

CULTURAL ALCHEMIST:
THE CULTURAL DIFFUSION OF ANIME AND MANGA

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Abstract
of
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This study sought to explore how the Cultural Adoption/Diffusion model applied to the import of Japanese popular culture products, specifically anime and manga. This was done through a content analysis of four periodicals covering a period between 1997 and 2011. This data was supplemented with data from the General Social Survey of 2004 as well as sales numbers from International Correspondence version 2. This analysis found that the Cultural Adoption/Diffusion model serves to explain how anime and manga came into the United States and how these products have spread to become part of the fabric of American popular culture.

_____, Committee Chair
Kevin Wehr

Date

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Introduction

Channel surfing through today's selection of television shows brings forth a dizzying array of possible viewing choices. Anything from courtroom dramas to sitcoms to children's animated shows are there for the watching. Yet, amongst shows like *American Idol*, *Law & Order*, *Sponge Bob Squarepants*, and *Ben 10*, there are a few programs which, just a few years ago, looked vastly different from anything else. These programs were known as "Japanimation" (now "anime" for short), animated programs from Japan that had an art style very different from anything found on American television. Originally arriving as "localized" (scrubbed of their Japanese origins) programs such as *AstroBoy* or *Speed Racer* in the 1960s, anime has experienced resurgence in America as it flaunted its Japanese origins. These programs eventually proliferated to the point that American shows began to mimic the same art and story style, and the proliferation allowed a related product to piggy-back its way into the American retail market: manga (originally known to Americans as "Japanese comics"). Suddenly, entire sections of bookstores were devoted to manga, a format both foreign and familiar to American audiences. The story moved through comic-style panels, but they were packaged in a format similar to a paperback novel. The sections, originally labeled "Manga", were absorbed by neighboring sections labeled "Graphic Novels" as authors from other countries adopted the style and format of manga. Now, works printed in the style of the Japanese manga can be found alongside such works as Alan Moore's *V for Vendetta* or compilations of *Superman* comics.

The proliferation of foreign products into new countries is by no means a strange notion; similar things have been happening for as long as there has been trade between two separate locations. For decades, this proliferation has become the subject of study: people were wondering how and why some things would be adopted in a new country and how and why some others

would arrive only to be forgotten within a short amount of time. These studies could easily be associated with marketing or business: two areas which would love to figure out the next big thing so that they could cash in on it. Yet, it is not “the market” as an isolated economic entity that drives the adoption of a product into new countries; it is the social environment through which such products travel that determines their overall staying power in the new location (Wejnert 2002: 292).

Tracking the possible path of the proliferation mentioned above is the domain of the cultural adoption/diffusion model. Some products may or may not be adopted into the destination culture, depending on various factors such as timing or accessibility, with the outcome of adoption determining the eventual spread of those products in the new culture (Hamblin and Miller 1976: 799; Wejnert 2002: 298). Many studies have been conducted regarding this model. However, many of the earlier studies focused on the adoption and diffusion of new technologies (Hamblin and Miller 1976: 800; Volken 2002). These analyses focused on a logistic curve that could be used to study and predict the rate at which a new technology or innovation would spread in new areas after the initial adoption had occurred (Hamblin and Miller 1976: 800).

Cultural adoption/diffusion is not a new concept by any means. Many analyses have been done to attempt to explain the spread of aspects of foreign cultures in an existing culture. Analyses have focused on the access of an existing culture to information about incoming cultures. These same analyses have also focused on the portrayal of the incoming cultures as a factor in its adoption/diffusion. To that end, my research will explore if a sense of “exotic other”, as framed by the Cultural Adoption/Diffusion Model, affects the spread of a foreign popular culture product (such as Japanese anime and manga) in the United States?

Popular culture encompasses the products (physical and visual) that are mass produced and express, either intentionally or unintentionally, the language, beliefs, values, norms, behavioral expectations, etc. of the origin country. As such, pop culture is probably one of the most commonly encountered forms of culture, resulting in the adoption/diffusion of at least some of the products encountered. Adoption and diffusion are two terms that have been placed somewhat interchangeably within the name of the “cultural adoption/diffusion model”. Yet, these two terms are slightly different. When people begin to use something new, something different, it is known as adoption (*Merriam-Webster.com* 2013). Diffusion, on the other hand, is the spread of culture between groups through contact of some kind (*Merriam-Webster.com* 2013). So, when looking at the adoption/diffusion of anime, I am studying how it has been picked up and spread into the United States. In terms of culture, this means that I am studying how culture has been picked up by a new group of people and how that culture spread to that area in the first place.

Sometimes, when looking at the culture of another country, aspects of it may seem different, or, to use another term, “exotic”. Yet, those impressions are based upon the culture in which we live, as illustrated by Edward Said in his work *Orientalism* (1978). Everything that is different can be seen as “exotic”. In the case of Japanese culture, “exotic” cultural aspects were sought out in two waves – the first in the 1700s and 1800s and the second in the mid-1900s (Kelts 2006: 5). In both waves, artists sought out aesthetic forms that were distinctly different from Western styles – woodblock prints, bushido practices, Zen, *ikebana* (the Japanese art of flower arranging), and even the Japanese tea ceremony (Ibid: 5). In an even broader sense, we have defined the world into “us” and “them”, or, to put it another way, “us” and “other”. My use of the term “exotic other” extends from this defining of boundaries. I am looking at those things from

outside my culture that are different – as defined by the norms that my own culture has established.

One may ask, why does any of this even matter? Volken argues that adoption and diffusion of culture helps to facilitate trust between two groups, enabling any further exchanges and paving the way for future innovations (2002). To put it shortly, how one culture adopts another can have influence over how those two cultures interact. On a more micro level, this means that interactions between people may be altered by whether or not one or both people have been touched by the same outside culture. Thus, the study of the adoption/diffusion of culture helps to demonstrate the influence of base structures (such as the economy) and superstructures (such as culture) on the interactions of people.¹

Studying the interactions of people and countries is well and good, and gives my work purpose. Even so, the subject would surely be a bit dry if I was not applying it to a subject that I enjoy. Thus, I have taken the approach of the fan-as-intellectual in regards to my subject matter. As a fan of the products I am studying (an “otaku”², or devoted fan), I am privy to many practices involved within the anime/manga community that many outsiders may not be – such as the availability of fan-subtitled anime and fan-translated manga, known as “fansubs” and “scanlations” respectively, and the accompanying “code of honor” not to subtitle/translate titles that have been licensed for the United States. That being said, my approach also reveals some of my bias. I am a fan through and through, and have an extensive personal collection of both anime and manga to show for it. For the purposes of this paper, I have been able to live the dream – I can research what I am truly passionate about with a depth that isn’t usually seen in casual fan circles.

¹ While Marx provides useful terminology for this analysis, his work will not be the predominant frame for my research. Rather, he will serve to supplement Hamblin and Miller, Volken, and Wejnert.

² An analysis of the term “otaku” is an undertaking in and of itself. To keep my focus on course, the simple definition of “devoted fan” will serve for this analysis.

Anime and manga have arguably become fixtures of life in the United States. These products have been adopted into American culture, so much so that they have spread (diffused) far and wide within that culture. This spread can be seen through both mass media coverage as well as hard sales numbers. Even so, how can this adoption/diffusion be explained in the context of the “exotic other”?

Literature Review

Defining moments: Just what do those words mean?

Before any exploration can begin, I must first provide you, the reader, with the working definitions of the main basis of this paper: anime and manga. Anime³, in this case, is any Japanese animated work that is imported to America. This includes pirated copies with or without subtitles, direct imports of works in raw Japanese, subtitled works direct from Japan, and works that have been dubbed by an American studio. Manga, for the purpose of this paper, is defined as a printed and bound work drawn in a style similar to anime utilizing comic-type panels. This is not to be confused with the general term “graphic novels”, which encompass United States comic characters as well as works from other countries such as England, Russia and Korea as well as Japanese manga.

The Cultural Adoption what?

Recent efforts to study the cultural adoption/diffusion model have focused instead on the study of culture as it crosses borders, whether those borders are from one neighborhood to the next or from one country to another (Wejnert 2002: 292). These analyses focus more on the impressions of the people in the destination country rather than on the cut and dried aspects of productivity and throughput (Volken 2002). Yet others look to social change and identity formation within a country as the cause for an active drawing in of external cultural inputs (Kaufman 2004: 336).

