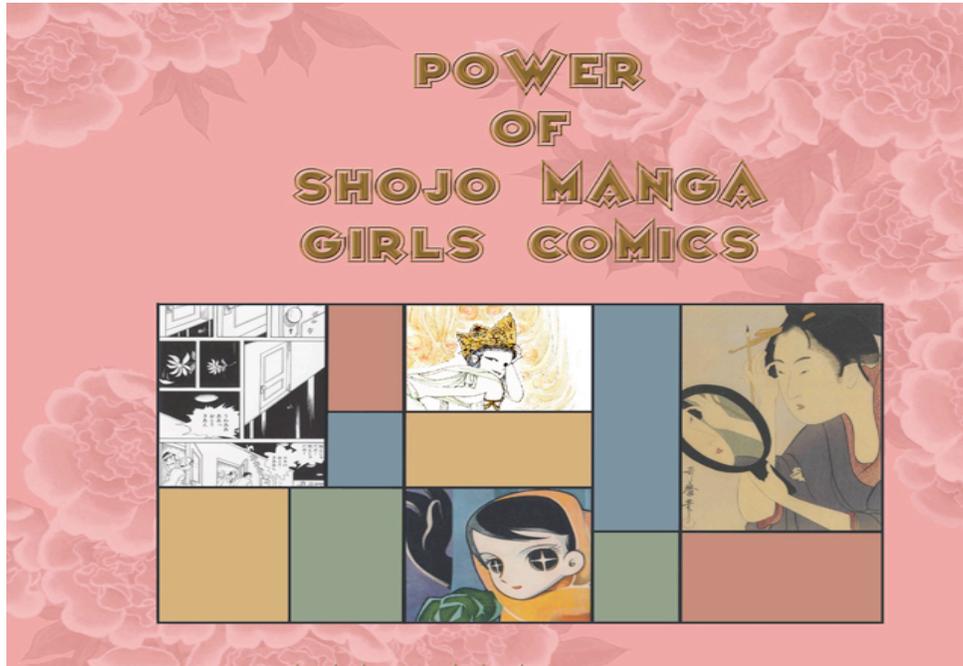


2013 NAEA conference presentation
Fort Worth, TX

Power of Shoyo Manga!- Girls' Comics!:
Multi-Perspectives from Global & Local Cultures



Date: Sunday, 3/10/2013

Time: 11:00:00 AM - 11:50:00 AM

Location: Meeting Room 106/Center/1st Floor

Moderator (and presenter): Masami Toku

Presenters: Jin-Shiow Chen, Mary Stokrocki and Brent Wilson

Session Title: Power of Shoyo Manga! Girls Comics!: Multi-Perspectives from Global & Local Cultures

Description: This is a collaborative presentation to introduce a book on the power of girls' comics, its influence on the visual cultural world, and its advantages and disadvantages for ArtEd curricula.

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A 2013 NAEA Symposium of

**Power of Shoyo Manga!- Girls' Comics!:
Multi-Perspectives from Global & Local Cultures**

Japanese manga (simply means “comics;” often called “graphic novels” due to the quality of story) is no longer just a phenomenon of visual pop-culture in Japan. It has become a world phenomenon. It may not be an exaggeration to say that manga has been promoted from the center of Japanese visual culture to the center of children’s visual culture worldwide with the proliferation of manga related animation, toys, TV series, computer games, and film. The characteristics of manga often appear in children’s pictorial worlds since the semiotic signs in the visual images directly and strongly influence their aesthetics.

In terms of the impact on children’s aesthetics and mind, the Ministry of Education and Science in Japan could not ignore the power of manga and adapted the characteristics of manga into its national curriculum in art education in 2001 to enhance children’s visual literacy and visual thinking skills.

