves. One book dedicated to the term framed *mottainai* thus: "Everything that exists is the result of someone's hard work and the time spent on it—it has a history. *Mottainai* embodies an appreciation of that history from those on the receiving end. That is why *mottainai* reflects a sense of guilt for the end-user when he/she lets things go to waste" (Planet Link 2005, 9). In 2005, the popularity of the term was further invigorated with the visit of the Kenyan activist and Nobel Prize laureate Wangari Maathai to Japan. On a speaking tour organized by the *Mainichi Shinbun*, a major national newspaper, Maathai embraced the phrase, saying that it captured in one term the "4Rs"—reduce, reuse, recycle, and repair—which have long been the focal point of grassroots initiatives to protect and restore the environment (Planet Link 2005, 5).

In the interactions and interviews I conducted in 2004 and 2005 with convenience store owners, I found *mottainai* was most prevalently used among those in their late forties to early sixties. Having grown up in Japan's immediate postwar period, when soaring food costs and scarcities of rice, meat, and vegetables were a fact of daily life, they or their parents would have known privation, and the sight of good food being thrown out would be something hard to bear.

An After-Shelf Life

As noted, in defiance of the manual and their training, owners—young and old alike—frequently take loss for their own consumption and offer it to the workers at their stores. The dozen owner-run convenience stores with which I had substantial contact during the course of my research threw away only a fraction of the products that had reached their consume-by date. In each store, staff members were allowed to glean their lunches, dinners, and snacks from the baskets of loss once the products had been recorded. In some of the stores, the owner or owner's spouse was responsible for processing the loss. Immediately after the recording process was complete, they helped themselves to the food that they wanted, placing it on a desk or sometimes in a plastic bag to take home. The remainder of the loss was then made available to the staff. In Daily, where I worked as a clerk, the staff established a pecking order. Veteran staff chose the food they wanted first, followed by junior staff, and finally the new recruits. It was commonly a junior staff member who explained the policy on loss gleaning to the new recruit, frequently adding a comment such as, "This is actually not supposed to be done, but. . ."

In my interviews with store clerks and observations of behind-the-counter activities, there was very little evidence to suggest that the consumption of loss by owners and store staff was detrimental to the work ethic. To the contrary, loss distribution may have helped strengthen bonds and employee loyalty by creating opportunities for backroom commensality. While eating a "loss" lunch during a shift break, one college student who worked several mornings a week at Daily explained how he privately calculated the free foods he received into his hourly wage. He joked that the only time he could afford a convenience store lunch *(konbini obentō)* was when he worked at the store and received the product for free.

In Tokyo, where convenience stores are plentiful and part-time job opportunities are, literally, just around the next corner, young people interested in clerking positions categorize stores according to owner attitudes toward food and gleaning. It is an owner's lenient approach to loss that may help strengthen part-time workers' tenuous commitments to a store. Free food came up when students and *furītā* (young, part-time workers not in school) talked about why they continued to work at a particular store. It even led several workers I interviewed to recommend clerking positions to their friends when the store was struggling to fill shifts. Such worker-initiated recruitment might be seen as a form of reciprocity for the free meals being given. Loss distribution practices revealed the kinds of personal networks that workers maintained. A Chinese exchange student who worked night shifts and on weekends at Daily regularly hauled home several bags worth of food and shared it with the other students he lived with in a rundown dormitory-style building a few blocks from the store. The student would sometimes jokingly refer to Daily as his "kitchen." When the store was short-staffed, the student took on additional shifts and began introducing his friends to Wakamatsu as potential recruits. At one point in my fieldwork, five workers out of Daily's twenty-one-member crew were "recommendees" of this one Chinese student.

