

Michael Fisch

Associate Professor, Anthropology
University of Chicago
1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, IL 60637
Tel: 773-708-2128 mfisch@uchicago.edu

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

- 2010 -- present Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago.
- 2009-2010 Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, Harvard University, 2009-2010.
- 2009 Adjunct Professor, Department of East Asian Studies, New York University.
- 2008 Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Sophia University.

EDUCATION

- 2009 Ph.D., (with distinction), Department of Anthropology, Columbia University.
Dissertation: *On the Train: An Anthropology of the Technosocial in Contemporary Japan*.
- 1997 M.A., Area Studies, Cornell University (Ithaca, NY)
Area Studies, 1997.
- 1996 B.A., Department of East Asian Studies, McGill University (Montreal, Quebec).

PUBLICATIONS

MANUSCRIPT: *Anthropology of the Machine. Tokyo's Commuter Train Network*.
University of Chicago Press (2018).

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- n.b. Extreme Infrastructure: Reconstruction and the Politics of Disaster in Post 3.11 Japan. Under Review *Social Science Journal Japan*
- n.b. Interaction: Digitalizing Organisms at the Japanese Living Zoo. Chapter in *Digital Animalities: Media Representations of Nonhuman Life in the Age of Risk*. Edited by Jody Berland and Thomas Lamarre. (Forthcoming)

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- 2021 Staging Encounters with the End in Pre-Apocalyptic-Post- 3.11 Japan. *Ethnos: Journal of Anthropology*.
- 2019 Revisiting a State of Nature: An Anthropological Encounter with Multispecies Science Fiction. *NatureCulture: Experiments in Thinking Across Worlds* (Special Issue), Issue 5.
- 2019 Michael Fisch and Jun Mizukawa. *Fukko to kaifuku: konkuriito no shukensei*. (Reconstruction and Repetition: Concrete Sovereignty). *Shinsaigaku* (Journal of Disaster Studies). Vol. 13.
- 2018 Michael Fisch and Erez Golani, Resituating the Place of Living and Non-Living in Contemporary Urban Japan. *Scapegoat Journal of Architecture/ Landscape/ Political Economy*. Winter 2017 / Spring 2018" Issue 11 - 'Life.'
- 2017 "Regenerating Bodies: Unbinding Rights within Ecologies of Process." *Science Technology, & Human Values*. *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 1-8.
- 2017 "The Nature of Biomimicry: Toward a Novel Technological Culture." *Science, Technology, & Human Values*. 42(5):795-821.
- 2016 "Remediating Infrastructure: Tokyo's Commuter Train Network and the New Autonomy." *In Infrastructure and Social Complexity: A Routledge Companion*, edited by Penny Harvey, Casper B Jensen and Atsuro Morita. London: Routledge.
- 2015 "'Days of Love and Labor': Remediating the Logic of Labor and Debt in Contemporary Japan." *Positions: asia critique* 23 (3): 463-486.
- 2013 "Tokyo's Commuter Train Suicides and the Society of Emergence." *Cultural Anthropology* 28 (2): 320-343.
- 2010 "Ringu/The Ring: Tracing the Analog Spirit in a Digital Era." *Refractory: A journal of Media Entertainment* 17:1-21.

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<http://blogs.arts.unimelb.edu.au/refractory/2010/07/18/ringu-the-ring-tracing-the-analog-spirit-in-a-digital-era-michael-fisch/>

- 2009 "War by Metaphor in Densha otoko." *Mechademia 4: War/Time* 4:131-146.
- 2004 "Murakami Haruki's *Sputnik Sweetheart*: Technology, (mis)communication and the 'other side'." *Japan Forum* 16 (3) 361-383.
- 2004 "Resistance in the IDF: An instance of social transformation in Israel." *Israel Studies Forum* 19(2): 108-126.
- 2001 "The Rise of the Chapel Wedding in Japan: Simulation and Performance," *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 28 (1-2): 57-76.
- 2000 "Nation, War, and Japan's Future in the Science Fiction Anime Film *Patlabor II*," *Science Fiction Studies* 27 (1): 49-68.

