

Understanding the Chinese Boys' Love Fandom: Information Sheet

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Hello! I'm a Chinese postgraduate at the University of Leeds conducting research into Chinese fans of Boys' Love/YAOI/shonen-ai. This information sheet explains why the research is being carried out and what it involves.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research is to further understanding of the Chinese fandom of Boys' Love. Boys' Love manga, anime, novels, and games are increasingly popular across the world but there is little or no research on Chinese fans.

Why have I been invited to take part?

If you are at least 16 years old, are a Chinese national, and consider yourself to be a keen fan of Boys' Love, I would like to invite you to take part in this research.

Do I have to take part?

No – it is entirely up to you whether or not you take part. If you are interested in taking part in the study, I will go through this information sheet with you to make sure that you fully understand what is involved, including the conditions of consent. You can ask me any questions you want about the study before you decide. If you would like to take part, you can decide if you would like to sign a consent form or just record your consent at the beginning without having to give a signature (e.g., verbally at the beginning of an audio-recorded interview). Giving consent does not mean that you have to do anything that you do not want to do. You can end the interview at any time, do not have to answer anything that I ask, and can contact me to take your interview out of the research at any time up to the point at which it has been submitted for examination or publication, without having to give a reason. It may be difficult for me to remove your contribution from a report that has been submitted for examination or accepted for publication so, if you do change your mind about contributing to this research, please try to let me know sooner rather than later – thanks!

What does the study involve?

The study will involve taking part in a recorded discussion – a research interview - with me about your Boys' Love interest and activities. I anticipate conducting the interview in Chinese, but just let me know if you prefer it to be conducted in English. I have a list of questions but I am happy for you to tell me about your experiences and opinions in your own way. The interview may be an audio-recorded face-to-face interview, but some interviews may be done over the telephone or over the internet (e.g., by e-mail). The interview may be very short or may last an hour or more depending on how much time you have and where it is conducted. Usually our contact will be just the one interview, but if you would like to contribute further I am happy to discuss this with you. I anticipate asking about how you got

interested in Boys' Love and how you pursue this interest, to tell me about your favourite BL mangakas and favourite BL publications, and your thoughts about the content of BL (including its sexual content), and your opinion about how BL is received in China.

Where will the research be done?

If our discussion is conducted on-line or by telephone there is a lot of flexibility when this can be done and I will come to an agreement about this together. If I am approaching you at an event, I can find a quiet place to sit and do the interview. If you would like a face-to-face interview, and this is a possibility for me in terms of my location in the UK or in China, I can discuss a possible venue. For privacy and for a clear audio-recording, it is helpful if I do the interview somewhere that is reasonably quiet but, given that I probably won't know each other very well, it is probably also appropriate that the location is a public one. I will agree a time and location together. If you are in or near Leeds, UK I could do the interview in a private room at the University of Leeds.

What about confidentiality?

Audio-recording of the interviews will be kept on a private and secure university computer, locked with a username and password. Audio-recordings will be typed up into a transcript. This may be done by a person other than me. If this is the case, the transcriber will keep the content of the interview confidential and will not hold onto any of the material after completing the transcription. Effort will be made so that you will not be identifiable in the transcripts or other material, such as e-mails, used for analysis. For example, potentially identifying details will be omitted and pseudonyms (false names) will be used. I will ask your consent to be able to use quotes from our recorded discussions in reports of the research but you should not be identifiable from these quotes. If you chose to sign a consent form, I will give these to my supervisor for safe and confidential storage. If you give me consent to share your data for analysis with other researchers, they will only have access to the anonymised version of our discussion and, if required, know only very general demographic information about you (e.g., approximate age).

There are some limits to confidentiality in all research activity. I may be obliged to alert relevant authorities if a participant reveals involvement in any serious criminal activity, intention to harm themselves or others, or if I have good reason to suspect that the participant is at serious risk of harm from others. If this is the case, I may tell you that I intend to seek advice and will, at the earliest opportunity contact my supervisor. However, I can reassure you that my research does not actively seek such information and, if I think you may be about to disclose something along these lines during the interview, I will remind you of my obligations.

Are there any risks in taking part?

I do not expect there to be any significant risks in taking part. However, some topics related to this research may be sensitive. For example, some Boys' Love has explicit sexual content and some Boys' Love on the internet may contravene copyright and other laws depending on the jurisdiction in which they are accessed. I would like to ask your opinion on these kinds of topics but you can decline this line of questioning without having to give a reason and I will, of course, respect your wishes.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

Although it is not the purpose of the research, taking part may be interesting and it might be good to know that you are promoting the understanding of a phenomenon that has the

potential to be misrepresented or misunderstood in mainstream culture. You will be able to find a copy of the information sheet, consent form, and (in due course) a summary of the research findings on-line at <https://leeds.academia.edu/AnnaMadill/BL-Chinese-Fandom-Research>.

Ethics

The ethical guidelines for this research have been set out by the British Psychological Society code of ethics. These guidelines include ethical principles such as making sure you know what will happen and are happy to take part, explaining that you can stop the interview at any time, and protecting your identity. If you have any complaints about my contacting you, or anything that happens in the interview, please contact my supervisor Professor Anna Madill who will be happy to discuss what action to take.

Thank you for considering taking part in this study. Yao