For certain store owners and managers with family backgrounds in neighborhood commerce, a disposition toward recycling and eating unsold food was a part of the merchant lifestyle, a kind of shopkeeper *habitus* ingrained in the selling of perishable products. I talked to Wakamatsu about convenience foods and unsold product one night while we walked home to our respective apartments after the evening shift. Wakamatsu was on orders from his doctor to reduce his weight and get more exercise and had taken to commuting to and from the store on foot rather than by train. As we strolled along the empty city street, passing convenience stores on almost every block, he reminded me that he was the son of a sweetshop *(wagashiya)* owner. What gets made doesn't always sell, and consuming and giving away food was, for him, common practice. He recounted a story from the early days of his family's convenience store contract. There was a weekend summer fireworks festival planned not far from where the family had their new store. Tens of thousands of visitors were expected to surge through the neighborhood on their way to the event, and the Wakamatsu family adjusted the daily food orders accordingly. Weekends were typically slow times for the store, but because the fireworks would be on a Saturday night, Wakamatsu purposefully overordered "practically a month's worth" of prepared foods and bottled drinks. So much food was on hand, in fact, that it couldn't be put on the shelves when it arrived and instead had to be squirreled away in the store's walk-in cooler where drinks were stored and chilled. The family anticipated a very profitable weekend.

When Saturday arrived, however, the weather was overcast and thunderstorms were predicted by evening. By midday the rain had already started, and the fireworks festival was canceled by the city, leaving the Wakamatsu store with a mountain of perishable food and few customers until Monday. Wakamatsu and his family froze what food they could. "We ate nothing but *obentō* until October," he joked. What they couldn't freeze they gave away to neighbors and friends. It was an expensive lesson for Wakamatsu and one that even a few neighbors still recall.

*Konbini*zation and the Wider World of Waste

"Observant participation" (Wacquant 2003, 2005) in the convenience store culture had its gustatory dimensions for me as an anthropologist. I was given and ate a lot of loss over nearly two years of ethnographic research. Following an interview with a family running a Lawson convenience store in Shizuoka early on in my study, the owner's wife, who was also the store's *tenchō* (manager), rushed out to the street as I was leaving and pressed a bag of expired rice balls and bread snacks into my hand, apologizing that there wasn't more to offer me but noting that these foods would keep me from getting hungry on the train. Only a half hour before, I had observed her decommissioning the food in the shop's backyard.

Halfway through my fieldwork when I was fully embedded as a store clerk (see Whitelaw 2008), the convenience store became my kitchen. This experience intensified my appreciation for the various roles that loss plays in the life of this institution. For one month I consciously lived out of these stores, using them not just for work but also as a place to find sustenance, socialize, and relax. I conducted most of my financial transactions there, posted all my mail in them, arranged to meet people at the stores, and made ample use of their bathrooms and trash receptacles. I referred to the experiment as "*konbini*zation."

My intentional embrace of convenience-store-as-life-support was not without precedent. Since the mid-1990s, Japanese authors have explored the possibilities of the convenience store diet (see *Kon'ya mo konbini ga yamerarenai!* 1994). Clerking at a store provided me, however, with an opportunity for far greater immersion. Another obvious influence on my methodological turn was the film *Supersize Me*, a "shockumentary" by director Morgan Spurlock in which he chronicles a month of him eating nothing but McDonald's food. However, my interest in *konbini*zation differed from the approach Spurlock took in his film. I was less interested in a gratuitous, belly-churning exposé on the legal, financial, and physical costs of Japan's convenience food hunger. Spurlock's investigative punch was in drastically altering his lifestyle to accentuate the habits of the average American. He limited his daily exercise and diet while increasing his visits to not one but three doctors for their professional opinions on how his health was faring as he ate his way through

ninety-three consecutive McDonald's meals. The study I envisioned demanded a different set of parameters. I wanted to keep doing what I was already doing (studying convenience stores) but do it more intensively and consciously than my initial methodological structure allowed. Also, restricting myself merely to food was too narrow a focus considering all the functions convenience stores fulfill in people's daily lives.

After two full weeks of *konbini*zing, my refrigerator flushed itself out and reached a steady state of near emptiness. All the food products fit on the top shelf. For the first time in my life, I knew exactly what my refrigerator contained. But by the end of the second week, I was also feeling a pinch. Not in the stomach but in the wallet. I ate mostly prepared foods, and my daily consumption was costing me between ¥1,800 and ¥3,000 ($19–32). Such costs encouraged me to take on more shifts at Daily and accept more unsold food. I froze the food that I couldn't consume immediately, a technique I had gleaned from my conversation with Wakamatsu mentioned above. On occasion, I would give unsold food to my landlord. He was grateful and never refused my offers. Meeting a friend for dinner became harder a few weeks into my project, when acquaintances got sick of my warm invitations to dine at Family Mart or 7-Eleven, so I focused my convenience commensality on "loss" meals during my store breaks. I lingered after my shifts to nibble and chat. It felt nourishing not to be alone, even in the dim, cramped confines of the store's backyard.

