

Japanese Popular Culture: A New Era

Lecture May 15, 2003

Sazae vs. Crayon Shinchan

- Nostalgia
 - Sazae
 - lost family values
- Contrast to realism?
 - Crayon Shinchan
 - Dysfunctional but lovable
- Popular culture as generational place marker

Crayon Shinchan

Sazae-san

William Kelly, "Finding a Place"

- Identity or difference
 - homogeneous salarymen
 - but most work smaller firms
 - standardized education
 - but much variation b/n levels
- Not a question of "consensus or conflict" (192)

Kelly in the press box for the Hanshin Tigers.

He is writing a book about Japanese baseball.

Kelly: Postwar transformations

- ideology
 - culture, class, cohort
- institutional patterning
 - work, schools, family
- everyday life
 - shaped by above (stdzn)
 - but leading to divergences

Akiyoshi Toshiko

jazz pianist, escapes to
NYC but wears kimono

Nihonjinron

(Who are we Japanese?)

- Comparison with West
- "National character"
 - homogeneous
 - vertical society
 - *amae* (dependence)
- Rural areas
 - boonies (*inaka*)
 - trad'l values (*furusato*)

Generations

- Meiji / Taisho Generation (re: 1931-45 war)
- *Showa hitoketa* ("Showa single digits")
 - born 1926-34
 - experience "dark valley" without responsibility
- *Showa futaketa* (mid-1930s - mid-1940s)
 - middle age in 1960s, '70s
 - "my home type"
- *Dankai sedai* (postwar baby boomers, '47-51)
 - personal lifestyle paramount, no suffering

Generations (cont'd)

- 1970s youth - *shirake sedai*
 - "reactionless generation" re: work and home
- 1980s youth - *shinjinrui*
 - "new breed" the ultimate consumers
- 1990s . . . *otaku* gen'n / *shôjo* generation
 - fragmentation of cultural styles
- 2000s "Freeter generation"
 - temp jobs, consumer lifestyles
 - the end of new middle class Japan?

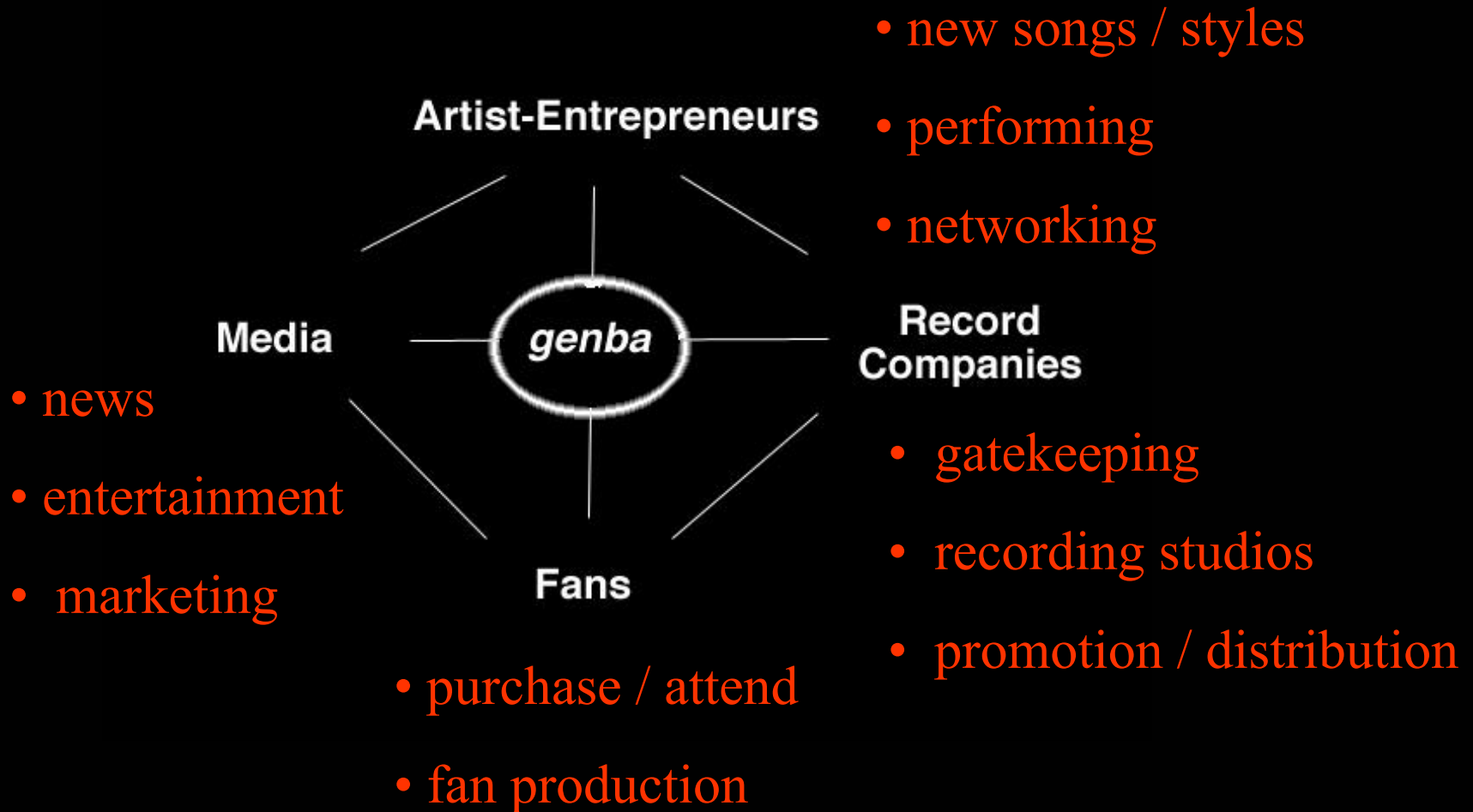
Production - Text - Audience

- production
 - institutional and historical setting
 - who pays? commercials, subscription, etc.
 - who makes? class, gender, age, etc.
- text
 - what readings?
 - what deep messages?
- audience
 - consumption, word-of-mouth, fan production

But how connected?

- Manga
- Anime
- Music

Genba as Location



genba: the club and fieldwork

現場

gen ba

“actual place”

Changing Japan

- Iida
- Treat
- Yoshimoto Banana

Affluence, 1974 - 1989

- Cornerstones of expanding economy crumble in early and mid-1970s.
- The end of:
 - access to raw materials
 - stable currency exchange
 - free international trade
 - high global demand

High Growth: Occupations

Occupational distribution change over high growth era

	1955	1974
primary		
(farm, fish, forest)	41%	14%
secondary		
(mining, construction, industrial)	23%	34%
tertiary (commerce, service, professions, gov't)	36%	52%

Source: Allinson (1997: 110)

Domestic responses

- consumer goods saturation
- structural adjustment
- agricultural change continues
- rise of retail and service sectors
 - Japan becomes affluent, post-industrial society during this period (1974 - 1989)

Marriage Rate and Average Age of First Marriage by Country

See United Nations, *Demographic Yearbook*, 1999; Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, *Jinko tokei shiryoshu* (Latest Demographic Statistics), 2001.

Change of Household Structure

See Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, *Nihon tokei geppo* (Monthly Statistics of Japan), January 2002.

Number of Children per Household

See United Nations, *Demographic Yearbook*, 1999; Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, *Jinko tokei shiryoshu* (Latest Demographic Statistics), 2001.