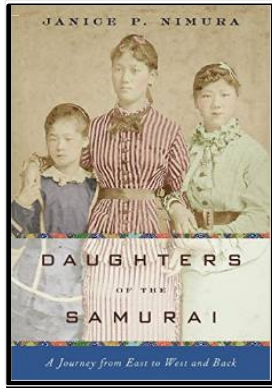


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Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back

By **NIMURA, JANICE P.**

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REVIEWS

Starred Review on **MARCH 15, 2015** | **Social Sciences**

Independent scholar Nimura has written an exquisite collective biography of the five Japanese girls who were sent to the United States at the end of the 19th century during Japan's Meiji period (1868–1912), as the country tried to prepare citizens to cope with—and catch up to, they felt—the modern West. While two of the girls returned home shortly after arriving in America, the other three were able to stay in their adopted home for ten years, attending school and living with host families in Connecticut and Washington, DC, before attending colleges along the East Coast. Nimura has a clear eye for depicting the relationship between Japan and the United States during the time discussed here, and she avoids the easy pitfall of turning the Japanese girls into "others" who were simply exotic treats for the Americans. Instead, the author highlights how both cultures were strange, each to the other, and, when the girls returned to Japan after their sojourn in America, how much like a foreign country their home had become to them. **VERDICT** A captivating read for biography lovers, readers interested in America's Gilded Age or late Meiji Japan, and fans of Arthur Golden's *Memoirs of a Geisha*.—HANNA CLUTTERBUCK, HARVARD UNIV. LIB., CAMBRIDGE, MA

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