= Otaku =

Otaku (??? / ???) is a Japanese term for people with obsessive interests , commonly the anime and manga fandom . Its contemporary usage originated with Akio Nakamori 's 1983 essay in Manga Burikko . Otaku may be used as a pejorative ; its negativity stems from the stereotypical view of otaku and the media 's reporting on Tsutomu Miyazaki , " The Otaku Murderer " , in 1989 . According to studies published in 2013 , the term has become less negative , and an increasing number of people now self @-@ identify as otaku .

Otaku subculture is a central theme of various anime and manga works , documentaries and academic research . The subculture began in the 1980s as changing social mentalities and the nurturing of otaku traits by Japanese schools combined with the resignation of such individuals to become social outcasts . The subculture 's birth coincided with the anime boom , after the release of works like Mobile Suit Gundam before it branched into Comic Market . The definition of otaku subsequently became more complex , and numerous classifications of otaku emerged . In 2005 , the Nomura Research Institute divided otaku into twelve groups and estimated the size and market impact of each of these groups . Other institutions have split it further or focus on a single otaku interest . These publications classify distinct groups including anime , manga , camera , automobile , idol and electronics otaku . The economic impact of otaku has been estimated to be as high as ¥ 2 trillion ($ 18 billion) .

= = Etymology = =

Otaku is derived from a Japanese term for another person 's house or family (?? , otaku) . This word is often used metaphorically , as an honorific second @-@ person pronoun . In this usage , its literal translation is " you " . For example , in the anime Macross , first aired in 1982 , the character Lynn Minmay uses the term this way . The modern slang form , which is distinguished from the older usage by being written only in hiragana (???) , katakana (??? or , less frequently , ???) or rarely in r?maji , first appeared in public discourse in the 1980s , through the work of humorist and essayist Akio Nakamori . His 1983 series An Investigation of " Otaku " (? ??? ? ??? , " Otaku " no Kenky?) , printed in the lolicon magazine Manga Burikko , applied the term to unpleasant fans in caricature . Animators Haruhiko Mikimoto and Sh?ji Kawamori had used the term among themselves as an honorific second @-@ person pronoun since the late 1970s . Supposedly , some fans used it past the point in their relationships where others would have moved on to a less formal style . Because this misuse indicated social awkwardness , Nakamori chose the word itself to label the fans . Morikawa Kaichir? , an author and lecturer at Meiji University , identified this as the origin of its contemporary usage .

Another claim for the origin of the term comes from the works of science fiction author Motoko Arai , who used the word in her novels as a second @-@ person pronoun and the readers adopted the term for themselves . However , a different claim points to a 1981 Variety magazine essay .

In 1989 , the case of Tsutomu Miyazaki , " The Otaku Murderer " , brought the fandom , very negatively , to national attention . Miyazaki , who randomly chose and murdered four girls , had a collection of 5 @,@ 763 videotapes , some containing anime and slasher films that were found interspersed with videos and pictures of his victims . Later that year , the contemporary knowledge magazine Bessatsu Takarajima dedicated its 104th issue to the topic of otaku . It was called Otaku no Hon (????? , lit . The Book of Otaku) and delved into the subculture of otaku with 19 articles by otaku insiders , among them Akio Nakamori . This publication has been claimed by scholar Rudyard Pesimo to have popularized the term .

= = Usage = =

In modern Japanese slang , the term otaku is mostly equivalent to " geek " or " nerd " , but in a more derogatory manner than used in the West . However , it can relate to any fan of any particular theme , topic , hobby or form of entertainment . " When these people are referred to as otaku , they

are judged for their behaviors - and people suddenly see an ? otaku ? as a person unable to relate to reality " . The word entered English as a loanword from the Japanese language . It is typically used to refer to a fan of anime / manga but can also refer to Japanese video games or Japanese culture in general . The American magazine Otaku USA popularizes and covers these aspects . The usage of the word is a source of contention among some fans , owing to its negative connotations and stereotyping of the fandom . Widespread English exposure to the term came in 1988 with the release of Gunbuster , which referred to anime fans as otaku . Gunbuster was released officially in English in March 1990 . The term 's usage spread throughout rec.arts.anime with discussions about Otaku no Video 's portrayal of otaku before its 1994 English release . Positive and negative aspects , including the pejorative usage , were intermixed . The term was also popularized by William Gibson 's 1996 novel Idoru , which references otaku .

