

ABSTRACT

The Japanese anime industry is known for its genres that are based on age group and gender. As a genre with a young male target audience, the male gaze is a concept that often gets explored in *shōnen* anime as a reflection of gender relations in Japanese society. While many analyze how it dictates the way gender is represented in *shōnen* anime, there are limited research on the ways in which it is challenged. Judith Mayne coined the concept of women's cinema as a way to challenge the male gaze by having women in the seats of production subvert patriarchal narratives in their works. Disrupting structures of patriarchal power in women's cinema is done by creating undistorted experiences of women nor have them at the passive expense of voyeuristic structures. Being a concept that has its roots in the Western Hollywood industry, its application has yet to be explored in other popular culture industries. Using this concept in Japanese *shōnen* anime, women's authorship and producership are analyzed against women's reception on their works. Findings show that women's cinema gets applied in Japanese *shōnen* anime by having these women authors and producers create realistic depictions of female characters that disengages with structures of voyeurism. Therefore subverting the traditionally patriarchal narratives commonly depicted in *shōnen*.

Keywords: feminism, male gaze, popular culture, japan