Illustrations

Part I  The Kibyōshi (A Study)

Introduction: A Little Yellow Comicbook 3
1  The Floating World in An'ei-Tenmei Edo 29
2  The Blossom of Pulp Fiction 95
3  Manga Culture and the Visual-Verbal Imagination 129
4  The Rise and Pratfall of the Kibyōshi 181

Reference Matter

Works Cited 509
Index 525

Part II  Translations

A Note on Reading Backwards 253
A Note on Translating the Kibyōshi 255
5  Those Familiar Bestsellers 263
6  Playboy, Roasted à la Edo 339
7  The Unseamly Silverpiped Swingers 427
I.1 Two courtiers-in-training struggling over a yellow-covered comicbook (kiyōshi), from *A Pageant of the Latest Beauties, Their Calligraphy Mirrored* (*Shin bijin awase jihitsu kagami, 1784*), by Kitao Masanobu

I.2 Detail from *A Pageant of the Latest Beauties, Their Calligraphy Mirrored* (*Shin bijin awase jihitsu kagami, 1784*)

I.1 Broadsheet depicting the eruption of Mt. Asama in 1783

I.2 The publishing process as an assembly line of specialists, from *Takarabune kogane no bobashira* (1818), written by Tōri Sanjin and illustrated by Katsukawa Shunsen

I.3 A “bag stasher” (fukurozashi), from *Thousand-Armed Goddess of Mercy, Julienned* (*Daibi no senrokubon, 1785*), written by Shiba Zenkō and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu

I.4 Scene from *Party at the Yoshinoya* (*Yoshinoya shuraku, 1788*), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Masayoshi

I.5 Scene from the jokebook *Arrowroot Flower* (*Tāōbana, 1789*), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Masayoshi

I.6 The titular protagonist of *The Story of Lady Dishhead* (*Hachikazuky*, ca. 1624–1643), an anonymous picturebook

I.7 Characters looking at printed matter through colorizing spectacles, from *The Virtuous Prosperity-Boosting Specs* (*Sakaemasu megane no toku, 1790*), written by Koikawa Yukimachi and illustrated by Kitao Masayoshi

I.8 A bevy of beautiful spooks, from *Life of a Stretchy Monster* (*Mikoshi nyūdō ichidaiki, 1782*), written by Iba Kashō and illustrated by Torii Kiyonaga

I.9 A mob of monsters, from *Life of a Stretchy Monster* (*Mikoshi nyūdō ichidaiki, 1782*), written by Iba Kashō and illustrated by Torii Kiyonaga
1.10 The picture-scroll motif that graces the various *kibyōshi* issued by Tsutaya Jūzaburō in the New Year’s publishing season of 1785, from the first edition of *Playboy, Roasted à la Edo* (*Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki*, 1785), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu.

1.11 Frontispiece employing a picture-scroll motif, from *Chop Not the Roots of the Money Tree* (*Kiruna no ne kara kane no naruki*, 1785), written by Tōrai Sanna, illustrated by Kitagawa Chiyōjo, and published by Tsutaya Jūzaburō.

1.12 The second and third frontispieces from the third edition of Kyōden’s *Playboy, Roasted à la Edo* (*Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki*), issued in 1793.

1.13 A young geisha engrossed in a *kibyōshi*, from the multicolored woodblock series “Edo’s Celebrated Beauties” (*Edo kōmei bijin*) by Kitagawa Utamaro, ca. 1792–1793.

1.14 Comicbook authors Santō Kyōden and sister Kurotobi Shikibaru in the opening scene of *Tale of the Two Tambours* (*Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi*, 1788), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitagawa Yūkimaro.

1.15 An electrostatic generating box (*erekiteru*), from *Trilateral Babble* (*Wakaran monogatari*, 1803), written by Kanwatei Onitake and illustrated by Kako (Hokusai).

1.16 Scene from *Nine Months Inside an Author’s Womb, Illustrated* (*Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, 1804), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa.

1.17 Draft manuscript for *Nine Months Inside an Author’s Womb, Illustrated*, with instructions from Santō Kyōden to artist Kitao Shigemasa.

1.18 “The Fart” (*He*), from *Sakuragawa’s Notebook of Old Chestnuts* (*Sakuragawa hanashi no chōtoji* (1801), written by Sakuragawa Jihinari and illustrated by Utagawa Toyokuni.

1.19 Illustration from *Hyakufukuya otoshibanashi* (1789), by Koikawa Harumachi.

1.20 The personified protagonists of *The Monstrous Udon and Soba Noodles of Mt. Ô* (*Udon soba: Bakemono Ôyama*, 1776), written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi.

