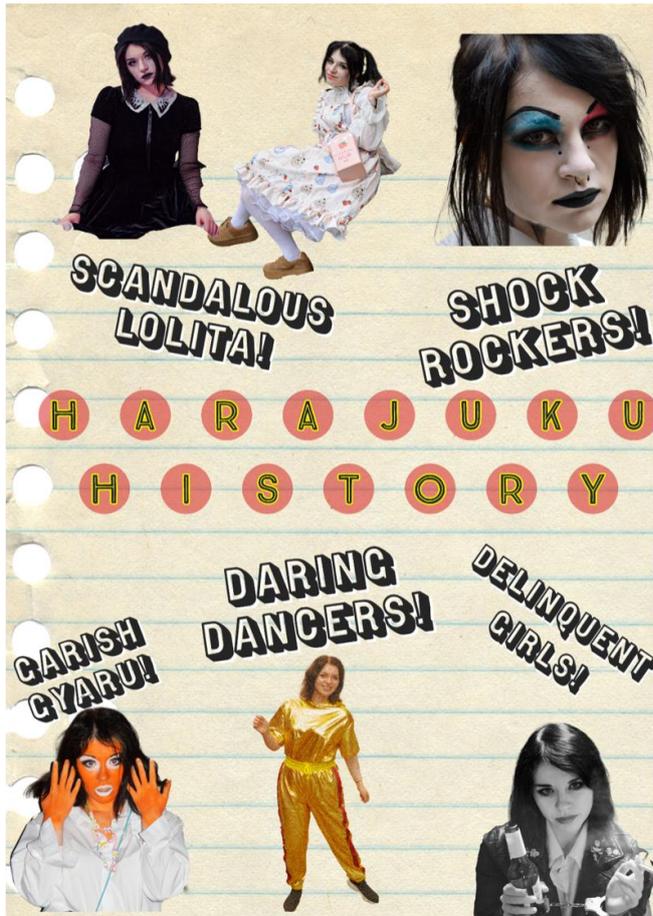


# Harajuku History by Bethany Whitaker

For her final output Bethany submitted a magazine on Harajuku's fashion subcultures and their history, with a full breadth of explosive visuals accompanying detailed summaries of each specific fashion style and their history. Bethany modelled for her magazine herself, recreating iconic Harajuku styles, arranging them into visual posters that were followed by a summary of the characteristics and meaning of the styles as well as their history.



“This piece was inspired by 1990s fashion magazines and Harajuku fashion magazines, such as ‘FRUiTs’. Completing ethnographic research in Tokyo was impossible. Therefore, this magazine was made through recreations to engage with the subculture without physically visiting Harajuku. Re-creating the looks allowed for a deeper understanding of the time and effort it took to achieve the style and understanding, on a smaller scale, how others perceive people who differ from normal fashion expectations as Galbraith (2010, p. 213) felt in his research on Otaku communities. The project aimed to show the complexity of Harajuku’s fashion sub-cultures and how Japanese youth are changing the gender norms expected of them (Saito 2014, p.161).”

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“The Sukeban look consists of discarded schoolbooks, smoking, drinking and handcuffs to imply how the Sukeban were not concerned with school and instead smoked, drank, and were involved with crime. The Sukeban do not appear to be extensively researched unless it is regarding their representation on film. In Winge’s review of the book ‘Japanese Schoolgirl Inferno’ by Macias, Evers, and Nonaka (2009, p. 319), the Sukeban are categorized as ‘Bad Girls’. Despite the Sukeban viewing themselves as independent, outsiders saw the Sukeban as the female counterpart to the Yakuza, often having Yakuza or motorcycle gang members as boyfriends. It was difficult to encapsulate the Sukeban style into one

look as the style rules are not as regimented as the other subcultures. If able to re-do the project, it would be beneficial to include the other styles and modern interpretation of the Sukeban”

“Overall, the project had strengths as it covered some of the most iconic and influential styles of Harajuku throughout the past 60 years with sound academic research. The inclusion of a social message and explanatory paragraphs enabled the magazine to give unknowing readers a good base knowledge of Harajuku fashion subcultures and why they are more important than just a “look”. Conversely, due to time, budget, location, and ethical restrictions, it was impossible to recreate all the sub-cultures in Harajuku authentically.”

