Anthropology 484
JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE
(Writing Intensive)
Spring 2014

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Christine Yano
Class meetings: TuTh 9:00-10:15am, Saunders 345
Office: Saunders 346E
Phone: 956-8193
E-mail: cryano@hawaii.edu
T.A.: Mattias van Ommen <ommen@hawaii.edu>
Office hours: TuTh 10:30-11:30am, or by appt

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course takes popular culture in Japan as a springboard for discussing contemporary issues such as social class, gender and sexuality, nationalism, globalization, emotion, and consumer culture. This is not a survey course of different forms of popular culture in Japan. Rather, through manga, anime, pop music, food, and other forms of everyday life, we will explore the issues around which Japan shapes itself and is shaped. Our goal is to rethink Japan – as a modern nation-state, as a site of harmony and conflict, as a site of global and local popular culture flows. In the 21st century, Japan is both source and recipient of global products, processes, ideas, and people. The course will be organized around films and readings, following characterizations of consumer culture in Japan, whose market cleavages do not follow ethnic or class lines so much as age-graded segments. For this reason, I have organized our subject matter through the life course, beginning in childhood, following through early adulthood, and ending in old age. My point is that popular culture and its consumption are not only a function of youth, but are part of a person’s life from beginning to end.

In any course on popular culture, one of the problems is the nature of the subject itself, which is constantly changing. One keeps chasing after the thing (that is, pop culture), only to find the thing running far faster and in different directions than we could ever conjure. I don’t claim to know the absolute latest of what is going on. But we will attempt to analyze some of what is going on with the tools of theory. I welcome students in the class to share their knowledge of Japanese popular culture. Some of you may be fans. Others may know next to nothing of what is going on in Japan, but be fans of a Japanese pop culture form as it exists in the U.S. All of this is great and I hope you add to our discussion by speaking both from readings, as well as from personal experience. What this class bring to the discussion are cultural and political issues and theories that transcend particular genres or manifestations in time.
Course Outcomes

The goal of this course is to provide tools by which students may interpret and understand contemporary Japanese culture and society through the popular culture that is part of everyday life. As a result of this course, the student should be able to interpret aspects of contemporary life in Japan with critical thinking skills. These include understanding:

1) the development and characteristics of consumer culture in Japan;
2) the role of gender as a formative structure of production and consumption;
3) the interlocking aspects of global and local forces vis a vis consumer culture; and
4) the applicability of anthropological concepts to the study of popular culture in Japan, including rites of passage, age-graded behavior, ideology, resistance, and agency.

Mentoring: The Department of Anthropology has an undergraduate mentoring program that is free to anthro majors, as well as others taking writing intensive courses. If you are interested in getting help with this and other anthro courses, please contact Phoebe France and Zakea Boeger. Please take advantage of this opportunity.

ON WRITING

This course is designated as writing intensive; therefore, you can expect to use writing in a number of ways. We will approach writing in three ways: 1) writing as thinking on paper; 2) writing as communicating; and 3) writing as crafted product. First, we will consider writing as a means by which one may generate and clarify one’s thoughts. I will give you opportunities to think through writing, in effect, communicating with oneself. Second, we will consider writing as a means of communicating with others. To this end, in particular kinds of writing, I will emphasize clarity of expression, which will include not only the mechanics of writing, but also the organization of it. These first and second aspects of writing are not unrelated. Thinking well and writing well go hand in hand. Third, we will consider writing as a process of interaction between you, your peers, and myself. We will craft your writing through peer-reviewed and teacher-critiqued drafts, hopefully resulting in a better product.

Writing will be an integral part of your learning process in several ways: 1) assigned papers incorporating readings, lectures, and fieldwork; 2) reading responses; and 3) in-class writing. Common to all three of these is the requirement that your writing be clear, succinct, and grammatical. I expect any piece of writing that has been done on a computer to be spell-checked and proofread.

