

Queer Lesbian Experience within Chinese Girl's Love Manga Fandom: An Qualitative Study of Sexuality among Chinese Yuri Fans

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Abstract : Yuri is a manga culture which refers to the works (manga, literature, TV shows) that depict the intimacy between two girls. It is originally a Japanese culture which then implanted in Chinese fandom after the airing of Maria-sama ga Miteru. There has been a growing fanbase of Yuri culture and most of them are attracted by the subtle and sentimental relationship between girls. The culture is characterized by the spiritual bonding and interactions within girls. A high proportion of female fans in Chinese Yuri community was recorded, and Yamibo forum is their major site for socializing and discussion on Yuri's work. There is a high tendency that female Yuri fans engaged in a homosexual relationship. However, they seldom directly address themselves as lesbian but non-heterosexual. It is due to the fact that Yuri fans community largely disagrees with the butch-femme role in the mainstream lesbianism. Within Chinese Yuri community, femininity is highly being appreciated. Members with high degree of feminine characteristics are popular among fans community. Besides, since the fans community-based at the online forum, there has been a high tendency that members developed the long-distance relationship. From the in-depth interviews of the research, Yuri fans are mostly pessimistic towards their relationship due to the social and geographical barriers, yet at the same time, they do not lose hope in searching for their true love. This research explored how Chinese Yuri fans challenge the homonormativity in mainstream lesbianism and how they construct their sexual identity through varies discourses on sexuality and homosexual experience.

Keywords : Chinese fandom, femininity, gender, homonormativity, Japanese manga, lesbianism, sexuality, queer culture

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