

**BODYGUARDS AND ASSASSINS:
VIOLENT WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE POPULAR CULTURE**
A USC Mellon Digital Humanities Summer Tutorial



- USC undergraduate students will receive a \$1,500 stipend for course completion.
- Non-credit course taught by a USC Mellon Digital Humanities Ph.D. Fellow
- Tutorials meet twice a week for two-hour sessions at USC during the month of July.

This tutorial explores how violent women are depicted across Japanese popular culture today. Considering that Japan is famous for its low crime rate, Japanese popular culture seems to practically be overflowing with violence. We will follow violent women from the pages of the newspapers to the movie theatre and into the home, asking how artists' genders affect the characters they create and how today's artists are building on prior work. We

will also examine the conjoined depiction of sex and violence and what depictions of violent women suggest about contemporary Japan. In addition to regular readings, the class will view television shows and films.

Instructor: Amanda Kennell
kennell@usc.edu

Reading Schedule

Week One: Violent Women of Yesteryear

1.1: Real Women, Unreal Stories

Christine Marran, *Poison Woman: Figuring Female Transgression in Modern Japanese Culture* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2007) pgs. xiii-xxv, 103-177.

Viewing: *Lupin the 3rd Part One* eps. 2-3 (1972), *Rose of Versailles* eps. 1-2 (1979)

1.2: Setting up the Turn of the Century

Debra Shamoon, *Passionate Friendship: The Aesthetics of Girls' Culture in Japan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2012) pgs. 101-136.

Week Two: Theorizing Women's Violence

2.1: Righteous Violence

Carol Clover, *Men, Women and Chain Saws* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992) pgs. 1-64.

Viewing: *Kite*, dir. Yasuomi Umetsu (1992)

2.2: Real? Violence

Tamaki Saitō, *Beautiful Fighting Girl*, trans. J. K. Vincent and D. Lawson (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), pgs. 3-8.

Week Three: Violent Women and History

3.1: Fantasy and History

Nahoko Uehashi, *Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit*, trans. Cathy Hirano (New York: Scholastic, 2008)

Viewing: *Sakuran*, dir. Mika Ninagawa (2007)

3.2: Swordswomen and Kunoichi

Week Four: Politics and Progression

4.1: Lupin of Versailles

Lupin the 3rd: A Woman Called Fujiko Mine eps. 1-13

Viewing: *Samurai Chicks*, dir. Mari Asato (2004)

4.2: Pop Music, Pop Violence

Hiroshi Aoyagi, "Idol Performances and Gender Identities." *Islands of Eight Million Smiles* (Harvard University Asia Center, 2005) pgs. 86-125.

Application Procedures

Undergraduate students at USC who are interested in applying for enrollment should send a resume and cover letter (explaining their experience and interest in the course topic) to digitalhumanities@dornsife.usc.edu by *Monday, May 2, 2016*.