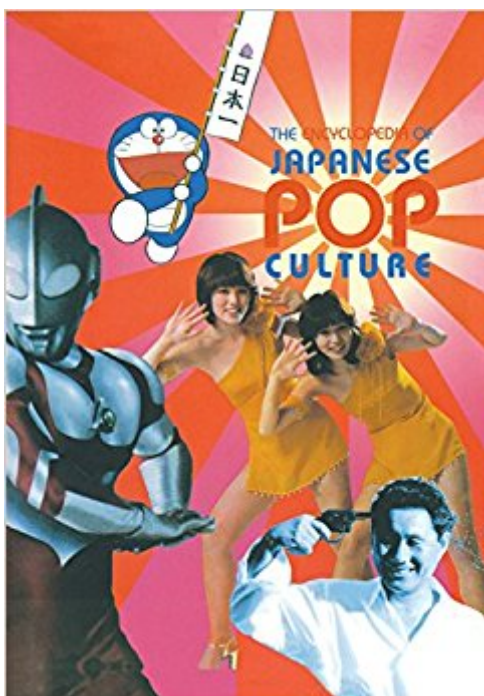


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# The Encyclopedia Of Japanese Pop Culture



## Synopsis

In the West, Japanese culture comes in the form of Power Rangers, Godzilla movies, and Sanrio products, but of course the indigenous pop culture is much richer. Rather than focus on what the rest of the world has already encountered, Mark Schilling provides an encyclopedic compendium of books, movies, music, comedians, and cultural scandals that have had the greatest impact in Japan. Thus, for the outsider, *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture* is an insider's guide to post-war Japan. Not content to simply catalog his entries, Schilling provides real depth and analysis in his articles, opening up Japan's rich pop heritage to the world at large.

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## Customer Reviews

In the West, Japanese culture comes in the form of Power Rangers, Godzilla movies, and Sanrio products, but of course the indigenous pop culture is much richer. Rather than focus on what the rest of the world has already encountered, Mark Schilling provides an encyclopedic compendium of books, movies, music, comedians, and cultural scandals that have had the greatest impact in Japan. Thus, for the outsider, *The Encyclopedia of Japanese Pop Culture* is an insider's guide to post-war Japan. Not content to simply catalog his entries, Schilling provides real depth and analysis in his articles, opening up Japan's rich pop heritage to the world at large.

"Japanese pop culture is the beta version of twenty-first century American pop culture. Mark Schilling's encyclopedia is an invaluable guide to a rich but labyrinthine subject. I use it not to look up what I don't know, but to find out what I should know." — Roger Ebert, movie critic "Over

seventy entries cover Japanese popular culture from 1945 to the present, covering music, comedy, fads, popular media, and all aspects which have fueled Japanese popular concerns over the decades. This does more than create listings of movements: it provides the historical references and connections essential to understanding how these interests developed." - Midwest Book Review

This is such a great read - I live in Japan and thought it would get me in touch with the people around me. Since most of the entries feature pop culture from the late 1950s through the early 1990s, though, what I've ended up with is a lot of fun stories which the Japanese 30-somethings around me have never even heard! The result? Everyone thinks I'm that weird foreigner who knows about and likes Pink Lady, who knows how many members there were in SMAP when they first started, and all the different generations of Ultraman. The author lives in Japan, and does know what he's talking about. He pokes fun at some of the goofy stars and trends which have come along, without ever getting mean about them. This makes for a highly readable book of short essays - highly recommended!

Awesome!!

I bought this as a gift so I can hardly speak to the subject matter. I will say that it is a rather large and well-made book.

I'm glad I got this book. I first saw it a long time ago in a Tower Books bookstore, and I thought it looked interesting, but I'd never gotten it until now, when I got it from .com. Good seller, item, and transaction AAAAA+++ From Cacilie

Book was torn at the spine, and had stickers on it (I assume it used to be a library book?). Not in the best shape, but still good. Interesting read.

Before you purchase this book, as yourself, "when have I ever seen a review of popular culture that covered everything?" The answer, probably, is never, and if so, this book won't change that. The author states as much in the introduction. Having said that, the book is very good at what it attempts to do, namely give novice readers a basic understanding of the key elements of Japanese popular culture in the post-War era. A book which covered every fad, popular music group, TV program and

movie during that time period would be larger than several phone books and would have a hard time selling. What this book does well is describe, in a fair amount of detail, the important cultural icons, from Misora Hibari and Sazae-san, through Pink Lady and Doraemon, ending with SMAP and Sailor Moon. If you're looking for a primer on Japanese pop culture over the last 50 years, this is the book. If you already have deep personal knowledge or are interested in only one thing (like anime), you may be disappointed. One other small problem with the book is that because it is in print form, the information is fixed in time, but Japanese culture goes on. In other words, some of the stuff in this book is dated. The concept of the book might better be served by a web site, but I doubt that Mr. Schilling could make a profit with such a site. If anybody decides to try though, please let me know. I'd visit!

Instead of cataloging the people and subcultures on the commercial fringe that Americans and other non-Japanese may be more familiar with, Schilling takes care to give the reader a broad view of actual Japanese pop culture from the post-WWII period through the mid-nineties. As to the criticism that Schiller chose to leave many things out of his encyclopedia: any other 320 page encyclopedia on pop culture that spanned fifty years would be much the same. As Schiller says himself in the Introduction, "The book could easily have contained twice as many articles, but I tried to put more emphasis on depth than breadth of coverage ..." I feel I now have a better understanding of Japanese 20th century pop culture, not just of the quirky, fringe, or subcultural elements that happen to make their way to other countries or have a large presence on the internet.

This book is a really interesting read if your curious about Japan. It tells you about a lot of popular people from Hitoshi Matsumoto to Beat Takeshi (guy on the cover with gun), popular classic anime from Doraemon (blue guy on cover) to Chibi Maruko-Chan, heros from the Power Rangers to Ultraman (front cover to the left), and alot more! The only problem I have with the book,which isnt the books fault, but it was puhlished in 1997 so it's 14 years old and thats 14 years of Japanese pop culture missed like Pokemon! But the buy the book it's worth it!

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