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# Report on Japanese-Language Manga Magazine Survey 2020

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## Introduction

The North American manga boom began in the early 2000s,<sup>1</sup> and so now an anime and manga studies boom is occurring now as fans grow up and design their research based on childhoods complete with idols, magical girls, ninjas, and superheroes. As such, we are witnessing a disciplinary change in how research on Japan is performed in North America, often with manga over other materials. Both English-language and Japanese-language manga are increasingly accessible to both fans and researchers in North America thanks to the work of both booksellers and librarians. Manga is available in two major print formats, volumes and magazines. Volumes, called *tankōbon*, focus on one series while manga magazines, referred to as *zasshi*, are “weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or bi-monthly anthology magazines containing episodes of multiple manga series.”<sup>2</sup> While volumes are widely available in both English and Japanese, manga magazines are usually only published in their original language – Japanese. The question then becomes, for patrons with Japanese literacy wishing to read manga magazines, rather than volumes, at which North American libraries are they able to do so?

## Objectives

The Japanese-language manga magazine survey was developed to document the availability of Japanese-language manga magazines at North American East Asian academic libraries, and to gain a stronger understanding of why, or why not, librarians collect these materials in particular. The larger purpose was to address the information needs of anime and manga studies students and researchers, as there is no current list of which libraries in North America collect Japanese-language manga magazines. Our hope is that this report will aid in ensuring robust research on anime and manga can be performed within North America without the need to access overseas Japanese-language manga magazine collections. Objectives of this survey included:

- Which North American East Asian academic libraries collections include Japanese-language manga magazines, if any.
- What Japanese-language manga magazines were being collected at the time of the survey, if any.
- Why, or why not, librarians and other collection development staff had chosen to collect Japanese-language manga magazines.
- What conditions would encourage or discourage collecting Japanese-language manga magazines in the future, for libraries who currently do not collect them.
- The primary purpose and usage of Japanese-language manga magazines, for libraries who do currently collect them.

- If North American East Asian academic libraries collections have also included, or did not include, Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*).

## Methodology

The survey was distributed by email on February 24, 2020 to 43 libraries associated with the Council on East Asian Libraries (CEAL), see Appendix 1 for a complete list of invitees. While CEAL collects statistical data on 46 libraries,<sup>3</sup> three were excluded as they are not academic libraries and thus fall outside the scope of this survey or were a duplicate listing. Reminders were sent to non-responders on March 16, 2020 and April 1, 2020. No financial incentives were offered to survey participants. The survey closed on April 15, 2020 with fifteen responses.

Additionally, the list of Japanese-language manga magazine titles used in this survey was carefully curated based on information from the Japan Magazine Publishers Association (JMPA) on best-selling Japanese-language manga magazines for the first quarter of 2019.<sup>4</sup> For brevity, only the top five best-sellers in each major age-specific genre category (*Shōnen*, *Seinen*, *Shōjo*, and *Josei*) were included. See Appendix 2 for a complete list of titles with associated age-specific genre categories and circulation numbers.

## Results summary

Of the fifteen responses received, two responses were deemed unusable as the respondent did not complete the screening questions. Results were drawn from the remaining 13 respondents who completed the screening questions.

### I. Japanese-language manga magazine availability

Nearly one-third of respondents (30.77%) stated that their library collections included Japanese-language manga magazines while over two-thirds (69.23%) did not. Institutions that responded affirmatively are listed below.

North American east asian academic libraries with Japanese-language manga magazine collections
Cornell University Library
Other (1 response)
University of Chicago Library
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries

Additionally, two institutions (50%), Cornell University Library and Other (1 response), listed what manga magazines are available at their institution while half (50%) did not. The full list of manga magazines selected is below with 週刊少年ジャンプ *Weekly Shōnen Jump* being the sole commonality between both institutions.

