

The Hidden World: *Nabari no Ou* Fandom as a Discourse Community

Myrah Fisher

University of North Florida

### Abstract

This ethnography explores the *Nabari no Ou* fandom, an online community based around an action/fantasy manga and anime series. With the rising popularity of both fandom studies and anime and manga, it is appropriate to dedicate some time and space to look at an example of this breed of fandom. This paper looks at the personal experience of the author in the *Nabari no Ou* fandom, the results from a survey seeking out the demographics, activity, and tone of the fandom, and interviews of fans in order to uncover the sorts of people involved in the community and how they interact. The ethnography then evaluates if the *Nabari no Ou* fandom can be considered a discourse community as outlined by John Swales. It also touches on the presence of queer culture in fandom.

*Keywords:* manga, anime, fandom, online communities, queer culture

## Introduction: the History of the *Nabari no Ou* Fandom

*Nabari no Ou* (“Ruler of the Hidden World”) is a shounen manga series written and drawn by Yuhki Kamatani. It was serialized in Square Enix’s Monthly GFantasy magazine between 2004 to 2010 (Wikipedia, 2012). It has been published in English by Yen Press since 2009 (Yen Press, 2012). An anime adaption was made by J.C. Staff in 2008, which was licensed and distributed in North America by Funimation Entertainment in 2009 (Anime News Network, 2012).

*Nabari no Ou* fandom boomed in both Japan and outside Japan with the airing of anime in early 2008. This is pretty typical for manga fandoms—often, they barely exist until an anime airs. In the case of Nabari it seems that a sizable internet fandom didn’t even exist at all until the anime, as evidenced by search history on Google Trends.



Despite this boom, the fandom remained relatively small and is now even smaller. I cannot speak much for the Japanese fandom, but the English-language fandom currently seems to be oriented on Tumblr, Deviantart, and Livejournal. The main production is fanart, though plenty of fanfiction and fanvideos exist as well. In the past forums and image boards were often a popular place for communication, but that seems to have died out with the emergence of Tumblr.

## Personal Narrative as a Fan

I've been in the *Nabari no Ou* fandom since about early 2009. I originally heard of *Nabari no Ou* from seeing it referenced in users' forum signatures on a Mangafox forum for a different series. I was quite taken by the character designs so I looked up the series online.

My initial reaction after reading the summary was not particularly positive. But I kept reading along and was informed that one of the main characters was intersexual. That is what caught my interest. I've been interested in intersexuality and gender/sex issues in general for a while, ever since stumbling across Anne Fausto-Sterling's *Sexing the Body: Gender Politics and the Construction of Sexuality*. Intersexuality is rarely mentioned in media so I decided that I would simply have to read *Nabari no Ou*. Long story short, I wound up loving it.

The Mangafox forum for *Nabari no Ou* was pretty active around that time, so I got involved posting on there and talking to other fans. I'd never been very big on forums before, so that was my first time really getting invested in one. It was also my first time speaking to other fans outside of the context of fanfiction.

Fanfiction has always been my biggest outlet for fandom-ing, so of course I wrote fanfiction for *Nabari no Ou*. Between July 2009 and November 2009, I wrote two oneshots and fifteen drabbles-- approximately 6000 words. That was my first time experimenting with drabbles.

In November 2009, I was very sick for about two months and got derailed on my Nabari fanfiction project. After I got better, I kept up with the series as the manga chapters came out and lurked in the community mostly through fanvideos on Youtube. I wasn't really active after that in

the *Nabari no Ou* fandom, though I'd check into forums from time to time. I continued to buy the English volumes as they came out and also eventually bought the anime series on DVD.

I am in the interesting position in that I am a strange hybrid of old fan and new. I was around back in the fandom's heyday, but I've also been out of the community for a while. This means that I can't help but compare the current community to the one I remember from 2009.

Another bias I bring is that I entered the series purposely looking for queer subtext. This is actually true for a good deal of *Nabari no Ou*'s fans, but it is worth mentioning. Despite this, I am not heavily involved in Nabari shipping. I support all of the canon and might-as-well-be-canon ships, but I don't deliberately seek out fanworks for those ships. This is somewhat unusual for me because the bulk of my prior experience with fandom has been through the lens of shipping.