1.21 A woman scrubs her skin “whiter than snow” (*yuki yori shiroku*), from *Cosmetics for Seven Female Masakados* (Onna...
1.22 Specimens of Chinese, Japanese, and Dutch persons and writing, from *Trilateral Babble* (*Wakaran monogatari*, 1803), written by Kanwatei Onitake and illustrated by Kakô (Hokusai) 88

1.23 Colophon announcing various titles in print, from *A Treasury of Loyal Sophisticates* (*Ana debon tsujingura*, 1779), written by Hôseidô Kisanji and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi 90

1.24 First of four pages of a publishing announcement, from the New Year’s edition of *The Yoshiwara, Detailed* (*Yoshiwara saiken*, 1785) 91

1.25 An early example of product placement, from *Nenashigusa fude no wakaba* (1794), written and illustrated by Santô Kyôden 92

2.1 A goofy-looking water sprite (*kappa*), from *Rootless Grass* (*Nenashigusa*, 1763), by Hiraga Gennai 99

2.2 A goofy-looking water sprite (*kappa*), from *Unsavorily Mismatched Jiffy Shanks* (*Fuanhai sokuseki ryôri*, 1784), written and illustrated by Santô Kyôden 99

2.3 Representative page from *Behind Silk Brocade* (*Nishiki no ura*, 1791), by Santô Kyôden 101

2.4 An impish Dream Creature, from *Rosei’s Dream—The Night Before* (*Rosei ga yume sono zengitsu*, 1791), written by Santô Kyôden and presumably illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa 113

2.5 Illustrated program to the 1792 production of *Pale Purple Soga, Edo Style* (*Waka murasaki edokko Soga*) 122

2.6 Silhouette of a flower revealed as two acrobatic loincloth-garbed commoners, from *Otsuriki* (1810), written by Jippensha Iku and illustrated by Kitagawa Tsukimaro 127

3.1 Master Wetdream making love behind a standing screen to a daimyo’s daughter, from *Master Wetdream’s Fantasy Pillow* (*Isei sensei yume makura*, ca. 1789), anonymous 136

3.2 Samurai underlings grimacing as their master squats in an outhouse, from *Hokusai manga* 140

3.3 One of the early appearances of the word *manga* in print, from the Preface to *Seasonal Passersby* (*Shiki no yukikai*, 1798), written by Santô Kyôden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa 141
3.4 Priest Kōgi magically transported from the underwater kingdom through a wisp of smoke emanating from a fish about to be devoured, from Tales of Moonlight and Rain (Ugetsu monogatari, 1776), by Ueda Akinari

3.5 The courtesan Takao appearing from the underworld to her lover Tadanobu via incense billows, from Unsavoryly Mismatched Jiffy Shanks (Fuanbai sokuseki ryōri, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

3.6 Scene from a rebus-style kihyōshi, from A Diverting View of A Treasury of Loyal Retainers (Onagusami chūshingura no kōkai, 1797), by Takizawa Bakin and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

3.7 A pictorial storyteller performing with a visual aid to a small crowd in a public space, from Seasonal Passersby (Shiki no yuki kai, 1798), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

3.8 Rosei as pictured in Dreamers the Winners (Miru ga toku issui no yume, 1781), written and illustrated by Hōseidō Kisanji

3.9 Rosei as modeled on the Rosei in Kisanji’s Dreamers the Winners of a decade earlier, from Rosei’s Dream—The Night Before (Rosei ga yume sono zenjitsu, 1791), written by Santō Kyōden and presumably illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

3.10 The kabuki star Ichikawa Danjūrō, from Picturebook of Water and Sky (Ehon mizu ya sora, 1780), by Matsuya Nichōsai

3.11 Rabbit and frogs laughing convulsively, from Frolicking Critters (Chōjū gigga, ca. late twelfth century), by Toba Sōjō

3.12 The namesake protagonists of Monkey vs. Crab (Saru kani gassen), by Nishimura Shigenaga

4.1 A demonic snake-woman wraps herself around the Dōjōji temple bell, inside of which the priest Anchin is hiding, from the companion booklet The Tale of Dōjōji (Dōjōji monogatari, ca. 1660)

4.2 Woman discovering a peach floating down the river, out of which will emerge the story’s superhero protagonist, from The Old Yarn of Peach Boy (Momotarō mukashibanashi), illustrated and presumably written by Nishimura Shigenobu ca. the early 1770s