BOOK REVIEWS

- 2013 "Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method by Tom Boellstorff, Bonnie Nardi, Celia Pearce, T.L. Taylor." *American Ethnologist* 40 (3): 599-600.

ARTICLE REVIEWS/RESPONSES

- n.b. Fungalism: The Magic of Mushrooms for Capitalism after Progress
Review of Anna Tsing's *The Mushroom at the End of the World*
- 2017 A Short Commentary on Casper Jensen's "New ontologies? Reflection's on some recent 'turns' in STS, anthropology and philosophy." *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale* (2017) 25, 4 1-21.

IN PREPARATION

- n.b. *Experimental Ecologies: Ecological Governance in Post-3.11 Japan* (Book manuscript)

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Podcast Interviews

An Anthropology of the Machine. New Books Network, Science, Technology, and Society Channel. Interview with Dr. John Traphagan. Forthcoming
<https://newbooksnetwork.com/an-anthropology-of-the-machine>

Tokyo Commuter Train Suicides. AnthroPod – Society for Cultural Anthropology July 25, 2013. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/michael-fisch-on-tokyo-commuter-train-suicides>.

AWARDS

2005 Daiwa Japan Forum Prize 2005 for best article of the year submitted by a junior scholar. For "Murakami Haruki's *Sputnik Sweetheart*: Technology, (mis)communication and the 'other side,'" *Japan Forum* Volume 16:3 (2004): 361-383.

GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

2021-2022 Fulbright Scholar Program. Long-Term Fellowship for research in Japan.
2021-2022 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), Fellowship for Advanced Social Science Research on Japan. Long-term Fellowship.
2020 Israel Institute Faculty Development Grant. For course development in Spring 2022, in Israel concerning the politics, culture, and technologies of ecological governance.
2016-2017 Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Long Term Fellowship for Research in Japan. (08/02/2016 – 06/01/2017).
2009 – 2010 Harvard Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies Postdoctoral Fellowship.
2004 -2006 Shincho Foundation, two-year fieldwork research grant.
2003 Weatherhead East Asian Institute Summer Research Grant, Columbia University.
2002 Schepps Summer Research Grant, Columbia University.

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- 2001- 2006 Columbia University Ph.D. Fellowship.
1998 – 2001 Japanese Ministry of Education Scholarship for Research and Study in Japan.
1997 Tel Aviv University Research Scholarship.
1996 Cornell University Masters Research and Teaching Scholarship.

INVITED TALKS

- 2021 Technography: Toward an Anthropology of Technology. Keynote talk at The Anthropology of Technology Conference. November 4-5, 2021.
2021 Japan's Extreme Infrastructure: Fortress-ification, Resilience, and Extreme Nature (Japanese). Natori Trail Center, November 2021.
2021 Japan's Extreme Infrastructure: From the Seawall to the Seawall System. Swathmore College. (Zoom)
2020 What if Liberalism had Never Been: Understanding the Philosophical Roots of Colonialism and Capitalism. Osaka University, Fragmentary Institute of Comparative Timelines. (Zoom)
2020 Anthropology of the Machine. North Shore Authors Showcase 2020. (Zoom)
2019 Mediating the Gap: An Anthropological Exploration of the Internet and Tokyo's Commuter Train Network. Appalachian State University, Anthropology Colloquium.
2018 *Fukko to kaifuku: konkureeto no shukensei*. (Reconstruction and Repetition: Concrete Sovereignty). Reconstruction Forum at Tohoku Gakuin University. August 5, 2018.
2018 "Reconstruction and Repetition: Re-animating nature within a Post-3.11 concrete Sovereignty," Aarhus University Academic Hour Talk. Aarhus Denmark.
2017 "The Technicity of Cybernetics: Becoming Organic and Extreme Capitalism," at The Afterlives of Cybernetics, Cambridge, England.
2017 "Automating Agriculture for a Post-Disaster World," at Automated Environments Conference. Canadian Center for Architecture. Montreal, Canada.
2017 "Repetition and Recovery in post 3.11 Japan," University of Tokyo Global Japan Studies Lecture Series
2017 "3.11 as Crisis and Opportunity," Sophia University Institute of Comparative Culture Lecture Series.
2017 "Repetition and Recovery: The limits of Reason in Post 3.11 Japan,"

