Japanese Women Writers  
565:360:01  
Tuesday/Thursday 1:10-2:30pm Spring 2012  
Room: Scott Hall 121

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Office Hours: Monday 1-2pm or by appointment.

Course Description

While masculine perspectives of anime, manga, and games circulate as Japanese pop-culture in the realm of fantasy, contemporary Japanese women’s literature may expose real experiences of living in Japanese cultures. This course examines women’s experiences and voices in Japanese literature, arts, and film. The course’s learning goals include: understanding issues of gender and sexuality in Japan, to gain knowledge on contemporary trend of literature by young Japanese female authors, and analyzing various social and cultural aspects of Japan from the perspective of women and sub-culture writers.

The course is divided in four parts.

Unit 1 – Sex and the City Heian Style introduces the two famous women writers in Heian period (794AD-1185AD) in Japan. These writers were one of the first to be discovered by the world as “women writers.” Their sassy writings on love, sex, career, and men still speak to women in many nations today.

Unit 2 – Bad Girls Or Bad-Ass Girls discusses discourses of deviant women in Japan and analyzes the gender cultures in Japan which engenders such discourses of “bad girls.”

Unit 3 – Manga To Eiga broadens the definition of Japanese writing into graphic novels and comics (shouojyo manga) and film world.

Unit 4 – Snakes and Earrings: Contemporary Voices considers today’s Japanese and transnational-Japanese women writers’ works in comparison to the previous course readings.

Texts


Course Requirements

Grading: You will be evaluated on the basis of 8 discussion sheets (40%) (2 discussion sheets in each Unit) and two 5-6 page papers on assigned topics (15% each). Discussion sheets must be turned in on the due date for full credit.
Please note that an “A” paper explains and interprets the material in an original way on the topic. A “B” paper accurately explains and interprets the material on the topic. A “C” paper presents and summarizes ideas in the texts and is mostly about the topic. A “D” paper presents an unclear argument and does not adequately address the topic. An “F” paper has no argument or is off topic. A: 91-100%; B+: 86-90%; B: 80-85%; C+: 75-79%; C: 70-74%; D: 60-69%; F: 59% and below.

Attendance/Quizzes/Participation (30%)

Discussion sheets (40%) [2 sheets x 4 Units = 8 sheets/5% each]

Response Papers (30%)

Attendance/Participation/Quizzes: For participation, see Participation Policy. The quizzes will be conducted to see if you have read the text.

Response Papers/Discussion Sheets: Your papers must be double-spaced, typed in the standard format (12" font preferably in Times New Roman, 1-inch margins around,) and stapled together if printed, or electronic submissions accepted, provided it is received on time. No late submission will be accepted.

Participation Policy: First and most important, your participation mainly depends upon completing the reading assignments. If you are not participating by skipping the readings, it WILL affect my view of your integrity as a student and therefore affect the grading.

Your opinions will be respected, and simultaneously you will be required to respect the opinions of your classmates.

Missed class cannot be made up. Each time you miss a class or are significantly tardy (make sure you come in quietly!) it will affect your grade through participation, pop quizzes, etc. In addition, if you miss more than four classes, your grade will be lowered by one full letter. If you miss ten or more classes, you will fail the course.

!!! All mobile-phones and similar electronic devices need to be turned off and PUT AWAY in class. No net-surfing in the class and No text messaging is allowed in the class. Violation to this rule will directly affect your participation credit which is 30% of the total course grade. In cases of emergency where you need to have your phone on for reception of calls or text message, you must speak with the instructor and obtain permission.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and will result in serious consequences, starting with failing this class. You are responsible to be familiar with the Rutgers Policy on academic Integrity. In other words, not knowing the policy
will not be an excuse for violation of the policy. Make sure you check:
http://teachx.rutgers.edu/integrity/policy.html

Disability Support Services
If you have a learning and/or physical disability, you must contact the instructor AND
Disability Support Services. Without doing this, no special treatment or exception will be
given to your coursework, and you will be evaluated just as any other student.
Call 732-932-2848 (Disability Service Support) for more information