4.3 Swashbuckling scene from A Rundown of Kinpīra’s Exploits (Kinpīra tegarazukushi), anonymous, date unknown
4.4 Chikusaibursting into a shop with his sword drawn, from *Chikusaia*, anonymous, date unknown

4.5 Master Flashgold strewing gold coins liberallyabout the pleasure quarter, from *Master Flashgold's Splendiferous Dream (Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, 1775)*, written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.6 Master Flashgold dressed in a chic black halfcoat over a striped robe, from *Master Flashgold's Splendiferous Dream (Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, 1775)*, written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.7 Sophisticate dressed in a chic black halfcoat over a striped robe, from *Today's Fashionable Chic (Tōsei fūzoku tsū, 1773)*, written by Hōseidō Kisanji and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.8 Students vomiting out avian spooks as Master Ban'oku prepares more emetic from classic texts, from *Travelogue of Snobby Atelier (Kōmansai angya nikki, 1776)*, written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.9 Two samurai dressed for excess, from *A Gratuitous Account (Mudaiki, ca. 1781)*, written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.10 A modern Peach Boy shakes out a cascade of gold coins with his magic wish-fulfilling mallet, from *Peach Boy—A Present-Day Sequel (Momotarō gōnichibanashi, 1777)*, written by Hōseidō Kisanji and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

4.11 Two samurai getting less than they bargained for, from *Dreamers are the Winners (Mira ga toku isshii no yume, 1781)*, written and illustrated by Hōseidō Kisanji

4.12 Lady Dishhead exhibited on stage as a freak, from *Horned Words of a Dishheaded Demoness (Hachikazuki hannya no tsuno moji, 1785)*, written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

4.13 Merchants amputating some of the Goddess's extra hands, from *Thousand-Armed Goddess of Mercy, Julienned (Daibi no senrokubon, 1785)*, written by Shiba Zenkō and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu

4.14 Armless characters—and one legless beggar—hoping for a helping hand, from *Thousand-Armed Goddess of Mercy, Julienned (Daibi no senrokubon, 1785)*, written by Shiba Zenkō and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu
4.15 The ridiculous radish-slicing showdown, from *Tale of the Two Tambours* (*Jidai sewa nichō tsuzumi*, 1788), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitagawa Yukimaro

4.16 A two-man stage horse, from *Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Theater* (*Shibai kimmogei*, 1803), written by Shikitei Sanba and illustrated by Utagawa Toyokuni

4.17 A real horse wreaking havoc on stage, from *Absent White Lies* (*Teren itsuwari nashi*, 1786), written by Ōta Nanpo and illustrated by Kitao Masayoshi

4.18 Cases of ten thousand gold ingots crowd out Manman and wife, from *Chop Not the Roots of the Money Tree* (*Kiruna no ne kara kane no naruki*, 1785), written by Tōrai Sanna and illustrated by Kitagawa Chiyōjo

4.19 Having tied up and forced his possessions on a hapless traveler, a highway bandit flees in nothing but a loincloth, from *Modish Pattern of a Confucian Stripe* (*Kōshijima toki ni aizome*, 1789), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

4.20 Sumo match between a blind masseur and a syphilitic prostitute, from *Buffing Up Aoto's Loose Coins* (*Tama migaku Aoto ga zen*, 1790), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitagawa Utamaro

4.21 Tsutajū kowtowing his apologies to the reader for having violated censorship regulations, from *Hako'iri musume men'ya ningyō* (1791), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Utagawa Toyokuni

4.22 Competing fire brigades, from *Swaggering Headbands: A Chronicle of Urban Knight-Errantry in a Peaceful Realm* (*Kyan taiheiki mokō hachimaki*, 1799), written by Shikitei Sanba, illustrated by Utagawa Toyokuni, and published by Nishimiya Shinroku


4.24 Fictional author Kyōden trying to dream up a *kibyōshi*, from *Nine Months Inside an Author's Womb, Illustrated* (*Sakusha tainai totsuki no zu*, 1804), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

4.25 Coin Lady (*Kohan musume*) and Chessboard Lady (*Goban musume*), from *Some Strange Sideshow and Tales of Ise* (*Kowa*
mezurashii misemonogatari, 1801), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

4.26 A mythological dream-devouring beast (baku) about to execute a Dream Creature for having produced unauthorized wet dreams, from Rosei’s Dream—The Night Before (Rosei ga yume sono zenjitsu, 1791), written by Santō Kyōden and presumably illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

4.27 Head on a platter, from Itojaruma kyūbi no kitsune (1808), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Ichiryūsai Toyohiro