During my month-long immersion in convenience life, I also took to throwing away much of my waste in store trash cans. In the course of just the first week of convenience living, I amassed twenty-eight plastic bags; six plastic straws; thirteen pairs of chopsticks; eleven plastic spoons of various sizes; a few plastic forks; and two ten-liter trash bags of plastic plates, covers, cellophane wrapping, and PET bottles (recyclable plastic bottles). In Tokyo, almost all convenience chains take part in municipal recycling programs. Whereas in the United States one is lucky to find a recycling bin outside a store, in Japan there are several containers for different types of recyclables: non-combustibles (plastic products, Styrofoam material); combustibles (newspapers, magazines, food products); cans and glass bottles; and PET bottles. Whether a plastic bag is a combustible or non-combustible depends on the person who is doing the discarding, but I found that the non-combustible trash can was usually brimming with bags, and many of the bags were from different chains than the store whose trash can I was using.

On my daily visits to store waste bins, I also crossed paths with people, usually men, tugging small carts or suitcase dollies with cardboard boxes lashed to them. These people paid quick visits to the combustible trash cans and fished out magazines and comic books. They didn't dig or pull trash out. Like a bee collecting nectar, they hovered for a moment, popped one hand into the mouth of the receptacle, and then withdrew the item they wanted. In a blink of an eye, they were off down the sidewalk to the next convenience store. On one occasion, I followed a particular gleaner on his rounds starting at Daily. His pace wore me out, but thanks to him, I learned the location of half a dozen new stores. Japan's *rojōseikatsusha* (people living on the street) earn part of their living by gleaning and recycling from convenience store trash cans (see figure 5.3). In addition to magazines, the street people also collect cans that they redeem for money. Until 2006, one kilogram of cans earned the collector ¥116 (around $1 at that time), though the rate fluctuated (Sakaguchi 2007, 43). Can competition around convenience stores is fierce according to a street couple interviewed by architect and activist Sakaguchi Kyōhei. Tokyo convenience stores, including Daily, typically lock their large trash bins in order to guard against waste and recyclables being disturbed by humans and animals, including the city's sizable crow population (Kirby 2011). As a way around these measures, some street people establish private agreements with store owners to allow them access to cans and other "recyclables"—including unsold food.

Several studies have been conducted to examine the patterns of people living on the street. In 1995, the forced eviction of thousands of street people from major parks around Osaka prior to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit and a similar roundup before the 2002 World Cup Soccer Tournament prompted economists at Osaka University to study why street people congregate in certain urban areas. The project team members were surprised to find that convenience store density and access are statistically more important in street life settlement patterns than proximity to welfare offices or even public hospitals (Suzuki 2002). In 2005, members of the same team assisted with a survey of street people in Tokyo's Sumida Ward. Eight percent of the six hundred people surveyed in this study specifically reported eating expired convenience store food (Mizuta et al. 2005, 37). Much of this food may not have come from the trash but reached the street people through the backdoor beneficence of store owners and staff, an activity memorialized in the award-winning film *Nobody Knows (Dare mo shiranai)*. In the film, based on a true story, four abandoned children living in the Tokyo metropolitan area survive in their suburban neighborhood through the largesse of

FIGURE 5.3
Gleaning from a convenience store's trash can

sympathetic convenience store attendants who take pity and share what is presumably unsold food.

Loss and Affect

My *konbini*zation project brought me into more frequent contact with the workers and owners of convenience stores in my neighborhood. I visited the store around the corner from where I lived almost every day. I purchased mostly milk and rice balls at that store, and I made a lot of photocopies there as well, having found the quality of the photocopier to be the best in the area—even better than that in the convenience store next to the public library where I borrowed most of my books and magazines. In a month's time, the store become my "third place" (Oldenburg 1989), a point of regular social interaction outside of work and home. But not for long. Soon after my *konbini*zation experiment ended, the store owner, Aoki, whom I had come to know over the course of daily visits, offered me a job working at his store. He knew that I was doing research on convenience stores and didn't mind. The job offer came with an opportunity to study the management practices of yet another convenience store.