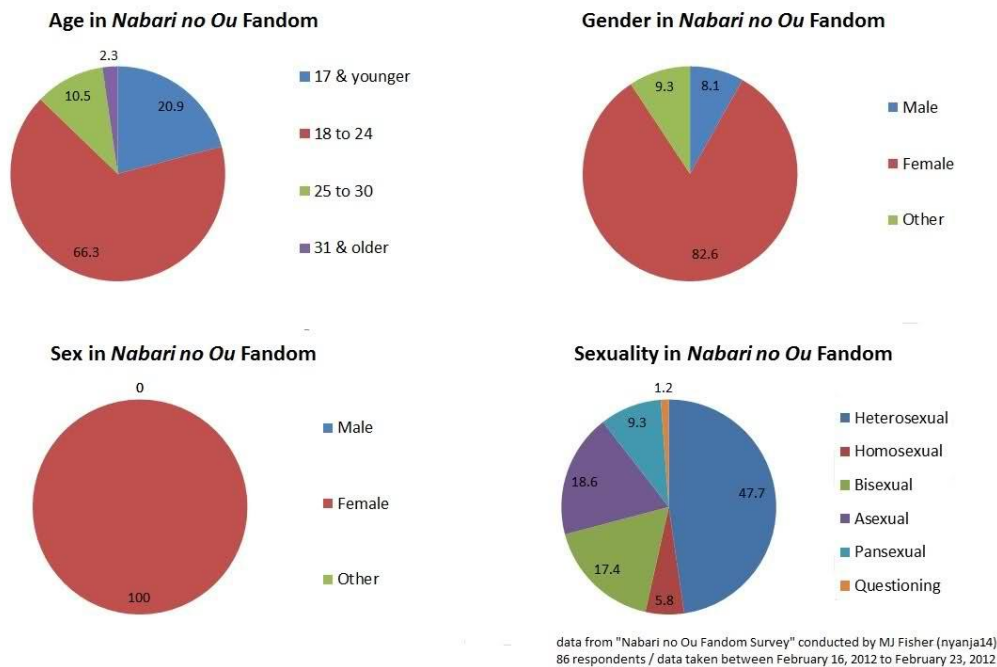
### **Fandom, In Particulars**

I re-involved myself in the fandom heavily for this class. I made accounts on Livejournal and Tumblr exclusively for *Nabari no Ou* and established myself by posting in the Nabari livejournal community and hashtag-ing fanwork and discussion on Tumblr. I also made an account on Twitter, but the fandom doesn't seem to be stationed there. I further set myself up in the Nabari community by hosting a fanwork contest. These efforts have been fruitful—as of now I have thirty-two Nabari fandom followers for my Tumblr blog, a fairly good number for a small fandom such as this.

I reached out to the community at large by conducting a survey through SurveyMonkey. The survey was ten questions: the first four questions were about the demographics of the fandom, the next five were about participation in the fandom, and the last question asked if the

respondent was willing to be interviewed. I had eighty-six respondents, though only thirty-eight completed the full survey; the last six questions were optional.

In summary, the demographic results were this: about 80% of the fandom is eighteen or older, the fandom is completely female biologically but only about 80% identified their gender as female, and only half of the fandom identifies as heterosexual

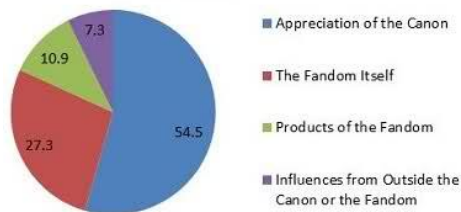


Mostly, the results confirmed my prior beliefs about the fandom. However, upon posting the demographic results I got some reactions from fans about the sex of the fandom. While my survey did not receive any biologically male respondents, various people stated that they have met cis-gendered male fans of *Nabari no Ou*. I am unsure as to why my survey did not reach any of those male fans. The only conclusion I can draw is that while there are male fans of Nabari they tend to stay out of the fandom. This is interesting because as a shounen series the target audience is supposedly meant to be young males. However, it has previously been observed that

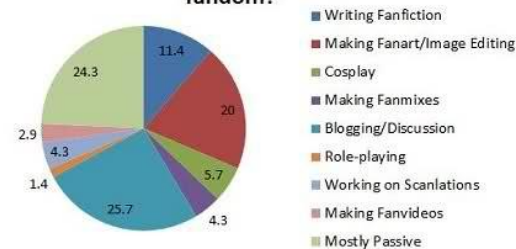
Monthly GFantasy, the magazine *Nabari no Ou* was serialized in, seems to cater to female shounen fans (Beasi, 2010).

My survey also questioned respondents about how they participated in the fandom. The most common response was blogging and discussion. This probably cannot be considered a “fanwork,” but it is a type of production, just with more of an essay-oriented or maybe even academic leaning to it. Interestingly, the *Nabari no Ou* fandom was described as “cerebral” and it was noted that “the people in [the Nabari fandom] seem to be a little, well, brighter [than people in other fandoms]” by two different survey respondents. These statements seem to be supported by the fandom’s willingness and even eagerness to participate in an academic survey.

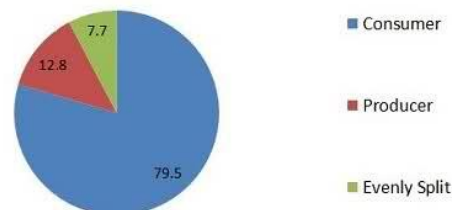
**"What drew you into the Nabari no Ou fandom?"**



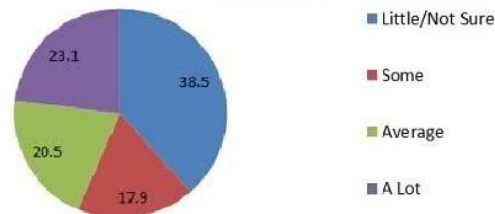
**"How do you participate in the Nabari no Ou fandom?"**



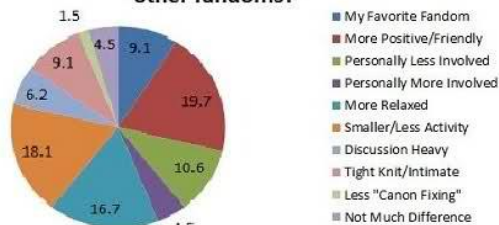
**"Are you more of a consumer or a producer in the Nabari no Ou fandom?"**



**"How much expense (money, time, energy) do you go through for the Nabari no Ou fandom?"**



**"How does your experience in the Nabari no Ou fandom compare to your experiences in other fandoms?"**



#### Summary / General Conclusions

\* The majority of fans joined the fandom primarily because of their love for the source material.