There is no doubt at the beginning of the 21st century that the popularity of Japanese manga has spread all over the world through comic books, animation, and merchandise. However, not many people in the US, even art educators, really understand how and why Japanese manga became so popular in the world, and why children are so attracted to Japanese visual popular products. What are the characteristics of manga that make it different from other comic styles? Since my first article, “What is Manga?: the value and the influence in adolescent art,” was published in the journal of the NAEA (National Art Education Association) in 2001, I have been researching the value & characteristics of manga, publishing articles, and developing a world touring exhibition of *Shoyo Manga! Girls' Power!* in 2005, which was a big success in North and South America (2005–2009). This particular exhibition project was the first one that focused on the particular theme of shoyo manga (girls’ comics) in introducing audiences to the significant values and characteristics of Japanese manga that are seldom seen in other comics like American comics. Since shoyo manga is written for girls and older female readers, it is a good place to explore how gender roles in visual pop-culture are spreading from Japan to the US and all over the world including Europe (Germany & Hungary) in 2011 and Asia (Vietnam) in 2012. Due to its success and reputation, the shoyo manga show will be re-developed as a 2nd world touring exhibition starting in Fall, 2013 from CSU-Chico to travel to the US and also South America. The 1st touring exhibition was a kind of showcase introducing the value and power of shoyo manga based on 23 artists, showing the development and diverse themes over 60 years from World War II to the present. The 2nd touring exhibition will focus on how shoyo manga expanded from the original comic form to other media, and its impacts on girls’ minds and society, a theme explored in the upcoming book *Power of Shoyo Manga!- Girls' Comics! : Multi-Perspectives from Global & Local Cultures*.

This collaborative book is mainly composed of two parts: 1) an overview of the development of shoyo manga and the influence on children’s minds and society; and 2) selected papers from manga critics, educators, and researchers worldwide.

The first part will be the overview of how shojo manga was developed as a main & popular category of manga, including a comparison of the characteristics of shojo manga with those of boy's manga. There is also theoretical information on how our artistic ability and aesthetic preferences tend to be developed, why children are so attracted by Japanese manga, and how the influences appear in their own pictorial worlds and impact their minds.

The second part will be 15 selected papers with the theme of shojo manga (girls' comics) that will be contributed by specialists as insiders/outsideers of Japanese visual-pop culture including critics, educators, and scholars.

There are so many books with the theme of manga in the USA due to the popularity of Japanese manga (comics). However, there is no single published book that focuses on understanding and studying Shojo Manga in spite of the fact that Shojo Manga has significant characteristics that make it unique in the comic world. This will provide an overview of the development and characteristics of shojo manga and a discussion of shojo manga's power and influence. This book also includes current and new debates on how shojo manga influences youth's minds in developing their aesthetics from local and global perspectives. This will be a one-stop resource for all those who want to learn more about Shojo Manga as a specific theme and Manga in general, as well as for anybody teaching a course on the subject.

In this presentation at NAEA, four contributors from the area of art education will discuss their own research topics in visual popular culture related to shojo manga.

Beautiful, Meaningful and Powerful: Explorations of the “bishoujo (beautiful girl)” and “bishonen (beautiful boy)” in Taiwan’s anime/manga fan culture

Jin-Shiow Chen

The “beautiful” anime/manga images of *bishōjo* and *bishōnen*, set in Japanese and Chinese culture, constitute a unique language with an organization of visual patterns, forms and styles; a semantic system; and meanings of power within the culture of anime/manga fandom.

This study presents the kinds of *bishōjo* and *bishōnen* that are the most pleasing to Taiwanese fans. It also itemizes the visual features of *bishōjo* and *bishōnen* images provided by Taiwanese fans. Some works of *bishōjo* and *bishōnen* images created by fan artists are shown to demonstrate their expertise of applying the visual language.

Anime/manga images can be categorized as “*Moe*”, “*bishōjo*” and “*bishōnen*”--Japanese terms, literally meaning “charming girl,” “beautiful girl” and “beautiful boy”. Takashi Murakami’s “Little Boy” exhibition utilized otaku (fanatic) preferences of *kawaii*, (cute, lovely, or adorable) images to introduce a new wave of Japanese art to the West. *Moe* and *bishōjo* images tend to be oriented toward male readers, while *bishōnen* images are oriented toward female readers who dominate the anime/manga fan culture.

