

The Saikaku text gives a good image of society in the Tokugawa period.

Let's trace the woman's career:

Court lady, feudal concubine, monk's concubine, parlormaid, seamstress, courtesan, senior courtesan, penmanship school, street prostitute, reclusive old lady/nun

Striking phrase: "way of love" – what does it entail?

- passion
- "love"

What does this reveal about women and court life?

- court life centers around women's appearance and mastery of arts or current trends
- very strict standards and not a very stable position
- the women were very jealous, but not allowed to express it

On merchant/courtesan life:

- revolves around money
- women are more capable of determining what they do (than samurai women, for whom the rules of life are more strict) – the main character can do things not only out of obligations (such as paying the rent) but largely because she wants to

Why was this text appealing to the merchant class?

- it's pretty funny
- expresses the limits on personal independence determined by society (even though these are less than they are for samurai)
- some people found its vulgarity "disturbing"
- wonder what its actual audience was – who did this appeal to?
- not samurai, probably (at least, they wouldn't admit it)

Is there a larger moral to this?

- it's ambiguous
- for us, a practical purpose is its view on Tokugawa society
- he was a monk; are the tales supposed to maybe have a moral? Point out flaws in society? Possibly more likely that he's just trying to illuminate the lives of ordinary people.

Now back to the film, *Samurai Rebellion*.