

GERALD K. LETENDRE & REBECCA ERWIN FUKUZAWA. McGill University Word count: 1236

Copyright Faculty of Education of McGill University Fall 2001 The conflict between the ideal of education and what actually happens in school are further discussed in chapter 3 (The Ideal of Education: A "Family Community"). The authors then analyze the role of the student's peers and friends in chapter 4 and of the student's teachers in chapter 5. As students willingly come to school because they want to be with their friends and participate in their club activities, the development of strong friendships and a sense of belonging to both the classroom and school is cultivated by skillful teachers. The dual role of teachers, especially home-room teachers (tannin), is "to assume a leadership role within the class as a group" (p. 72) and to "create elaborate systems of management in order to integrate young adolescents and teach them how to work in complex social institutions" (pp. In chapter 2 "Exams, Juku, and the Pressure to Advance in School," the author discusses the tensions inherent in Japan's competitive exam system. As high school education has become the norm rather than a dream in this modern era, Japanese middle school students face increasing pressure to do well academically. Despite the official goal mentioned above, the reality is that middle school education pulls students away from the learning ideal (namely, learning to become a "whole person"), and pushes them towards cramming information for the high school entrance exam. Based on these two chapters, the authors conclude that "most of the social development for young Japanese occurs in a school-based context" (p. 6). Given the importance of school to the development of friends, social networks, and social learning, when problems arise in school, students encounter enormous pressure (chapter 6. Adjustment: Problems in School). In Japan, schools can neither suspend nor expel students (p. 80); thus, in order to maintain order, middle schools "rely... They argue that as "young adolescents are moving between the world of children and the world of adults, their lives are affected by a broad range of social forces not found in other age groups" (p. 2). Given examples of social forces, they note that "[d]espite the Japanese predilection for depicting themselves as a harmonious and homogeneous society, the modern history of Japan suggests that it is a dynamic society prone to change, conflict and tension" (p. 1). US\$50 / C\$75 (HB ISBN: 0-8153-3145-2) In their new study, *Intense Years: How Japanese adolescents balance school, family, and friends* (2001), Rebecca Fukuzawa and Gerald LeTendre examine the lives of middle school students based on research they conducted in Japan between 1982 and 1995. Author Affiliation REIKO YOSHIDA. New York: Routledge Falmer (2001). 72-73).