

Transgender Bodies in Eiichiro Oda's *One Piece* and Its Fandom

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15:30–17:00
Room 8018
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Abstract: *One Piece* is not best known for its range of transgender characters, but over its nearly 30-year run, they have charted in popularity polls, become established parts of merchandising lines, and have been subject to intense fandom debate. This talk first details the changing faces of these trans depictions and the aesthetic and historic influences behind their design, making comparisons between the radical newkama community and their refusal to conform to policed, gendered boundaries, and the contemporary transfeminine Kikunojo, whose acceptance as a woman relies on conformity to cisheterosexual standards. The second part of the talk considers how these characters, especially the newly introduced Yamato, have been debated within online fandoms of the series, where fans' anxieties around real-world sexual, gender politics can be read through their fan practice. In analyses of fan wikis, fanart, forum posts and online comment sections, there is a sense of unease regarding the ambiguity of gender for characters outside of the established newkama that lead to increasingly bordered concepts of gender. In the final part, the talk turns to official merchandise of the series and in doing so argues that despite multiple radical conceptualizations of gender within the canon of *One Piece*, what is ultimately at play in franchise representations is the extratextual profitability of eroticized female characters in an unstable financial market.



Two GLITTER & GLAMOURS figurines of *One Piece* characters Okiku and Boa Hancock, produced by BANPRESTO/BANDAI, on display in second-hand reseller Lashinbang.

To Attend Online (Zoom):

Access the Zoom Meeting via the following Meeting ID and Passcode. **Preregistration is NOT required to attend via Zoom.**

Meeting ID: 990 2151 8715 Passcode: KUMMC

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