\* Discussion and fanart are the two biggest areas of production in the fandom.

\* About a quarter of the fans hardly produce at all and most fans describe themselves as being a consumer.

\* The majority of fans don't acquire much expense because of the fandom.

\* General experience in the fandom is overwhelmingly positive. The only negative response to the fandom in comparison to other fandoms is that it is not as active.

data from "Nabari no Ou Fandom Survey" conducted by MJ Fisher (nyanja14)  
39 responses / data taken between February 16, 2012 to February 23, 2012

The most prolific fanwork in the Nabari fandom is art. This is probably due to two reasons. First, *Nabari no Ou* is a drawn visual media in the first place (a manga and an anime) so it makes sense that people would produce images for the fandom. Fanart tends to be scarcer for fandoms based on books since there is no canon, agreed upon appearance for the characters. However, in a media like manga or anime there most certainly is a visual canon, so it is easy for the fans to draw the characters and for other fans to recognize them.

And second, *Nabari no Ou* has non-English speaking fandoms that are just as big and as active as (if not more than) the English-speaking fandom. Fanart gets passed around a lot between the communities because while we might not be able to understand each other's words, we can certainly understand each other's images.

Plenty of fanfiction and fanvids also exist within the fandom, but they are not as common as fanart. Cosplaying, role-playing, and making fanmixes (sort of like fan-picked soundtracks) are other activities that take place.

However, despite the variety of production that is present in the fandom, the actual volume of production tends to be low. About 80% of respondents said they are more of a consumer of fanworks than producers. A frequent comment that arose when respondents were asked to compare the Nabari fandom to other fandoms they were in was that it is “not as active” or “quiet.”

This is perhaps due to the Nabari fandom's size. One respondent wrote “I'm usually more participative [in fandom], but a smaller pool of people brings out my shy side.”

Another respondent suggested that the lack of fanwork might actually have to do with *Nabari no Ou* itself: “...it's a complete experience of its own....the source story and art were

amazing enough, unlike many other series for which I often feel the need to ‘fix’ something by writing or reading fic.”

Despite the low production, the general experience in the Nabari fandom according to my survey respondents is overwhelmingly positive. About 30% of respondents described it as being their favorite fandom or friendlier than other fandoms they’ve been involved in. Another typical response was that Nabari has a relaxed or calm fandom and that it “doesn’t seem prone to arguing, shipping wars, or fandom wank shenanigans of that nature.”

### **Fandom Conclusions**

Is the *Nabari no Ou* fandom a discourse community? I have to give a tentative yes. To begin, there is a shared goal: to appreciate the series, discuss it, and (perhaps most importantly) try to bring new fans in. Many of survey respondents talked about recommending the manga or anime to people they meet in hopes of the fandom growing.

The fandom communicates frequently, mostly on internet communities such as Tumblr or forums. The purpose of that communication is mostly to stay in contact and share thoughts on *Nabari no Ou*.

The fandom has what Swales calls “genres,” textual responses to recurring situation that all group members recognize and understand (Swales, 1987.) This would be fanwork: the art, fiction, videos, and etc. Members are able to communicate their views and feelings on the canon and in general through that fanwork.

The Nabari community cannot claim to have a vast lexicon, but there is some jargon. Fans nicknames are fairly common, for example “Owlzawa” and “Kittyjima” for Aizawa and

Shijima respectively. The series itself also gets affectionately dubbed as “Nyaabari” or “Naberry.” Outside of this, there aren’t very many words or terms unique to the Nabari fandom.

The Nabari fandom lacks established “experts” or “novices.” Some usernames might carry a certain amount of recognition in the community, but nobody exerts any true power. This is probably due to the small size; everyone in the community more or less stays on equal footing. Because of this, the fandom is very easy to engage in. Most newcomers are able to pick up knowledge of the community simply by stepping into it. The only threshold is that they must be familiar with the series.

In short, while the Nabari no Ou fandom may not be the best example of a discourse community, it does meet the set criteria. Besides this, there are a few other note-worthy things to be mentioned about this fandom.

Something that makes the Nabari fandom stand-out is that it seems to function as a Safe Space for many members. For instance, one respondent stated, “a lot of the fandom is queer or queer friendly, so I feel welcome here.” The fandom is indeed pretty queer, as the demographics show; less than half of the respondents identified themselves as heterosexual. I personally have discussed my sexual and gender orientations with fellow Nabari fans in the past and felt very comfortable doing so.

In fact, many fandoms seem to be moving into a Safe Space type of direction. One woman I interviewed, Rhiannon, said “...fandom also helped me come to terms with my sexuality, made me a much more open-minded person than I may have been otherwise, and has made me much more aware of the issues in today's society and the continual fight against them.” Another woman I interviewed, Megan, agreed with this sentiment and explained, “...prior to

being in anime fandom, I didn't have any opinion on homosexuality nor did I really give much thought to my own sexuality or (future) sex-life. Fandom also opened the doors to an entirely new culture that I now consider one of my own.”

