

Anth 484 (CRN 88543)
JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE
(Writing Intensive)

Spring 2023

GENERAL INFORMATION

Instructor	Dr. Christine Yano
Class meetings	TuTh 9-10:15, Saunders 345
Office	Saunders 322
Phone	956-4447
E-mail	cryano@hawaii.edu
OFFICE HOUR	Thurs 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, identity, nationalism, globalization, emotion, and consumer culture. This is NOT a survey course of different forms of popular culture in Japan. Rather, through various popular cultural forms, 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, as an object and force of consumption. 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. Popular culture in Japan, as elsewhere, forms and is formed by issues of identity that keep shifting and gaining new meanings.

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 together attempt to analyze some of what is going on – as well as has gone on in the recent past -- 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 brings to the discussion is critical thinking surrounding cultural and political issues and theories that transcend particular genres or manifestations in time.

A final note on the choice of films. As you will notice from the syllabus, these films are not necessarily the latest ones out. Instead, I have selected particular films for these reasons: 1) to make a point related to the course, 2) to serve as a prompt for the paper (or essay question) you are required to write, and 2) for their high quality as films. These films are among the contemporary classics of Japanese film making.

Course Outcomes

The goal of this course is to provide tools by which students may interpret and understand contemporary Japanese 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:

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.

BOOKS: these are required and available at the bookstore, as well as on-line through the library.

In the order in which they will be read:

- Freedman, Alisa and Toby Slade, eds. 2018 *Introducing Japanese Popular Culture*. London: Routledge.

UH LIBRARY ONLINE ACCESS

**https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma9910782134405681&context=L&vid=01UHAWAII_MANOA:MANOA&lang=en&search_scope=DN_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,introducing%20japanese%20popular%20culture&offset=0

COMPANION WEBSITE, with chapter summaries, discussion questions, further readings

<https://www.routledgetextbooks.com/textbooks/9781138852105/student.php>

- Yano, Christine 2002 *Tears of Longing; Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

UH LIBRARY ONLINE ACCESS

**https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=alma9910847491905681&context=L&vid=01UHAWAII_MANOA:MANOA&lang=en&search_scope=DN_and_CI&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=Everything&query=any,contains,TEARS%20OF%20LONGING&offset=0

*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:

Readings (10x3)	30%
Paper #1	20%
Paper #2	20%
Final exam	20%
In-class	10%

** PLEASE NOTE: for all papers and due dates, turning in anything late will result in a lowered grade.

****ADDITIONAL NOTE:** If you do not take part in the peer review of papers, then ONE point will be deducted from your paper grade.

READING RESPONSES (10 points x3) no set required number of pages, but usually around 2-3 pgs., single-spaced. Please **DOWNLOAD THE READING GUIDE AND EMBED YOUR ANSWERS ITALICIZED AFTER EACH QUESTION**. All students email me their responses by the due date (see calendar).

*Please note that discussion leaders (facilitation groups) for each book are required to **post answers to the reading guide questions on Laulima (see calendar)**. You may divide up the questions within each facilitation team.

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. This is not meant to be completed all at once, but done perhaps a chapter or more per class period. 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 few sentences to answer. You will be graded generously.

PAPERS: approx. 5-7 pages (20 points x 2)

Papers will attempt to integrate readings, lectures, and film. These are not research papers and you are not expected to do any outside reading for them.

Any paper that you write should have a thesis, an argument. “In this paper, I argue that . . . “ **Please underline your thesis statement.** It should occur in the first or second paragraph. And the rest of your paper should be support for your thesis.

*Note: assume that the reader has seen the film. Therefore, you do not need to reiterate the plot of the film.

*You must include **AT LEAST THREE CITATIONS FROM CLASS MATERIALS** in your paper. E.g. LECTURE (484 II-1 02/04/23); E.G. READING (Yano 2002:158)

The format of papers is as follows:

- 1" margins, all around
- 12-point font, Times New Roman (i.e., what I have used in this syllabus)
- double-spaced
- pages numbered

Each paper has two due dates: 1st draft and final draft.

* Note: for the 1st draft papers, you have two options. 1) email me your paper no later than 10pm the day before due date. OR 2) bring in 2 hard copies of your paper. We will conduct a peer review in class.

* When you email your final papers, please include your 1st drafts, your peer reviews.

**Note: no class on the Thursday that papers are due. Instead I will be in my office during class hours and after for individual consultation. 9-11:30am)*

On Writing

This course is designated writing-intensive for good reason. My firm belief is that good writing makes for good thinking and vice versa. Disciplining one's writing is akin to disciplining one's thinking. Writing will be an integral part of your learning process in two main ways: 1) Short papers incorporating readings, lectures, and fieldwork; 2) reading responses. Common to both of these is the requirement that your writing be clear, succinct, and grammatical. I expect any piece of writing to be spell-checked and proofread. You should approach these two 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. Please do make use of the Writing Workshop at Kuy415 (956-7619) where you can sign up for half-hour appointments with writing tutors.
- 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. Note: reading responses are to be posted on Lulima by assigned groups.

The bottom line is that writing will be a self-conscious and fully integrated part of this course. Thus, not only will you learn something about Japanese pop cultures through taking this course, hopefully you will end up writing with greater clarity, thought, and care.

CLASS PARTICIPATION (*10 points*)

These points will be accrued by:

1. Consistent attendance and participation in class.
2. Facilitation group leadership: a) post reading responses on Lulima, b) lead class discussion

CALENDAR (subject to change)

UNIT I 1/09-1/14 GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THEMES OF THE COURSE

READING: none

1/10 What is popular culture and why study Japan through this lens?