Guidelines for discussion sheets and 5-page papers:

Discussion sheets are due on the dates we discuss the specific reading which you
are writing on. You may choose what day you would submit your discussion sheet, but it
just has to be submitted on the day we discuss the reading of your choice. You will
submit 2 discussion sheets in each Unit (2 sheets x 4 Units = 8 sheets total.) The
discussion sheets must be typed & printed, single-spaced, one page in length, and in 12-
point Times New Roman or equivalent font. Your name, the date, and title of the essay or
chapter discussed should appear in the first three lines. No late submission is received.

5-page papers must be typed double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman
or equivalent font. Include page numbers and staple the pages together. Proofread every
page to catch grammatical errors, spelling errors, and typos. Failure to do so will reduce
your grade. Your name, the date, and title should appear in the first three lines. It is not
necessary to include a Works Cited page or Bibliography after the paper. Instead, include
all necessary information such as book titles and page numbers in parentheses within the
text of your discussion. Book titles must be italicized or underlined, and titles of short
stories must appear in quotes.

Note: Plagiarism is the use of other people’s words or ideas without proper
acknowledgment. To avoid suspicion of plagiarism, when you use a direct quotation in
your papers, be sure to indicate this by surrounding it with quotation marks or by
indenting it, if it is more than four lines. If you have any questions about what constitutes
plagiarism, discuss them with the instructor.
Course Schedule

1/17  Introduction

Before we begin / Against Orientalism

1/19  Excerpts from Asian Mystique
     Also check the website: http://www.bigbadchinesemama.com/
     Read the sites thoroughly

Unit 1 Sex and the City - Heian Style

1/24  Sei Shonagon Pillow Book (Makura no Soushi) Excerpts 1
1/26  Sei Shonagon Pillow Book (Makura no Soushi) Excerpts 2
1/31  Murasaki Shikibu The Tale of Genji Excerpts 1
2/2   Murasaki Shikibu The Tale of Genji Excerpts 2

Unit 2 Bad Girls or Bad-Ass Girls

2/7    “Introduction,” “Mythical Bad Girls,” and “Bad Girls Confined”
       (Intro to page 46) from Bad Girls of Japan
2/9    “Bad Girl Photography” and “Sex With Nation” (p127-144 and 175-190)
       from Bad Girls of Japan
2/14   “Black Faces, Witches, and Racism against Girls” (p143-158) and “Filipina
       Modern” (p159-174) from Bad Girls of Japan
2/16   DC Conference
2/21   OUT by Kirino Natsuo
2/23   OUT by Kirino Natsuo
      5 pages paper #1 Due

Unit 3 Manga To Eiga

2/28  NANA
3/1   NANA
3/6   Boys Over Flowers
3/8   Boys Over Flowers

!!! Spring Break !!!
3/20  Nodame Cantabile
3/22  Nodame Cantabile
3/27  Film Kamome Diner
3/29  Film Kamome Diner

**Unit 4 Snakes and Earrings: Contemporary Voices**

4/3  (From Inside)
    “Forward” by Ruth Ozeki
    “Milk” Tamaki Daido (p13-42)
    “Inside” Rio Shimamoto (p43-66)

4/5  (From Inside)
    “Piss” Yuzuki Muroi (p67-98)
    “My Son’s Lips” by Shungiku Uchida (p99-122)
    “Her Room” by Chiya Fujino (p123-148)

4/10  (From Inside)
    “Fiesta” by Amy Yamada (p149-170)
    “The Unfertilized Egg” (p171-202)
    “The Shadow of the Orchid) (p203-233)

4/12  Circle K Cycles by Karen Tei Yamashita
4/19  Snakes and Earrings by Hitomi Kanehara
4/24  Snakes and Earrings by Hitomi Kanehara

4/26  Final Discussion (one reading that stayed with you, and evaluation of your overall learning)
    5 pages paper #2 Due