Another interesting thing about this community is that the canon is treated with a lot of respect in the Nabari fandom. The majority of my respondents answered that they entered the fandom because of their appreciation of the canon, and this holds true when one surveys the fanwork. Crack is somewhat scarce and when it does exist it is typically pretty tame. Non-canon pairings and Alternative Universe fanfiction of Nabari are also rare. One respondent stated, “I feel that the series itself is the best part, it's a complete experience of its own; I have read some absolutely fantastic fic and seen adorable fanart, but the source story and art were amazing enough, unlike many other series for which I often feel the need to "fix" something by writing or reading fic.”

In conclusion, *Nabari no Ou* is a somewhat obscure series and so the fandom is likewise niche. It may be a small fandom but it is also unique and thus, in my opinion, very worthy of closer examination.

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## Appendix A

These are the survey responses from the “Nabari no Ou Fandom Survey” conducted online between February 16 to February 23, 2012.

1. Age?
  - 17 & younger – 18 responses
  - 18 to 24 – 57 responses
  - 25 to 30 – 9 responses
  - 31 & older – 2 responses
2. Sex? (What is between your legs?)
  - Male – 0 responses
  - Female – 86 responses
  - Other (please specify) – 0 responses
3. Gender? (What is between your ears?)
  - Male – 7 responses
  - Female – 71 responses
  - Other (please specify) – 8 responses
    - “feeling somewhere in between”
    - “genderqueer and fluid”
    - “gender neutral”
    - “I don’t really care about gender :<”
    - “genderfluid”
    - “genderqueer”
    - “neither”
    - “neutral”
4. Sexuality?
  - Heterosexual – 41 responses
  - Homosexual – 5 responses
  - Bisexual – 15 responses
  - Asexual – 14 responses
  - Other (please specify) – 11 responses
    - “Pansexual”
    - “pansexual”
    - “Panromantic asexual”
    - “pansexual”
    - “Homoromantic asexual”
    - “Pansexual”

“Pansexual”

“Pansexual—I’d rather fall in love with someone for their personality than anything else =)”

“I consider myself pansexual with a preference for the male type..heteropansexual I suppose!”

“Pansexual”

“i don’t know”

5. What drew you into the Nabari no Ou fandom? – 39 responses

“I saw a picture of Yoite from a friend and wanted to see where it came from. After finding it I fell in love with it instantly.”

“The unique art style of the author.”

“A friend of mine loved it. I started reading an online translation of the novels, and, well.”

“The art style mostly, as well as the characters and fandom itself.”

“Yoite. I liked his fashion sense.”

“Boredom”

“After getting to chapter 51, I needed cheering up. So I went looking for some happy fic.”

“watching the anime”

“Initially I was drawn in by the beautiful art, but I didn't fall in love with the series until I got to volume five of the manga.”

“Yoite.”

“One of my best friends loved it, and recommended it. I fell in love with the story and have loved it ever since. Clearly once you love a canon you must try out the fandom. It's really nice here <3.”

“The style of the anime looked beautiful to me.”

“A friend's recommendation.”

“I liked Pandora Hearts and Black Butler and thought Nabari might be similar...a quality manga by a female mangaka, with lots of pretty boys.”

“The story and art of the manga was so nice and interesting, I wanted to talk about it with other people.”

“My absolute love for Yoite and Miharu (not as a couple so to speak but as important people) and the sort of tragic story line.”

“Friends were discussing how simultaneously heartbreaking and heartwarming those "Yoite and Miharu" guys were, and how fab that "Raikou" guy was.”

“I had heard of the series beforehand, but I think that seeing how popular it was on 4chan, actually, drew me into it. It seemed like something I'd like.”

“I liked the art style and the summary for the manga so I decided to read it and I loved it since then.”

"I was intrigued by the character of Yoite, to be honest. I'd seen multiple videos of him from the anime and, once I had watched that, I dove into the manga and fell completely in love with the entire thing."

"My friend has bunch of anime, and I just sort of copied everything from her. What makes me watch it (rather than others) are the opening clip, however. As biased as it sounds, there are a lot of good-looking guys there that I could pair up with each other, LOL. But then throwing that aside I got hooked into the intricating plot and start reading the manga, which is far better than the anime. Daebak!"

"Yoite."

"I read the first few chapters in the YenPress magazine."

"Yoite'beauty"

"To be honest? A guy I had a crush on liked the manga, so I read it to have something to talk about with him. In the process, I discovered I really loved this series! And what ultimately drew me "into" the fandom spaces was nabari-no-ou and capslock\_nabari on LJ, posting fanfiction for it, meeting and befriending fans, and cosplaying from it."

"My friend recommended it to me, and I fell in love!"

"I was actually Googling for a show either like or better than Naruto when I enjoyed the series..and I can still remember someone answering with "Nabari no Ou has done more for me than Naruto ever could." They were so right."

"You mean WHO :D my... friend Misha did."

"The actual comic's breathtaking artwork was the thing that first got my attention. I saw screencaps of the anime on an imageboard in 2008 and thought it looked interesting, so I decided to watch it."