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- Anthropology Department Seminar Seoul National University, South Korea.
- 2017 "Toward a Techno-Ethics: Thinking with Technicity," Bodies, Machines, Affects: New Anthropological Approaches Workshop, Department of Anthropology, Osaka University.
- 2016 Post Culture Media Ecologies: The Living Museum of Nifrel, Japan. Media Ecologies Symposium, Concordia and McGill University, Montreal, Canada.
- 2013 "Taking the "A" Train: Tokyo to Chicago." The Japan American Society of Chicago.
- 2013 "Tokyo's Commuter Train Suicides and the Society of Emergence." UCLA Anthropology Series: Culture, Power, and Social Change and the Terasaki Center for Japanese Studies.
- 2013 "Days of Love and Labor": Remediating the Logic of Labor and Debt in Contemporary Japan." Korean Family in Comparative Perspective (KFCP) Workshop. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- 2012 Anthropology of the Machine: Tokyo's Commuter Train Network, Cornell University East Asian Program Speaker Series.
- 2012 East Asia's New Middle Class: a new look at Ezra Vogel's *Japan's New Middle Class*, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Panelist and presenter.
- 2011 Chicago Humanities Festival. "Trains of Thought: Lessons from Tokyo."
- 2011 Washington University, Merle Kling Honors Undergraduate Fellowship Lecture.
- 2011 Human Thread. "Commuter Trains and Nuclear Power." Chicago Gallery.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

- 2019 Reconstruction and its Discontents. Animating Ecological Futures, First STS Japan Symposium, University of Chicago.
- 2019 The Culture and Politics of Visibility and Disaster Infrastructure. Global Asias 5 Conference, Penn State University, April 5-7.
- 2019 Making Energy Intimate. Third International Interdisciplinary Faculty Forum between the University of Tokyo and the University of Chicago. March 18-20.
- 2018 Repetition and Recovery: From Concrete Sovereignty to Experimental Ecologies Urban Art and the Network: Infrastructure Symposium. University of Chicago Grey Center Urban Art and Urban Form.

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- 2017 "Game Over: Playing with the Future in Post 3.11 Japan," American Anthropology Association. Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
- 2017 Remediating Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene, Japan Society of Cultural Anthropology, 51st Annual Meeting, Kobe Japan.
- 2016 Experimental Ecologies: The politics and culture of transforming Disaster. Tsukuba Global Science Week, Tsukuba University, Japan.
- 2015 Finessing the Interval – Yamanote Living, Association for Asian Studies (AAS), March 26- April 29, Chicago.
- 2014 Welcome to the Machine: Commuting and Machinic Life in Tokyo's Commuter Train Network. American Anthropology Association. Annual Conference, December 3-7, Washington, DC.
- 2014 An Anthropology of the Machine: Tokyo's Commuter Train Network, Keio Symposium, Medicine, Science, and Technology, July 12, 2014.
- 2013 "The Nature of Biomimicry" Society for Literature and the Arts. Notre Dame
- 2013 "Biomimicry and the Dream of Techno-nature." Association for Asian Studies.
- 2013 "Remediating Modern Transit." Remediations II Japan@Chicago. University of Chicago.
- 2012 Knowledge/Value: Information, Databases and Archives. Beijing Sept 6-9. Response to Response to Orit Halpren's, "The Image of the World as the Inscription of Data: Vision, Communication, and Design in Post-World War II America."
- 2012 "Tokyo Commuter Train Suicides and the Society of Emergence." Remediations: The Eleventh Japan at Chicago Conference.
- 2011 "The Temporal Aesthetic of Death in the Network." American Anthropology Association. Annual Conference, Montreal.
- 2011 "Days of Love and Labor: Beyond Simulation and Allegory." presented on panel addressing Youth Labor and Changing Generations in Japan. Association for Asian Studies (AAS), March 31- April 3, Honolulu.
- 2010 "Managing the Crisis: An Anatomy of the Amagasaki Derailment and the Politics of Fault-Tolerance." Paper presented at the Society for the Social Studies of Science Conference, Tokyo.
- 2010 *Organizing Life: Biopolitics and the Commuter Train Network in Contemporary Japan*. Reischauer Institute Japan Forum presentation. Discussion Moderator: Theodore C. Bestor, Professor of Anthropology and Japanese Studies and Chairperson, Anthropology Department.

