

KONSHU

vol. 53 #5
Survival



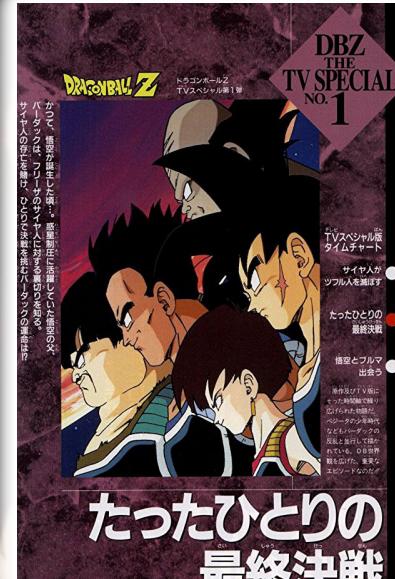
Eren Yeager
Attack on Titan
Art By Heaven Jones

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED SERIES!

ANIME RECOMMENDATION

DRAGON BALL Z SPECIAL 1: TATTA HITORI NO SAISHUU KESSEN

A departure from the series' usual light-hearted tone, the first *Dragon Ball Z* special episode features Bardock, father of series protagonist Son Goku, attempting to thwart Lord Freeza's genocidal plans. Using the series' lore to frame a unique story not found within Toriyama Akira's original series, this special is an uncharacteristically dark greek tragedy where a man fights to survive in spite of the known outcome of his demise.



1990, Toei Animation
By Daisuke Nishio
1 Episode

MANGA RECOMMENDATION

DOUBT

Doubt, just like the title suggests, is a psychological horror manga that revolves around players, dubbed rabbits, trying to escape a building while figuring out the wolf who is disguised among them. The wolf picks off (kills) the rabbits one by one, and the rabbits are enveloped in a game where they doubt and accuse each other. Will the rabbits be able to escape?



Dec 2007 - Feb 2009
By Yoshiki Tonogai
4 Volumes

SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO: SAME PREMISE, DIFFERENT SERIES



TONY T.

1st Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

I can't believe I admitted to liking a modern anime over an older one. Hope my elitist license doesn't get revoked.

Writer

As someone who's seen my fair share of anime, I occasionally get frustrated with the overwhelming focus fans place towards premise. Though premise can be useful in determining whether or not you want to pick up a show, I feel it's become overstated with people solely using premise to even dictate the quality of a series, without looking into other elements such as narrative structure, themes, and *mise en scène*. My go-to example for this would be the 1974 anime *Space Battleship Yamato* and its 2012 remake *Space Battleship Yamato 2199*.

If judging purely by the premise, the classic original and 2199 feature virtually the same plot: in the year 2199, the human species is on its last legs with Earth about to die from alien attacks perpetrated by the Gamilas Empire. A glimmer of hope appears through a transmission from the planet Iscandar, prompting the assembly of a ragtag group tasked with flying the titular Space Battleship Yamato with the weight of human survival on their backs. Though this plot is not incredibly novel, it was fairly influential amongst its contemporaries as one of the earliest anime to feature a (comparatively) complex narrative. The original 1974 classic follows its premise in a fairly straightforward and linear, albeit satisfying, journey. The humans are chased around by the Gamilas in a sort of cat and mouse game, only managing to barely escape each time due to clever tactics. The main cast is not incredibly fleshed out, but the characters who are focused on, namely the ship captain Okita Juuzou and the series protagonist Kodai Susumu, do get a lot of focus. Particularly notable is how the series makes good use of its medium with it often showing and letting the viewer interpret, instead of just explaining. Overall, the original 1974 *Space Battleship Yamato* is a classic story that doesn't stray far from what the premise implies. It does not feature a hugely complex web of characters like *Legend of the Galactic Heroes*, or other space operas. *Space Battleship Yamato* tells a rather simple story of heroes against villains very proficiently. It is a classic for a reason.

And yet, despite *Space Battleship Yamato 2199* sharing the same characters and premise as the original, the remake, re-

leased nearly 40 decades later, is a wildly different show. The term "remake" here is misleading, as the 2012 *Yamato* is, if anything, a reimaging of the original premise. The new series takes elements of the original 1974 *Yamato*'s sequels, which feature far more morally grey characters and many factions and subfactions throughout the whole conflict, and injects it back into the rather simple original plotline. As such, while still perfectly matching exactly fitting the earlier plot summary of a ragtag group of humans flying through space to keep their species alive, *Yamato 2199* is an entirely different series. What was once a black-and-white battle between heroic humans and evil aliens is completely transformed into a storyline featuring heroes and villains on both sides. The original series' depiction of the titular ship, only focusing on Okita and Kodai, is completely done away with, as the entire cast is far more evenly developed. A clear example of this can be seen in one of the later episodes, which features an attempted coup d'état, not at all present within the storyline of the original. Similarly, the Gamilas aliens are depicted as a far less congruous force than the original depiction showed.

