As indicated in my previous review, pre-Meiji documents are not found in any great number in the Kumayama area, and consequently I was interested in how the editorial committee would deal with pre-modern eras. One approach, quite naturally, was to employ documents from collections in major prefectural archives and museums. But more interesting (to me) is the lengths to which collections outside of Okayama were exploited. Willingness to exploit material from Kyoto University archives, for example, permitted a brief exploration of women’s inheritance of property in the early medieval period of Kumayama history. Likewise, the region’s ties to national political developments is explored through the association of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa’s wife, Hino Tomiko, with Kumayama. Of more direct interest to kinsei literature specialists, the final chapter of volume one contains a rather extended discussion of waka, eika, and haikai. Special emphasis is given to the stimulus provided by the visit of Okayama samurai and scholar, Hiraga Motoyoshi. Although the sections on kinsei religion are brief, three sections may be of some interest to readers. One deals with the suppression of the Fujufuse sect of Buddhism. Although this region is not known for the widespread presence of Christianity, archaeological finds (substituting for manuscript materials) suggest the extension of Christian influence even into an area that would have been relatively isolated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Finally, the kinsei section ends with a discussion of yōnaoshi. In the realm of institutional history, the discussion of the Okayama domain’s retainer fief system strikes me as particularly interesting. Standard explanations stress the daimyo’s confiscation of all practical control over the fiefs of landed retainers. In English, the work of John W. Hall on Bizen reflects this emphasis. Nonetheless, Kumayama chō shi (I, pp. 660-64) takes a somewhat different approach, stressing the division of farmers among fiefholders (hyakushōwari) and the continued role of landed retainers in collecting land taxes (despite their loss of any ability to set tax rates), exploitation of mountain and forest resources, and so forth. In addition, other forms of obligations to landed retainers remained and were divided among individual villagers. Such evidence raises the question of whether Western scholarship (at least) has over-stated the completeness of the seventeenth century tendency to fictionalize retainer
Sexuality and Edo Culture, 1750-1850
An International Conference
Indiana University, Bloomington
August 17-20, 1995

Sexuality in Edo culture has long been a taboo subject in literary histories and critical studies in spite of the fact that, as with other major cities, urban culture materialized in narratives grounded in sexual fantasies. Recently, scholars from many disciplines have been exploring the connection between the awareness of the body and self-consciousness of the city's culture so as to find a place for sexuality in teaching and research on Japan.

From August 17-20, 1995, at Indiana University, Bloomington, sexuality and urban culture will be the focus of attention in two special exhibitions at the Indiana University Art Museum, the Final Arts Gallery, and in an international conference to be held here on campus. The exhibitions will include hand painted scrolls, handbound illustrated books, woodblock prints from the museum's collection as well as the Kinsey Institute. Sumie Jones, an Indiana University faculty member in Early Asian Languages and Cultures and Comparative Literature, is chairing the conference as the culmination of a national Endowment for the Humanities sponsored collaborative project. In order to convey the multi-layered and multi-disciplinary aspect of Edo culture, over forty scholars from Europe, Japan and the United States with different specialties have been invited to present papers and comments during the conference. Howard Hibbett, a distinguished translator and critic of Japanese Literature from Harvard University will give the keynote address. Other participants include: Norman Bryson, Harvard University; Naoki Sakai, Cornell University; Henry Smith, Columbia University; Haga Toru, Research Center for Japanese Studies; Kobayashi Tadashi, Gakushin University; Ueno Chizuko, Kyoto Seika University; Jurgis Elisonas and Richard Rubinger, Indiana University. Both the exhibitions and the conference have received major grant support from the National Endowment for the Humanities as well as other organizations.

Registration materials will be available in May. For further information, please contact Jason Lewis, East Asian Studies Center, Indiana University, tel: (812)855-3765; fax: (812)855-7762, E-mail jalewis@indiana.edu.