"the people are literally perfect"

"I joined thinking it would make it much easier to find fanworks, because people share what they find with each other. what keeps me in the fandom are the awesome people there!"

"It's been so long that I can't really remember, but I think it was a recommendation from a friend."

"I saw the anime and didn't think it was anything special. Later on, I heard a friend of mine talking about the manga and how it was a lot better than the anime so I thought I might as well give it a try. I'm really glad I did!"

"The anime drew me into the manga and the fandom. I was originally attracted to the art, but the story and characters made me want to participate in the fandom."

"Miharu in little devil mode."

"I went through the manga and the anime really fast, but I wanted more. So I poked around into Nabari's fanfiction and was disappointed that there wasn't more.

So then I started looking at fanart and fanvids and talking to other people in the fandom and just kind of wound up in it.”

“Well, I used to watch the anime on tv when I was still in middle school, then they started publishing the manga in my country and...well, the rest is history.”

“I saw my sister watching it one day and it looked interesting, so I read the manga.

“I will admit, part of what drew me in was the queer subtext, because being queer myself, I enjoy that in a work. The fandom was small and friendly, so it seemed like a good thing to be a part of.”

6. How do you participate in the Nabari no Ou fandom? – 39 responses

“I write fanfiction when an idea comes to mind.”

“Join in discussions of chapters and such.”

“I write a bit of fanfic, but that's it.”

“I cosplay as well as draw fanart.”

“I've made fanmixes and fanart.”

“Reblog stuff on tumblr. Appreciate fanart/ fanfiction.”

“I mostly just lurk, to be honest. The fandom had mostly died down by the time I got there.”

“reading some fic”

“I've drawn fanart before but never have time to fix it up and post it anywhere.”

“I dont. Sadly.”

“I read fanfic and have several (currently inactive) role-playing journals on livejournal.”

“I just reblog stuff. I make cards and wallpapers for theOtaku, too.”

“Rarely.”

“Mostly by reblogging fan arts others have done. And reading the occasional fic. Oh and I had a Yoite haircut once.”

“Used to draw some fanart, but I pretty much just lurk now.”

“Answer questions when I can, join in discussions.”

“Passively (read fic & stare at pretty fanart)”

“Read fanfiction, might write some. Character analysis. Plan to cosplay... probably Raikou.”

“I never really did because the fandom is either very little or there was no special events about it, nor did the fans do much as well. Besides, that I read the manga online, and never bought it because I did not have the money to buy the entire set.”

“I just read the manga, watch the anime, and occasionally make videos.”

“Eh, no, not really. I mean, I joined the LJ community and watch whatever's happening, and I did survey like this too. Hehe.”

“I write fanfiction sometimes.”

“I have drawn fan art.”

“Reading posts”

“I write fanfiction, make fanmixes, and cosplay from it primarily, and I also run the blog "Fuck Yeah, Raikou/Gau!" on Tumblr.”

“I mostly just dabble around. I enjoy reading fanfiction and looking up fanart.”

“I haven't participated much since that manga ended..but I used to spend a lot of time on Mangafox and Nyaabari forums.”

“I like drawing... and painting. I'm not really good tho, so I don't like to post my fanarts on the internet. I don't write fanfictions because my english is bad, sigh”

“I am trying to write fanfics and manifestos.... I'm also going to cosplay if I ever find a cosplay buddy”

“I draw fanart and try to recommend nabari to other people.”

“I look for fanart to share on my blog, draw art and write fanfiction, and make ridiculous edits of the manga pages.”

“I cry and talk to everyone I LOVE THEM TOO MUCH”

“I draw fanart and cry about my otps”

“I draw a little fanart, but not very much; I mostly just appreciate the work of others! Also I analyze everything.”

“I draw fanart and occasionally make tumblr posts about things I notice or like. Sometimes (read, very rarely) I translate/scanlate 4komas/fanmade 4komas.”

“I've drawn a disgusting amount of fan art for the series and enjoy talking to other people who draw fan art. I've worked with a scans group to produce scanlations for the manga.”

“Mostly, I write fanfiction. I've written some oneshots and drabbles. I also have a long story planned out in my head, but I haven't had a chance to do it yet. I hang around on the Tumblr hashtag and in the LJ community and I watch amvs and mmvs on youtube. I also talk to other fans-- I used to do it on forums a lot, but now I mostly chat on Tumblr.”

“Mostly with stupid fanarts, silly manipulations, wild speculations/observations about tiny details, wild re-reading. Generally, I like to point out all the details the author puts here and there.”

“I have participated in discussion on various websites, tried to promote the manga when I can by posting new information and linking to Kamatani's blog, written a little bit of fanfiction, and I've done translations for a few of the later chapters. Oh, and I make fanmixes.”

7. Within the Nabari no Ou fandom, would you say you are more of a producer of fanworks or more of a consumer of fanworks? Explain. – 39 responses

“Both, I like to read other peoples' and that helps me to get a deeper idea of what other people think of NNO.”

“A consumer of fanworks. I'm too lazy to make icons and prefer using others' works.”

“I read/look at things a lot more than I write.”

“More of a consumer. While I do cosplay it and draw it, I do less of that than most other people do.”

“Consumer. Nabari no Ou isn't one of my primary fandoms so I don't contribute much.”

“Consumer. Have not produced any fanworks of any medium to date.”

