An Assessment of Abenomics
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One characterization of Japan in recent decades has been as an increasingly unequal society. Yet while the Gini coefficient, the most commonly cited measure of aggregate income inequality, indicates that Japanese disposable income (after taxes and transfers) has been more unequally distributed in recent years than in the era of high-speed growth, it has been roughly constant in the current century. In addition, although research by T. Piketty and others on top income shares in many countries has concluded that growing share of income has been going to the top one percent, research on trends in the top income share in Japan has not come to the same conclusion.

Is there a gap between perception and reality with respect to Japanese income distribution? If so, could it arise because of limitations with certain inequality measures or with the quality of the underlying income distribution data? This paper will examine these and other questions making use of a wide range of Japanese sources, and will consider Japanese research on income distribution in light of research on income distribution in other countries including Canada.

'Womenomics': Image and Substance in Japanese Economic Policy
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This paper examines the role of promoting gender equality in Japan's official strategy for economic revitalization-- i.e. "Womenomics" as part of the "Third Arrow" of Abenomics.

In particular, Japan's comparative success (since 'Womenomics' was adopted by the Abe government in 2012) in boosting female participation and substantial improvement in pay equity in the marketplace is contrasted with the growing gap between Japan and other countries in female achievement in the areas executive leadership and political representation.

From a feminist perspective, the initial results of "Womenomics" simply indicate that most working females are expanding the precariat of low-wage flexible workers, while a few more are bumping into Japan's glass ceiling.

From the perspective of policy analysis and political economy, the paper asks whether a more radical and transformational approach to gender equality is necessary in order to reinvigorate the Japanese economy in the face of its daunting demographic and environmental challenges. It is suggested that a plausible explanation of the limited success of Abenomics has been its "everything goes" eclecticism, which has prevented a clearer focus from emerging on gender equality as one of the main variables. It is also suggested that embracing female equality is more consistent with a belief in Japanese exceptionalism than other strategies.
During election campaign periods in Japan, election bulletins (senkyo kōhō), created and distributed by local election management boards, are considered a fundamental medium for providing candidate information. Legislated by Section 167 within the Public Office Elections Law (kōshoku senkyohō), these broadsheets offer each candidate a pre-determined amount of space to communicate their individual manifestos, policy- and party-related points, and other campaign-related information. Published soon after the beginning of the official election campaign period that precedes all elections, election bulletins are an integral and traditional means of campaign communication in Japan for elections at the local, prefectural, and national level.

Since 2011, in addition to being distributed in paper format, local election management boards have posted election bulletins on their websites, which has enhanced distribution and ease of access by the electorate. Yet very little is known about how election bulletins are produced, as well as distinguishing trends in features and content among individual candidates.

This paper uses a content-analysis approach to examine the characteristics of election bulletins during the October 2017 Lower House election period to investigate party affiliation and regional characteristics of candidates.