All of this combines to show us that there are certain factors in the adopting country that help to determine the rate at which those countries adopt new aspects of cultures or technologies (Hamblin and Miller 1976: 801; Kaufman 2004: 337; Wejnert 2002: 310). These factors include,

³ The term “anime” is not only used in the United States of America. However, for the purpose of my research, the focus will remain on the United States.

but are not limited to, the level of trust in the adopting country regarding the origin country, the effectiveness of communication in the adopting country, and the geographic relationship between the adopting and origin countries (Hamblin and Miller 1976: 805; Volken 2002; Wejnert 2002: 310). Each of these factors influences the speed at which aspects of culture or new technologies are adopted and spread.

Analyses regarding the spread of culture and technology today are rooted partially in the work of Karl Marx, specifically in regards to his analysis of mode of production. Here, Marx's concept of the commodity comes heavily into play. This is a product that is produced to satisfy some human want or need and is assigned a value based upon what someone would be willing to exchange to obtain it (Marx 1972: 303). While a products' utility creates its use-value, tying that product to another commodity (such as money) creates its exchange value (Ibid: 305). This exchange value changes based on the labor that it took to produce, but also on the social quality attached to a given sort of labor (Ibid: 321). As such, producers attempt to ensure that their products maintain their value when exchanged for another commodity, thus ensuring profits (Ibid: 323). As a result, products are always subject to attempts to improve their production and throughput.

The technological innovations that were the subjects of analyses by Hamblin and Miller (1976: 799) were often adopted to increase the production and throughput of a given product. Even so, production and throughput do not necessarily apply to aspects of culture. According to Adorno (1991: 99), this is true – to a point. His argument is that culture can be packaged (in one way or another), mass-produced, and then marketed to the largest consumer base possible. These culture products must be made in such a way that their basic exchange value provides the maximum amount of profit. However, the exchange value of the commodity, especially in the

world of Adorno, is also determined by the ideology that comes with the commodity (Ibid: 100). This ideology, which helps to orient consumers to the way of life that requires these commodities, creates Marx's fetishism and allows value to be added to a product that has nothing to do with the labor or materials that went into the commodity (Adorno 1991: 100; Marx 1972: 305). Popular culture can serve as the vehicle for this ideology. As Dorfman and Mattelart demonstrate using the Disney character Donald duck, popular culture (in this case, comic strips) help to orient consumers in a given market to the Disney-portrayed way of life (1975: 11). Donald Duck is constantly looking for work, not to pay bills such as rent or electricity, but solely to consume (Ibid: 71). In most scenes in which he appears, he is seeking employment to pay for a vacation, a present or "the final installment on his television set" (Ibid: 71). In this sense, Disney is orienting a market, not to a specific product, but to the practice of consumption itself. The word of Duckburg has no sense of work as a means of production – the sole purpose of work is to give workers money to use to consume (Ibid: 71). In short, Disney is turning workers into consumers.

Consumers become a part of an equation made to calculate the possible profit of a product (Adorno 1991: 100). This equation also contains variables associated with the ideologies that are attached to the product. Such products do not use techniques in their making with the intent of looking inward toward a unified, balanced whole; these products are manufactured with the intent to look beyond the product itself for its purpose (Ibid: 99). These cultural "products" are just that – products meant to be consumed on a large scale while enabling their distributors to make large amounts of profit.

Even mass media products – such as television shows, pulp novels, comics, etc. – are packaged and meant to be consumed as a product, even if there is not an obvious exchange value for the product. These are the products that are often pointed to when referring to popular culture.

But they are commodities just like any other product. They are created by manufacturers to reach the widest possible audience by relating in some way to what the producers think is the mass reality (Adorno 1991: 98). This supposed image of mass reality is based on assumptions by the manufacturers regarding the views and environment of those who comprise their audiences (Ibid: 99). Because of this, even though some might say otherwise, the line between what is obviously “art” and what lies firmly in the realm of mass culture is more firmly drawn today than it was during the time of early pulp novels (Ibid: 2). As Adorno is fond of asserting, something that is not “art for art’s sake” is simply a product of mass culture (Ibid: 98).

Even Adorno knew that both products that should be considered art and what is simply commercialized mass culture can be influenced by the capitalist drive for profit (1991: 2). Even anime, the animation style from Japan that has been referred to simply as “Japanese cartoons”, is now the subject of analyses attempting to determine whether or not it should be given the status of an art form (Napier 2005: 3). This argument prompted Napier to pen a text, now used as a textbook in Asian film classes, which argues the point of including anime in a study of art worthy of similar treatment to other famous film analyses such as *Film Noir* (2005: 5-6). At the same time, anime, manga, and their accompanying cultural practices are the largest export product of Japan, having tripled its share of the gross domestic product since 1996 and surpassing both the automobile and steel industries (Allison 2006: 13). This can be seen in the continued presence of the popular card and video game series *Pokemon* (and its accompanying toys) in stores across the United States, even though the animated program involving the same premise no longer airs on non-cable channels in the United States (Gardiner 2003; CartoonNetwork.com 2013). Another example may be the massive product empire associated with the “Hello Kitty” brand.

Hello Kitty is a unique case in that it is both a medium of cultural adoption/diffusion and as a force of soft power, or “the ability of a country to influence events through persuasion and attraction” (Nye 2004: x). The character of Kitty White, otherwise known as Hello Kitty, has been used as a viable alternative to sumo (where transporting a 600lb. wrestler proved problematic) in an effort to project Japanese culture around the world (McGray 2002: 4-5). The character has gone from a children’s animated show to being a goodwill tourist ambassador for Japan (Associated Press 2008). As impressive as Hello Kitty’s use as an instrument of soft power may be, there is a key difference between soft power and cultural adoption/diffusion – soft power is the origin country *projecting* its influence outward, whereas cultural adoption/diffusion is a destination country *bringing other culture aspects in*. Even here, Hello Kitty serves as a model. Hello Kitty products used to be exclusive to Sanrio stores – the company that created the character (Associated Press 2008). Now, Hello Kitty merchandise can be found just about anywhere, from the bargain aisles of the global giant Wal-Mart to designers such as Tiffany.

When it came to other anime and manga products, however, the demand for more from the United States took Japanese companies by surprise (Kelts 2006: 121). Some companies were astonished at the popularity of these products, while others downplayed the significance of the demand, placing it in the category of a passing fad (Ibid: 121). All the while, studios in the United States were grabbing up licenses for shows, often taking advantage of a Japanese corporate belief that anime was “too Japanese to appeal to foreign taste” (Ibid: 73). The spike in demand began with shifts in United States foreign policy towards Asia during the Cold War. In order to promote a Western shift in Asian countries emerging from colonial rule, President Eisenhower instituted policies that promoted feelings of integration with Asia (Klein 2003: 58). As part of this “integration” cultural products depicting Japan and other Asian countries as exotic

and fascinating, such as the works of James Michener, were promoted at home (Ibid: 65). These policies were at their height during the 1950s, just before the United States was first introduced to anime (Ibid: 5).

Now, even though much of the current United States anime market has been consolidated into the hands of a few big companies – much like the rest of the mass media – there are still some who cling to the “anime is art” mantra, who claim that dubbing over anime’s original Japanese ruins the program and who seek to learn Japanese just to watch the unadulterated “art” that is anime (Manion 2005: 16). This sense of “high culture” serves more to delineate the differences between anime consumers (average fans versus the hardcore “otaku”) rather than to place anime into an art category (Kelts 2007: 191-192). Even without a sense of “high culture” or “low culture” as Adorno argues it, anime is very much a cultural export, as Allison asserts. However, neither of these explanations gets close to the heart of why anime was able to cross the Pacific Ocean and be adopted originally as they deal with practices that came as the anime boom was up and going. The original source of Japanese popular culture in the United States was through products that had been scrubbed of anything indicating their Japanese origins in the 1960s (Kasa 2005: 73).

Edward Said’s (1978) theory of Orientalism helps to explain why an existing culture might desire to adopt aspects and ideologies of an external culture. When other cultures are portrayed as exotic – vastly different from the existing culture – they can become a desired novelty (Said 1978: 202). These perceived differences can influence the level of desirability of the new culture (Prasso 2005: 391; Said 1978: 202). While there may be many perceived differences, this perception is often based on a sense of familiarity.

