

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics

SPECIAL ISSUE

### BOYS' LOVE MANGA

PROPOSALS DUE BY OCTOBER 14, 2011

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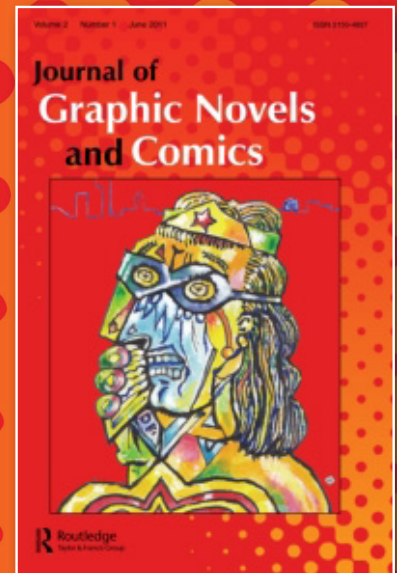
Boys' love emerged in the late 1960s as women in Japan began creating commercial *manga* (comics) about young males in homoerotic relationships and self-publishing similarly-themed comics called *dōjinshi* using young male characters taken from popular *shōnen* (boys) *manga*. The stories show the characters trying to overcome obstacles in order to connect or bond romantically. The genre has gained popularity in many world regions. Beginning in the second half of the 1990s, boys' love became popular in the West, where it is generally called yaoi, from the acronym of the tongue-in-cheek description "*yamanashi, ochinashi, iminashi*," or "no climax, no point, no meaning."

Fans use the genre in subversive and oppositional ways, reading or creating boys' love as a form of resistance and challenge to gender norms, such as the female-objectifying "male gaze," and as expressions of ambivalence in relation to these norms. The latter, in particular, is shown in the recently recognized fact that a number of heterosexual males also create and consume BL narratives.

We seek to make this special issue inclusive of expressions of boys' love and yaoi worldwide, multifaceted and interdisciplinary. We hope to reflect fan diversity, explore previously unexplored areas, and suggest ideas for future research.

We are seeking essays of 5,000 to 7,000 words. Topics might include:

- The history of *shōjo* (girls') comics in Japan as it influenced, framed, and grounded the development of the boys' love genre;
- Current legal and censorship issues related to boys' love, especially in the context of comic history, such as the recently enacted youth protection amendment in the Tokyo prefecture and the proposed Internet filtering in Australia;
- The practices and identities of fans who create and consume this genre, including *fujoshi* (female BL fans), *fudanshi* (self-identified heterosexual male fans), and *otaku* (all fans);
- The inception, growth, and marketing strategies of the publishing industries that include or are entirely dedicated to boys' love comics, especially compared to those that publish gay comics or heterosexual adult comics;
- Concepts of "race" and ethnicity as they manifest in boys' love and yaoi;
- Discursive analysis of media responses to the boys' love/yaoi genre and to fans' activities;
- Queer discourses within and about boys' love and yaoi, such as their potential for a subsumption, by female boys' love artists and writers, of gay/queer male discourses;
- Comparison of boys' love and yaoi expressions in world regions;
- Reading strategies of fans;
- The distribution of boys' love comics over new media, such as mobile phone novels, microblogs, and image boards such as 4chan;
- Copyright issues related to boys' love, such as the ethics of making scanlations of untranslated works and the poaching in *dōjinshi* of commercially published characters;
- Artistic and iconographic developments and differences within the genre over time and between national cultures;
- Self-reflexivity within the comics as males read boys' love comics for same-sex romantic or sexual "tips," are supported by female boys' love fans, or work within the *manga* publishing industry.



We are looking for articles from multiple disciplines and theoretical approaches. The primary focus would be *manga* (printed and electronic), but we would hope to include at least an overview of non-*manga* genres, too, to provide context and a sense of the genre's scope.

Please submit abstracts of between 250-300 words no later than October 14, 2011 to [editors@yaoiresearch.com](mailto:editors@yaoiresearch.com)

Please visit the journal's website for instructions about how to prepare your paper for submission [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rcom](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rcom)

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