You should approach these three types of writing in different ways. 1) The papers are the most formal pieces of writing that you will do. We will do peer reviews of each of the papers and you should write knowing that not only I, but also your peers, will be reading these. 2) The reading responses are less formal. I will pose questions on the readings and ask you to respond. In many cases, the questions I pose will be big ones that could be answered by quoting the entire book or chapter. Do not do this. Instead, summarize briefly what the author says. In addition, inject some of your own thought to this. Do keep in mind that this should be a response, not a regurgitation. 3) In-class
writing is even less formal. For one thing, it is not done on computer and I don’t expect
the kind of “perfection” that instant editing, spell-checkers, grammar-checks easily
provide.

In sum, writing will be a self-conscious and fully integrated part of this course. Thus,
not only will you learn something about Japanese popular culture through taking this course,
hopefully you will end up writing with greater clarity, thought, and care.

The format of papers is as follows:
- 1” margins, all around
- 12-point font (Times New Roman)
- double-spaced
- pages numbered
- no title page for this length of a paper
- no folders or binders (this is a short paper)
- stapled
- no bibliography needed

These are standard university requirements and should be followed not only in
this course but in others as well.

Citation format:
written - (Author date: pg #)
lecture - (Anth484 lecture date)

In addition, PLEASE UNDERLINE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT in your
introduction, as well as its restatement in your concluding paragraph. The thesis
statement should answer the question: what is the point you are trying to make in this
paper?

Each paper has two due dates: 1st draft and final draft.
• Note: for the 1st draft papers, please bring in 2 copies of your paper. We will
conduct a peer review in class.
• When you hand in your final papers, please include your 1st drafts, your peer
reviews, and your final drafts.

In addition, if anyone wants me to look over and comment on your 1st draft papers, I will
give you opportunities to do so IF you hand in your paper to me the day BEFORE 1st
drafts are due. You may submit these electronically up to 6pm on that day. I will give
you comments within 24 hours (keep in mind that the extent of my comments depends in
part on how many students take advantage of this opportunity).

Late papers are highly discouraged. I will deduct 1 point per day past due. This
holds true for 1st and final drafts.

N.B. If you do not take part in the peer review (i.e. 1st draft paper), then 1 point is
deducted from your paper grade. If you hand in your final draft paper 1 day late, then 1
point is deducted. If you hand in your final draft paper 2 days late, then 2 points are
deducted. Etc. Do the math!

After I grade your papers, you have an opportunity to turn in a revised paper for
a higher grade. But you must:
1. Consult with me about your paper
2. Turn in original paper + revised paper no later than ONE WEEK after original paper was graded and returned.

BOOKS: these are required and available at the bookstore.
- Yano, Christine 2013 *Pink Globalization: Hello Kitty’s Trek Across the Pacific*
- Yano, Christine 2002 *Tears of Longing; Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*

*A note on readings. Lectures and readings do not necessarily overlap. Each one is considered a different source of material, information, and engagement with ideas. If you have questions on the readings, please do ask for clarification in class.*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading responses (3X10)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper #1</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper #2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam/paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5 points for discussion leader; 5 points for attendance, video sheets, class participation, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

READING RESPONSES (10 points each)
This is the section of the course that gives you practice in writing as thinking. These written responses ask you to reflect upon questions related to readings. I will pose questions on the assigned readings. You are asked to address these questions. The easiest way to do this is to download the questions and embed your answers directly after the question. Note: you should keep up with the readings according to the schedule and simply add to the document as you progress through the assignments. This is not meant to be completed all at once. These notes are primarily for yourself to help you think through the readings, but I will collect these notes toward the end of each unit and before that unit’s paper is due. See calendar below for due dates. There is no page requirement for these reading responses, but I expect your writing to be thoughtful and complete, without being excessively lengthy. In most cases, the questions require a paragraph to answer. *Please single-space and italicize your answers.* You will be graded generously.

PAPERS: approx. 7 pages (20 points each)
Papers will attempt to integrate films that we watch with lectures and, to a lesser extent, readings. (I fully acknowledge that this integration is not always possible with the variety of readings.) The paper topic will be handed out at the beginning of the unit, so that your notes on lectures can address the topic most directly. In your papers I expect you to use lectures (and readings) as much as possible to comment on the film. These are not research papers and you are not expected to do any outside reading for them.
CLASS PARTICIPATION (10 points)

In a highly interactive course such as this, each student’s daily presence and participation is critical. You will be assessed on the basis of attendance, verbal participation, and completion of in-class worksheets. 5 points for leading class discussion + 5 points for class participation (including any in-class writing).

