



# Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential: How Teenage Girls Made a Nation Cool

By Brian Ashcraft, Shoko Ueda

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**"The schoolgirl is the main driver of Japan's Gross National Cool, and Brian Ashcraft's book is the best source for those hoping to understand why." —Chris Baker, *WIRED* Magazine**

*Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential* takes you beyond the realm of everyday girls to the world of the iconic Japanese schoolgirl craze that is sweeping the globe.

For years, Japanese schoolgirls have appeared in hugely-popular anime and manga series such as *Dragon Ball*, *Sailor Moon*, *The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya*, and *Blood: The Last Vampire*. These girls are literally showing up everywhere—in movies, magazines, video games, advertising, and music. *WIRED* Magazine has kept an eye on the trends emerging from these stylish teens, following kick-ass schoolgirl characters in videogames like *Street Fighter* and assassin schoolgirls in movies like Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill*.

By talking to Japanese women, including former and current J-Pop idols, well-known actresses, models, writers, and artists—along with famous Japanese film directors, historians and marketers—authors Brian Ashcraft and Shoko Ueda (who have both contributed to *WIRED*'s "Japanese Schoolgirl Watch" columns) reveal the true story behind Japan's schoolgirl obsessions.

You'll learn the origins of the schoolgirls' unusual attire, and how they are becoming a global brand used to sell everything from kimchi to insurance. In *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential*, you'll discover:

- Sailor-suited pop-idols
- Cult movie vixens
- Schoolgirl shopping power
- The latest uniform fashions

Japanese schoolgirls are a symbol of girl empowerment. *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential* shows why they are so intensely cool. Don't miss this essential book on the Japanese youth culture craze that is driving today's pop culture worldwide.

**"Whether your preferred schoolgirl is more the upstanding heroine Sailor Moon or the vengeful, weapon-wielding Gogo Yubari of Quentin Tarantino's Kill Bill, Vol. 1, you'll come away well versed." —*Publishers Weekly***

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Manga, horror movies, pop music, fashion, and accessories are all popular Japanese topics and trends. Brian Ashcraft and Shoko Ueda tackle all of the above—and more—through the well-known trope of the schoolgirl in *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential: How Teenage Girls Made a Nation Cool*. The authors explore aspects of trends such as blazers and skirt lengths and provide interviews with pop stars emulating the schoolgirl look. Whether your preferred schoolgirl is more the upstanding heroine Sailor Moon or the vengeful, weapon-wielding Gogo Yubari of Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill*, Vol. 1, you'll come away well versed." —**Library Journal**

"If you're into Japanese culture and want to know more about the Harajuku origins or why schoolgirls are on the advertisements for nearly everything, then pick this up. You'll learn about things you never thought to ask!" —**Jessica Barton, Nerdist.com blog**

"Every page in this book has something impressive, even to us Japanese who should be familiar with Jyosi-Kosei...The book is literally "Eye-Opening" for any reader both in and out of Japan." —**Gigazine blog**

"For those of you who have always regretted not taking that course "Japanese Schoolgirl" at school—be disappointed no more as all you have to do is pick up this book and study at home instead. *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential: How Teenage Girls Made a Nation Cool* is the Japanese Schoolgirl bible that will arm you with the knowledge to pass the JSPT (Japanese Schoolgirl Proficiency Test)." —**Danny Choo, Culture Japan Director & Web Monkey**

"Honestly, if you've got any interest in Japanese pop culture, this book is a must-have primer on one of the most influential items in Japan. I didn't think that was the case before reading this, but at this point, I have to admit, Ashcraft and Ueda have convinced me that it really is the case in Japan." —**Japanator blog**

"Brian Ashcraft and his wife, Shoko Ueda, give the most comprehensive look at the girls that have shaped Japan. Whether you have interests in Japan's history, a love for videogames, or are an anime otaku, this book will definitely keep your eyes glued to the pages." —**Sit Sam! game resource blog**

"*Japanese Schoolgirls Confidential* is highly valuable as a written discourse on one of Japan's most valuable exports. Authors Brian Ashcraft and Shoko Ueda do a fantastic job at deconstructing the Japanese schoolgirl and in the process elevating the discourse on the subject. There really hasn't been an entire book dedicated to such a topic released within the West before this, so it's certainly a welcomed addition. Those wanting to learn more about the Japanese schoolgirl and why she's so cool should look no further. Perhaps this is what's needed because while the cultural barriers still remain, we can still learn from one another, and with some of the most simplistic of concepts—in this case the sailor uniform—we can bridge the divide between entire nations. Now that is cool." —**iSugio blog**

"Overall, the topics of discussion and the specific examples used seem to have been very carefully chosen, and all of the facts and information flow together nicely. The prose is intelligent, witty, and easy to read... *Japanese Schoolgirl Confidential* is not only lots and lots of fun but also manages to transcend the schoolgirl icon by coalescing into a rich and informative cultural history. If I were teaching a class about contemporary Japan, you can bet that this book would be required reading." —**Contemporary Japanese Literature blog**

About the Author

**Brian Ashcraft** and **Shoko Ueda** are a husband and wife team based in Osaka, Japan. Brian is the author of *Arcade Mania!*, a Senior Contributing Editor for Kotaku.com, and a Contributing Editor at *WIRED* Magazine. He has written for *Metropolis* Magazine, *Popular Science*, *Otaku USA*, the British tech magazine *T3*, and *The Japan Times*. Shoko has been a research assistant for *WIRED* and is a former Japanese schoolgirl.

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