“Consumer, definitely. I feel guilty about that sometimes.”

“consumer”

“I'd say I'm more of a consumer of fanworks, because I love seeing all of the fanstuffs people create, and because I don't usually have time to contribute myself.”

“I'm not sure. I don't do anything to contribute and I don't think I consume... I merely window-shop?”

“I would consider myself more of a consumer. I haven't written or drawn anything, but I love reading fanfic.”

“Consumer. I don't contribute much to the fandom.”

“Consumer - I read fic and look at shiny art now and then, but most of my creative energy is directed towards other fandoms.”

“More of a consumer. But I admit, I don't consume very much due to lack of time.”

“Consumer, because I haven't produced anything in years.”

“Neither since I'm usually only interested in discussing work done by the author and am not interested in fan fiction and the such.”

“consumer (see above)”

“Consumer. At this point I'm reading waaay more fanfic than I'm writing. Also, I buy the manga.”

“I am more of a consumer of fanworks, as I do not have any marketable skills in art. But I do love to see any kind of fanwork.”

“Definitely more of a consumer, as I spend much more of time looking at fanworks than creating them.”

“Consumer, definitely. I checked Zerochan from time to time and reading fanfictions (and god we're lacking at it)”.

“I'd say I'm more of a consumer. I don't see enough of the fandom usually to want to produce, because the fandom is pretty quiet lately.”

“Consumer. I look at more art than I have created myself.”

“Consumer, 'cause it's easier.”

“I'm more of a consumer these days -- my fanwork output has dramatically slowed down and is almost nonexistent since I've come to college, so I rarely have

anything to post. I'm now mostly relegated to reblogging fanart and headcanon discussions on Tumblr, chiming in with my commentary here and there, and reading the fanfiction others write."

"Consumer. ^^;; I feed off of other people's kindness and creativity."

"I've made some fanart and fanvids but I've def been more of a consumer."

"I don't know... I "produce" a lot, but no one sees my artworks except of Misha. So I think I am more of a "consumer", duh!"

"A producer because as an artist I tend to draw the things I'm interested in."

"I am more of a consumer- I enjoy collecting and saving any fanart I can find."

"Unless roleplaying the characters counts as producing, I am definitely a consumer."

"A producer, because I can't stop drawing my otps"

"Consumer, as I stated in question 6. I don't write fanfiction, make fanvideos, or draw much fanart, but I do appreciate every single piece of work that others make."

"I am not sure! I hungrily consume any fanwork that comes my way but I try to give back when I can."

"I'm more of a producer. I like to solidify the headcanons I have."

"Consumer."

"Eh, kind of half-half at this point. There is a whole lot of fanwork out there, so I try to produce some of my own. Quantity wise, I'm still mostly a consumer though. I'd like to be more of a producer, but I don't always have the time for it."

"Probably a consumer, since I rarely post fanarts (and never post fanfictions), but I hope I can gain some confidence and actually produce decent fanart for the other fans to enjoy."

"It's honestly half and half. I do consume quite a bit, but then, I also make fanmixes, wrote a bit of fanfic (though not a lot was published online) and wrote this long manifesto once... so yeah, split down the middle."

8. How much expense (money, time, energy) do you go through for the Nabari no Ou fandom?

"When I first started with it, I devoted days to reading it all and the fanfiction but that was a few years ago so I've calmed down to about... an hour weekly maybe."

"Money-not much. I depend on raws, spoiler summaries and scanlations. I've never seen a single manga of NnO in a bookstore here in my country. Time- Depends on how much time I read something related to NnO. Probably 5-10 mins? Energy-Well, most of the time I sit while using the computer, so not much energy spent."

"Minimal."

"I have no idea to be honest. Though I did spend a good lot of money on my Yoite cosplay."

“Very little of any.”

“Maybe an hour a week max. That's all.”

“Not a lot. Nabari is one of those fandoms I drift in and out of but never really sink into.”

“not a lot”

“I make sure to buy every volume of the manga, I've bought both guidebooks, a drama CD, and plan on buying the artbook, and I check fanart/fanfiction/blog sites all the time looking for new Nabari fanstuffs.”

“None. Yet. Hopefully.”

“Nothing more than the cost of the books, which I found on sale, so I guess nothing after an initial \$40 dollars.”

“Not much.”

“Not much. I buy the English manga as it comes out, but not much else.”

“Not much”

“Nowadays? Not much. Some money for the books, a little time and energy to consume fanworks, but that's pretty much it.”

“No idea so probably not that much.”

“... None at all, I didn't even buy the comics (borrowed off a friend). Just the time to read it..”

“Slightly less than I do for some of the other series I follow. Although I've been spending less money on anime/manga related stuff lately because of college.”

“As I said before, I never bought anything from the fandom. I never bought the manga because if I were to get the first volume, I'd have to get the entire set, which costs a lot. I never bought any merchandise either, but I would always love to attain Yoite's hat.”

“I was much more invested about two years ago than I am now. But, I've been buying all of the manga, which are about 10-11 dollars a piece, so. But that's about the extent of it.”

“I spent a lot for the manga, really. Daaaaamn.”

“Not much.”

“Perhaps about \$11 per book.”