4.28 Fleacatcher Managoro and the flea that gnaws at him, from Vendetta of Mr. Fleacatcher Managoro, the Fifth (Katakiuchi nomitori manako, 1791), written by Takizawa Bakin and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

4.29 Violent scene from Asaka no numa gonichi no adauchi (1807), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Utagawa Toyokuni

4.30 Illustration from A Monstrous Chronicle of Great Peace (Bake-mono taihei, 1804), written and illustrated by Jippensha Ikku

4.31 Cover of a kibyōshi-inspired manga titled Tales of Foxes at Flower-Viewing Time, by Sugiuira Hinako

4.32 The Chinese Rosei poring over Japanese comicbooks, from Rosei’s Dream—The Night Before (Rosei ga yume sono zenjitsu, 1791), written by Santō Kyōden and presumably illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

II.1 Yamaguchi Takeshi’s typescript version of Kyōden’s Playboy, Roasted à la Edo (Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki, 1785)

II.2 Sugiuira Hinako’s handwritten version of Harumachi’s Master Flashgold’s Splendiferous Dream (Kinkin sensei eiga no yume, 1775)

5.1 Ranking of Kyōden’s Familiar Bestsellers as “the great crème de la crème,” from Bystanders See it Better (Okame bachimoku, 1782), by Ōta Nanpo

5.2 Personified slang expressions, from New Roots of Verbal Jonsting (Kotoba tatakai atarashii no ne, 1778), written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

5.3 Personified species of fruit, from A Domestic Tale of Fruits in the Flesh (Kudamono: Mitate osewahanashi, 1780), written and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu
Workers in autumnal fields and the simple hut associated with Emperor Tenji’s poem

Ranking of Hōseidō Kisanji’s *Dreamers the Winners* (*Muru ga toku issu no yume*, 1781) as the “ultimate crème de la crème” (*kyoku jō ji kichi*), from *Flowery Felicitations* (*Kikujusō*, 1781), by Ōta Nanpo

A sign prohibiting urination

A peepshow, from *Some Strange Sideshow and Tales of Ise* (*Kowa mezurashii misemonogatari*, 1801), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa

The personified slang expression “thick as a big old tree stump” tormenting the fictional author Harumachi, from *New Roots of Verbal Jouting* (*Kotoba tatakai atarashii no ne*, 1778), written and illustrated by Koikawa Harumachi

Ōtsu print (*Ōtsue*) of a demon with mallet, gong, and list of temple donors, from *Souvenirs of Ōtsu* (*Ōtsu miyage*, 1780)

Illustration from *ABCs of Short Verse* (*Iroha tanka*, ca. 1736–1740), by Kondō Kiyoharu

Quarreling couple from *A Hundred Poems by a Hundred Buffoons* (*Dōke byakunin shu*), illustrated and presumably written by Kondō Kiyoharu

Pot broken by a quarreling couple, from *ABCs of Songs* (*Iroba uta*, ca. 1770), anonymous

Spurned wife whose face resembles a demon mask, from *A Good Listener* (*Kikijōzu*, 1773), by Komatsuya Hyakki

A scene from *Children’s Acrobatics to Keep Safe from Smallpox* (*Hōsō anzen kodomo no karanawa*, date unknown), written by Tamenaga Shunsui and illustrated by Sadashige

Frontispiece to the deluxe second edition of Kyōden’s *Playboy, Roasted à la Edo* (*Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki*), published in 1793

Kamo no Muchikage’s unnamed pug-nosed character who would become the model for Enjirō, from *The Handtowel Competition* (*Tanagui awase*, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

Robe that would become the model for Enjirō’s unconventional suicide mat, from *The Handtowel Competition* (*Tanagui awase*, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden
6.4 Cartoon characters shooting handheld fireworks, from *Toba Caricatures of the Three Kingdoms* (*Tobaえ sangokushu*), by Ōoka Shunboku

6.5 Enjirō, Warui Shian, and Kitari Kinosuke, from *The Stylishly Slangy Latticed Bordello* (*Tsuguyō sōmagaki*, 1787), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

6.6 Enjirō’s progeny Unutarō, from *Himon yari shō no yotsudakebushī* (1789), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

6.7 Banners of the Dutch East India Company, from *Bankoku haku kizufu* (1854)

6.8 List of major geisha, male and female, from the New Year’s edition of *The Yoshiwara, Detailed* (*Yoshiwara saiken*, 1785)