Familiarity may indeed be a factor in the migration of a cultural product from one area to another, at least initially. British cultural norms were transplanted onto the shores of what would become the United States through British citizens settling in this new land (Rodgers 1998: 2). The colonists maintained their connections to Britain, enabling cultural aspects to cross the Atlantic Ocean and take root (Ibid: 46). This continued connection allowed for both the reinforcement of the existing culture as well as the adoption of new aspects of culture that had evolved back in Britain (Ibid: 269). The same was true for anime: its reemergence in the 1980s in the United States was the result of a “familiar” product called *Star Blazers* in 1974, an edited and dubbed program involving a space cruiser that hoped to cash in on the original *Star Trek* craze (Ledoux and Ranney 1997: 60-61). The program did indeed become part of the craze, popping up enough in discussions of *Star Trek* that fans began searching for the origins of the show – origins which, to their surprise, led back to Japan (Patten 2004: 27). This search also led to the rediscovery of some programs from the 1960s (such as *AstroBoy* and *Speed Racer*) that had originally been broadcasted as “American” and completely scrubbed of anything that pointed to Japanese origins (Kasa 2005: 73). At the same time, thanks to Japanese-language television channels broadcast for the large population of Japanese immigrants major cities, these enthusiasts rediscovered their “familiar” programs (Ibid: 66). Members of west coast *Star Trek* fan clubs in the 1970s had been exposed to anime before on the Japanese-language channels coming out of Hawaii (Ibid: 68) When their fellow fans began expressing interest in *Star Blazers*, they pointed them to the anime airing on these channels (Ibid: 68). By the late 1970s, the video cassette recorder had been introduced, and fans with access to the specialty channels began recording the shows to play at club parties (Ibid: 69, Patten 2004: 99) These recorded copies gained popularity, and fan clubs were founded around them (Patten 2004: 99) To help fill the demand of fan clubs

seeking to watch more anime, those with access to the specialty channels would record the program as it aired and share the video cassettes with the clubs, who would then distribute the copies among themselves (Ibid: 65). The various clubs eventually came together in the early 1990s and created the first convention devoted to anime –Project A-Kon in Dallas, Texas (Ibid: 122). These groups were not seeking something new, only something that had become “familiar” to them from their earlier experiences with the style of animation. They were reinforcing the current norm of what anime was, defining the entire style and product through the example of one original program. It was this familiarity with what these fans believed to be anime that allowed those new aspects of culture to arrive in the United States, and to bring their related culture industry products with them (Ibid: 66).

Familiarity may be the most important stepping stone in the transmission of culture across borders. As Volken states in his analysis of the adoption of culture (using the example of technologies), “Once a radical innovation ... emerges, there tends to be a clustering or swarming of further innovations” (2002: Section 2.1). Volken asserts that this clustering and swarming is due to the formation of trust around the original innovation (Ibid: Section 2.1). People learn to trust the product as well as the product’s origin, thus clearing the way for further products from that same location (Ibid: Section 2.1). This is true whether the product was introduced to the destination country or was sought out by the destination country.

The bridge of familiarity can be built on both real familiarity and imagined familiarity. In the case of the colonies that would become the United States, the original colonists had a sense of real familiarity regarding Britain – they had originally come from that country. In the case of the Near East – the countries dominated by Islam known today as the Middle East – this was more a sense of imagined familiarity. The people did not know the places that made up the area

known as the “Orient”, but they thought they knew what they weren’t (Said 1978: 2). This sense of knowing formed a sense of familiarity in that people thought they knew what they were dealing with when it involved the countries of the Orient. Even so, this “otherness” that cloaked the countries of the Orient – the sense that they were vastly different from the “Occident” of continental Europe – was also part of the allure of the area (Ibid: 2). This familiarity was expanded again as the United States adopted a policy of attempting to foster commonalities between Asian countries and the U.S., thereby encouraging integration of Asian ideas in order to create closer, more friendly relations (Klein 2003: 19).

People were fascinated by the stories told to justify the intervention of imperialist nations: stories of mistreatment of women, of strange marital practices, of things so vastly different from their everyday lives (Said 1978: 95). The fascination was so intense, that an entire academic discipline developed in order to study the area (Ibid: 2). As such, the myth of the “Orient” has persisted and has continued to hold “otherness” to it like a magnet, so much so that the area known as the Orient has now been extended to include not just the Middle East but the Far East (China, Japan, Korea, etc.) as well (Ibid: 1; Prasso 2006: xi).

It is this “otherness” magnet that allows other culture aspects to swarm to the originally adopted cultural product. Otherness and Trust are the two sides of the adoption/diffusion coin. It is not until trust is established that the otherness can be adopted into the new culture. And it is the trust of the original otherness that allows further otherness to swarm to the original idea that set down roots in the new location. It is the image of the Chinese concubine or the Japanese Geisha of old, an image so trusted that it is even replicated today, that has allowed for the fantasy of the Japanese school girl to become a high selling point in cultural products coming out of Japan (Prasso 2006: 200; Ashcraft and Ueda 2012: 7). It was the “localized” original anime in

the United States – programs that had been cleansed of anything that might hint at an origin other than the United States – that created the trust that led to the bootleg videotapes of the 1980s (Kasa 2005: 68). The otherness of the animation style, something vastly different from the current cartoon fare of *Looney Tunes*, was adopted because of the imagined familiarity with the country of origin, the United States. This trust steadily built through the release of *Akira* in 1990 until, in the mid-1990s, the swarm of accompanying ideas truly began with the introduction of a series of anime programs aimed specifically at a younger crowd (Ibid: 85, 95). These programs had the same otherness in regards to their animation style, and much of the same familiarity of other localized programs that had come before, with one exception: while the dialogue had been localized for United States audiences, these series made no assertions that they were from anywhere but Japan (Ibid: 77). Later on, manga also discarded any trappings hinting at a non-Japanese origin. In addition to adding leaving the original onomatopoeia in Japanese (sometimes with translations in the margins), publishers “returned to the source” by laying out the pages to read in the original right-to-left format of Japanese publications, rather than the left-to-right standard of English-language books. This new-found openness about the identity of the cultural products helped to lend a heightened level of desirability in the acquisition of these products.

However, regardless of the level of desirability, the adopting people must have access to information about the incoming culture – even if that information is skewed by the lens of ethnocentrism (Prasso 2005: 394; Said 1978: 2). This information and its dissemination is what spreads the desire for, and the adoption of, external cultures (Prasso 2005: 392; Said 1978: 6). Thanks to the quickening spread of globalization, consumers were able to gain access to information regarding these popular culture products.

It is those globally-intertwined economies of today, probably more than any other factor, that contribute to the ability of cultures to cross borders (Wejnert 2002: 317). In the 1980s, when anime distribution consisted of bootleg videotapes, information finding was a process involving libraries, phone calls, letters, hearsay, etc. Now, in the age of the Internet, information is readily available on a series of choice, all with a few simple keystrokes (Allison 2006: 18). The ability to confirm information about a culture becomes almost as simple as searching for reviews on the latest iDevice. Thus, trust-building (or trust-breaking) for a culture product can move at ever faster speeds, as can the swarm of accompanying products.

In the case of Japanese anime and manga, products have been swarming since the introduction of *Pokemon*, *Sailor Moon*, and other such programs that arrived in the late 1990s. In addition to the obvious merchandising opportunities – such as the related *Pokemon* card and video games – numerous titles in both the anime and manga spheres have followed those first few programs (Kasa 2005: 68). Yet, despite the massive amount of material to analyze, relatively few studies have been done on just why these two culture products managed to spread as quickly as they did – from two shows in the afterschool cartoons to a multi-million dollar industry (Ibid: 73; ICv2 2011).

Where is the “why”?

Two graduate students working in the first decade of the 21st century came close to an analysis similar to mine. Naomi Kasa conducted a study on how Americans constructed their views of anime through active spectatorship (2005: 11). She constructed a compelling argument using a combination of historical literature and content analysis of anime that was popular at the time of her research (Ibid: 28). She found that various factors, including a loosening of cartoon content regulations in the late 1980s, contributed to the desire to consume anime (Ibid: 138).

However, her work focused primarily in the historical context in which the products came to the United States and only barely mentioned the idea of “otherness” as being a driving factor. Similarly, the work of Jennie Davis gave the same treatment to the world of manga while including an analysis of the effects of globalization and the Internet (2004: 1). Using the same technique of historical analysis combined with some content analysis, she makes the case that globalization helped the spread of manga (Ibid: 40). She found that graphic novels as a whole, whether they be from the United States or Japan, have benefitted from the expansion of culture through globalization (Ibid: 40). She does not explore the difference of the products as a major factor. Rather, she focuses on economic policies and access to information via the Internet as the two driving forces behind the spread of manga (Ibid: 41).