Convenience stores are standardized retail formats, and there was much that was familiar to me when I put on a new uniform and started working. But there were differences as well. Aoki's management style and approach to ordering food was one example. When ordering food, which Aoki did alongside his wife, the couple relied less on the store computer and the number of items that the store computer recommended they order and more on a handwritten log they kept in a three-ring binder. Maintaining an accurate record in this log book was important to the store, and the couple trained their staff on how the data were to be collected. Recording loss in the three-ring binder was part of the store's informal management.

Despite efforts to reduce the amount of unsold food, it was impossible for the Aokis to avoid loss. Unsold food was not discarded but taken for consumption. The redistribution of store loss took two forms. First, certain items were given strategically to particular customers. Such giveaways, known as *omake*, are long-standing merchant practices in Japan. They are a display of preferential service bestowed upon customers to both thank them for their patronage and encourage their continued loyalty. Although the convenience stores' emphasis on "dry" customer relations and a strict accounting system curbs this practice, owners like Aoki could and did use expired food products to add flavor and character to the standardized service provided by their store.

The deliveryman who received packages of pastry while purchasing lunch is a particularly interesting case. Several months prior to my starting my second clerking job, the chain to which Aoki belonged cut off contract relations with this deliveryman's company when the chain decided to become a vendor for a new package delivery system offered by Japan Post. All at once, the chain's several thousand stores nationwide ceased to accept package delivery orders from this company. But the bad blood between the chain headquarters and the package delivery firm did not prevent the deliveryman from occasionally dropping by Aoki's store to buy food and drink. On such occasions, Aoki would relieve me at the counter and slip an expired package of sweet rolls into the deliveryman's bag of purchases. Both men nodded their bows, but no words were exchanged.

The Aoki couple also consumed loss and shared it with their employees,

yet they did so in a way that drew them together with the staff. Instead of their simply handing out unsold food to workers, the food was incorporated into home-cooked meals. (Preparing and sharing meals with employees is far from rare in the world of Japanese small business.) The couple would ferry unsold food items into their apartment, where Aoki's wife would transform rice balls into steaming plates of fried rice. Expired tofu went into freshly made miso soup or *mābōdofu*, a flavorful Chinese dish. *Obentō* were disassembled and recombined with other ingredients into full meals on proper porcelain plates. In the dozens of meals I shared with the Aokis and other workers, not once did disposable chopsticks appear on the table. If I had not seen the food leaving the store and the plastic packages and the evidence left by wrappers piled on the kitchen counter of the apartment, I would not have known that lunch was loss. Without children of their own, the Aokis found a certain satisfaction in eating with others. Aoki admitted that not everyone was appreciative of their approach, but the workers who remained as employees mentioned that being served a meal distinguished the Aoki's operations from establishments where they had worked, convenience stores included.

Living Out of the Trash

While some owners, like the Aokis, were able to transform loss into a convivial mode of survival, other families struggled. For the Ishiguros, loss became a metonym for personal dissolution and despair. Ishiguro Kazuhiko and his wife, Keiko, were approaching their sixties when they became convenience store franchisees for one of Japan's largest chains. Kazuhiko was nearing his retirement, and he started to ponder a fresh approach to the decades that lay ahead. He had worked as a salaryman for the same company for thirty years, was restless in his job, and yearned for a new challenge without a large amount of risk. Owning a convenience store came to mind. He and his wife looked into various chains, focusing on the more well-known store chains, which boasted considerable instruction and "backup" for their franchisees. "We didn't have any experience. We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into," Kazuhiko said in retrospect.

Kazuhiko admitted that the convenience business fit well with a larger hope he had for his family. Both of Kazuhiko's children were settled abroad. His son was working for an American company, and his daughter was about to begin graduate school. He and his wife hoped that some day one or both of their children would return to Japan and join them in running the business. A convenience store franchise was a business that he could offer his children.

Taking on a franchise was not an easy decision. Kazuhiko had no experience in the field of small retail. But buffering some of these concerns were resources and experiences that his family possessed. To start with, the Ishiguros had financial resources to draw on. They owned a home and were not in debt. Their children were independent, and by taking an early retirement, Kazuhiko would receive a "golden parachute," enough to cover the startup costs of the business. Keiko also possessed skills that would be helpful in running a store. She had previously held a job in insurance sales and was experienced in customer service. The chain they were courting recognized these assets. The chain's recruiters were looking for families who would make successful and reliable franchisees. Simply being a married couple is not enough; franchise chains use interviews as a way to get behind a couple's salaryman-housewife image to see how the pair might or might not work together in a store management situation. The interest of the wife is weighed more heavily than the enthusiasm of the husband.

