New Boundaries, New Connections

Masamune (1991)

Two robots question their identity.
From *Ghost in the Shell*
NAKAZAWA Keiji *Barefoot Gen* (Hadashi no Gen)
KON Satoshi (Dir.) 1997 *Perfect Blue*
Celebrity, Fans, and Identity

AMANO Yoshitaka
TEZUKA Osamu (1928-89)

Self-portrait

from Schodt (1996) Dreamland Japan
"No matter what becomes of the world, we should celebrate the blessing of being born."

*Comic Box Bessatsu Vol. 6 Chihiro no Daibouken (2001)*
Miyazaki (1988)

My Neighbor Totoro (Tonari no Totoro) 1988
Nature, Gods, Humans, Technology

Princess Mononoke (1997)
Spirited Away (Sen to Chihiro)

Miyazaki (2001)

Highest grossing box office receipts in Japanese film history
Japanese Popular Culture

- What's Japanese?

- What's popular culture?
Defining Popular Culture

- formal
- aesthetic
- quantitative
- sociological
- political

Ganguro fashion, late 1990s

Lawrence Grossberg (1989)
1. Formal

- popular culture relies on formulas
  - soap operas
  - teen idol pop
  - action movies

Sakamoto Kyu in 1960s
2. aesthetic

- popular culture as opposed to high culture
  - not opera, symphony, ballet
  - yes, theater, rock 'n roll, disco

Grafitti art *kanji* as CD cover
3. quantitatively

- popular culture is mass culture
  - hit songs, not playing piano at home
  - hit TV shows, not home videos

UTADA Hikaru (1999) *First Love* debut album sets record
4. sociologically

- popular culture is everyday culture of the people
  - karaoke box
  - video games
  - cell phones

Nikki Lee's identity art
5. politically

- popular culture is **folk culture**
  - not mainstream culture of the powerful
  - yes, culture of marginal groups

- Grafitti on walls, but not in art museums . . . ?

Kazz Rock panel in Sakuragi-cho, 2000
"You Better Listen Up"

- Alternative visions of society
- Media power in economics, politics, and culture
- Fan and artist positions
- The future of culture is in the balance
• Alternative visions of society
• Media power in economics, politics, and culture
• Fan and artist positions
• The future of culture is in the balance
Assignment for Monday

• Reading:
  – Horkheimer and Adorno (handout)
  – Treat, "Introduction" *Contemporary Japan and Popular Culture*

• Video:
  – "The Japanese Version" at the LLARC, 6th floor, Building 16