Another author explored this issue in some depth. Roland Kelts, a writer of both fiction and nonfiction, took his curiosity and Japanese-American heritage and applied it to looking at the spread of Japanese popular culture in the United States (2007: 5). He found it to be due to a give and take between Japan and America going back to at least the 1960s (Ibid: 227). While he does cover much of the background of anime and manga’s spread, he did not do so as an academic study, intending his work to be more of a guide for a layman to follow (Ibid: 5). As such, there was no formal collection of data, simply personal interviews and personal experiences crafted into a narrative on the spread of anime and manga (Ibid: 7).

Other researchers have focused on the products of anime and manga as a lens for other phenomena. Annie Manion analyzed how American views of anime could be a factor influencing their decision to undertake the study of Japanese culture at large (2005: iii). Through in-depth interviews, she gathered college students’ views of why they were studying Japanese culture – and, in some cases, the language – and found that the majority of them became interested in the

study after becoming fans of anime and manga (Ibid: 12). She also found that those students involved in Japanese language classes specifically associated the material with understanding anime and Japanese culture (Ibid: 13). At the same time, she found that many of her subjects felt that their interest is misunderstood, given the subculture status that anime has been assigned (Ibid: 43).

Other work includes that of Ian Condroy (2010: 193), who uses the “fansubbing” – fans adding subtitles to anime that has not been dubbed over in English – of anime as a lens to analyze the copyright wars. He found that the practice of fansubbing actually served as a value-adding practice for anime that does not fit into the current discourse on piracy and copyright law (Ibid: 206). The fansubbers position themselves as a bridge between the United States and Japan, creating desire for new products while adhering to a code of ethics (a policy of ceasing distribution of fansubs if the product becomes licensed by a U.S. company) that prevents them from running afoul of the U.S. copyright system (Ibid: 203-205). Wendy Suyi Wong (2006: 24) used the spread of manga to Hong Kong as a case study in globalization forces. She found that the more Japanese popular culture products were interacted with, the degrees of openness toward Japan and other culture products increased (Ibid: 29-36). In fact, she finds that anime and manga have become Japan’s main source of cultural power on a global scale (Ibid: 42). Another analysis done by Andrew C. McKeivitt (2010: 894) and published in the journal *Diplomatic History*, uses anime to illustrate the impact of the globalization of culture on the United States. He found that, until the Japanese recession beginning in 1991, there was a distinct fear of the Japanization of America – an assumption based largely on the other Japanese consumer goods that were being imported into the country (Ibid: 916). He also found that the spread of anime occurred through non-elite members of society that were traditionally isolated from the main forces of globalization

(Ibid: 916). Anne Allison (2006) used anime and manga – and the fads associated with those products – to conduct an analysis of millennial consumerism. She finds that the world of popular culture globalization may not be as dominated by U.S. culture products as Japanese culture products work their way further and further into the consumer mainstream (Ibid: 18). She cites this expansion as due to the expansive, immersive fantasy world that Japanese culture products (specifically, anime and its accompanying merchandise) produce (Ibid: 19). She does not attempt to make an apples-to-apples comparison between Japanese culture products and those of the United States, instead focusing on her personal observations of the behavior of consumers interacting with the products (Ibid: 20).

The third main form of analysis in regards to anime and manga is using the content of the products themselves to make an argument. In the case of Susan Napier's book *Anime: From Akira to Howl's Moving Castle*, she uses the content of anime to make the argument that these products should be considered an art form unto themselves, rather than lumped in with animation in general (2005: 294). Her content analysis of major anime films goes into great depth. For example, she attributes anthropological symbology to scenes in the film *Princess Mononoke*, which was originally released in 1997 (Ibid: 231-248). However, her work is focused primarily on legitimizing anime as part of academic discourse, a point she cites herself in her introduction to the book (Ibid: 6-8). As such, her findings are of an art analysis nature, with her work providing evidence that anime should be accepted as an art form and, as such, should be discussed in academic discourse just as other art forms are (Ibid: 8). Brian Ruh (2010: 33) used an in-depth content analysis – literally combing through anime films on a minute-by-minute analysis – to explore the practice of localizing foreign films in the 1980s. He found that reception of the heavily edited and redubbed works was based on the level of preexisting fan knowledge of the

product, knowledge that had to be obtained through sources other than mainstream media (Ibid: 47). This was due to a lack of non-localized (“authentic”) anime at the time (Ruh 2010: 47, Kasa 2005: 68). When anime did become readily available, Ruh found that the better the reception the product had enjoyed in the 1980s, the faster it was adopted upon rerelease with its original dialogue intact (2010: 47).

There are hundreds of studies out there involving anime, and by no means have they all been explored here. Even so, the majority of the analyses that are easily found focus on other aspects of anime and manga as culture products. There are not, as yet, any analyses that focus on just *why* anime and manga have spread as well as they have in the United States. There is not an analysis on *why* these culture products – whose followers are still considered a subculture (Allison 2006: 15) – have gone from an obscure niche product to having their own entries in Webster’s dictionary (*Merriam-Webster.com* 2012). Various methods have been used to study anime and manga, from content analysis to qualitative interviewing. However, the focus of these studies has always been on either the product itself in an argument of legitimacy or on a perceived cause and effect relationship between the consumption of these products and some later outcome. Therefore, a comprehensive analysis is needed into what factors of the culture products themselves affected their adoption/diffusion in the United States.

What might be found?

If a sense of “otherness” can truly help lead to the adoption of new culture aspects, I hypothesize that media coverage emphasizing the foreign aspects of anime and manga may correlate to adoption of the products in the United States, as indicated by rising numbers of sales⁴.

⁴ There seems to be a slight “chicken and the egg” conundrum here, I know. This will be addressed in the Discussion section.

As coverage continues and drops references to “otherness”, I hypothesize that diffusion of anime and manga may increase, as indicated by steady or slightly rising sales numbers.

Methods

Framework

As stated before, there is a distinct lack of research into what factors within the products of anime and manga affect the adoption/diffusion of these products. There is also a distinct lack of survey data in regards to American views of incoming foreign popular culture. Therefore, a different method is needed to study this issue.

I conducted a content analysis of American media coverage regarding these culture products as a method of analysis. Specifically, I used the coverage produced in periodicals for their extensive archives and ease of access. I chose two newspapers – the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times* – for their extensive readership, national coverage, and contrasting locations. These two publications include large sections devoted to entertainment and popular culture, giving rise to extensive sources of data. I also chose two magazines – *Time* and *Wired* – also for their large readership audiences and similar-sized archives of entertainment and popular culture-related coverage. This study was done using periodicals (e.g. the entire archive of the *Los Angeles Times*) as the unit of analysis.

Why Content Analysis

In searching for quantitative data to analyze, I found that there are numerous surveys in regards to the spread of popular culture from the United States to other countries. Multiple studies have been done on how foreign countries view the incoming American culture such as the Soft Power in Asia (SPA) survey of 2008, which analyzed the feelings of five East and Southeast Asian countries (China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and Indonesia) about incoming culture from the United States (Bouton et al 2008). The survey did include questions posed to citizens of

the United States. However, these questions focused on American views of foreign policy towards the five target countries, not views on culture (Bouton et al 2008).

In my attempts to find a way to quantify American views of incoming foreign popular culture, I was faced with a dearth of data. However, one question was found in the General Social Survey (GSS) of 2004 in regards to American views of popular culture. The question asked whether or not respondents believed that foreign popular culture was damaging to existing local culture (Smith et al 2011). The question did not single out any specific country nor were there any additional questions about respondents' perceptions in regards to foreign popular culture.

Given this lack of existing quantitative data, and the corresponding lack of existing studies, content analysis of media coverage can provide insight into views of the United States towards a given incoming popular culture. This analysis can also be tailored to focus on specific culture products – in this case, anime and manga. In this age of constant connectivity to sources of information, media coverage can serve to build the “trust” needed to facilitate the adoption/diffusion of a given culture product (Volken 2002). At the same time, depending on the content of the coverage, the image of the “exotic other” can be conveyed onto the product, producing an Orientalism-like effect (Said 1978: 3).

