Overview

This course examines the fictional representations of contemporary Japan from the 1980s to the present. It will consider the significance of a variety of works not only in the ways they reflect the preoccupations and conditions of contemporary Japanese society but also in the ways they function to play an active role in shaping the society in which they were produced, circulated, and consumed. While this course serves as a continuation course for two courses already offered by the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures, Modern Japanese Literature in Translation (565:242) and Japanese Film (565:350), the students are not required to have taken these courses prior to taking this course.

Requirements

4 response papers (2 pages, 7.5% each) 30%
2 tests (15% each) 30%
Final paper (8-10 pages) 30%
Class attendance and performance 10%

Note on Academic Integrity: You are expected to uphold the highest level of academic integrity in this class. For details, please see http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/. I will also be glad to discuss with you any concerns or questions you have on this issue.

Note on absences: Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss class, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

Required Texts


***We will also watch 6 films during the semester. The copies of screened films will be placed on reserve at the Media Center in Douglass Library.***
Schedule (subject to change)

1/18 Introduction

UNIT I: Archetypes of Contemporary Japanese Fictions

1/25 The Family Game, cont’d
2/1 RESPONSE #1 DUE; discussion

UNIT II: Traumas of Modern Existence

2/6 Kore-ed a Hirokazu, Maboroshi (1995)
2/8 Maboroshi, cont’d
2/15 RESPONSE #2 DUE; discussion

UNIT III: Stories of Youth

2/20 Kitano Takeshi, Kids Return (1996)
2/22 Kids Return, cont’d
2/29 RESPONSE #3 DUE; discussion

3/5 Review
3/7 TEST #1
3/12 NO CLASS: Spring Break
3/14 NO CLASS: Spring Break

UNIT IV: The Japanese Fantastic Revisited

3/19 Film screening, TBD
3/21 Film screening, TBD
3/26 Murakami Haruki, Dance, Dance, Dance (1988)
3/28 RESPONSE #4 DUE; discussion

UNIT V: Women and Horror in Japanese Society

4/4 Ringu cont’d
4/11 RESPONSE #5 DUE; discussion
UNIT VI: Postmodern Subjectivities and Identities

4/18   *Kamikaze Girls*, cont’d
4/25   Discussion and review

4/30   TEST #2

5/9    FINAL PAPER DUE at noon in my office (Scott 338) or my mailbox (Scott 330)