These developments unfortunately come at the cost of some of the subtlety that the 1974 series had—2199 is far more apt to describe events to viewers rather than convey it in other ways. Still, the way that such a simple plot was turned into a universe with depth perhaps not comparable, but similar to the aforementioned *Legend of the Galactic Heroes* is admirable. Arguably, *Space Battleship Yamato 2199*, with its richly developed world and fluid animation, surpasses the original's linear plot, simpler characters, and rushed, undynamic visuals. And yet, in spite of its various sub conflicts developing the universe far more thoroughly than the 1974 series, the 2012 series ultimately reaches an almost identical (though distinct) finale as its inspiration. But that misses the greater point: though *Space Battleship Yamato* and *Space Battleship Yamato 2199* have the same storyline, they are fundamentally two completely different series. Though I liked the newer series just a bit more than the original classic, both series have different intentions and execute on their ideas well. Premise does not dictate the quality or actual narrative of an anime—the 1974 and 2012 series are both worth watching for their own reasons and stand on their own even though their initial premises are identical.

ATTACK ON TITAN AND THE FEELINGS OF FEAR SHARED BETWEEN CHARACTER AND READER



MITCHELL MADAYAG

1st Year, Undeclared

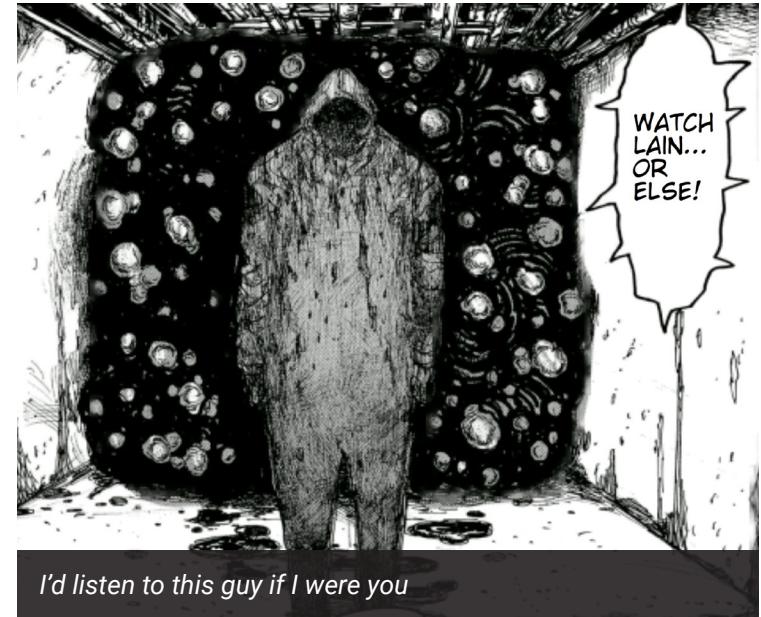
Are humans the equivalent of titans to bugs?

Writer

SPOILERS FOR ATTACK ON TITAN MANGA!

There is no series that has piqued my interest lately quite like *Attack on Titan* has. The exciting setting of what is thought to be the last remnants of humanity being forced into hiding behind three concentric walls that protect them from vicious monsters called titans, was an important part of what influenced me to get into the series. To be honest, I was a bit late on boarding the *Attack on Titan* hype train as I only started watching the show upon hearing that such an iconic series among the masses was nearing its glorious end (and also because my brother kept pestering me to watch it). I later caved in and after two weeks of binge watching and binge reading (rookie numbers, I know), I finally understood what gave *Attack on Titan* traction in the first place: the looming fear of death and that any day could be your last.

I often find myself drawn towards series with similarly dreadful and mysterious tones, curious to see what lengths characters will go through to survive. It is a theme commonly seen in manga such as *Berserk*, *Dorohedoro*, and *I Am a Hero* which perfectly encapsulate the feeling of terror through the black and white medium in a horrifically beautiful way. Believe me when I say that I can't handle horror, but these series express different kinds of scare factors which encourage me to read on with attentiveness rather than stop in disgust. When reading manga, I can speed through panels and pages, dying to know what happens to the protagonist(s), only to stumble upon a gruesome monochrome sight. Alternatively, I could read at a leisure pace—my preferred method—appreciating the effort and detail put into each panel, analyzing its gritty presentation derived from cross hatching and shading. Could that dark splotch over there be a puddle of blood? Perhaps some nasty tar? Or maybe even some otherworldly substance that no mortal creature should ever come into contact with? My imagination is able to run wild and it is part of the reason why I tend to enjoy manga over anime as I'm not able to have the same experience when watching a show.