While a quantitative analysis of the spread of anime and manga could indeed be done, perceptions of “otherness” and “trust” would be difficult to validly measure using survey questions. This would be due to varying definitions of key terms. Also, there would be a risk of inadvertent prompting of the respondent toward a particular view. The GSS question mentioned above could be perceived as implying that foreign culture products are negative, possibly skewing a person's view. Also, given that as mentioned before, anime and manga fans are still considered

a subculture (Allison 2006: 15), there is a distinct difficulty in accurately sampling this group for the purposes of a survey.

Data Collection

For the purposes of collecting data from the massive archives of my four chosen publications, I searched through the full text of archived articles for the following terms:

Anime, Japanese Cartoons, or Japanimation – These three terms have been used interchangeably to refer to animated programs originating in Japan (Kasa 2005: 11). Specifically, these products have a distinctive art style involving large (often oversized) eyes, “flapping” mouths (the animation of the mouth opens and closes rather than form syllables), and detailed backgrounds (Napier 2005: 12).

Manga, Japanese Comics, or Graphic Novels – These three terms have been used interchangeably for this set of products much in the same way as the terms for anime are used (Davis 2004: 1). These products follow the panel to panel style of storytelling most often associated with comics but are bound and sold in a format closer to that of a mass-market paperback novel (Ibid: 2). In the case of the term “graphic novel”, the search will have to be paired with the filter term “Japan”. This is due to the term “graphic novel” coming to mean any panel-style story bound into a full book-style format. This filter is needed to separate the products of this analysis from American comic imprints such as Marvel or DC.

I sampled articles from 1997 through 2011. The first anime marketed as being from Japan arrived in 1997 (Kasa 2005: 77). Contextual data I have obtained is for the years 2002 through 2012, covering the beginning of the boom through the current year (Ibid: 141). Once the articles were selected, a two-stage coding structure was implemented. In the first stage, uses of

terms and phrases referring to the “otherness” of the products will be coded and counted. Such terms and phrases include: different, “not like American cartoons/comics”, “something other than American cartoons/comics”, “much deeper/richer/complex/etc.”, or any use of comparative language. These terms and phrases seek to illustrate the defining of something foreign in terms of something familiar – defining the “Orient” in terms of the “Occident” (Said 1978: 2). The aim was to uncover the level of perception regarding the differences between “native” American culture products and the incoming Japanese anime and manga.

The second stage involved a more qualitative approach, with the coding of whether or not the coverage was positive or negative, and how that may have changed over time. A positive or negative spin within a given set of coverage can have major effects on the trust-building towards a given product (Volken 2002). The coverage spin was determined using the context of the full article: articles referring to the products in regards to negative issues (e.g. as part of a growing problem) or articles referring to the products in regards to positive issues (e.g. as part of increasing creativity).

Context

In an effort to provide context for this content analysis, I used two sources of quantitative data to supplement my findings. The first of these was a published white paper from marketing think tank International Correspondence version 2 (ICv2). ICv2 tracks market trends of popular culture products in the United States. Their White Paper data, most recently compiled in 2011, contains sales numbers dating from 2002 to 2011 for these products. These sales numbers serve to contextualize just how far the adoption/diffusion of these products has spread based upon sales trends for the nation.

The second source of quantitative data I used is the General Social Survey of 2004 that I previously mentioned. This is the one question found, thus far, that asks American respondents directly of their opinions of foreign popular culture. This question, measured on an ordinal scale from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree” with a neutral option of “Neither Agree Nor Disagree”, asked whether or not respondents agreed with the statement: “Increased exposure to foreign films, music, and books is damaging our national and local cultures” (Smith et al 2011). Since this analysis is dependent upon the relationship between adoption/diffusion – and thus perceptions – and media coverage, I conducted an analysis of the relationship between a respondent’s answer to the above question, their usage of the Internet, and their education level – two factors that can influence their access to information and therefore their “trust” in the product (Volken 2002). The question appeared on the survey in 2004, a year that has been cited as close to the beginning of a “boom” for anime and manga (Kasa 2005: 141; Davis 2004: 41). The placement of this question may have resulted from the awarding of the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature to an anime film entitled *Spirited Away* at the 2003 Academy Awards (Kelts 2007: 52).

Strengths and Limitations

Content analysis provides a way to study this issue in a longitudinal fashion, allowing for an analysis of coverage changes over time. This adds to the validity of this method of analysis, as coverage can follow the changes in the population’s opinions over time. In the case of media coverage, influence can move both ways – media coverage can influence views of those consuming it, but it can also serve as a reflection of existing views of that same consumer audience.

Content analysis also allows for the unobtrusive study of this issue. The analysis is conducted using existing published materials, allowing for the almost complete elimination of errors associated with human participation such as interviewer effect or non-response errors. This also means that ready access allows the possible replication of this study.

Given that cultural adoption/diffusion is based heavily on the perceptions of the consumers doing the adopting/diffusing, content analysis may not prove as valid a measure when compared to direct qualitative interviews. However, content analysis offers the ability to analyze adoption/diffusion factors at a national level – a scope that is prohibitive for in-depth interviews. A quantitative survey could have the same scope, but may run the risk of inadvertently prompting respondents to respond in a certain manor. A quantitative study would also have the distinct possibility of sampling error. The choice of media can also challenge the reliability of this method as the selection of different media outlets (or formats) could significantly change the data. It is for this reason that I have selected media outlets with national audiences in an effort to mitigate any skew that could occur from studying outlets with a more specialized audience. There is also the possibility that results I obtain may not be as reliable as they could be, based on my indicators for measuring difference.

Results

Stage 1 – Amount of coverage; references to “otherness”

As shown in Table 1, the amount of coverage generated across the four publications varied widely, with the newspapers producing numerous articles each year as opposed to the magazines, which only produced one article per year, with some years omitted⁵. Most of the articles found in the newspapers were confined to the entertainment pages, while the magazine articles tended to not be placed in a specific section. References to “otherness” were common from 1997 to 2006, with the references lasting longer in the *New York Times* on the east coast than in the *Los Angeles Times* on the west coast, as seen in Table 2⁶. One article in the *New York Times* from 1998 states, “...most Americans will probably never broaden their concept of animation as anything more than children’s territory. In Japan, by contrast, the animation industry springs from a long association with the comic book, both for grown-ups and for youngsters” (Nichols). Similar references were made in the *Los Angeles Times* in the late 1990s (Iritani 1997; Lechner 1998; Solomon 1999).

As time passed into the 2000s, the west coast coverage began to change from references of “otherness” into references of familiarity. As early as September 2001, anime had become a descriptor used to describe other popular culture in the cover story – in this case, a Madonna concert: “...the show melds imagery from Japanese anime, flamenco dance floors and a Wild West that, if it existed, would have had more nightclubs than corrals” (Boucher). In contrast, the same year, the *New York Times* was still inserting explanations for what anime was: “...a type of cartoon animation that emerge in Japan in the 1960’s. ...anime offers a weird mix of innocence and experience” (Johnson 2001). It took until 2004 for the *New York Times* to drop the

⁵ Appendix A, Page 44

⁶ Appendix A, Page 44

explanations, though it still left the term manga in quotation marks (Hodgman 2004). It wasn't until 2006 that the east coast newspaper finally reached the point the *Los Angeles Times* had arrived at in 2001: using the terms anime and manga simply as descriptors for other concepts (Johnson 2006).

The magazines, on the other hand, had two distinct tones. *Wired* magazine used the terms anime and manga with easy familiarity from as early as 1998 in reference to the online news site "The Onion" (Schillinger). The references used were consistently without the seemingly obligatory explanations of the terms seen in the newspapers. *TIME* magazine followed the transition from "other" to familiar closer to the *New York Times*, with explanation-removed references coming in 2004 (Holton).

Stage 2 – Spin

The coverage, for the most part, was positive across the four periodicals, though the magazines tended to be more neutral rather than either positive or negative. However, in the early portions of the data (1997-2002), the *New York Times* tended to have a more negative bent to their coverage. For instance, many *Los Angeles Times* articles described anime and manga as "popular", "clever", and "unique" (Iritani 1997; Herz 1998; Solomon 2000). Coverage in the *New York Times* paints anime and manga into the same corner with "misfits" and the "fringe", "peculiar", and even "innocent yet sinister" (Kristof 1997; Gates 1999; Johnson 2001). The negative aspects of the coverage dropped off between 2003 and 2006, where many references were more informational, such as leaving quotation marks around the term (Hodgman 2004) or simply mentioning the extent of the market in Japan as opposed to the United States: "...where anime occupies a much broader cultural niche..." (Scott 2004). Both magazines treated the

products as though they were neutral terms, predominantly using definition-based terminology when making initial references to the subject (Corliss 1999; Schillinger 1998).