6.9 Handtowel bearing the concentric-squares crest of actor Ichikawa Danjūrō, from *The Handtowel Competition* (*Tanagui awase*, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

6.10 Lady Han’s fan (*Hanjo no ōgi*), from *Record of the Treasure Competition* (*Takara awase no ki*, 1783), attributed to Hezutsu Tōsaku and Moto no Mokuami and illustrated by Kitao Masanobu and Kitao Masayoshi

6.11 Anchor-and-crowbar design, from *The Handtowel Competition* (*Tanagui awase*, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

7.1 Twins fused at the spine, from *Tale of Koyasu* (*Koyasu monogatari*, 1661)

7.2 Textual affirmation of a “two-headed, one-bodied child born in Yamashiro” (*Yamashiro ni ittai nitō no ko o umu*), from *The Fully Illustrated Yearly Annals* (*Nendaiki ōeshō*, 1781)

7.3 Bearded hermaphrodite with a vaginal opening at the stem of his erect penis, from *The Illness Scrolls* (*Yamai no sōshi*, ca. twelfth century)

7.4 An infant emerging from a vagina on the back of a phallus, unsigned *netsuke* (ca. early nineteenth century)

7.5 Colophon from *The Yoshiwara, Detailed* (*Yoshiwara saiken*, 1788)

7.6 Parents hold their noses in response to the awful fart of their newborn, from *The Proverbial Crude Exegesis* (*Kotowaza gesu no hanashi*, 1796), written by Santō Kyōden and illustrated by Kitao Shigemasa
7.7 The graph お of Oinosuke as it appeared in Ono no Takamura’s Lyrical Character Dictionary (Ono no Takamura utajizukushi, 1819), anonymous

488

7.8 Entry for the two-headed god of Mt. Yangling, from The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Chinese Edification (Morokoshi kinmōzui, 1719), by Hirazumi Sen’ān

491

7.9 Entry for the two-headed god of Mt. Yangxu, from Assmebled Pictures of the Three Realms (Sancai tubui, 1609), compiled by Wang Qi

492

7.10 Detail from Assmebled Pictures of the Three Realms (Sancai tubui, 1609), showing the poorly printed variant of the graph ま that Hirazumi would later miscopy as わ

492

7.11 A wealthy man in a boatful of people holds up his coin purse that he believes has weighed them down, from “The Passenger Boat” (Noriaibune, ca. 1760s)

500

7.12 Pillar calendar for Tenpō 11 (1840)

501

7.13 The actor Ichikawa Monnosuke in the play Kachizumō uchiwa no ageba, detail from a print by Torii Kiyonaga

503

7.14 Entry for Ichikawa Monnosuke, from the second volume of The Complete Writings on Actors (Yakusha zensho, 1774)

505

Color insert (following p. 134)

1 A young geisha engrossed in a kibyōshi, from the multicolored wood-block series “Edo’s Celebrated Beauties” (Edo kōmei bijin) by Kitagawa Utamaro, ca. 1792–1793

2 The three frontispieces to the 1793 deluxe second edition of Playboy, Roasted à la Edo (Edo umare uwaki no kabayaki, originally published in 1785), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

3 Kamo no Muchikage’s unnamed pug-nosed character who would become the model for Enjirō, from The Handtowel Competition (Tanagui awase, 1784), written and illustrated by Santō Kyōden

4 Two courtesans-in-training struggling over a yellow-covered comicbook (kibyōshi), from A Pageant of the Latest Beauties, Their Calligraphy Mirrored (Shin bijin awase jibitsu kagami, 1784), by Kitao Masanobu

5 The titular protagonist of The Story of Lady Dishhead (Hachikazuki, ca. 1624–1643), an anonymous picturebook
6 Cover of the redbook *Monkey vs. Crab* (*Saru kani gassen*), written by Nishimura Shigenaga

7 The two extant frontispieces from *Life of a Stretchy Monster* (*Mikoshi nyūdō ichidaiki*, 1782), written by Iba Kashō and illustrated by Torii Kiyonaga

8 Master Wetdream making love behind a standing screen to a daimyo's daughter, from *Master Wetdream's Fantasy Pillow* (*Isei sensei yume makura*, ca. 1789), anonymous

9 A scene from *Children's Acrobatics to Keep Safe from Smallpox* (*Hōsō anzen kodomo no karuwaza*, date unknown), written by Tamenaga Shunsui and illustrated by Sadashige

10 Ōtsu print (*Ōtsue*) of a demon with mallet, gong, and list of temple donors, from *Souvenirs of Ōtsu* (*Ōtsu miyage*, 1780)