“A looooooot of time. And about 125 €”

“I've spent more money on Nabari than I care to think about, haha. Cosplay materials; English volumes of the manga; the complete set of anime DVDS; Kamatani-sensei's Nabari artbook; and the second guidebook -al fine-, I know I've spent at least upwards of \$200 on Nabari goods, perhaps closer to \$300, and plan to spend even more (more cosplay, drama CDs, Unitamente, other goods I find, etc.). Time is a little harder to calculate, but so far Nabari has been a primary interest for me for at least two years. Energy? Countless hours of energy spent capslocking, headcanon-ing, writing, daydreaming.....”

“About an average amount. It's not a /major/ fandom of mine, but I love it enough to spend entire nights reading fanfiction about it!”

“Not much. I only have to first 3 manga. Wish I could afford more manga/series in general.”

“Money... I have the complete Italian edition of the manga, three volumes (4, 8, 13) of the French edition and I want to buy some of the English edition. Well, about time, I spend all the time at school drawing Raikou and Gau... uhm. I don't know about "energy", uhm!”

“not very much.”

“I am not sure.”

“Hmmm lots of time”

“Money: none Time: well...I would say each piece of fanart takes at least 3 hours, so in all probably over 30 hours so far. Energy: a medium amount? I don't know how to quantify amount of energy spent”

“I go through only the money that is needed to buy the books. Energy-wise, I expend a lot of energy crying and cooing over the series.”

“I try to buy a volume or two when I have the money..”

“It's the only anime series I've ever bought on DVD. I'm picky when it comes to buying manga because I go through fandoms quickly, but the Nabari no Ou series is well worth my money and time. I've spent a lot of time in Nabari no Ou communities and have gone through the manga countless times, always searching for new details. I've donated several weekends to the fandom to work on scanlations.”

“Roughly 3 hours a month and about \$50 so far.”

“Well, I buy all of the manga as it comes out in English. So that's about \$140 right there. I also own the anime (about \$35) and one of the artbooks (another \$35.) Time and energy, right now I write about 500 words of fanfiction a week and that usually takes me a collective 4 hours. I spend about an hour a day looking at Nabari stuff on the internet. And I also reread and rewatch. And I listen to the soundtrack all the time. I guess that all adds up to a lot of expense? Of all the fandoms I've been in, this is probably one of my more expensive ones.”

“EVERYTHING. I'm actually thinking of buying the manga in another language, just to compare the two versions.”

“More than I've spent in any other fandom! I've bought volumes 3-8 of the English translations, and own 11, 12, 14, and the final guidebook in Japanese. As for time, because I've done translations, it's been quite a bit over the years.”

9. How does your experience in the Nabari no Ou fandom compare to your experiences in other fandoms? – 38 responses

“This one is my absolute love other than Letter Bee. The others are awesome and wonderful and I love them as well, but this is just so deep and complex with such beautifully written characters that it just sucks you in and never lets go.”

“Depends on the storyline, and since NnO started revealing twists near the end of the series, the fandom became alive with discussions and analyses of the chapters and characters. Now that NnO has ended, the fandom has slowly lessened. But during the course run of the series, it wasn't much different with other fandoms like that of Pandora Hearts or Kuroshitsuji. Or perhaps it was different with its subtle BL elements and the fans' reactions to it.”

“Positive, though I'm less passionate about Nabari no Ou than some other fandoms.”

“It's not as active, since I don't know many people in the fandom itself.”

“Pretty positive! Very friendly people, although I'm only superficially involved in the fandom.”

“It's not my most passionate fandom, but it has its charm.”

“Roughly the same as my other small-ish fandoms; I just lurk around. In bigger ones I'm usually more participative, but a smaller pool of people brings out my shy side.”

“I'm not hugely 'in' the fandom, as in, involved, I just read a little, and watch the community on my feed. More involved in other fandoms.”

“I can relate more with members of one of my other fandoms (Oofuri), but I've never loved a series before as much as I love Nabari.”

“I'm all by my lonesome. With no one to talk to. Personally.”

“It's a lot smaller and a lot more relaxed than other fandoms. I appreciate the lack of drama.”

“I'm not as involved in the Nabari fandom. It's more of a side obsession.”

“Nabari is a very, very small, slow fandom, but overall, very friendly and not a lot of drama. I wish the scanlations for the finale would be finished, though.”

“Pretty similar to others, though maybe slightly more into it than average. Most of my fandom energy goes into Pandora Hearts.”

“It's been really chill and nice. Since I've only been lurking, I can't say how it is now, but when I joined and participated, everyone was really friendly and fun to chat with.”

“It's about the same since I love the series but I'm not devoted to it.”

“I feel that the series itself is the best part, it's a complete experience of its own; I have read some absolutely fantastic fic and seen adorable fanart, but the source story and art were amazing enough, unlike many other series for which I often feel the need to "fix" something by writing or reading fic.”

“Generally more positive. It's smaller than many of the other current fandoms, and the people in it seem to be a little, well, brighter. I've noticed, too, more

variation among the pairings and interpretations of Yoite's gender and sexuality which has actually been handled very well. And frankly, many sexual related situations in other fandoms have been received poorly or misinterpreted by some people at some point, but I can't say I've come across an instance like that in this fandom... although I might just be able to recognize poorly-conceived fic by their summaries at this point!"