Context – ICv2

The sales data from ICv2's white paper shows total sales of anime and manga crawling from 1997 until the end of 2001 "White Paper Deck" 2011: 25) Starting in 2002, sales started increasing steadily from 2002 through 2007, followed by year-over-year declines from 2008 to 2010 (Ibid: 25). As of the time the data was compiled in the first half 2011, sales were decreasing by 10 percent (Ibid: 25). This sales decline from 2008 onward has been attributed largely to the closure of the Borders Books line of stores, as these retail outlets tended to have large anime and manga selections (Ibid: 27). This coincided with the reduction of other retailers' decreasing of their anime and manga footprint during the recent economic downturn (Ibid: 27).

Context – General Social Survey 2004

The data in Table 3⁷ show that the average response to the issue of whether or not foreign popular culture is damaging national or local cultures falls between "disagree" and "neither agree or disagree" (mean = 2.36). Of the 2,812 people in the sample, 1,912 of them responded between the values of 1.343 (between "strongly disagree" and "disagree") and 3.377 (between "neither agree or disagree" and "agree"). This shows that there is a positive skew⁸ to this distribution.

⁷ Appendix A, Page 45

⁸ A positive skew is when data at the upper end of the distribution produces a curve bunched up toward the left. In this case, a few values of the responses came in much higher than the rest thus producing a curve with the "hump" of the curve to the left and the higher values – the "tail" – trailing off to the right.

The distribution of data for use of the Internet had a high amount of negative skew⁹, with the vast majority of respondents (94.6%) reporting that they do use the Internet for purposes other than email. The average amount of time spent using the Internet per week was 7.79 hours.

The majority of respondents reported a high school or lower education (64.0%). This distribution of data has a positive skew¹⁰.

This analysis tests two related hypotheses; 1) whether or not someone uses the Internet is positively related to American opinions of foreign popular culture and 2) the amount of time someone spends using the Internet is positively related to American opinions of foreign popular culture. In order to test both hypotheses, two separate analyses were performed.

First, testing the relationship with simple usage of the Internet for purposes other than email was done using a Chi-Square analysis. While a crosstabulation table implies that there might be a relationship (Figure 1)¹¹, an initial analysis that included all cases produced a Chi-Square value of 1.938, a value that I am 95% confident shows no significant relationship (p-value = 0.747) between simple use of the Internet and opinions of foreign popular culture (Figure 2)¹².

In order to ensure that the relationship (or lack of one) is true across educational attainment, an analysis was conducted using Chi-Square and controlling for attainment level. This control variable was split into two groups: High School or Less (Figure 3)¹³ and Associate/Junior College or Higher (Figure 5)¹⁴.

⁹ See footnote 7. A negative skew is the exact opposite of a positive skew – values are clustered toward the right of the curve.

¹⁰ See footnote 7

¹¹ Appendix A, Page 46

¹² Appendix A, Page 47

¹³ Appendix A, Page 48

¹⁴ Appendix A, Page 49

With Chi-Square values of 2.044 (High School or Less) and 1.291 (Associate/Junior College or Higher), the analyses showed that, with 95% confidence, there is no significant relationship between these two variables (Figures 4 and 6)¹⁵ (High School or Less p-value = 0.728; Associate/Junior College or Higher p-value = 0.863).

The second analysis, involving the relationship with how many hours are spent using the Internet per week for purposes other than email, was done using a correlation analysis. The initial analysis (Figure 7)¹⁶, with all cases included, showed a significant relationship at 95% confidence (p-value = 0.026). This is contrary to the analysis of simply using the Internet.

Given a Pearson correlation value of -0.080, there is a negative relationship. However, this relationship is rather weak. Therefore, educational attainment was added to see if there was a moderating effect on the relationship. Two analyses were run based on the two categories of the control variable of educational attainment: High School or Less (Figure 8)¹⁷ and Associate/Junior College or higher (Figure 9)¹⁸.

Of these two analyses, only the relationship with having a high school education or less was significant at 95% confidence (p-value = 0.017). Given the Pearson correlation value of -0.124, a negative relationship is present. This relationship is still weak, but much stronger than the general analysis. In the case of those with at least some college, the relationship was not statistically significant at 95% confidence (p-value = 0.615).

Overall, this analysis has shown that the key factor in this analysis is not whether or not someone simply uses the Internet for purposes other than email, but how long they spend doing that activity. This relationship seems to be moderated by whether or not someone has gone

¹⁵ Appendix A, Page 49, 50

¹⁶ Appendix A, Page 50

¹⁷ Appendix A, Page 51

¹⁸ Appendix A, Page 51

beyond high school, with those who have not showing a significant relationship to their opinions on foreign popular culture.

Discussion

In looking at the combined data, there are two main themes that have emerged: 1) when a cultural product is “exotic” it spreads slowly at first, picking up speed as more people adopt it, and 2) once the product has become fully integrated into the culture of the destination country, consumption demonstrates a pattern similar to native popular culture products. While the data seems to indicate a strong correlation between media coverage of the products and an increase in sales, there is not a definitive causal relationship between the two. While this seems to leave the “chicken and egg” dilemma mentioned at the end of Chapter 2, the data indicates that there is some lead time between when the media coverage of anime and manga evolves and the corresponding uptick in sales.

Spread

In the late 1990s, when anime was just barely emerging into larger markets and manga was still confined to early adopter status, media coverage treated it as something different and new. Such descriptions are summed up by the article “Amazing Anime” published in *Time* magazine in 1999:

So what is anime? Easier to ask: What isn't it? An American cartoon is simple to define. It's Disney--the Disney style of romantic realism, questing kids and cute critters. Anime is all kinds of different (Corliss).

At this time, according to ICv2, sales of anime in the United States were increasing – barely (“White Paper Deck” 2011: 25). This was the time of the early adopters – those people who had just discovered what those erstwhile watchers of Japanese TV in Hawaii had already known: anime was quite different from the typical American cartoon. The presence of American cartoons provided a familiar standard upon which to base a comparison, demonstrating the cultural foundation needed to create the impression of an exotic product (Said 1978: 202). This

cultural foundation was further reinforced by a demographic growth in Asian Americans as well as a rise of ethnic studies in academic circles during the 1970s and 1980s (Klein 2003: 266). The supposed vast differences between anime and cartoons formed the impression of a desired novelty (Said 1978: 202). This impression fueled the rise of anime films such as *Akira* and *Ghost in the Shell*, giving the two films a sort of cult following (Kasa 2005: 77), but now anime was being introduced to the masses with the hope that it would take off (Keveney 1998). It sounds more like the “soft power” mentioned in Chapter 2, the driver of Hello Kitty’s rise to popularity, rather than cultural adoption diffusion. However, the main difference here is still the origin of the selection of the popular culture products. Even as early as the 1960s, television producers based in the United States were selecting anime to bring across the Pacific Ocean (Kasa 2005: 61). This was not a case of the Japanese leading American producers to a specific product in the hopes that they would make it big in the United States, this was a case of an NBC representative seeing *Astro Boy* on Tokyo television and becoming intrigued enough at its difference – the sense of exotic difference mentioned by Said (1978: 202) – to persuade his company to purchase the rights to the show (Kasa 2005: 61).

The late 1990s became the age of *Sailor Moon* and *Pokemon* airing on afternoon network TV (*Sailor Moon* aired on FOX, *Pokemon* on The WB) (AnimeNewsNetwork 2014: “Sailor Moon”, “Pokemon”). Suddenly, anime had taken off. Soon, in addition to *Pokemon*, there was *Yu-Gi-Oh!*, *Cardcaptors* and *Digimon* (Ibid: “Yu-Gi-Oh!”, “Cardcaptors”, “Digimon”). Other shows moved to cable, specifically to Cartoon Network, where there was now a block of shows mid-afternoon called “Toonami” (AnimeNewsNetwork 2014: “Cartoon Network”). This portal served as the entry point for many anime fans, and provided a growing familiarity with the world of anime. Once consumers had developed this sense of familiarity, the reach of anime rapidly

spread (Patten 2004: 66). Eventually, as the familiarity grew, anime fans began to broaden their search for new products.

