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This project examines the differing ways in which Japanese war literature reflects the societal views of men and women during World War II, specifically as regards the Battle of Okinawa and the Hiroshima bombing. These reflections are often depicted as the memories of characters directly involved in the events, and are often a dramatization of the actual perception of Japanese society or war survivors. By analyzing well-known literary depictions of both genders during in the War, I examine the way in which women are portrayed as innocent victims while men are viewed as figures of guilt and shame. I use the combination of English and Japanese literary texts, testimonials, and analysis to determine the ways in which Japanese literary depictions of men and women involved in Okinawa and Hiroshima are colored by how they are viewed by society and by themselves. Literary works such as *Black Rain* and *Droplets* adhere to the idea that women are innocent victims of the war while men hold some sense of responsibility, and therefore guilt, even in cases where both qualities can be assigned to each gender, such as is the case with the Lily Corps in Okinawa. However, Okinawan writer Medoruma Shun provides an interesting contrast with the norm in his work “Mabuigumi,” in which a female civilian from Okinawa feels guilt over her role during the Battle. These gender dynamics are important because they neglect the guilt of women and the victimization of men, leading to misconceptions of the realities of the war for most of Japanese society. However, these portrayals also work against the idea that Japanese war narratives only depict Japan as a victim of the War. Instead, both sides of the spectrum are included,

illustrating the different responses to Japanese involvement in World War II that aren't always available on the surface level.