

# THE STANFORD UNIVERSITY-J. F. OBERLIN UNIVERSITY COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE SERIES

(共催: 桜美林大学大学院国際学研究科・国際学研究所)

## Tenth Lecture

# Are Visions of the Future a Thing of the Past in Japanese Science Fiction Anime and Manga?

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Language: English (Q&A may be in Japanese)

Date and time: December 7, 2015 (Monday), 16:10–17:40

Place: Sūteikan 6H, Machida Campus



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Since the end of WWII Japanese popular culture has provided prescient visions of the future in narratives that have influenced both technological innovation and considerations of the ethical ramifications of technological advances. However, recent trends in Japanese SF have moved away from envisioning and exploring possible futures. The *seikaikei* and *kūkikei* genres of the 1990s and 2000s, despite their futuristic settings, emphasized small-scale stories of personal salvation through heterosexual romance, rather than the far-reaching, philosophically rich, and often intriguingly queer narratives of earlier Japanese science fiction. The dominant trend now is for narratives that take their structure from video games, wherein visions of the future are structured in reset-able loops. This presentation will consider recent works such as *All You Need is Kill*, *Attack on Titan*, *Gantz*, and *Sky Crawlers* in terms of the messages they provide regarding our present anxieties and our (lack of) hope for the future.

Professor Orbaugh teaches modern Japanese literature and popular culture at the University of British Columbia. Representative publications include: *Propaganda Performed: Kamishibai in Japan's Fifteen Year War* (2015); "Cult Film as Affective Technology in Oshii Mamoru's *Innocence*" (2015); "Emotional Ineffectivity: The Japanese Cyborg and the Limits of the Human" (2008); and "Future City Tokyo: 1909 and 2009" (2011).

This lecture series was established under the auspices of an Agreement of Academic Cooperation between J. F. Oberlin University and Stanford University. Speakers are non-Japanese scholars who studied, earlier in their careers, at the Inter-University Center for Japanese Language Studies (IUC) or who are alumni or faculty of Stanford. The IUC, founded in 1963 and administered by Stanford University on behalf of fifteen U.S. and Canadian universities, is located in the Minato Mirai district of Yokohama.