

Why Lolicon? Love it or hate it, it's here.

It's no surprise to say that younger characters in anime have been used provocatively. The question to answer then is why? These are my thoughts and interpretations to give some sort of explanation as to why. If you love lolicon, great. If you hate it, great. This is just interpreting history.

Disclaimer: This analysis is attempting to analyze the sexual preferences of Japanese people from the last sixty or so years. Western thinking bias toward sexual norms is prominent from my background. As such, I will attempt to provide the least amount of personal bias in accessing the issue. Thank you.

Chronophilia: Paraphilia, Pedophilia and Infantophilia. An American Understanding of Pedophilic Attractions

The analysis of human sexuality presented in this section is specifically based on research done by psychologist and sexologist John Money. Among his research, 'chronophilia' was a term he used to refer to sexual attraction based on age.¹ The relevant information about chronophilia to this argument will be displayed.

Chronophilia: Erotic attraction based on specific age ranges.

Paraphilia: "The experience of intense sexual arousal to atypical objects, situations, or individuals."²

Pedophilia: "The act or fantasy on the part of an adult of engaging in sexual activity with a child or children, generally 11 or younger."³

Infantophilia: Recent sub-category of pedophilia, usually with an emphasis on children 5 years or younger.⁴

Hebephilia: "Primary erotic interest in individuals between the ages of 11-14."⁵

Ephebophilia: "Primary erotic attraction to youth between the ages of 15-19."⁶

¹ John Money (1986) "Lovemaps: clinical concepts of sexual/erotic health and pathology, paraphilia, and gender transposition of childhood, adolescence, and maturity, ISBN 0-8290-1589-2, pp. 70, 260

² American Psychiatric Association (June 2000). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV (Text Revision)*. Arlington, VA, USA: American Psychiatric Publishing, Inc. pp. 566–76. doi:10.1176/appi.books.9780890423349. ISBN 978-0-89042-024-9.

³ ""pedophilia" (n.d.)". *The American Heritage Stedman's Medical Dictionary*. Retrieved 2010-09-23. The act or fantasy on the part of an adult of engaging in sexual activity with a child or children.

⁴ Greenberg DM, Bradford J, Curry S (1995). "Infantophilia--a new subcategory of pedophilia?: a preliminary study". *Bull Am Acad Psychiatry Law* 23 (1): 63–71. PMID 7599373..

⁵ Blanchard R, Lykins AD, Wherrett D, Kuban ME, Cantor JM, Blak T, Dickey R, Klassen PE (June 2009). "Pedophilia, hebephilia, and the DSM-V". *Arch Sex Behav* 38 (3): 335–50. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9399-9. PMID 18686026.

Paraphilia is the grand category of multiple different sexual disorders. The classification of sexual deviation is determined by a cultural understanding of 'normal' sexual expression and acts which are essentially beyond that spectrum. Homosexuality was included in the Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) until the American Psychiatric Association removed it in 1974.

Pedophilia is included under the paraphilia grand category. Looking at pedophilia's etymology, it comes the Greek": παις (paîs), meaning "child", and φιλία (philía), "friendly love" or "friendship."⁷ However, the Greeks did not use the term in the way it's used today. The term entered sexual discourse with the book "Psychopathia Sexualis" in 1886 by the Viennese psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing.⁸ The term only became widely used during the early 20th century. To define Pedophilia, it generally refers to attraction to children under the age of 11. The person diagnosed with this mental disorder has to be at least 16 years of age and at least 5 years older than the target of sexual interest.⁹

Infantophilia, a more recent term, has entered the psychiatric discourse as a sub-category of pedophilia looking at attraction to specifically children 5 and under.

Hebephilia and Ephebophilia refer to an attraction to pubescent and post-pubescent youth, respectively.¹⁰ They can be differentiated by the preferred age: ephebophilia and hebephilia I (age of early puberty), II (middle adolescence) and III (late adolescence).

Lolita: Lolicon History

Lolicon (ロリコン) has roots in a book published in Paris 1955. Written by Vladimir Nobokov, "Lolita" tells the story of a man's sexual ambitions with a 12 year old girl he called Lolita. The real name of the girl in the story was Dolores "Dolly" Haze, daughter of Charlotte Haze. The interesting aspect of his writing here is that the female name "Lola" is a form of Dolores or Charlotte.¹¹ The diminutive form of "Lola" is "Lolita."¹² Diminutive is defined as: "Grammar.