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- 2009 *Blood on the Tracks*. Paper presented at the 8th Annual Conference for East Asian Studies, Tel Aviv University, Israel.
- 2007 *Ringu/Ring*. Tracing the Analog Spirit in a Digital Era." Paper presented at Ubiquitous Media Conference: Asian Transformations, Tokyo, Japan.
- 2007 *Collisions: Derailing the Temporal Logic of Modernity*. Paper presented at Asian Studies Conference, Tokyo, Japan.
- 2005 *Catching the Last Train*. Texts and Temporality in Contemporary Japan. Lecture given at the Daiwa House Japan Forum Award Ceremony, London, England.
- 2005 *Between the Analog and Digital*. Paper presented at Sheffield University as part of Japan Forum Award, Sheffield, England.
- 2002 *Reading Shock in Murakami Haruki*. Paper presented at Columbia University East Asian Studies Annual Graduate Conference, New York, USA.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

- 2020-present Governing Through Design, International and Interdisciplinary Research Group into the politics and aesthetics of design practice. Associate Member, <https://criticalmedialab.ch/portfolio/governing-through-design/>
- 2020 Co-organizer for International Japan Studies Graduate Student Workshop at Tohoku University.
- 2019 Co-organized Animating Ecological Futures, First STS Japan Symposium with Professor Jun Mizukawa.
- 2018-2019 Co-organized Annual Graduate Student Workshop in Japan.
- 2016-present Co-organized International Interdisciplinary Faculty Forum with Professor James Ketelaar.
- 2012 Remediations: The Eleventh Japan at Chicago Conference, May 25-27 (Organizer).
- 2013 Remediations II: The Twelfth Japan at Chicago Conference, March 15-17 (Organizer).
- 2012-2015 Infrastructure Workshop Co-organizer with Julie Chu 2012-2015.

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2013-present Contributing Editor for The Journal *NatureCulture*

Events Planned for 2019-2020

Animating Ecological Futures: An STS Japan (East Asia) Symposium, October 18, 2019 (Funded through CEAS). Co-organizing with Jun Mizukawa (Lake Forest College)

The 4th International Interdisciplinary Faculty Forum and Graduate Workshop of the University of Chicago and the University of Tokyo, at the University of Chicago Hong Kong Center. Co-organizing with James Ketelaar (UChicago, History).

Asia as Action: Scaling Ethnography of the Everyday, Spring 2019 (Co-sponsor with Judith Farquhar).

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

American Anthropology Association, member (AAA)

Association for Asian Studies, member (AAS)

The University of Chicago Urban Network, Research Affiliate

<https://urbannetwork.uchicago.edu/directories/full/research-affiliates>

Japan Studies Dissertation Reviews Advisory Board Digest

(<http://dissertationreviews.org/about-dr/advisory-boards>)

Urban Workshop, University of Chicago. Faculty Sponsor.

RESEARCH POSITIONS

1998-2001 Hitotsubashi University (Tokyo, Japan)

Ministry of Education Visiting Researcher, 1998-2001

1997-1998 Tel-Aviv University (Tel Aviv, Israel)

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Research, Japan Studies, 1997-1998

LANGUAGES

Native Language: English

Acquired Languages: Japanese (fluency in speaking, scholarly reading and writing); Hebrew (fluency in reading, speaking, writing).