The “soft power” influence of Japanese anime/manga comics has spread throughout the world, particularly in Taiwan where a prominent anime/manga fan culture has developed, marked by annual high-profile conventions. These conventions allow fan (amateur) artists to show and sell their creative work, including manga doujinshis (fan art and amateur manga). Taiwan’s fandom has demonstrated the power of productiveness identified through the thousands of manga doujinshis and manga-related products displayed for sale in the events. “Moe”, “*bishōjo*” and “*bishōnen*” images appear everywhere, as logos tagged to bookmarks, mugs, shopping bags, key chains, pillows, and many other products, filling up an entire convention. Art educators should learn to appreciate the effort and enthusiasm of students who master anime/manga. When we incorporate what young people love into art classes, we can encourage students to learn and even to design their art into creative, saleable products.

Dr. Jin-Shiow Chen is Professor of Art Education in the Department of Visual Arts at National Chiayi University, Taiwan. Her research interest used to focus on community-based art education, but has switched to young people’s socio-aesthetic experiences in anime/manga fan culture. She has published articles on these topics of interest in anthologies and journals. Jin-Shiow is also an active artist in Taiwan. She has given several solo exhibitions of installation art and participated in many group exhibitions around Taiwan.

Semiotics of The Taiwanese Cosplay Club---Teaching Asian Art Culture Using Second Life

Mary Stokrocki & Kai-Hsuan Hsu

When teaching Visual Culture Research, Stokrocki encourages students to investigate the semiotics of visual culture, namely in-depth interpretation of its signs and significance. She requires students to conduct a case study and learn about the stages of semiotic research, a type of qualitative research that include data collection, content analysis, and comparative analysis. For example, Taiwanese student Kai-Hsuan Hsu conducted a case study about teaching Asian Art, by notably studying the Taiwanese Cosplay Club on the virtual world of Second Life. She observed their meetings, interviewed two avatars the first years and two more the second year. After re-analyzing findings, she discovered these cosplayers read manga at a very young age; they were more serious about the costumes than the roleplay story, and sex was ambiguous (as in manga) because its fantasy and participants experiment freely with gender identities and escape masculine abuse (Wilson & Toku, 2004). She compared results with research on cosplay in real life in Japan and China proper as imitative (Chen, 2007) and offered future implications and research suggestions. Noteworthy, however was the predominance of cyborg characters (3/4). Stokrocki interpreted this finding deeper and uncovered the fact that humans are already "weirdly" cyborg with robotic parts and wired connections, using multiple identities, engaging in genderless and socially mediated networks. This future Asian mindset presents a new cultural politics of intimacy, which evolved from repressed history and migrant speculations, and offers cyborg hope (Lai, 2012).

Dr. Mary Stokrocki is Professor of Art and Area Head of Art Education, Arizona State University and a 2012 Fulbright Scholar to Taiwan. She was former Vice-President and World Counselor of the International Society for Education Through Art [8 years] and former President of the United States Society for Education through Art and its Webmaster [10 years]. She received: 2007 College of Arts & Architecture Outstanding Alumni Award, Pennsylvania State University. She won the following National Art Education Association Awards: 2007 Women’s Caucus June King McFee Award; 2005 Lowenfeld Award, and 1995 Manual Barkan for outstanding research article. She has conducted qualitative research for over 30 years.

Her research focuses on multicultural teaching/learning in the inner-city Cleveland; Rotterdam, Holland; Ankara, Turkey; Sao Paulo, Brazil; Warsaw, Poland; Barcelona, Spain; Evora, Portugal; Chiayi Taiwan; and the Yaqui, Pima/Maricopa, Ak-Chin, Apache and Navajo Reservations in Arizona. Now she teaches and does research on Second Life using Digital Ethnography.

Kai-Hsuan Hsu is a doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction at Arizona State University and has a degree in Metal Jewelry from Taiwan.