Initially Keiko was not excited about the plan. Kazuhiko assured her that they would not be stocking shelves for the rest of their lives. He argued that it was a chance to own and grow a business that would sustain them into their elder years. He foresaw his son and daughter taking on positions in the store and the family expanding the business to two franchises within the first two years, then adding a third store by the fifth year of their contract. Kazuhiko's plan was exactly what many major chains currently outline to prospective owners. Owning multiple stores minimized risk and maximized profit. In the multiple franchise formulation, three stores represented the ideal; one store was likely to be a dud, but the profits of the other two would make up the difference. Kazuhiko felt he had the energy and management skills to build an enterprise. After five or six years he and Keiko could step back and enjoy more free time for themselves, supported by a steady income from their franchise holdings. The store chain's representatives encouraged the Ishiguros to think in this way. Like other chains, this company also faced challenges in finding "capable" new owners and in recent years had begun encouraging its prospective franchisees to have a long-term business plan that included license expansion.

Immediately after opening their store, the Ishiguros found that running a convenience store entailed far more than they had been trained for. For starters, they faced issues with schedules and staff. Kazuhiko summed the issues up in this way: "There is a lot of discussion about being more independent these days. The convenience store seemed to be an image of that; it seemed to make that possibility a reality. But [I] just didn't understand what running a twenty-four-hour business meant. The headquarters gives you these model schedules of work shifts, showing who is working when. . . . That is not easy to arrange. The headquarters didn't explain this reality. Cultivating a reliable workforce is difficult. It adds to the pressure and unease of the job." Troubles for the couple mounted. Store costs were much higher than they had anticipated. They had trouble with a worker whom they caught stealing from the store. His forced dismissal brought threats on their lives. Kazuhiko said, "The store was supposed to be our business, but increasingly we wondered for whom we were really working this hard and suffering this much." Kazuhiko recalled his task each night was to throw away the store's unsold food. He wondered where the know-how was that the corporation was supposed to possess and share with the owners. He questioned why every day his family's store had to throw away so much food, and he would reach into the trash *(gomi)* and remove things to consume. "I thought, I am living a life in which I am eating trash," he said during an interview. "I hated this, too."

Kazuhiko spoke with the company service representative during the visits he made to the store several times each week. The man placated the family by saying that a lot of first-time owners faced such challenges and that with time and perseverance the store's situation would improve. He cajoled the couple into sticking it out. But within several weeks, the couple submitted a handwritten letter requesting a termination of their contract:

> Before we began business, we were told that from November onward the store would become profitable enough that we could begin to pay ourselves a salary, but as of November there is still no prospect of our earning any income; night shifts are filled with a sense of terror that we can no longer endure; various costs are higher than were estimated before we began business; estimated store sales were significantly lower than projected; the demand that both the owner and manager must each work for over fifteen hours a day makes it impossible to properly maintain our health.

After several months of hard work to lift store sales and a sizable fine, the couple was released from their contract.

Loss Battles and Hidden Costs

While part-time workers may see the opportunities to glean store loss as a bonus to low hourly wages, for owners like the Ishiguro and Aoki families, eating loss while on the job and bringing it home to feed the family can amount to more of a financial necessity. Since the latter half of the 1990s, the average daily sales figures of convenience stores have steadily declined as more stores have opened and competition from other parts of the retail sector, like supermarkets and drugstores, have increased. According to Takeuchi Minoru, an industry analyst, only a third of all Japanese convenience stores are turning a significant profit. The remaining stores are either in the red or just getting by. The work hours and eating habits of store owners tend to bear out these divisions. Unable to raise profits, store owners forsake hiring additional staff and assume the burden of more shifts, often the evening and late-night shifts because those are the positions that are most expensive to fill. Longer shifts at their stores increase opportunities for owners to consume unsold food. Certainly eating unsold food is not a recent phenomenon in the world of small-scale retail. For centuries, greengrocers, fishmongers, and butchers have engaged in the practice of consuming their merchandise when the need arose. But mass-produced convenience store foods tend to be high in sugar and salt. In addition, what an owner consumes is limited to what has not sold. While stores stock salads, fruit, and even tofu, owners may forgo the hassle and added expense of purchasing healthier foods in favor of simply taking the food they have already been forced to buy before it goes bad.