= = Subculture = =

 Morikawa Kaichir? identifies the subculture as distinctly Japanese , a product of the school system and society . Japanese schools have a class structure which functions as a caste system , but clubs are an exception to the social hierarchy . In these clubs , a student 's interests will be recognized and nurtured , catering to the interests of otaku . Secondly , the vertical structure of Japanese society identifies the value of individuals by their success . Until the late 1980s , unathletic and unattractive males focused on academics , hoping to secure a good job and marry to raise their social standing . Those unable to succeed socially focused instead on their interests , often into adulthood , with their lifestyle centering on those interests , furthering the creation of the otaku subculture .
 Even prior to the coinage of the term , the stereotypical traits of the subculture were identified in a 1981 issue of Fan R?do (Fan road) about " culture clubs " . These individuals were drawn to anime , a counter @-@ culture , with the release of hard science fiction works like Mobile Suit Gundam . These works allowed a congregation and development of obsessive interests that turned anime into a medium for unpopular students , catering to obsessed fans . After these fans discovered Comic Market , the term was used as a self @-@ confirming and self @-@ mocking collective identity .
 The 1989 " Otaku Murderer " case gave a negative connotation to the fandom from which it has not fully recovered . The usage of " (interest) otaku " , however , is used for teasing or self @-@ deprecation , but the unqualified term remains negative . The identification of otaku turned negative in late 2004 when Kaoru Kobayashi kidnapped , sexually assaulted , and murdered a seven @-@ year @-@ old first @-@ grade student . Japanese journalist Akihiro ?tani suspected that Kobayashi 's crime was committed by a member of the figure moe zoku even before his arrest . Although Kobayashi was not an otaku , the degree of social hostility against otaku increased . Otaku were seen by law enforcement as possible suspects for sex crimes , and local governments called for stricter laws controlling the depiction of eroticism in otaku materials .
 Not all attention has been negative . In his book , Otaku , Hiroki Azuma observed : " Between 2001 and 2007 , the otaku forms and markets quite rapidly won social recognition in Japan " , citing the fact that " [i] n 2003 , Hayao Miyazaki won the Academy Award for his Spirited Away ; around the same time Takashi Murakami achieved recognition for otaku @-@ like designs ; in 2004 , the Japanese pavilion in the 2004 International Architecture exhibition of the Venice Biennale (Biennale Architecture) featured ? otaku ? . In 2005 , the word moe - one of the keywords of the present volume - was chosen as one of the top ten ? buzzwords of the year . " The former Prime Minister of Japan Taro Aso has also claimed to be an otaku , using this subculture to promote Japan in foreign affairs . In 2013 , a Japanese study of 137 @,@ 734 people found that 42 @.@ 2 % self @-@ identify as a type of otaku . This study suggests that the stigma of the word has vanished , and the term has been embraced by many .

= = = Places = = =

 The district of Akihabara in Tokyo , where there are maid cafes featuring waitresses who dress up

and act like maids or anime characters , is a notable attraction center for otaku . Akihabara also has dozens of stores specializing in anime , manga , retro video games , figurines , card games and other collectibles . Another popular location is Otome Road in Ikebukuro , Tokyo . In Nagoya , students from Nagoya City University started a project on ways to help promote hidden tourist attractions related to the otaku culture to attract more otaku to the city .

