



Coming Out in Japan (Japanese Society Series)

Ryuta Yanase, Satoru Ito

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Traditionally the Japanese have shunned those not fitting the majority heterosexual mould. Those with a homosexual orientation have always endured an uncomfortable existence in a culture which condones blatant public scorn and ridicule being directed towards them and which doesn't question the pernicious stereotyping of gays. In Japan these traditions have survived into the twenty-first century and remain a deeply rooted part of the national psyche. It was in such a hostile environment that two men, in defiance of the prevailing social norms, saw fit to take a stand and declare that they were different from the mainstream, different from all the imagery they had ever been exposed to, and not orientated to fit the rigid, positively sanctioned mould presented to them by society. This book gives a human focus to the nascent struggle for social acceptance and dignity being waged by homosexuals in Japan. It describes the authors' coming out to society and their subsequent appeals, on both a personal and public level, for the acceptance of homosexuality by the wider society. It is a highly personal account of the authors' experiences - their fears, despair, self-loathing and rejection, aspirations, traumas and triumphs.



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