⁶ Blanchard, R.; Lykins, A. D.; Wherrett, D.; Kuban, M. E.; Cantor, J. M.; Blak, T.; Dickey, R.; Klassen, P. E. (2008). "Pedophilia, hebephilia, and the DSM-V". *Archives of Sexual Behavior* **38** (3): 335–350. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9399-9. PMID 18686026.

⁷ Liddell, H.G., and Scott, Robert (1959). *Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*. ISBN 0-19-910206-6.

⁸ Von Krafft-Ebing, Richard (1922). *Psychopathia Sexualis*. Translated to English by Francis Joseph Rebman. Medical Art Agency. pp. 552–560. ISBN 1-871592-55-0.

⁹ See section F65.4 Paedophilia. "The ICD-10 Classification of Mental and Behavioural Disorders Diagnostic criteria for research World". World Health Organization/ICD-10. 1993. Retrieved 2012-10-10. B. A persistent or a predominant preference for sexual activity with a prepubescent child or children. C. The person is at least 16 years old and at least five years older than the child or children in B.

¹⁰ Blanchard, R. Blanchard, R., Lykins, A. D., Wherrett, D., Kuban, M. E., Cantor, J. M., Blak, T., Dickey, R., & Klassen, P. E. (2008). Paedophilia, hebephilia, and the DSM-V. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*. doi:10.1007/s10508-008-9399-9.

¹¹ lola. Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/lola> (accessed: December 26, 2014).

pertaining to or productive of a form denoting smallness, familiarity, affection, or triviality, as the suffix -let, in droplet from drop.”¹³ The diminutive version of “lola” is based around romantic feelings. In this way, the origins of the word “Lolita” come from a unique expression of love and sexual desire. The quote by Vladimir below illustrates this point.

“Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta.”¹⁴

The quote expresses just how much passion was involved in every syllable of the nickname. Connecting each of the syllables of Lolita with his very soul and existence.

The novel’s expression of socially unacceptable love in a western culture definitely had a lasting impact with the adoption of the term into western culture. By 1960, “Lolita” was in wide spread figurative use in western culture to denote underage sexual desires.¹⁵ However, the term didn’t enter Japanese culture until the 70’s. The entrance of the term into the Japanese nomenclature can most likely be attributed to “*The Lolita Complex*.” Translated into Japanese and distributed to the Japanese public in the early 70’s, this can be seen as the starting point for the term “Lolicon.”¹⁶ Possibly the first use of “lolita complex” in manga can be seen in Shinji Wada with his *Stumbling upon a Cabbage Field* (キャベツ畑でつまずいて Kyabetsu-batake de Tsumazuite), an Alice in Wonderland manga parody in 1974.¹⁷ The shortening of the term to “lolicon” came later.¹⁸ Lolicon is a portmanteau of Lolita Complex where “com” is expressed as “con” because of linguistic differences between Japanese and English. Strictly speaking though, “Lolita Complex” in Japanese refers to the paraphilia itself (sexual deviation as noted above).¹⁹

Underage Love Origins in Ancient China and Greece

¹² lolita. Dictionary.com. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Douglas Harper, Historian.<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/lolita> (accessed: December 26, 2014).

¹³ diminutive. Dictionary.com. *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc.<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/diminutive> (accessed: December 26, 2014).

¹⁴ Lolita_light_of_my_life_fire_of_my. Dictionary.com. *Columbia World of Quotations*. Columbia University Press, 1996.http://quotes.dictionary.com/Lolita_light_of_my_life_fire_of_my (accessed: December 26, 2014).

¹⁵ lolita. Dictionary.com. *Online Etymology Dictionary*. Douglas Harper, Historian.<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/lolita> (accessed: December 26, 2014).

¹⁶ Galbraith, Patrick W. (2009). *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's guide to the subculture of Cool Japan*. Foreword by Schodt, Frederik L. and Photography by Katsuhide, Asuki (First ed.). Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International. pp. 128–129. ISBN 978-4-7700-3101-3.

¹⁷ Shinji Wada, "Kyabetsu-batake de Tsumazuite" in *Bessatsu Margaret*, June, 1974, p.121

¹⁸ Galbraith, Patrick W. (2009). *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's guide to the subculture of Cool Japan*. Foreword by Schodt, Frederik L. and Photography by Katsuhide, Asuki (First ed.). Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International. pp. 128–129. ISBN 978-4-7700-3101-3.

¹⁹ Feitelberg, Rosemary (June 22, 2007). "On the drawing board. (Lehmann Maupin gallery)". *Women's Wear Daily*. p. 13. Retrieved July 30, 2012. His paintings include a garter-wearing prepubescent maid and a knock-kneed girl in a panty-exposing pose—apparent references to his Lolita complex, or what manga and anime followers refer to as being a 'lolicon.'

