Interest in Japanese popular culture is high among students at all levels, driving enrollment in Japanese Studies programs. However, there has been little reflection on the pedagogy of teaching Japanese popular culture. Now is the time for critical reflection on teaching practices related to teaching about and with Japanese popular culture. This volume encompasses theoretical engagement with pedagogy of popular culture as well as practical considerations of curriculum design, lesson planning, assessment, and student outcomes. While the main focus is undergraduate teaching, there is also discussion of K-12 teaching, with authors discussing their experiences teaching Japanese popular culture not only in North America, but also in Australia, Germany, Singapore, and Japan, both in Japanese-language and English-language institutions.

“This is an incredibly valuable book. It might well be retitled 'Taking Japanese Popular Culture Seriously.' The book demonstrates how much study of Japanese popular culture has matured over the last two decades, and also shows off Japanese popular culture in all its richness and variety. Accessibly written but theoretically engaged, the book offers a fascinating variety of approaches to a fascinating variety of subjects. It will be invaluable both to those of us who work on popular culture and in Japanese Studies.”

— Susan J. Napier, Professor of Japanese Studies, Tufts University

“As Japanese popular culture has captured the imagination of youth around the world, educators have struggled to integrate diverse and rapidly evolving forms like manga, anime, J-pop, and video games into their classrooms. This pioneering collection on the pedagogy of Japanese pop offers practical advice as well as theoretical reflections on the opportunities and challenges of teaching with (and about) Japan’s globalized media products. Instructors at all levels (from K-12 through university) and in all disciplines (including language teachers) will find this volume timely, stimulating, and thoroughly useful.”

— William M. Tsutsui, President, Hendrix College, AR

“Two decades since 'cool Japan' began to attract widespread interest in the university classroom, resources on the teaching of Japan’s popular culture remain scarce. This outstanding collection does much to fill this gap - offering insightful, hands-on approaches to help students engage critically with pop culture materials. Featuring chapters on curriculum design, language pedagogy, and the use of popular music, television and fashion as well as manga and anime, the editors have brought together an essential volume that needs to be read by all those engaged with Japanese culture in the classroom.”

— Mark McLelland, Professor in the Sociology Program at the University of Wollongong and former Toyota Visiting Professor of Japanese at the University of Michigan
# Contents

List of Figures and Tables / vii  
Acknowledgments / ix  

**Introduction**  
Deborah Shamoon and Chris McMorran / 1

**PART I. The Big Picture: On Curriculum Design**

Sally McLaren and Alwyn Spies

2. **Talking Japanese Popular Culture at an Australian University: Insights from a Literacies Pedagogy Perspective** / 45  
William S. Armour and Sumiko Iida

3. **Goethe Goes Cool Japan: Teaching Popular Culture through Research-Oriented Learning at a German University** / 61  
Cosima Wagner

**PART II. In the Media Studies Classroom: Teaching about Popular Culture**

4. **Contested Classrooms: Reconstructions of “Japaneseness” through Anime** / 79  
Akiko Sugawa-Shimada

5. **Teaching Fashion as Japanese Popular Culture** / 101  
Jan Bardsley
PART III. Using Popular Culture in Teaching

6. Confessions of an Anime and Manga Ignoramus: Approaches to Japanese Contemporary Popular Culture for the K–12 Classroom / 137
   Melanie King

   Deborah Shamoon

8. Using Japanese Television Media in Content-Based Language Learning / 187
   Marc Yamada

9. Performing Gender in the Prisonhouse of a (Foreign) Language: Blending Japanese Language Learning and Cultural Studies / 211
   James Dorsey

10. Pop(ular) Culture in the Japanese History Classroom / 231
    Philip Seaton

Conclusion
The Online Future(s) of Teaching Japanese Popular Culture / 257
Chris McMorrnan

Contributors / 283
Index / 287
Acknowledgments

Inspiration for this book came in part from the Teaching Japanese Popular Culture Conference, organized by Deborah Shamoon, Chris McMorran, and Kam Thiam Huat, held in November 2012 at the National University of Singapore. We are grateful to all the participants for their contributions, thoughtful comments, and engaging discussions. The conference was generously supported by the Japan Foundation, and hosted by the National University of Singapore Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and the Department of Japanese Studies. Thanks to the staff and students who helped organize and run the conference. We thank our colleagues in Japanese Studies for their encouragement, particularly Hendrik Meyer-Ohle for getting us started on this project.

We are grateful to the Association for Asian Studies for seeing the utility of this volume, and especially to our editor Jon Wilson for his support and guidance. We also thank Dominic Pang and Vivian Goh Yit Min for their hard work in helping ensure the book’s completion.

Deborah Shamoon acknowledges the National University of Singapore and Ministry of Education Start Up Grant. She is greatly indebted to Hanabusa Noriko at the University of Notre Dame for her generous and fruitful collaboration, and for thoughtful guidance in exploring new directions in Japanese language teaching pedagogy. She thanks her husband Jason Banta for his unwavering support, encouragement, and advice.

Chris McMorran thanks his colleagues at the National University of Singapore for their genuine concern with improving teaching and learning. He also thanks his wife Hisako for her constant love and support.