Class discussions on readings will be led by students. Sign up sheet for selecting readings will be on 1/10. If you are a discussion leader, you must send me your answers to the reading questions by 12n the day before your assigned discussion. As leader you will be conducting a small group discussion on the reading, followed by a full-class discussion. You will be evaluated based upon your ability to LEAD the discussion. Your goal is not to provide answers to the questions posed. Rather, it is to generate and shape the discussion itself.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Thurs, 5/15, 9:45-11:45am (20 points)

The final examination will be closed book, on the date given above. It will cover all the material of the course. I will hand out the exam questions on the last day of class (Tues 5/6), and you will have the opportunity to discuss them. On the day of the exam, however, you will not be allowed to bring in any notes or books.

An alternative to this is a take-home exam on the same questions as distributed on the last day of class. I expect the take-home to be approx.7 pages long. It is due on Fri, 5/9, 3pm, emailed to me. Failure to make this deadline means that you will have to take the exam as scheduled.

TAKE-HOME OPTION: Fri, 5/9, 3pm, emailed to me
IN-CLASS OPTION: Thurs, 5/15, 9:45-11:45am, Saunders 345

On electronic seductions and classroom etiquette

Rudeness has existed since time immemorial. However, I think that technology has contributed to our devolution as beings that do not recognize common courtesy in a group setting, such as the classroom. Therefore, I feel the need to lay out some ground rules for the class. A lot of this is kindergarten stuff, yet it still needs saying. Maybe we all need reminders of the manners we supposedly learned in elementary school. Forgetting comes easy.

Bottom line: I believe that we have all become a more distractable bunch, and I think that technology contributes to it. Our attention spans are short. If we do not find something immediately entertaining or if we find something too difficult, we mentally switch channels. In fact, we channel surf through our realms of attention, searching through multiple signals and messages. Electronic seductions call us constantly – and I include myself in this. These seductions make reading a book particularly difficult. They make listening to a lecture hard. I will try to do my part to make the classroom time intellectually challenging and of interest. I ask your cooperation in meeting me half way. I ask your help in stemming the tide of distraction. For 75 minutes, twice a week, for one semester, I ask that you recover (or discover) your powers of focus and attention. We’ll be better thinkers for it.

1. Come to class on time. In fact, come to class at least one minute before class
is supposed to start. It won’t kill you.
2. Turn off electronic distractions (smart phones, etc). Put them away. Don’t look at them, try not to think about them.
3. Don’t talk to neighbors while someone else is officially speaking in class (this could be me, or it could be another student).
4. Recapture the notion of undivided attention. (THIS is something that I feel is being lost through technology.)
5. If you are using your computer to take notes in class, don’t browse the Web, play games, chat, email, etc. This is disturbing to those around you. Eliminate distractions – especially electronic ones. We have to relearn how to focus and reduce the noise of seductive stimuli.
6. Use the bathroom before coming to class. There should be no reason – other than an emergency—for people getting up in the middle of the class and leaving the room. (I find this embarrassing to have to say.)

I call these ground rules of classroom courtesy, and in some ways I find it incredible that they need be stated in a university-level syllabus. So be it. At the same time, I do not necessarily want to lay out explicit and punitive means for enforcing them. I detest taking that position. I would prefer to think that in a university setting, we are all mature adults who come together willingly (even excitedly) in the spirit of mutual respect and eager learning. Therefore, these are old-fashioned rules designed to make our time together hashing out newfangled ideas the most productive that they can be. We are here to learn and to think. Join me in this endeavor.

