

An Analysis of Letters to the Radio Program *Gaitō Rokuon* and the Program's Role in the Democratization of Japan: The Demand for 'True' Voices of 'the Public' in the Occupation Period

Nanako OTA

This paper analyzes letters (owned by NHK Broadcasting Museum in Atagoyama, Tokyo) that listeners sent to *Gaitō Rokuon*, a street-interview radio program started to demonstrate freedom of speech in Japan in the wake of World War II. Listeners did not necessarily favor voices collected on busy, everyday streets. Rather, they desired the 'true' voices of 'the public,' collected from people who could not speak out against social inequality. The paper concludes that *Gaitō Rokuon*'s role in democratization was not only to teach listeners how to engage in a democratic discussion, but also to inform them of the struggles of the socially vulnerable.