Japan is home to the second largest advertising market in the world and its commercial communications are among the most sophisticated. Its ad content routinely addresses issues of family, youth culture, nationalism, work, education, technology, the human condition, consumption, capitalism, freedom, leisure and social welfare, many containing gender discourse. In this talk, Professor Holden will marshal dozens of examples from television advertising in Japan over the past two decades to plot the arc of discourse about gender. Building on Erving Goffman’s classic concept of genderism, Professor Holden suggests a number of additional aspects to consider, such as context, medium or epoch. Accounting for type and direction of change will help plot the arc of gender representations; more importantly, measured through the prism of critical and classical scholarship, it should tell us about gender dynamics and, more widely, socio-cultural shifts in Japanese society today.

This is the third of the Speaker Series on gender funded by the Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures and the Humanities Collective. For additional information, please contact the Department of East Asian Languages & Literatures at (949) 824-2227.