[Still needs to be worked on]

Lolicon: Cultural Interpretation of It's Origin

The oversexualization of women has been used to promote the sale of products in a number of capitalized societies. Japan in the early 1900's used women in "pink-collar" jobs, such as elevator operators, advertising on machine magazines, clerk women at new department stores to attract men to these places. Remember, at this time the introduction of new technology was for many people a stark contrast in understandings of how the world worked. A good modern comparison could be looking at how an elderly man would look at the use of a new Iphone. Women viewed as "homely presences" were used in the new consumer culture to help facilitate the transition from "old" to "new". The destruction of Japan during WWII and subsequent United States occupation lead to a ground-up rebuilding of many Japanese industries. Scholars argue that by the 1970's, the years of social upheaval and economic recovery were over which lead to a rise of consumerism.²⁰ The use of the "shoujo" to advertise products in this era was a desirable contrast between the "work-centric" needs of a modern reality and consumptive pleasures.²¹ The use of young girls in this period contrasted with the turn of the century is the fleeting illusion that was the shoujo. Many scholars claim that during this time the shoujo represented a gender disconnected from needs of heterosexual reproduction.²² The idealization of "Youjo" (little girls) and "Shoujo" in their distinctly disconnected gender allows for the exploitation of age to drive an idealized Eros (sexual desire).²³ The use of age in this way can be seen as a commodity. The need to drive consumer sales in reference to social desires can be expressed in how the idealized shoujo is pushed to a younger and younger age to find a "new commodity" distinctly different from the one before. The new image of desire in society created for some a fictional ideal of the women clearly disconnected with reality. The unexpected fanbase for magical girl anime during the 70's by an older demographic can be interpreted as consumers desiring that ideal. Scholars have asserted that the magical girl anime genre in the 70's can be interpreted as the roots of the lolicon anime.²⁴ The beginning of the so-called "Kawaii Craze" in Japanese culture can be seen in the number of magical girl anime produced during this time.²⁵

1970 – Maho No Mako-chan ("Magical Mako-chan")

1972 – Mahotsukai Chappy ("Witch Chappy")

1974 – Majoko Megu-chan ("Witch Meg-chan")

²⁰ Galbraith, Patrick. 2011. Lolicon: The Reality of 'Virtual Child Pornography' in Japan. *Image and Narrative : Online Magazine of the Visual Narrative*. 12: 83-119.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ McCarthy, Helen and Jonathan Clements (1999). *The Erotic Anime Movie Guide*. Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press. See pp. 43, on lolikon anime.

²⁵ <http://www.angelfire.com/moon/sailormoon19/MagicalGirlGenre.html>

1978 – Majoko Tickle (“Witch Tickle”)

1979 – Hana No Ko LunLun (“Flower Girl LunLun”)

The expression of a stabilized economic machine as well as the quelling of many social issues allowed for the creation of a distinctly disconnected gender. This disconnected gender was idealized and used by companies to further sales by exploiting age. The “Kawaii Craze” beginning and the unexpected audience for the magical girl anime represent the desire for a new fictional ideal.

Lolicon: Manga Origins, Pornographic Restrictions and Public Attention

An early propagator of the lolicon manga in Japan is Hideo Azuma during the early 80’s. His manga “Cybele” was illustrated specifically to cater to lolicon desires.²⁶²⁷ Azuma’s works become so popular because they touched on turning younger girls into sexual objects. Much of pornography during this time focused on older women as sexual objects. Scholars also assert that the popularity of lolicon can be interpreted in terms of age. In which, age was used to create a softer feminine character.²⁸

The censorship laws during this time were based on Victorian style attitudes toward sex. Issues such as genitalia or the bedroom were considered sacred but concepts such as incest or age were allowed to slip by. Scholars assert that censorship laws during this time allowed for “erotic manga with lolicon flavor” to flourish.²⁹³⁰ The issue of taboo subjects may have created a circle of desire. Men come into contact with Anime or Manga that features prominent underage characters, sexual desire disconnected with reality manifests, sexual satisfaction, and repeat. The very nature of the taboo subject makes it, usually, impossible to satisfy in reality. Public attention was brought to lolicon when Tsutomu Miyazaki kidnapped and murdered four girls between the ages of 4 and 7 in 1988 and 1989, committing acts of necrophilia with their corpses. The moral panic in the aftermath of this case led to the arrests of multiple doujinshi as well as the creation of the non-profit organization CASPAR whose goal was campaigning for lolicon regulation.^{31 32} A bill proposed in 2010 sought to regulate the distribution of lolicon

²⁶ Galbraith, Patrick W. (2009). *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's guide to the subculture of Cool Japan*. Foreword by Schodt, Frederik L. and Photography by Katsuhide, Asuki (First ed.). Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International. pp. 128–129. ISBN 978-4-7700-3101-3.

