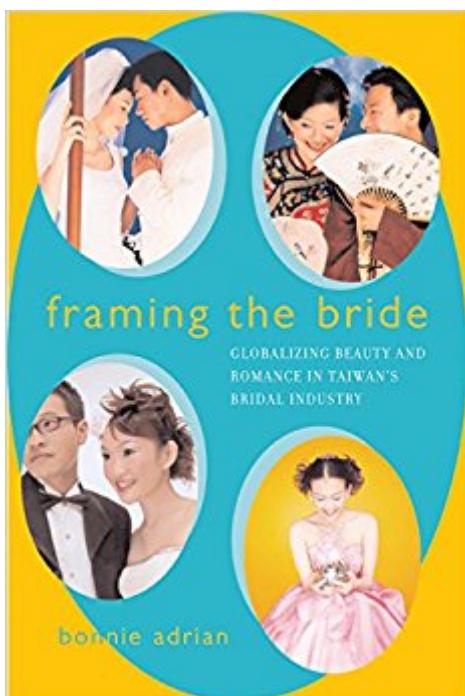


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Framing The Bride: Globalizing Beauty And Romance In Taiwan's Bridal Industry



Synopsis

With a wedding impending, the Taiwanese bride-to-be turns to bridal photographers, makeup artists, and hair stylists to transform her image beyond recognition. They give her fairer skin, eyes like a Western baby doll, and gowns inspired by sources from Victorian England to MTV. An absorbing consideration of contemporary bridal practices in Taiwan, *Framing the Bride* shows how the lavish photographs represent more than mere conspicuous consumption. They are artifacts infused with cultural meaning and emotional significance, products of the gender- and generation-based conflicts in Taiwan's hybrid system of modern matrimony. From the bridal photographs, the book opens out into broader issues such as courtship, marriage, kinship, globalization, and the meaning of the "West" and "Western" cultural images of beauty. Bonnie Adrian argues that in compiling enormous bridal albums full of photographs of brides and grooms in varieties of finery, posed in different places, and exuding romance, Taiwanese brides engage in a new rite of passage—one that challenges the terms of marriage set out in conventional wedding rites. In *Framing the Bride*, we see how this practice is also a creative response to U.S. domination of transnational visual imagery; how bridal photographers and their subjects take the project of globalization into their own hands, defining its terms for their lives even as they expose the emptiness of its images.

Book Information

Paperback: 310 pages

Publisher: University of California Press (December 8, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0520238346

ISBN-13: 978-0520238343

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

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Best Sellers Rank: #511,858 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #245 in Books > Gay & Lesbian > History #540 in Books > Textbooks > Business & Finance > International Business #838 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Customs & Traditions

Customer Reviews

"Do not be misled by the title of this book. It is a study of Taiwan's bridal industry but it is also a fine ethnography of marriage in contemporary urban Taipei. With great subtlety, Bonnie Adrian shows us

how much marriage in Taiwan has changed and how many of the old ways it has retained. She does so with wit and humor."—Margery Wolf, author of *A Thrice-Told Tale: Feminism, Postmodernism, and Ethnographic Responsibility*"Faced with the puzzle of the ubiquitous bridal photography in Taipei, Bonnie Adrian has produced a model ethnography of media-saturated contemporary life. Ethnographically adventurous, analytically smart, and warmly human, this book cleverly unpacks the ways women's canny choices in Taiwan are forged at the intersection of everyday worlds of inter-generational tension, fantasies fed by a keenly competitive local culture industry, and global imagery tied to the transnational beauty industry. Unlike many who work on globalization, Adrian has not lost sight of the ways that gender and family are still at the heart of people's social worlds and women are not victims."—Lila Abu-Lughod, author of *Veiled Sentiments and Writing Women's Worlds*

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