## Japanese-language manga magazine titles available at North American East Asian academic libraries

週刊少年ジャンプ *Weekly Shōnen Jump* (2 responses)

別冊マーガレット *Bessatsu Margaret* (1 response)

ちゃお *Ciao* (1 response)

花とゆめ *Hana to Yume* (1 response)

月刊コロコロコミック *Monthly CoroCoro Comic* (1 response)

週刊少年マガジン *Weekly Shōnen Magazine* (1 response)

Other: *Bessatsu Nakayoshi* (1 response)

## II. Factors which influence Japanese-language manga magazine collection development

The majority of respondents (61.54%) provided additional information on why, or why not, Japanese-language manga magazines were a part of their library's collection. Five major themes were identified as factors which positively or negatively affect Japanese-language manga magazine collection development.

### Positive

- Research and instructional needs (50% of respondents)
- Student request (12.5% of respondents)

### Negative

- Processing and binding (50% of respondents)
- Funding (50% of respondents)
- Space (50% of respondents)

One respondent summarized the factors expressed by all respondents concisely when stating, "So far acquiring manga magazines haven't been considered due to: a) lack of needs & demands by our scholars, b) lack of available budget, c) lack of spaces and d) cost/labor for binding." Note that while Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*) are approximately the same size as a paperback novel, *My Brother's Husband* 弟の夫 measured 18.3 x 13 x 1.5 cm,<sup>5</sup> Japanese-language manga magazines are often compared to phone books due to their large size. An issue of *Nakayoshi* なかよし<sup>6</sup> without binding applied measured 24.8 x 18 x 3.3 cm and an issue of *Weekly Shōnen Jump* 週刊少年ジャンプ with binding applied measured 26.7 x 18.3 x 3.4 cm.<sup>7</sup>

## III. Primary purpose and users of Japanese-language manga magazine collections

Among respondents who stated Japanese-language manga magazines were a part of their library's collection, three-quarters (75%) provided additional information on users of the collection, while half (50%) provided additional information on the purpose of the collection.

Regarding the primary purpose of the collection, both instruction (50%) and research (50%) were selected equally, while no respondents selected either reading for fun (0%) or other (0%). Respondents reported the primary users of Japanese-language manga magazine collections to be undergraduate students (66.67%), followed by graduate students (33.33%) with no respondents selecting community members (0%), faculty (0%), or other (0%).

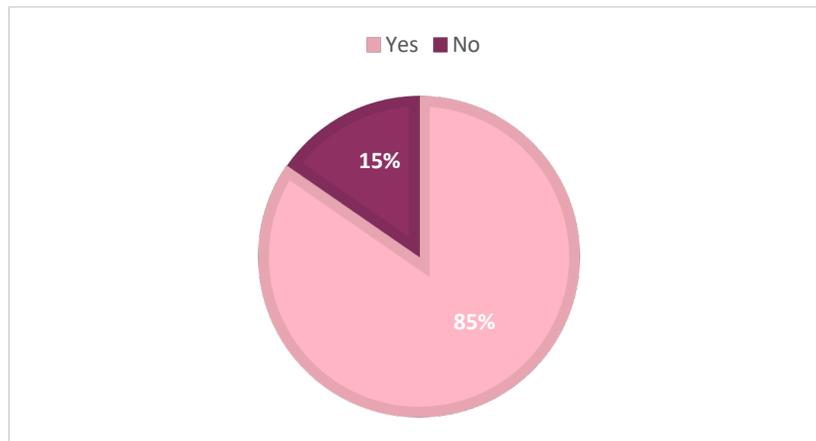
#### IV. Japanese-language manga volume (*tankōbon*) availability

Among all respondents, the majority (84.62%) collected Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*). A small amount (15.38%) collected neither Japanese-language manga magazines nor Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*). Among respondents who collected Japanese-language manga magazines, all (100%) respondents also collected Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*). Additionally, among all respondents, over one-third (38.46%) collected both Japanese-language manga magazines and Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*).

