Just Looking: Tantalization, Lolicon, and Virtual Girls

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Abstract

Using discourse analysis, I critically investigate the intertextuality of the Japanese subculture of Lolicon and Lolita representations; including the controversy around erotic anime called rorikon, and issues related to virtual child pornography. What was once culturally-bound to Japan, now influences popular culture in the United States and Europe. Inherent in the formation of Lolicon and rorikon are the discursive connections threading throughout the Lolita genre and the subculture of Loli-girls, which I argue serve to tantalize and further promote consumption of sexualized girl imagery.

Author Biography

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Shari L. Savage is an assistant professor in the Department of Arts Administration, Education and Policy at The Ohio State University in Columbus Ohio, where she also serves as Undergraduate Studies Chair. She received her Ph.D. in Art Education from The Ohio State University (OSU); her B.A.E. and M.A., were also earned at OSU. Her research interests include narrative inquiry, critical analyses of media, and mentoring. She is the author of several book chapters and has published research in leading academic journals in the field of art education, including Art Education, Visual Arts Research, Visual Culture & Gender, and Studies in Art Education. Shari L. Savage can be contacted at savage.12@osu.edu
Shari Savage's article "Just Looking: Tantalization, Lolicon, and Virtual Girls" takes a similar stance to Bardock, proclaiming that consumers of lolicon media shouldn’t be trusted around children, and that lolicon media should be feared as a negative social influence that would cultivate pedophilia. Savage’s article has issues in many areas: she hand-waves away the work of Galbraith and other scholars by finding their explanations “hard to reconcile”, but doesn’t engage with their research or arguments. Instead, being herself a scholar deeply invested in Lolita culture, she correlates ‘lolico...