Suggestive of the potential negative impact that convenience store food, work, and lifestyles can have on the physical condition of store owners, at least five of the twelve owners with whom I maintained regular contact in my study reported health problems during the course of their store contracts. Three owners reported struggling with diabetes, one suffered a mental breakdown, and another had stomach ulcers. All were forced to take substantial time off of work in order to rest. They also had to alter their diets. Wakamatsu is a case in point. Upon returning to work following a brief stint in the hospital to bring his diabetes under control, Wakamatsu was under strict orders from his doctor not to eat any convenience store food. Each day he brought with him to work a thermos of tea and an *obentō* prepared for him at home. But it wasn't long before Wakamatsu began to slip back into his old habits. One evening, about a month after his return, I came into the store's back room to pick up the cleaning supplies. I found him seated at his desk and staring at the store's computer screen while snacking on a package of deep-fried chicken nuggets that I had pulled from the shelves a short time earlier. He looked up to see who was there, grinned somewhat guiltily, and silently offered me what was left.

Food remains central to the convenience store's dual affect—that of refining standards while at the same time creating differentiation. Customers expect to find a standard fare of edible options when they enter these establishments. Yet be it in the form of rice balls or Christmas cakes, prepared foods are also the flavorful field on which chains seek to differentiate themselves from their competition and encourage "healthy" competition among members of the same chain (Whitelaw 2006, 2008). Convenience store food contributes to what anthropologist Richard Wilk terms the "structure of common difference" (1995, 111). The stores and the food they provide organize diversity rather than simply replicate uniformity (119).

As this chapter illustrates, however, convenience store food should be followed further than the cash register to understand how this cultural form functions to differentiate the practices of owners and franchise chains within what is typically taken to be a highly uniform, undifferentiated retail system. Furthermore, food, particularly unsold food, is a metonym for the less visible dimensions of global consumer culture and convenience. The growing international prominence of Japan's convenience stores and their success on new soil has not altered the fact that in Japan, franchisees and workers are burdened with maintaining these twenty-four-hour hubs of sustenance and relief. For some owners, the expansion of chains overseas and growth in company profits only deepens uncertainties and anxiety about the future of the business they run.

In the era of the convenience store's (second) overseas expansion, unsold food has become a catalyst for action, both individual and collective. In 2005, a "food fight" broke out when a 7-Eleven franchisee filed a suit against the company for imposing royalty fees on unsold food product. 7-Eleven lost the case but appealed to the Tokyo High Court, where the lower court's decision was overturned. In 2009, the issue flared up again. This time 7-Eleven, the largest chain in Japan, was accused of violating the anti-monopoly laws by pressuring its franchisees not to discount and sell food close to its consume-by date. In open challenge to 7-Eleven's rules that food should not be sold at a discount, owners of a handful of stores banded together and discounted food that was nearing its expiration date. The court upheld the owners' challenge to 7-Eleven, and the company announced that it would create a compensation system for owners (Takeuchi 2009). This band of owners also founded a fledgling union of owners to push for further reforms to the practices that contributed to unnecessary food waste. In a report published by researchers at Chiba University (Anzai et al. 2009), a study of discounting food practices at Kanto area convenience stores showed that food loss was reduced by 50–80 percent with no or little impact to overall store sales. A 7-Eleven owner who started using time sale reductions in 2009 revealed that there was a 5 percent reduction in store sales compared with the month before price reductions began, but the store's overall profits increased by 30 percent because food was sold. The same owner said that store staff, particular female part-time workers, were pleased with the new discounting practices because they felt guilty having to throw food away (Takada and Masumitsu 2009, 1).

Concerns about food waste have spurred particular chains to experiment with other ways to reduce waste. Using information technologies and exclusive contracts, companies have reduced inefficiencies in ordering, delivery, and merchandise control (Ishikawa and Nejo 1998; Kawabe 2004). Chains have also improved production processes and packaging so that prepared foods have a longer shelf life. Since the early 2000s, corporations have experimented with recycling waste food. In one project carried out by Lawson, Japan's second-largest convenience store chain, unsold food from a group of stores in the Yokohama area was collected and given to a nongovernmental organization (NGO) to be "remade" into food for a soup kitchen. In another project by the same chain, unsold *obentō* and rice balls were collected and brought to a processing center where the food was separated from the plastic packaging and transformed into fertilizer and pig feed. Such initiatives, however, are still being piloted, and questions remain about the economic feasibility of carrying them out on a large scale.