I'd listen to this guy if I were you

Having said that, there are some anime out there that have genuinely impressed me with how unsettling well they animate horrifying monsters and tense moments as seen in *Akira*, *Mado-ka Magica*, the first season of *The Promised Neverland*, and of course *Attack on Titan*. Wit Studio did an incredible job adapting the titans and corpsmen into moving characters and I often found myself recoiling in my seat whenever a titan or a very pissed off Mikasa was on the attack. I felt that Mappa did just as well carrying on the animation, but I did miss the bolder lines that made characters stand out from the background. Other than the occasionally glaring CGI Colossus Titan and horses that made me want to look away more than the actual violence and gore being depicted, I was quite amazed at how the anime adaptation turned out. I pray for Mappa or whichever studio that will have to take on the herculean task of animating the final battle on the Founding Titan's spine. Sadly, I can't particularly praise the original manga source material the same as the anime. Not that I'm saying it's bad, but I feel that anything other than the titans and two-page spreads are lacking in defining details that could really make the manga stick out. Of course, visuals should not be the sole focus when it comes to critiquing a manga or anime and *Attack on Titan* makes up for it with a dark setting that keeps you guessing how Eren and company will survive.



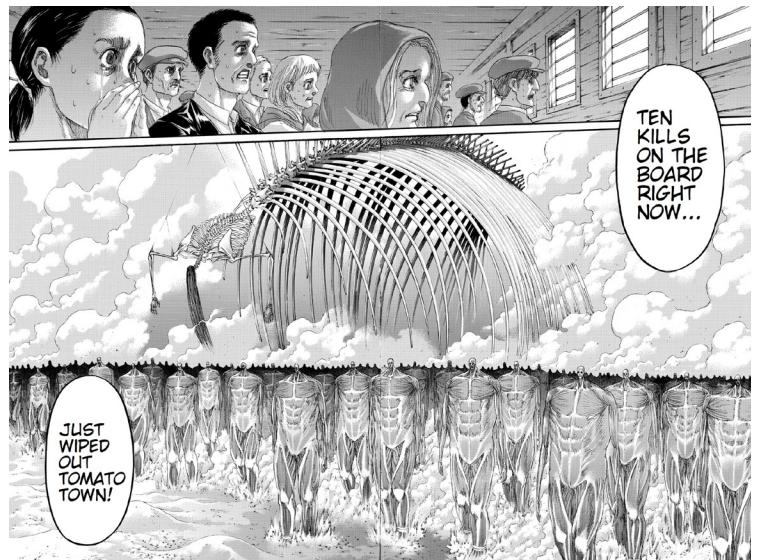
I don't understand this white gap separating the ground and sky

Putting art direction aside and refocusing on the main premise of the show, what fascinated me the most about *Attack on Titan* was the cruel world our protagonists are unwillingly born into. Imagine that you yourself are put into this unfair situation and are about the young age as Eren was when he enlisted in military training. Pretending that you don't know about Eren, future events in the story, and answers to the world's biggest mysteries that us privileged viewers are able to bear witness to, would you too be able to be brave enough to fight back against the titans? I sure as heck wouldn't and I don't blame you if you thought so as well. I'm sure that the first assault on Shiganshina District led by the Colossus Titan left an impression on most of us that these monsters were seemingly impossible to defeat and even knowing the titans' weakness wasn't enough to ensure victory. One specific moment that struck me the most was when Hannes mustered up the courage to take on the Smiling Titan, yet immediately retreated after staring at its overwhelmingly hideous face and realizing his own powerlessness. This sense of dread and terror that swept the fleeing citizens and soldiers was something that could easily be related to the viewer, something that many of us may always remember. Yet despite witnessing a calamity that is sure to permanently scar kids and adults alike, Eren, Mikasa, and Armin would later be willing to *tatakai* against the titans as bona fide soldiers. Everyone who joined the military each had their own reasons and I respect every one of them no matter if they wanted to mercilessly slaughter all titans as a Survey Corpsman like Eren or hide safely within the inner walls as a Military Policeman like Hitch.

However, as we all know, having the training and desire to kill wasn't enough either as Eren's entire squad except Armin was devoured. Even Eren was brutally injured before he too was swallowed whole by a titan. As someone who has managed to avoid spoilers for *Attack on Titan* for years, I was shocked to see how Eren was obliterated so early in the first few episodes of the anime. Of course, he is the main protagonist so we knew he was gonna survive somehow, but seeing so many characters who were introduced early on only to die was thrilling. Perhaps

I got attached too quickly but I almost shed a tear when Levi's Special Operations Squad members fell to the Female Titan one after another. Even if they played a minor role and had little screen time, you could tell they meant a whole lot more to Eren than to us. Moments like these showed that the *Attack on Titan* universe is cruel and even the most brave and elite of soldiers will fall victim to the living nightmares known as titans.