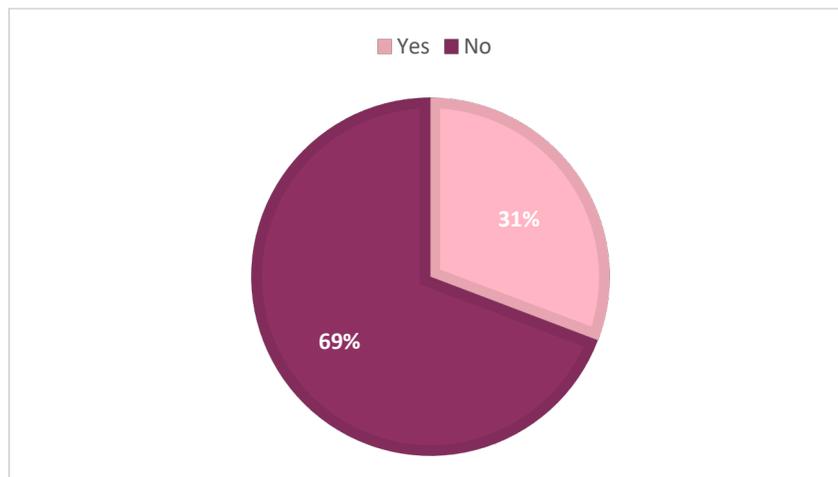
North American East Asian academic libraries with Japanese-language manga volume ( <i>tankōbon</i> ) collections
Cornell University Library
Other (1 response)
University of British Columbia, Asian Library
University of California San Diego
University of Chicago Library
University of Michigan Library, Asian Library
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries
University of Oregon Libraries
University of Wisconsin – Madison Libraries
Washington University in St. Louis, East Asian Library
Yale University, East Asian Library

## Survey results

Q1. Do your library collections include Japanese-language manga volumes (*tankōbon*)?



Q2. Do your library collections include Japanese-language manga magazines?

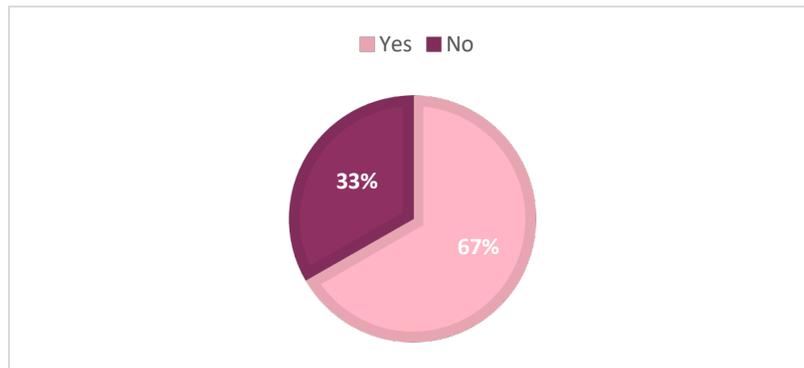


Q3. [If yes in Q2.] Please select the manga magazines your library currently carries.

Title	Cornell	Other
週刊少年ジャンプ <i>Weekly Shōnen Jump</i>	1	1
Other: <i>Bessatsu Nakayoshi</i>	1	—
月刊コロコロコミック <i>Monthly CoroCoro Comic</i>	—	1
週刊少年マガジン <i>Weekly Shōnen Magazine</i>	—	1
ちゃお <i>Ciao</i>	—	1
別冊マーガレット <i>Bessatsu Margaret</i>	—	1
花とゆめ <i>Hana to Yume</i>	—	1



Q6. [If no in Q2.] Would you consider collecting manga magazines in the future?



Q7. [If no in Q2.] If you were to collect manga magazines for your library, which of the following would you consider carrying?

Title	University of Oregon	Washington University St. Louis	University of Southern Cal	UC San Diego	Yale	University of British Columbia
I do not know	—	1	1	1	1	1
週刊少年ジャンプ <i>Weekly Shōnen Jump</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
週刊少年マガジン <i>Weekly Shōnen Magazine</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
別冊マーガレット <i>Bessatsu Margaret</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
花とゆめ <i>Hana to Yume</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
月刊少年マガジン <i>Monthly Shōnen Magazine</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
ビッグコミックオリジナル <i>Big Comic Original</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
りぼん <i>Ribon</i>	1	—	—	—	—	—
月刊コロコロコミック <i>Monthly CoroCoro Comic</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
ちゃお <i>Ciao</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
週刊少年サンデー <i>Weekly Shōnen Sunday</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
週刊ヤングジャンプ <i>Weekly Young Jump</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
ヤングマガジン <i>Young Magazine</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
ビッグコミック <i>Big Comic</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
コミック乱 <i>Comic Ran</i>	—	—	—	—	—	—
LaLa	—	—	—	—	—	—
BE・LOVE	—	—	—	—	—	—