Chain-led food waste management programs and nascent owner unions around the discounting of food are two forms that differentiation has taken, but perhaps the more meaningful differentiation that this study found was in the ways that individual owners dealt with unsold food in their own stores. When I followed expired rice balls and boxed lunches, the contours of changing lifestyles came into focus—not just consumer lifestyles, but also the working lives of small shop owner families who have been the bulwark of neighborhood politics and community identity in the postwar era. Within the policies and practices of the convenience store, franchisees still struggle as small proprietors seeking to sell products in an ever-changing retail landscape. Although all the owners may wear the same uniform, seasoned merchants with backgrounds in small business tended to be more adept at reinterpreting and informalizing the convenience stores' globalizing standards and seemingly rigid contractual agreements. People like Wakamatsu, with his appetite for distributing free food, and the Aoki couple, who reached into their recipe book to turn store losses into opportunities to personalize their workplace and cultivate loyalty, reveal that the convenience stores can be made, in small ways, more palatable. In the case of former white-collar, salaried employees, like the Ishiguro family, who enter a store contract without much prior knowledge, experience, or local support, the transition tends to be harsher. The new work regime of a twenty-four-hour franchise can quickly sour a couple's dream of "low-risk" independent store ownership. For such families, unsold food indexes just how sharp a turn their lives have taken.

By selling the first plastic-wrapped rice balls, Japan's small shop owners immeasurably contributed to localizing the convenience store franchise within Japan's neighborhoods. They have also played an important role in turning this reinvented general store into a new global template. One of the ways that Japanese industry leaders and government officials packaged the convenience store model was as a way to help struggling shopkeepers maintain neighborhood family businesses for the next generation. In 2013, the convenience store business model's "best-before" date seems to have passed, particularly for local merchant families. Shortly after I completed my fieldwork at Daily, Wakamatsu's family decided not to renew their franchise contract and turned over the keys of the operation to the chain headquarters. Wakamatsu's older brother, the actual owner of the franchise contract, threw a party at his "other business"—a restaurant—to thank Daily's staff for its dedication and service. While plates of steaming spaghetti, salad, and freshly baked bread were being delivered to the long table that seated some twenty-five staff and former part-time workers, the owner made a short speech. He commended his younger brother and wife for their diligence in running Daily and praised the workers for their efforts to successfully close the store. He also noted his brother's health condition and the intense competition from other chains. "A convenience store cannot survive unless the people who run it do," he concluded, raising his glass for a toast. "That is all I want to say. *Kampai* (cheers)."

Notes

A 2004–2005 Fulbright Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship supported the initial research for this chapter. A 2009–2011 Young Researchers Start-Up Grant from the Japan Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) contributed to follow-up research. I would also like to thank Jordan

Sand, Satsuki Kawano, Glenda Roberts, and Susan Long for their helpful comments and suggestions at critical stages of the drafting process.

1. Daily is one of three convenience stores where I conducted participant observation as a clerk between 2004 and 2005. In accordance with practices common to anthropology, the names of the actual individuals have been altered to protect informant identities. In addition, certain identifiable details of stores have been altered for the same reason.
2. At the time that this research was conducted the exchange rate was approximately ¥90 to $1.
3. In follow-up research conducted in 2012, the same area had only half the number of stores, upgrading the district in industry lingo from a "*konbini* hell" to a "*konbini* village" *(konbini mura)*. Daily was among the half-dozen convenience stores which had gone out of business or moved to a different location.

References Cited

"An Appalling Waste of Food." 2013. *Japan Times Weekly*, February 2, 18.

Anzai, Yōta, et al. 2009. "Konbiniensu sutoa ni okeru shokuhin mikiri hanbai no shakaiteki kekka." Paper presented at Nihon Seiksaku Gakusei Kaigi conference, "Seisaku Fōramu 2009."

Chiba, Tamotsu, et al. 2005. *Konbini bentō 16 man kiro no tabi: Tabemono ga sekai o kaeteiru*. Tokyo: Tarō Jirō-sha Editus.

