Visitor Survey at the Hiroshima City Manga Library

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In recent years, the number of cultural institutions dedicated to manga has been on the rise. They take on a variety of forms such as museums and memorial halls, but as manga usually takes the format of a book, such facilities are often conceived of as "manga libraries." Here, libraries will be the focus of our discussion.

Previous discussions of manga and libraries have generally centered on the treatment of manga as library materials, but almost no reference has been made to the way visitors to the manga library actually make use of the facilities.

It is in this context that we have conducted a survey focusing on the behavior of visitors to the Hiroshima City Manga Library, a frequently cited example of a successful manga library. One of our findings is that many visitors conduct themselves within a limited range of choices: either to borrow a manga and take it home, or to read it on the spot. Drawing on the survey results and Ishida Saeko's discussion of manga readers, we examine what it means to deal with manga in libraries.