= = = Subtypes = = =

There are specific terms for different types of otaku , including Fujoshi (??? , lit . " rotten girl ") , a self @-@ mockingly pejorative Japanese term for female fans of yaoi , which focuses on homosexual male relationships . Reki @-@ jo are female otaku who are interested in Japanese history . Some terms refer to a location , like Akiba @-@ kei , a slang term meaning " Akihabara @-@ style " which applies to those familiar with Akihabara 's culture . Another is Wotagei or otagei (??? or ???) , a type of cheering that is part of Akiba @-@ kei . Other terms , such as Itasha (??) , literally " painful car " , describe vehicles who are decorated with fictional characters , especially bish?jo game or eroge characters .

= = = Media = = =

Otaku often participate in self @-@ mocking through the production or interest in humor directed at their subculture . Anime and manga otaku are the subject of numerous self @-@ critical works , like Otaku no Video , which contains a live @-@ interview mockumentary that pokes fun at the otaku subculture and includes Gainax 's own staff as the interviewees . Other works depict otaku subculture less critically , like Genshiken and Comic Party . A well @-@ known novel @-@ cum @-@ manga @-@ cum @-@ anime is Welcome to the N.H.K. , which focuses on the subcultures popular with otaku and highlights other social outcasts like the hikikomori and NEETs . Works that focus on an otaku character include WataMote , the story of an unattractive and unsociable otome game otaku who exhibits delusions about her social status . Watamote is a self @-@ mocking insight that follows the heroine 's delusion and attempts to reform herself only by facing reality with comedic results on the path to popularity . An American documentary , Otaku Unite ! , focuses on the American side of the otaku culture .

= = Types and classification of Japanese otaku = =

The Nomura Research Institute (NRI) has made two major studies into otaku , the first in 2004 and a revised study with a more specific definition in 2005 . The 2005 study defines twelve major fields of otaku interests . Of these groups , manga (Japanese comics) was the largest , with 350 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 83 billion market scale . Idol otaku were the next largest group , with 280 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 61 billion . Travel otaku with 250 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 81 billion . PC otaku with 190 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 36 billion . Video game otaku with 160 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 21 billion . Automobile otaku with 140 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 54 billion . Animation (anime) otaku with 110 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 20 billion . The remaining five categories include Mobile IT equipment otaku , with 70 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 8 billion ; Audio @-@ visual equipment otaku , with 60 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 12 billion ; camera otaku , with 50 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 18 billion ; fashion otaku , with 40 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 13 billion ; and railway otaku , with 20 @,@ 000 individuals and ¥ 4 billion . These values were partially released with a much higher estimation in 2004 , but this definition focused on the consumerism and not the " unique psychological characteristics " of otaku used in the 2005 study .
NRI 's 2005 study also put forth five archetypes of otaku . The first is the family @-@ oriented otaku , who has broad interests and is more mature than other otaku ; their object of interest is secretive and they are " closet otaku " . The second is the serious " leaving my own mark on the world " otaku , with interests in mechanical or business personality fields . The third type is the " media @-@ sensitive multiple interest " otaku , whose diverse interests are shared with others . The fourth type

is the " outgoing and assertive otaku " , who gain recognition by promoting their hobby . The last is the " fan magazine @-@ obsessed otaku " , which is predominately female with the a small group of males being the " moe type " ; the secret hobby is focused on the production or interest in fan works . The Hamagin Research Institute found that moe @-@ related content was worth ¥ 88 @.@ 8 billion ($ 807 million) in 2005 , and one analyst estimated the market could be as much as ¥ 2 trillion ($ 18 billion) . Japan based Tokyo Otaku Mode a place for news relating to Otaku has been liked on Facebook almost 10 million times .

Other classifications of otaku interests include vocaloid , cosplay , figures and professional wrestling as categorized by the Yano Research Institute . Yano Research reports and the tracks market growth and trends in sectors heavily influenced by otaku consumerism . In 2012 , it noted around 30 % growth in dating sim and online gaming otaku , while vocaloid , cosplay , idols and maid services grew by 10 % , confirming its 2011 predictions .