1/12 Brief crazy history of modern Japan and its popular culture as pendulum swings

UNIT II 1/16-2/18 CHILDHOOD: GIRL CULTURE

READING: F/S Introduction (1-10), Occhi (13-23), Yano (24-34), Galbraith I (158-167), Slade (401-411)

PAPER TOPIC: nostalgia, girl culture

FILM: Tonari no Totoro

1/17 CONSUMER CHILDHOODS: MCDONALD'S, DISNEYLAND

1/19 SHŌJO AND GIRL CULTURE

1/20 Facilitation group #1 post F/S Introduction, Occhi, Yano on Laulima by 5pm

1/24 CUTENESS AS COMMODITY: HELLO KITTY

1/25 Facilitation group #1 post Galbraith, Slade on Laulima by 5pm

1/26 FACILITATION GROUP #1 LEADS DISCUSSION. All students email me reading response #1 by 5pm.

1/31 FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO (1988, dir. Miyazaki Hayao)

http://www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/auth/laulima.php?fn=1806_my_neighbor_totoro

2/02 FILM: TONARI NO TOTORO – discussion

2/07 **Paper #1 peer review** (email me your drafts by 2/06, 10pm; OR bring 2 copies to class)

2/09 NO CLASS; instead, individual consultation in my office on your papers

2/10 **Paper #1 due by email (ALSO send in your first draft, peer review sheets)**

UNIT III 2/13-3/24 ADULTHOOD – SPOTLIGHT ON MASCULINITIES

READING: F/S Katsuno (37-47), Hutchinson (71-80), Condry (123-134), Furmanovsky (137-147), Tsutsui (193-203), Galbraith II (373-385), Monden (424-432)

PAPER TOPIC: masculinities in contemporary Japan

FILM: Shall We Dansu?

2/14 Valentine's Day as a negotiation of the sexes

2/16 WHITE COLLAR MASCULINITY (HEGEMONIC)

2/17 Facilitation group #2 post Katsuno, Condry, Furmakovsky on Laulima by 5pm

2/21 BLUE COLLAR & RURAL MASCULINITIES (relate to Unit IV);

2/23 BISHŌNEN (PRETTY BOYS) MASCULINITY

2/24 Facilitation group #2 post Tsutsui, Galbraith, Monden on Laulima by 5pm

2/28 OTAKU MASCULINITY; BŌSŌZOKU BAD BOY MASCULINITY

3/02 FACILITATION GROUP #2 LEADS DISCUSSION. All students email me reading response #2 by 5pm

3/07 FILM: SHALL WE DANSU (1996, Masayuki Suo, 136 min.)

http://www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/auth/laulima.php?fn=2003_shall_we_dance

3/09 FILM: SHALL WE DANSU – discussion

*3/13-3/18 SPRING BREAK

*3/21 1st draft **Paper #2 peer review** (email me your drafts by 3/20, 10pm; OR bring 2 hard copies to class)

3/23 NO CLASS; instead, individual consultation in my office on your papers

3/24 **Paper #2 due by email (ALSO send in your first draft, peer review sheets)**

UNIT IV 3/28-5/03 LATE ADULthood – “TRADITION” AND NOSTALGIA

READING: YANO – TEARS OF LONGING (see reading guide)

PAPER TOPIC: nostalgia, “tradition”

FILM: Zatoichi the Blind Swordsman

3/28 MASCULINITY AND THE NATION IN ENKA

3/30 BUTTERFLIES IN DRAG

3/31 Facilitation Group 3 posts Yano Prologue, Ch1, Ch3, Ch4 on Laulima

4/04 MISORA HIBARI: NOSTALGIA FOR POSTWAR JAPAN

*4/06 GENDERED KATA; VIDEO: DREAM GIRLS, 1994, Kim Longinotto, Jano Williams (53 min.) (OneSearch permalink)

https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UHAWAII_MANOA/11uc19p/alma9951062051405682

4/07 Facilitation Group posts Yano Ch 5, 6, 7, Epilogue

4/11 JERO: FAILED ENKA DREAMS

4/13 Facilitation Group 3 leads discussion; ALL STUDENTS EMAIL ME READING RESPONSE #3 BY 5PM

4/18 FILM: ZATOICHI THE BLIND SWORDSMAN (2003, dir. Kitano Takeshi)

https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=01UHAWAII_MANOA:MANOA&search_scope=DN_and_CI&tab=Everything&docid=alma9910933896905681

4/20 FILM: ZATOICHI – DISCUSSION

UNIT V 4/25-5/02 WRAP-UP

04/25 GLOBAL JAPAN

04/27 FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

05/02 FINAL EXAM DUE BY email or hard copy 9AM; come to class for refreshments!

VIDEO ACCESS: for best viewing please use CHROME

TONARI NO TOTORO

http://www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/auth/laulima.php?fn=1806_my_neighbor_totoro

SHALL WE DANSU

http://www.sinclair.hawaii.edu/auth/laulima.php?fn=2003_shall_we_dance

DREAM GIRLS (UH Manoa Streaming Video Purchase)

(OneSearch permalink)

https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UHAWAII_MANOA/11uc19p/alma9951062051405682

ZATOICHI THE BLIND SWORDSMAN (Swank)

https://uhawaii-manoa.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=01UHAWAII_MANOA:MANOA&search_scope=DN_and_CI&tab=Everything&docid=alma99109338

96905681

<https://digitalcampus-swankmp-net.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/uhmanoa331151/play/1a6494cefa2c8343?referrer=direct>

SOME UH DATES

January 17 Deadline to: Drop a course for 100% tuition refund

February 1 Deadline to: Drop a course without a “W” grade

February 2-March 24 Restricted Withdrawal period (with a “W” grade) via STAR GPS