Urban Life in Japan

This seminar seeks to entice students into exploring the complexities of modern city life in Japan. While engaging different aspects of urban life each week in class, students will also research and write an original research essay on an aspect of city life. The topics of these essays will vary widely, reflecting each individual student’s interests and expertise. *Weekly attendance is mandatory.

Requirements:

- research project outline (10%)
- preliminary bibliography (10%)
- textexercise and webtextercise (5% each = 10%)
- weekly readings and class participation (20%)
- 20-25 page research paper (50%)

Reading: Short readings for class discussion will be distributed each week.

Office Hours: 1-3 Wednesdays, and by appointment, in 327 McKenzie Hall.
Email: hanes@uoregon.edu; Phone: 541-346-4837

Learning Objectives:

- to gain historical perspective on urban life in modern Japan
- to place Japanese cities in the broader context of modern urban life across the world
- to explore and engage a compelling aspect of urban life in Japan through original research and writing

Week One (March 31). Introduction.

Introduction: The Seminar and the Seminarian
Project Prep: How to Come Up With a Research Topic

Assignment: Locate a visual image that shouts “Urban Japan!” to you and resonates with your preliminary ideas for a research project. Send the image to me electronically by Sunday evening (April 6) for posting in a Powerpoint presentation, then come to class April 7 prepared to briefly explore the image and your ideas for a research project.
**Week Two (April 7). The Past in the Present.**

- Reading: Roland Barthes, “Empire of Signs” (1970)
- Discussion: “Urban Japan!” project ideas
- Show and Tell: Urban Museums
- Project Prep: Framing a research prospectus
- Field Trip: Presentation on research resources in Knight Library by Kevin McDowell (Japanese Studies Librarian)

**Assignment:** Write a one-page research prospectus, and make copies for everyone in the class (due in class March 14).

**Week Three (April 14). Cities as Civilization (Cities as Objects).**

- Reading: Tristan Grunow, “Paving Power” (2014)
- Guest Presentation: Tristan Grunow, “Ginza Bricktown”
- Viewing: “Tokyo, the Eclectic Metropolis” (1999)
- Discussion: Presentation of research prospectuses
- Project Prep: On Notetaking and Bibliographies

**Assignment:** Prepare a Preliminary Project Bibliography, including annotations.

**Week Four (April 21). Cities as Cesspools (Cities as Subjects).**

- Reading: Ashita Saga, “Urban lower-class society in modern Osaka” (2012)
- Show and Tell: Jacob Riis, Charles Booth, Yokoyama Gennosuke, etc.
- Discussion: Presentation of Preliminary Research Bibliography
- Project Prep: On Primary and Secondary Sources

**Assignment:** Textercise: Write a 1-page analysis of a printed primary source central to your research that tells us what the source says and why it matters.

**Week Five (April 28). Cities and Modanity.**

- Reading: Louise Young, “The Cult of the New” (2013)
- Viewing: “Osaka Elegy” (1936)
- Show and Tell: Modernology and Matchbook Covers
- Discussion: Presentation of Textercises
- Project Prep: On Electronic Sources

**Assignment:** Webtextercise: Write a 1-page analysis of an electronic source central
to your research that tells us what the source says and why it matters.

**Week Six (May 5). Urban Destruction and Reconstruction.**


Viewing: “Stray Dog”
Discussion: Presentation of Webtexercises.
Project Prep: Outlining Research Projects

**Assignment:** Write a comprehensive outline of your research project that identifies your topic, states your thesis, lays out your argument, and presents your historical evidence.

**Week Seven (May 12). Cities and the Senses.**

Reading: Jeffrey E. Hanes, “Aural Osaka” (2013)
Ingrid Getreuer-Kargl, “Gendered modes of appropriating public space” (2012)
Evelyn Schulz, “Walking the city” (2012)

Viewing: “Tanpopo” (1985)
Discussion: Presentation of Research Project Outlines
Project Prep: Organizing and Writing the Opus

**Assignment:** Begin writing your opus. Rough drafts are due May 27th.

**Week Eight (May 19). Olympian Urbanism.**

Guest Presentation: Professor Bruce Suttmeier (Lewis & Clark), “Roads and People”
Individual Meetings: Writing Reports, by appointment, May 20, 21, 22.

**Assignment:** Continue writing your opus. Rough drafts are due next Wednesday.

**Week Nine (May 26). Writing the City.**

Memorial Day (No Class). Rough drafts are due Wednesday, May 28.
Send two copies—one each to your peer reviewer and the instructor.

**Assignment:** Peer Reviewers: Read and prepare a brief commentary/critique on the rough draft assigned to you by the instructor. Be ready to present your peer review in class, briefly, on Monday, June 2.
Week Ten (June 2). *Metropolis*

Guest Presentation: Professor Alisa Freedman (UO), “Tokyo: My Hometown”
Reading: TBA
Viewing: “Train Man” (2005) or “Tokyo!” (2008) or…..
Discussion: Peer Reviewers’ Commentaries/Critiques

PRINTED COPIES OF FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE ON MONDAY, JUNE 9.