CALENDAR (subject to change)

UNIT I: 1/14-1/17 INTRODUCTION; GENERAL THEMES OF COURSE
Reading:

1/14 INTRODUCTION OF ISSUES
WHAT IS POPULAR CULTURE AND WHY STUDY JAPAN THROUGH ITS LENS?
Reading: Yano Pink Globalization, Introduction (pp 1-42)

1/16 MODERN JAPAN, FOREIGN-DOMESTIC PENDULUM SWINGS, AND POPULAR CULTURE
Reading: Yano Pink Globalization, Ch1 (pp 43-83)
* sign up for reading assignments

UNIT II: 1/21-2/13 YOUTH: CUTE CULTURE
Written responses to Reading I (Yano: Pink Globalization) due 1/30
Paper #1, 1st draft due (bring two copies) 2/11
Final draft due 2/13

1/21 GLOBALIZED CHILDHOODS: MCDONALD’S, DISNEYLAND
Reading: Yano PG, Ch2 (pp. 84-118)
1/23  SHOUJO: AMBIGUITY AND AMBIVALENCE  
Reading: Yano PG, Ch3 (pp 119-162)
1/28  HELLO KITTY: THE CAT SOME LOVE TO HATE  
Reading: Yano PG, Ch 5, 7 (pp 199-229, 252-268)
1/30  DISCUSSION OF READINGS  
*Reading responses #1 due*

2/04  FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO (1988, Hayao Miyazaki)
2/06  FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO & discussion
2/11  PAPER #1: 1st DRAFT PEER REVIEW (BRING TWO COPIES)
2/13  PAPER #1: FINAL DRAFT DUE

UNIT III: 2/18-4/03 YOUNG ADULTHOOD: MASCULINITY AND FANDOM
Written responses to Reading II (Ito, Okabe, Tsuji, eds. *Fandom Unbound*) due 3/13
Paper #2: 1st draft due (bring two copies) , 4/01
   Final draft due, 4/03
2/18  GLOBALIZED FIGURES: OTAKU  
Reading: Ito et al, Introduction, Ch1 (pp. Xi-xxvii, 3-29
2/20  OTAKU AS ICON  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch3 (pp. 68-84)
2/25  VIDEO: Densha Otoko (partial)  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch5 (pp. 107–132)
2/27  VIDEOGAMES (GUEST LECTURE)  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch6 (pp. 133-157)
3/04  ANIME/MANGA  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch9 (pp. 207-224)
3/06  ROBOT CULTURE: MECHANICAL HUMANOIDS  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch 10 (pp. 225-248)
3/11  BOSOZOKU: FLOW  
Reading: Ito et al, Ch 11 (pp. 249-274)
3/13  DISCUSSION OF READINGS II  
*Reading Responses #2 due*
3/18  FILM: Waterboys (2001 Shinobu Yaguchi, 90 min.)
3/20  FILM: Waterboys
*SPRING BREAK 3/24-3/30*
4/01  PAPER #2: 1st DRAFT PEER REVIEW  
4/03  PAPER #2: FINAL DRAFT

UNIT IV: 4/08-4/29 LATE ADULTHOOD: RETREAT TO “TRADITION”
Written response to Reading III (Yano: *Tears of Longing*) due 4/22
4/08  BUTTERFLIES IN DRAG: GENDERED KATA  
Reading: Yano, Prologue, Ch. 1
4/10  VIDEO: DREAM GIRLS (Wong AVC #11682)  
Reading: Yano, Ch, 3, 4
4/15  NOSTALGIA FOR JAPAN: ENKA  
Reading: Yano, Ch 5, 6
4/17  TRANSNATIONAL NOSTALGIA: KOREAN DRAMAS  
    Reading: Yano, Ch7, Epilogue  
4/22  DISCUSSION ON READINGS III  
    * Reading Responses #3 due  
4/24  FILM: ZATOICHI THE BLIND SWORDSMAN (2003, Kitano Takeshi)  
4/29  FILM: ZATOICHI and discussion  

UNIT V: 5/01-5/06 WRAP-UP  
5/01  GLOBAL JAPAN  
5/06  Hand out final exam  

FINAL EXAM: Thurs, May 15, 9:45-11:45am  
    (*Take home due 5/9, 3pm; emailed to cryano@hawaii.edu)