With the entry of anime into the mainstream television market, manga was able to make an entrance around 2001 (ICv2 2011: 26; Volken 2002). By this time, west coast viewers had been exposed to profusions of difference from *other fans*, so much so, that the *Los Angeles Times* had already entered anime into their lexicon of descriptors for other things (Boucher 2001). When manga arrived, an existing familiarity with the art style, combined with the taste of something new, allowed the product to quickly enter the market and be adopted (Kelts 2007: 212). Much of this buzz came from word of mouth, as it had since the first early adopters began watching anime in the United States (Ibid: 212). This quick adoption was also hastened by the rapid spreading of Internet access, and the accompanying quickening of online discourse about the subject (Ibid: 200; Wejnert 2002: 317; Allison 2006: 18). This is further supported by the analysis of GSS data conducted in Chapter 3. The attitudes of respondents changed based on spending longer amounts of time surfing the Internet.

Manga's adoption was so quick, that sales jumped 67 percent from 2001 to 2002 (ICv2 2011: 27). By 2006, even the east coast had adopted anime and manga into the fold of American popular culture, using the terms to describe a superhero movie (Carter 2006), inspiration of OutKast (an American hip-hop artist) (Heffernan 2006), and the works of a French artist (Johnson 2006). At this point, anime and manga sales had been increasing by double digit percentages each year, to the point where annual sales topped \$200 million (ICv2 2011: 25). However, once all four periodicals had adopted anime and manga as basic terms, eschewing so much as a "Japanese cartoons or comics" parenthetical to the terms, sales began to slide. The year 2006 saw all four periodicals tossing the words anime and manga around as easily as they would "street" or

“president”. The following year, sales of anime and manga fell to single-digit growth of only 5 percent (ICv2 2011: 25).

I can also attest, from personal experience, that 2007 was the year that manga and anime sections in retail stores started to shrink. One month there was two full aisles of manga at Barnes & Noble Booksellers. Two months later, it had shrunk to one and a half. By the following year, not even a full aisle was devoted to the product. The same could be said for anime. At the height of the boom shown in the data (roughly Christmas season 2006), both Best Buy and Fry’s Electronics had entire DVD rows devoted to anime. By the same time in 2007, both had shrunk by at least half.

At this point, anime and manga began double-digit declines in sales, beginning near the end of 2008 (ICv2 2011: 25, 27). While this could have indicated that popular culture whims had moved on, this time also coincided with the market crash that led to the current sluggish economy (Ibid: 28). Given the previous high prices of anime and the continuing high price of manga (13 episodes of anime sold for \$59.99 with manga ranging from \$9.99 per volume¹⁹ to \$14.99 per volume) (Personal receipts), the growth trend could not be sustained. Sections in retail stores virtually disappeared - Barnes & Noble had three shelves of manga compared to half an aisle while Best Buy and Fry’s Electronics had roughly two to three shelves of anime, depending on the store. Suddenly, anime prices plummeted (though manga prices stayed roughly the same), along with the number of available titles. Now, whole anime series could be had for \$22.99 (Personal receipts). This drop in price also coincided with a rise in Internet sales over those of physical retail stores (Ibid: 28).

¹⁹ A “volume” of manga is roughly 5-10 chapters of story bound into a single paperback. Titles could be a single volume, or could encompass a series of 20 or more volumes.

Integration

Now, however, anime and manga have become firmly embedded in the fabric of American popular culture. References to the two terms as simple passing phrases abound in media coverage. Prices for a season of anime are now roughly on par with those of American television (a season of “Modern Family” is \$14.99 while a season of “Naruto” – a popular ninja anime – is \$15.89) (Amazon.com 2014). Sales declines in manga, while still occurring, have begun to reverse, going from a 20 percent decline in 2009 to only 10 percent in 2011 (“White Paper Deck”: 25). Some of this decline can also be attributed to a simple labeling change. As I observed the manga sections of retail stores shrink, I also saw them transform. No longer in their own sections labeled “Manga”, they had been integrated into a new section comprising manga, comics, and non-Japanese graphic novels with the new label “Graphic Novels”. While still somewhat of a niche product, anime and manga are slowly becoming mainstream, to the point that “Modern Family” competes on Netflix and Hulu with the anime series “Fullmetal Alchemist” (Chozick 2011), the series for which my thesis is named. Anime and manga have truly spread, from early adoption in the 1960s to larger adoption in the late 1990s to almost mainstream diffusion and integration now.

Conclusion

Japanese popular culture products, especially anime and manga, have proven to be a classic example of the cultural adoption/diffusion model. The initial approach of these products is based on trust of Japan that, in itself, is based on a trust of the conceptualization that the United States has of that country. Familiarity with these products, produced through adapting them to their destination country, allowed them to first enter into a given market. The familiarity of those initial products, combined with the otherness of associated products, enabled the swarming of other culture products around the adoption of the first. From this perspective, the culture adoption/diffusion model seems to fully explain the spread of anime and manga.

Yet, has it been fully explained? Not quite. For cultural adoption/diffusion doesn't just involve borders, it also involves the evolution of culture within a given area. This evolution is, in turn, dependent on the structures that govern socialization within that area. Socialization itself can vary, to a certain degree, between one group within a given area and another. To fully analyze the forces behind the adoption/diffusion of these products, one would have to delve into the origins of the perceptions of the consumer, meaning a much more in-depth study involving quantitative interviews is needed.

Possible future research

A possible way of conducting such an in-depth study could involve one of the most visible sections of the anime/manga community: convention-goers. Anime conventions can last for a single day to an entire weekend, drawing anywhere from hundreds to thousands of anime/manga fans to their events. These fans run the gamut of age, socio-economic status, and gender, making sampling for research much more diverse. For example, Otakon, a major

convention in Baltimore, Maryland, celebrated its 20th anniversary in August of 2013 (Kelts 2013: par. 5). The convention drew 35,000 attendees from 42 different states (Ibid: pars. 2-3).

At the multi-day conventions, attendees are typically given a packet when they first arrive. This packet typically includes information on the activities at the convention, a detailed schedule of events, a booklet on the various rules and policies of that particular convention, as well as flyers for various dealers, artists and amenities in the area. A simple multiple-choice survey could easily be included within this packet.

The survey would be geared towards ascertaining why attendees are at the convention. Are they there because they're chaperoning (parents)? Are they there because they wish to hang out with friends? Are they a fan of anime or there for other aspects of the convention (such as a concert)? If they are there because they are a fan of anime, what do they like about anime? When did they become a fan?

Such a survey would have limitations on the depth of the information that could be gathered. However, the simple survey could instead serve as a jumping-off point for a series of interviews that would enable an exploration of the social environment which led to an attendee's exposure to, and possible fandom of, anime and manga. Factors such as exposure to other forms of foreign popular culture could be explored. A detailed picture could be formed of just how they entered the world of anime/manga in the first place.

Such a study wouldn't have to be limited to one convention. Such events take place all over the country. Even in the area around California State University, Sacramento, there is a major weekend-long convention early each year as well as two or three smaller one-day conventions during the rest of the year. There is also Anime in San Jose, California, a convention that takes place over Memorial Day weekend. Finally, there is AnimeExpo, a huge

convention taking place every year around the Fourth of July in Anaheim, California. These are just three of the many conventions a researcher could tap to study the adoption/diffusion of anime and manga. Studies could be done by region, state, or even nationwide, if the resources were available. Such a study could serve as a way to come close to fully explaining, in detail, how anime and manga were able to spread, and stay, within the United States.

But what about the model?

While the spread of anime and manga hasn't been fully explained simply by slapping the label of "cultural adoption/diffusion" onto it, the study of the spread of these products can still serve to enhance our understanding of the model itself. Currently, the model is dependent on looking at factors of trust (demonstrated in familiarity with the origin culture – whether real or perceived) (Said 1978: 2; Volken 2002). That information is then followed up with an analysis of means of communication (e.g. newspapers, phones, the Internet, etc.) involving members of the destination culture (Wejnert 2002:317). Yet, this approach leaves out, or at the least oversimplifies, the role of social networks (not the Twitter or Facebook variety) in spreading adoption and/or diffusion of a new cultural product. After all, it was fan clubs of "Star Trek" that first began swapping anime among themselves, turning the clubs as a unit into the earliest adopters of the products (Patten 2004: 27). Those clubs later became primarily anime clubs, and furthered their networks of fellow fans to allow for distribution of whatever anime they could get their hands on (Ibid: 99; Kasa 2005: 69). In studying anime and manga – and their accompanying clubs, conventions, and fans – a new perspective can be gained on the factor that social groups play in the cultural adoption/diffusion model. The main tenets of the model would remain, but the factors included in it would expand to include social interactions within the vastly top-down view of the existing model.