²⁷ **(Japanese)** Maruta Hara and Kazuo Shimizu, "The Lolicon Dōjinshi Reviews" (ロリコン同人誌レビュー — *Rorikon Dōjinshi Rebyū*)[1] in *Apple Pie*, March, 1982, p.116

²⁸ Schodt, Frederik L. (1996). "Modern Manga at the End of the Millennium". *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*. Berkeley, California: Stone Bridge Press. p. 336. ISBN 1-880656-23-X.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 54-56.

³⁰ Zank, Dinah (2010). Kawaii vs. rorikon: The reinvention of the term Lolita in modern Japanese manga. In *Comics as a Nexus of Cultures* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland). pp.215-216

³¹ "Lolicon Backlash in Japan". Anime News Network. January 13, 2005. Retrieved June 7, 2007.

materials by defining the exploitation of “non-existent youth” under the age of 18.³³ The bill was shot down but came up later in December of the same year taking out references to “non-existent youth.”³⁴ The bill passed and would regulate “manga, anime and other images’...that ‘unjustifiably glorify or emphasize’ certain sexual or pseudo sexual acts...depictions of ‘sexual or pseudo sexual acts that would be illegal in real life.’”³⁵ The regulation is specifically targeting books and DVD’s and not online materials. On May 27, 2013, a revised child pornography law was introduced by the Liberal Democratic Party, the New Komei Party and the Japan Restoration Party that would make possession of sexual images of individuals under 18 illegal with a fine of 1 million yen and less than a year in jail.³⁶ This bill did not pass until June of 2014 only after removing the references to regulation of lolicon anime/manga.³⁷

Conclusion:

The desire for underage girls can be looked at from a perspective of chronophilia specifically targeting certain age ranges. “*Lolita*” is the root of the modern understanding of the meaning of “loli.” The effects of the strong emergence of the consumerism culture in Japan during the 70’s can be attributed to the exploitation of age to sell products. The result of this exploitation is the creation of a fictional ideal. This fictional ideal was able to be exploited in pornographic material because of Victorian style censorship laws. The negative attention given to it during the late 80’s lead to a moral panic where many doujinshi artists were arrested as well as a concentrated movement to regulate the materials. The recent attention to the subject contrasts between government desires for regulation and artists desire for financial gain through their perceived “freedom of speech.”

Want more analysis and an interpretation about anime related topics? Take a look at my Youtube Channel “[Anime Historian](#).” And as always, thank you for reading my article.

Other Reference Stuff:

³² Galbraith, Patrick W. (2009). *The Otaku Encyclopedia: An Insider's guide to the subculture of Cool Japan*. Foreword by Schodt, Frederik L. and Photography by Katsuhide, Asuki (First ed.). Tokyo, Japan: Kodansha International. pp. 128–129. ISBN 978-4-7700-3101-3.

³³ "Tokyo's 'Nonexistent Youth' Bill Rejected by Assembly". Anime News Network. 2010-11-24. Retrieved 2010-11-28.

³⁴ "Tokyo's Revised Youth Ordinance Amendment Bill Posted". Anime News Network. 2010-11-22. Retrieved 2010-12-16.

³⁵ "Tokyo to Resubmit Bill on Sexual Depictions of Youths". Anime News Network. 2010-11-15. Retrieved 2010-12-16.

³⁶ "Japan's Ruling Party to Reintroduce Child Pornography Law Revision". www.animenewsnetwork.com. Retrieved 2013-06-17.

³⁷ Tom Porter (2014-06-07). "Japan to Ban Child Pornography". www.ibtimes.co.uk. Retrieved 2014-06-09.

<http://www.imageandnarrative.be/index.php/imagenarrative/article/view/127/98>

Kumiko Saito (2014). Magic, Shōjo, and Metamorphosis: Magical Girl Anime and the Challenges of Changing Gender Identities in Japanese Society . *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 73, pp 143-164. doi:10.1017/S0021911813001708.

Zanghellini, Aleardo. 2009. Underage Sex and Romance in Japanese Homoerotic Manga and Anime. *Social & Legal Studies*. 18, no. 2: 159-177.