Fukunaga, Kazuhiko. 1999. "Konbini: The Japanese Convenience Store." *Look Japan*, March, 4–8.

Ishii, Itsurō. 2006. "Konbini wa haikishōhin keigen e." *Mainichi Shinbun*, January 26, 12.

Ishikawa, Akira, and Tai Nejo. 1998. *The Success of 7-Eleven Japan: Discovering the Secrets of the World's Best-Run Convenience Store*. London: World Scientific.

JFA (Japan Franchise Association). 2012. *2011 nendo JFA furanchaizuchēn tōkei chōsa hōkoku*. Tokyo: Japan Franchise Association.

Kawabe, Nobuo. 2004. *Konbiniensu sutoā keieishi: Nihon ni okeru konbiniensu sutoā no 30 nen*. Tokyo: Waseda University.

Kirby, Peter W. 2011. *Troubled Natures: Waste, Environment, Japan*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Kon'ya mo konbini ga yamerarenai! 1994. Tokyo: NTV (Nihon Terebi) Publishers.

Mizuta, Megumi, et al. 2005. *Sumida-ku hōmuresu jittai chōsa*. Tokyo: Sumida-ku Hōmuresu Seisaku Kenkyūkai.

Oldenburg, Ray. 1989. *The Great Good Place: Cafés, Coffee Shops, Community Centers, Beauty Parlors, General Stores, Bars, Hangouts, and How They Get You through the Day*, 1st ed. New York: Paragon House.

Ōsako, Makiko. 2005. "Shoku no genba kara mottainai: Konbini, sūpā" (From food's scene mottainai: Konbini and supermarkets). *Mainichi Newspaper*, June 6, 1–2.

Planet Link. 2005. *Mottainai*. Tokyo: Magazine House.

Sakaguchi, Kyōhei. 2007. "0 en seikatsu no hōhō." *Aera*, February 26, 40–44.

Suzuki, Wataru. 2002. "Analysis of the Distribution of Homeless Using GPS." In *Research Seminar of the Japanese National Cabinet Office*. Osaka: Osaka University Graduate School.

Takada, Hide, and Yūichirō Masumitsu. 2009. "Konbini tenshu nebiki ni hataraku." *Asahi Shinbun*, May 6, 1.

Takeuchi, Wakeko. 2009. "Haiki dō eikyō?" *Yomiuri Shinbun*, June 24, 10.

Wacquant, Loïc. 2003. *Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2005. "Carnal Connections: On Embodiment, Apprenticeship, and Membership." *Qualitative Sociology* 28, no. 4:445–447.

Whitelaw, Gavin H. 2006. "Rice Ball Rivalries: Japanese Convenience Stores and the Appetite of Late Capitalism." In *Fast Food/Slow Food: The Cultural Economy of the Global Food System*, ed. Richard R. Wilk, 131–144. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

———. 2008. "Learning from Small Change: Clerkship and the Labors of Convenience." *Anthropology of Work Review* 29, no. 3:62–69.

Wilk, Richard R. 1995. "Learning to Be Local in Belize: Global Systems of Common Difference." In *Worlds Apart: Modernity through the Prism of the Local*, ed. Daniel Miller, 110–133. London: Routledge.

CAPTURING CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

Differentiation and Uncertainty

Edited by

Satsuki Kawano
Glenda S. Roberts
Susan Orpett Long

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I PRESS
HONOLULU

19 18 17 16 15 14   6 5 4 3 2 1

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Capturing contemporary Japan : differentiation and uncertainty /
edited by Satsuki Kawano, Glenda S. Roberts, and Susan Orpett Long.
pages cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-0-8248-3868-3 (cloth : alk. paper) —
ISBN 978-0-8248-3869-0 (pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Japan—Economic conditions—21st century.
2. Japan—Social conditions—21st century.
I. Kawano, Satsuki, [date] editor of compilation.
II. Roberts, Glenda Susan, [date] editor of compilation.
III. Long, Susan Orpett, editor of compilation.
HC462.95.C365 2014
331.10952—dc23
2013031859

University of Hawai'i Press books are printed on acid-free
paper and meet the guidelines for permanence and durability
of the Council on Library Resources.

Designed by Julie Matsuo-Chun
Printed by Thomson-Shore, Inc.

CONTENTS