Even so, this study of the cultural adoption/diffusion model can easily be applied within the two areas mentioned at the beginning of this analysis: business and marketing. After all, having an equation that can predict how a given product might disperse in a given society and can, therefore, enable preparation of related products and the infrastructure needed to distribute them is a very powerful thing.

Outside of those areas, however, the application of this model can indicate what social trends might be coming down the road. For instance, the appearance of manga as a cultural product of Japan created entire sections within the large chain bookstores to house the new product. These sections soon became impromptu reading libraries for those who wished to partake in the contents of the manga within the store, for purposes ranging from previewing the story in preparation to purchase to reading the entire volume because of an inability/lack of desire to purchase. This trend prompted attempts to open manga cafes – cafes where, in addition to wireless internet, brewed drinks, and light food, patrons are able to sit and read any of the manga housed on shelves throughout the establishment (AnimeNewsNetwork 2008) – as places for the growing number of manga fans to sit and socialize with one another. Rises or falls in cultural adoptions may also serve to indicate changes in the relationship between two areas, such as a boycott of goods from a certain country because relations between it and another country soured.

Even though the model has served well for decades, it may be on the verge of needing to be updated. The model has been around since at least the 1970s, an era where information travelled quite a bit slower than it does today. With the continued expansion of the Internet, information is now easily accessible to continually growing segments of the population. This massive flow of information can change the dynamic of how culture moves. The development of

culture can change. It can also change just what becomes a “culture product”. Given the ever-changing content of the Internet, however, such an analysis would be difficult at best.

The cultural adoption/diffusion model is part of our lives, in everything we do. If we are consuming something from the culture of another area, be it another neighborhood or another country, we are taking part as a variable in the equation that makes up the model. We may not see it, just as we might not see the functioning culture industry, but it is there, for anyone who knows which channel to tune into to watch – right between “Bloomberg TV” and “CSPAN”.

Appendix A: TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1: Number of articles produced per year referring to anime/manga by periodical

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
New York Times	16	27	43	33	52	68	77	115	113	108	92	93	118	85	57
Los Angeles Times	23	19	13	22	35	36	60	62	57	66	86	66	51	32	33
TIME Magazine	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	0
WIRED Magazine	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

SOURCE: *The New York Times*, 1997-2011; *The Los Angeles Times*, 1997-2011; *TIME Magazine*, 1998-2010; *WIRED Magazine*, 1998-2005

TABLE 2: Number of articles with references to "otherness" or familiarity by periodical

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
New York Times	2	5	7	3	11	12	10	16	28	28	20	21	22	34	26
Los Angeles Times	20	7	13	20	33	33	48	50	54	63	84	65	49	31	33
TIME Magazine	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	0
WIRED Magazine	0	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

SOURCE: *The New York Times*, 1997-2011; *The Los Angeles Times*, 1997-2011; *TIME Magazine*, 1998-2010; *WIRED Magazine*, 1998-2005

TABLE 3: Variable Descriptions, Means/Proportions, and Standard Deviations

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Response</i>	<i>Mean/ Proportion</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>
Foreign Culture	Level of agreement with the sentiment that foreign popular culture is damaging to local culture	1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Neither Agree or Disagree 4 = Agree 5 = Strongly Agree	2.36	1.017
Use of Internet	Self-reported use of the Internet (World Wide Web) for purposes other than email	0 = No 1 = Yes	5.4% 94.6%	
Hours per week using Internet	Self-reported number of hours spent using the Internet (World Wide Web) for purposes other than email.	Continuous; Hours	7.79	9.796
High School or College	Self-reported completion of high school-level education or less OR completion of college-level education	1 = High School or Less 2 = Associate/Junior College or Higher	64.0% 36.0%	

SOURCE: General Social Survey, 2004

Figure 1: Crosstabulation of FORCULT_R and USEWWW, all cases included

FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE * usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL Crosstabulation		usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL		Total
		1 YES	2 NO	
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	1 STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count 111 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 18.9%	Count 8 24.2%	Count 119 19.2%
	2 DISAGREE	Count 288 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 49.1%	Count 13 39.4%	Count 301 48.6%
	3 NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count 127 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 21.7%	Count 7 21.2%	Count 134 21.6%
	4 AGREE	Count 44 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 7.5%	Count 4 12.1%	Count 48 7.8%
	5 STRONGLY AGREE	Count 16 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 2.7%	Count 1 3.0%	Count 17 2.7%
Total	Count 586 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 100.0%	Count 33 100.0%	Count 619 100.0%	

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 2: Chi-Square of FORCULT_Rand USEWWW, all cases included

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.938 ^a	4	.747
Likelihood Ratio	1.825	4	.768
Linear-by-Linear Association	.066	1	.797
N of Valid Cases	619		

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .91.

Symmetric Measures			
	Value	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.056	.747
	Cramer's V	.056	.747
N of Valid Cases		619	

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 3: Crosstabulation of FORCULT_R and USEWWW, showing only High School or Less
 FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE * usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL
 Crosstabulation

FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE		usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL		Total
		1 YES	2 NO	
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	1 STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count 37 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 12.0%	Count 5 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 20.8%	Count 42 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 12.6%
	2 DISAGREE	Count 152 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 49.2%	Count 10 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 41.7%	Count 162 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 48.6%
	3 NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count 78 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 25.2%	Count 5 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 20.8%	Count 83 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 24.9%
	4 AGREE	Count 29 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 9.4%	Count 3 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 12.5%	Count 32 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 9.6%
	5 STRONGLY AGREE	Count 13 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 4.2%	Count 1 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 4.2%	Count 14 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 4.2%
Total	Count 309 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 100.0%	Count 24 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 100.0%	Count 333 % within usewww R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL 100.0%	

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 4: Chi-Square of FORCULT_R and USEWWW, showing only High School or Less

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.044 ^a	4	.728
Likelihood Ratio	1.8036	4	.766
Linear-by-Linear Association	.121	1	.728
N of Valid Cases	333		

a. 3 cells (30.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.01.

Symmetric Measures			
	Value	Approx. Sig.	
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.078	.728
	Cramer's V	.078	.728
N of Valid Cases		333	

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 5: Crosstabulation of FORCULT_R and USEWWW, showing only Associate/Junior College or Higher

FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DEMAGE TO OUR CULTURE * USEWWW R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL Crosstabulation

	FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DEMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	USEWWW R USE WWW OTHER THAN EMAIL		Total
		1 YES	2 NO	
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DEMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	1 STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count 74 26.7%	3 33.3%	77 26.9%
	2 DISAGREE	Count 136 49.3%	3 33.3%	139 48.6%
	3 NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count 49 17.7%	2 22.2%	51 17.8%
	4 AGREE	Count 15 5.4%	1 11.1%	16 5.6%
	5 STRONGLY AGREE	Count 3 1.1%	0 .0%	3 1.0%
Total		Count 277 100.0%	9 100.0%	286 100.0%

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 6: Chi-Square of FORCULT_R and USEWWW, showing only Associate/Junior College or Higher

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.281 ^a	4	.863
Likelihood Ratio	1.312	4	.859
Linear-by-Linear Association	.042	1	.838
N of Valid Cases	286		

a. 6 cells (60,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

Symmetric Measures		
	Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.067
	Cramer's V	.067
N of Valid Cases		286

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 7: Correlation of FORCULT_R and WWWHR, all cases included

Correlations			
	FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	WWWHR WWWHOURS PER WEEK
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 1177 750	-.080 [*] .029 750
WWWHR WWWHOURS PER WEEK	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.080 [*] .029 750	1 1701

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 8: Correlation of FORCULT_R and WWWHR, showing only High School or Less

Correlations			
	FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	WWWHR WWW HOURS PER WEEK	
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 -.124* .017 371	
WWWHR WWW HOURS PER WEEK	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.124* .017 371	1 873

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: General Social Survey 2004

Figure 9: Correlation of FORCULT_R and WWWHR, showing only Associate/Junior College or Higher

Correlations			
	FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	WWWHR WWW HOURS PER WEEK	
FORCULT_R EXPOSURE TO FOREIGN FILM DAMAGE TO OUR CULTURE	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 -.026 .615 379	
WWWHR WWW HOURS PER WEEK	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.026 .615 379	1 828

Source: General Social Survey 2004

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