

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xii
<i>Explanatory notes</i>	xiv
1 Introduction	1
<i>Times of major transitions</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Postwar Japan – gendering the workforce and diverging paths</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Professional aspirations and career options</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Positionality in a shifting field</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Structure of the book</i>	<i>23</i>
2 Women and work in modern Japan	33
<i>Identity and the shaping of white-collar career trajectories</i>	<i>33</i>
<i>Japan as a neoliberal economy – critical perspectives on knowledge, power, and practice</i>	<i>34</i>
3 Identity, family, and career	53
<i>Identity and selfhood</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Aspects of an aging society</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Low birth and high divorce rates</i>	<i>64</i>
<i>Workforce participation of women and work–life integration</i>	<i>68</i>
4 Pioneering female career tracks in Japan – women in their sixties and above	77
<i>Nomura Mihoko and others – the outliers</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>104</i>
5 The performative aspect of self-fulfilling prophecies – women in their fifties	111
<i>Imagawa Tomiko and Kawamori Mieko – the forerunners</i>	<i>112</i>
<i>Conclusion</i>	<i>126</i>

6	Through the labyrinth of their working lives – women in their forties	128
	<i>Fukuyama Noriko and others – “last chance” anxieties</i>	132
	<i>Conclusion</i>	165
7	Reevaluating the self – women in their thirties	171
	<i>Kishimoto Yoshie and Fukuda Reiko – conflicting life choices</i>	172
	<i>Conclusion</i>	194
8	Transitioning to a career – women in their twenties	202
	<i>Suzuki Masako and Nagata Yoko – finding one’s path in uncertain times</i>	205
	<i>Conclusion</i>	225
9	Conclusion	230
	<i>The “career woman” archetype</i>	230
	<i>Constant transitions</i>	231
	<i>Future prospects</i>	238
	<i>Appendix – list of informants</i>	242
	<i>Glossary</i>	246
	<i>Index</i>	249