I give high praise on how *Attack on Titan* first introduces itself as a suspenseful series full of death, but the experience shifts dramatically as it progresses beyond the first season. Battles are still tense such as during the battle to reclaim Wall Maria against the Beast Titan, and although a depressing amount of people perish, you could tell at this point that almost all of the main characters will keep living to see another day. You could say their survival was well fought for, but it was jarring to see the main cast who arguably put themselves in the most danger survive longer than any other corpsmen. I originally adopted the mentality that "no one is safe from death" but it no longer became believable as I continued watching. Eren becomes one of the strongest beings out there as he continues to absorb more and more titans, and Mikasa, Levi, and even characters like Connie develop plot armor that protects them from being shot. Even with newfound power and confidence, characters are still at risk of death, but they now have a greater chance of surviving which lowers the great tension viewers once felt. It is a trade-off I've seen similarly in *The Promised Neverland* and *High-Rise Invasion* where the main characters eventually grow strong enough to overcome their fears which inadvertently makes the series less exciting. This was more of an observation than a critique as I wasn't really bothered by this new direction in storyline, but it was definitely an interesting transition for *Attack on Titan* to take that in hindsight I should have seen coming. I understand it's hard for creators to produce the same feeling of fear if characters become fearless (or even the feared in Eren's case), but at least the Rumbling gave us one final horrifying perspective of the countless deaths that totalled to 80% of the planet's human population.



Staff Picks:**FAVORITE SURVIVAL STRUGGLER****ASH LYNX****BANANA FISH****SUEJI K.**

After being given a mysterious unknown drug, Ash struggles to survive in a world targeted by Mafias and infamous New York City gangs. On the way, however, he meets a Japanese photographer and realizes that there is much more to protect in the search for the truth.

GUNDHAM TANAKA**DANGANRONPA****MITCH MADAYAG**

Dark lonely boy who has a harder time socializing than surviving a killing game.

KAIJI ITOU**KAIJI: ULTIMATE SURVIVOR****FELIX L.**

Having to repay his friend's immense debt, Kaiji needs to make a choice that will decide his fate: work in agonizing conditions for the rest of his life, or put everything, even his life, on the line and face the cruelest of gambles to escape from this situation.

USO EWIN**MOBILE SUIT VICTORY GUNDAM****TONY T.**

The youngest Gundam pilot in the entire franchise, in (by far) the darkest entry. He... has a pretty bad time. Don't let the upbeat opening and young cast fool you. Director Tomino Yoshiyuki isn't known as "Kill em all" for nothing, y'know.

YURI HONJO**HIGH RISE INVASION****KHALEA RIDAD**

From a timid high school girl to a formidable opponent, Yuri becomes a badass due to her strong mental fortitude and skills as she learns to adapt to "angels" trying to kill her, maintaining an optimistic and confident attitude the whole series.

PHOSPHOPHYLLITE**LAND OF THE LUSTROUS****NICK W.**

Land of the Lustrous is a story about an immature adolescent struggling to survive against a never-ending invasion while desperately trying to keep their friends and their own sense of self intact. The characters just happen to be gemstones.

DEAR KONSHUU-SENSEI...

If catgirls were real, would they have rights?

Who said catgirls weren't real? I'm right here.

How do you get your non weeb friends into weeb material?

Tell them that their mere existence is a JoJo's Reference. They can't refute that at all.

Sensei! Please help me figure out how to stop procrastinating. It's gotten very bad and I don't know what to do!

Sad Student-kun! Don't feel too bad, it gets the best of all of us sometimes. Have you tried "assigning" yourself a few tasks each day instead of trying to do everything at once? It's hard to stay on top of things but you'll get used to it sooner than later—so most importantly, please be patient with yourself but stay disciplined!

What are some cooking recipes I should learn?

cough CAA Sukuna finger recipe *cough*. I mean, start off with simple dishes like noodles and pastas but experiment with the broth, seasoning and garnish! There's a lot more you can do than you realize!

Ask a question at tinyurl.com/konshuuSensei and it might be answered by Konshuu-sensei in the next issue!

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Weekly Virtual Game Nights:

Thursdays 8-9pm

CAA Discord - cal.moe/discord

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Konshuu accepts guest submissions from club members! If you'd like to have content featured, please visit:

j.mp/konsub

Toko Fukawa and Komaru Naegi

Danganronpa Another Episode: Ultra Despair Girls
Art By [Miranda Zhang](#)