プチコミック  
 Petit Comic  
 Kiss  
 Cocohana  
 office YOU  
 Other

—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—
—	—	—	—	—	—

Q8. [If yes OR no in Q2.] Is there anything else you would like to add regarding your experiences with collecting or not collecting manga magazines?

### Open-ended responses

1. I think I made a misunderstanding of Manga Magazin. We do not have any of these but I started to subscribe "Animeju" since Japanese Anime became so popular. Near by university have emphasizing collecting manga, so I decided not to. I ordered several Manga comic book set titles which were somewhat popular at one time or stories that deal with interesting topic such as same sex couple stories etc. We have couple professors teaching Manga classes too. One of the professor says origin of Manga is in Kibyoshi books from Edo period, so he likes use kibyoshi in his classes. Hence I collect Edo period story books including kibyoshi, soshi, gokan etc.
2. In case of specific needs, Manga Libraries at Meiji University are always our option to refer although they haven't considered any possibilities of translations of their resources into foreign languages when I talked to the person in charge back in 2015.
3. Personally, I think manga provides abundance of information for users (educational, cultural, etc.) but due to the books/magazines being so fragile, it is hard to collect them for lending. Currently, our policy for manga is to purchase only when requested and make it in-house use only. I would like it if we can collect it as e-books but currently, publishers do not have manga book policy for institutional use.
4. Binding was an issue as we wanted to preserve the cover and spine.
5. I hope the majority of the journals will be online soon. Less costly to preserve and do not take large space in stack.
6. We collect quite a few numbers of manga monographs, and they are great resources not just for researchers but also for Japanese language learners and those who wants some "fun reads."
7. With space restrictions, we cannot maintain full runs of any magazine. The few that we have are for context in teaching and exhibitions.

### Conclusion and recommendations

The challenges and opportunities that come with building strong Japanese-language manga magazine collections at North America East Asian libraries are complex, with this survey

only aiding in increasing our surface-level understanding of their availability to patrons. While this survey was developed with print materials in mind, the need for digital materials has increased dramatically in 2020 due to the COVID-19 public health crisis preventing researchers from accessing materials at both the local level, at their university's East Asian library, and the global level, at archives in Japan. Therefore, future research should address digital manga volumes and digital manga magazines in terms of selection and acquisition, what manga magazines and volumes are available digitally and should they be purchased over print manga, and distribution, how can librarians ensure multiple patrons have access to digital manga magazines and volumes when either on or off-campus. Finally, the gifts (paratextual drama CDs, illustrations, toys, etc.) often packaged with each issue of a manga magazine need further attention in terms of preservation and access for current and future anime and manga studies students and researchers.

**Appendix 1.** List of North American East Asian Libraries Invitees

1. Arizona State University Libraries
2. Binghamton University Libraries
3. Brigham Young University, Harold B. Lee Library
4. Brown University Library
5. Columbia University Libraries, C. V. Starr East Asian Library
6. Cornell University Library
7. Duke University Libraries
8. Emory University, Robert W. Woodruff Library
9. Georgetown University Library
10. Harvard University, Harvard-Yenching Library
11. Indiana University Libraries
12. McGill University Library
13. Northwestern University Library
14. Oberlin College Library
15. Pennsylvania State University Libraries
16. Stanford University Libraries, East Asia Library
17. The Claremont Colleges, Asian Library
18. The Ohio State University Libraries
19. University of British Columbia, Asian Library