Updated Boys' Love, Yaoi, and Art Education: Issue of Power and Pedagogy

Brent Wilson & Masami Toku

More than one decade ago in 2001, Wilson and Toku addressed the controversial issue of boy's love as one of the most popular topics in graphic narratives created by young amateur female authors (*Semiotics and Visual Culture: Sights, Signs, and Significance*, ed. Deborah Smith-Shank, NAEA). It was a challenge in the area of education at that time how to interpret this phenomenon of boy's love and how to adapt and/or implement the power of this genre into art educational curricula. One decade later, there is no hesitation to discuss this topic, since it has become more popular in diverse media such as manga, novels, TV, computer games, and others. The biggest fans of the topic, as readers and creators, are now around 14 years old, at the beginning of their teen years. In this paper, we would like to discuss what's happened in these ten years, which will be a new interpretation of the phenomenon and also a continuation of the story of this previous publication.

Dr. Brent Wilson is an emeritus professor of Pennsylvania State University. Wilson is one of the foremost authors, educators, and scholars in the area of art education. He is also the first researcher to introduce the power of manga based on his cross-cultural research of children's pictorial world more than twenty years ago in the 1980s, when nobody in Western education was paying attention of the power of manga.

Dr. Masami Toku is a native of Japan, professor of art education and visual culture at California State University, Chico. Her research interest is children's aesthetic and artistic development. Toku started to collaborate with Brent Wilson in 2000. As a result, she was encouraged to develop her research in a new direction, the influence of visual pop-culture that impacts children's minds and society. She is also a founder of the shojo manga project and has traveled all over the world with the project since 2005.

Following is a list of topics and the book's contributors (alphabetical order by authors' names).

Revisiting Manga High: Literacies, Identities, and the Power of Manga on New York City Youths by Michael Bitz, Executive Director, Center for Educational Pathways, Assistant Professor of Literacy and Teacher Education, Ramapo College of New Jersey, and Honorary Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music Education, Teachers College-Columbia University

Beautiful, Powerful and Meaningful: Explorations of the "bishoujo (beautiful girl)" and "bishonen (beautiful boy)" fanatic spectacular in Taiwan's manga fan culture by Jin-Shiow Chen, National Chiayi University Department of Fine Arts Graduate Institute of Visual Arts College of Humanities and Arts, Taiwan

Stories by Female Comic Artists in Southeast Asia by Cheng Tju LIM, Country Editor of the International Journal of Comic Art, Singapore

The Cute Little Girl living in the Imagined Japanese Past: Sakura Momoko's Chibimarukochan by Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase, Associate Prof. of Asian Study and chair, Vassar College, NY, USA

Miyazaki's View of Shojo by Marc Hairston, Professor of Physics, University of Texas at Dallas and chief editor of Miyazaki's films website in the US

The development of Hispanic Manga in Peru and South America by Edward Huerta, critic and editor of Perumanga

Between the Shôjo Kyara and the Modern Man by Frenchy Lunning, Professor, Minneapolis College of Art and Design and chief editor of manga journal, Mechademia, University of Minneapolis publication, USA

Magazine Media and Shojo Manga: What is the Power of Shojo Manga? by Nozomi Masuda, Associate Professor, Konan University, Japan

Queer Readings of BL: Are Women "Plunderers" of Gay Men? by Kazumi Nagaike, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Oita University, Japan

From Shôjo Manga to Women's Manga by Kotaro Nakagaki, Associate Prof., Daito Bunka University, Japan

Panorama of Shojo Manga in Brazil by Arnaldo M. Oka, Translator - editorial assistant at Editora JBC, Sao Paulo, Brazil

Semiotics of an Aesthetic Event: Taiwan Cosplay Club Costume in Second Life by Mary Stokrocki (& Kai Hsuan Hsu), Professor of Art Education and Media Study, Arizona State University, USA

The Social Performance of Comics in Contemporary Japan: An Examination of Tobe Keiko's With the Light by Shige Suzuki, Ph.D., Assistant Prof., Baruch College, The City University of NY, USA

Children's Artistic and Aesthetic Development in their Pictorial World – Visual pop-Cultural Influence to Children's Mind and Society by Masami Toku, founder of shojo manga project and exhibition, CSU-Chico

Updated Boys' Love, Yaoi, and Art Education: Issue of Power and Pedagogy by Brent Wilson, Pennsylvania State University & Masami Toku, CSU-Chico, USA