20. University of California, Berkeley, C. V. Starr East Asian Library
21. University of California, Irvine Libraries
22. University of California, Los Angeles, Richard C. Rudolph East Asian Library
23. University of California Riverside Libraries
24. University of California San Diego Library
25. University of Chicago Library
26. University of Hawai'i, Hamilton Library
27. University of Kansas Libraries
28. University of Maryland Libraries
29. University of Michigan Library, Asia Library
30. University of Minnesota Libraries, East Asian Library
31. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Libraries
32. University of Notre Dame, Hesburgh Libraries
33. University of Oregon Libraries
34. University of Pennsylvania, Penn Libraries
35. University of Pittsburgh, East Asian Library
36. University of Southern California, East Asian Library
37. University of Texas Libraries
38. University of Toronto, Cheng Yu Tung East Asian Library
39. University of Virginia Library
40. University of Washington, Tateuchi East Asia Library
41. University of Wisconsin – Madison Libraries
42. Washington University in St. Louis, East Asian Library
43. Yale University, East Asian Library

## Appendix 2. Information on Japanese-language manga magazine titles

Title	Age-Specific Genre	Circulation Number <sup>8</sup>
週刊少年ジャンプ <i>Weekly Shōnen Jump</i>	<i>Shōnen</i>	1,692,000
週刊少年マガジン <i>Weekly Shōnen Magazine</i>	<i>Shōnen</i>	715,417
月刊コロコロコミック <i>Monthly CoroCoro Comic</i>	<i>Shōnen</i>	623,333
月刊少年マガジン <i>Monthly Shōnen Magazine</i>	<i>Shōnen</i>	299,567
週刊少年サンデー <i>Weekly Shōnen Sunday</i>	<i>Shōnen</i>	277,500
週刊ヤングジャンプ <i>Weekly Young Jump</i>	<i>Seinen</i>	467,209
ビッグコミックオリジナル <i>Big Comic Original</i>	<i>Seinen</i>	465,833
ヤングマガジン <i>Young Magazine</i>	<i>Seinen</i>	325,733
ビッグコミック <i>Big Comic</i>	<i>Seinen</i>	271,000
コミック乱 <i>Comic Ran</i>	<i>Seinen</i>	179,537
ちゃお <i>Ciao</i>	<i>Shōjo</i>	365,000
りぼん <i>Ribon</i>	<i>Shōjo</i>	140,000
別冊マーガレット <i>Bessatsu Margaret</i>	<i>Shōjo</i>	113,333
花とゆめ <i>Hana to Yume</i>	<i>Shōjo</i>	109,167
<i>LaLa</i>	<i>Shōjo</i>	104,333
<i>BE・LOVE</i>	<i>Josei</i>	73,000
プチコミック <i>Petit Comic</i>	<i>Josei</i>	66,667
<i>Kiss</i>	<i>Josei</i>	60,733
<i>Cocohana</i>	<i>Josei</i>	54,233
<i>office YOU</i>	<i>Josei</i>	47,000

<sup>1</sup> Casey Brienza, *Manga in America: Transnational Book Publishing and the Domestication of Japanese Comics*, (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), 21.

<sup>2</sup> Nicole Rousmaniere (eds.) and Matsuba Ryoko (eds.), *Manga マンガ The Citi Exhibition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2019), 342.

<sup>3</sup> Council on East Asian Libraries, "Participating Libraries Information for Year 2019," CEAL Statistics Database, accessed 27 August 2020, <https://ceal.ku.edu/library/status/2019>.

<sup>4</sup> "Insatsu Busū Kōhyō" 印刷部数公表, Nihon Zasshi Kyōkai 日本雑誌協会, accessed 27 August 2020, <https://www.j-magazine.or.jp/user/printed/index>.

<sup>5</sup> Tagame Gengorō 田亀 源五郎, *Otōto no Otto* 弟の夫, (Tokyo: Futabasha 双葉社, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> Nakayoshi なかよし (Tokyo: Kodansha 講談社, March 2020).

<sup>7</sup> *Shūkan Shōnen Janpu* 週刊少年ジャンプ (Tokyo: Shueisha 集英社, January 2020).

<sup>8</sup> "Insatsu Busū Kōhyō" 印刷部数公表, Nihon Zasshi Kyōkai 日本雑誌協会, accessed 27 August 2020, <https://www.j-magazine.or.jp/user/printed/index>.