"The Nabari no Ou fandom is not as big as the other fandoms I have participated in. Some people go out of their way to have events about their certain fandom, but I have yet to see it for the Nabari no Ou fandom."

"I wasn't too invested in this fandom as much as I was the series. I read fic and watched some amvs, but for the most part I just spent my time watching/reading the series over and over again. From what little I've been involved with, though, everyone was really rather kind and supportive of one another."

"Eh. From 100%, it's more like... eh... 80%."

"The Nabari fandom is really sweet and calm. It's one of the best fandoms I've ever been in."

"It's very quiet compared to others fandoms. NNO is lesser-known than other mangas and It's completed, so the number of active fans has tapered off."

"NnO fandom was lively, but Yugi oh fandom is lasting more."

"The Nabari fandom experience is truly lovely. We're a small, quiet fandom, but a kind and interesting one. Some of the people I've met here have been the loveliest, most creative, funniest people I've ever met. And we all seem very capable of "live and let live" -- we may dislike each other's ships or headcanon, but we respect each other's right to have it. We also seem to be aware of social issues without being obnoxious SJWs, and will quickly but politely call out people who say things we find offensive (I have a special place of dislike in my heart for people saying Yoite "isn't really a boy," for instance). I love Nabari fandom and I love interacting with Nabari fans, for the most part. I only ever really get frustrated when people write the series off as "that BL series," because to me, it is so much more than the sum of its romances."

"The Nabari no Ou fandom is nice! It's not huge, and that in itself has its own appeal. Everyone is so nice."

"I participated far more in the Nabari fandom than I do/had with others."

"I have a lot of experience in other fandoms (I started four years ago with the HORRIBLE Naruto fandom, and believe me when I say that mentioning all the fandoms I've been in would take too long- the most important are Saint Seiya, Madoka Magica and Touhou) but the Nabari no Ou fandom is definitely the best one. Everyone here (I mean, among the "hardcore fans", not the casual ones that still call Gau "gua" \*facepalm) is nice and there are no pairing wars, no hetfags, everyone respects each other's opinion and this is just PERFECT ;\_\_\_;"

“The Nabari fandom was the only fandom I've ever really been in. But since the work is much less known the community has been really tight knit and accepting. It is my favorite fandom and I've enjoyed talking to other people who like Nabari no Ou. The people I've met have been friendly and civil and the fandom (at least the older teen+ generation) doesn't seem prone to arguing, shipping wars, or fandom wank shenanigans of that nature.”

“It's literally the perfect fandom”

“the naberry fandom one of the smallest fandoms I've been in. however, I feel like it's also the most tight-knit -- most of the main contributors know one another, even more than in other small fandoms I've been in like ghost trick and 999. like all small fandoms, we tend to suffer from a lack of new fanwork, especially fanfiction.”

“The Nabari fandom is extremely nice and friendly, which is often because its size necessitates being nice. I'm also part of the Homestuck, Supernatural, Doctor Who, and Sherlock fandoms - all of which are larger and seem more fractured. They also seem to have a lot of ingroup fighting that I have never seen with the Nabari fandom.”

“The fandom here is a lot smaller. As much as I'd love for more people to read and appreciate Nabari, I'm secretly happy that the community is so small; It's more close knit and cozy imo.”

“It's incomparable. Other fandoms are crazy and hard to break into. They fizzle out when the series end. I find the Nabari fandom close-knit, dedicated and cerebral.”

“It's been a lot more intimate. I don't really talk to other fans very often in other fandoms, but I've spoken to lots of Nabari fans. Also, this is one of the smaller fandoms I've been in, so that adds to the intimacy. It's also been a lot calmer. I've been in some crazy fandoms before, but Nabari isn't one of them.”

“It's nothing like I ever experienced before, because I actually participate to the fandom life.”

“It's generally been better here than most places! Not a lot of drama, there's immaturity but less than a lot of fandoms. And a lot of the fandom is queer or queer friendly, so I feel welcome here. It's definitely small and kind of spread out - kind of like the world of Nabari, actually, in that it's very hidden. A few times I've stumbled across a small pocket of the fandom on one site or the other, separate from everyone else but doing their own thing.”

10. May I contact you for a follow-up interview? If yes, please leave some way for me to contact you. (Such as an email address, a Tumblr or Livejournal username, etc.)

(I will not post the actual responses as some contain personal information, but the breakdown was like so.)

Yes – 25 reponses

No – 5 responses

Appendix B

These are interviews conducted online between February 27 and March 9, 2012.

1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

My name is Sonia. I live on the east coast, and I am currently a junior in college. My friends and family know that I'm into fandom. In fact, most of my friends participate themselves.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

It's different from a lot of other manga in that the story is the most important part. Nabari isn't cliché, the characters develop and have relationships that are realistic. I appreciate the clear thought the author put into their work, with a clear beginning and end. Other manga just kind of drag on and on and never seem to end. I would have liked to see more of Nabari, but I'm satisfied with the end.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

I read Nabari at the end of last year, and I've been in the fandom since. Three months, then, I guess!

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

Fandom is a distraction from real life. Sometimes you just want to step back and experience something out of the ordinary for a while. Fandom is a way of getting more out of a short experience, in example reading a manga or watching an anime. It allows you to think deeper into the story, explore things you hadn't thought of-- and immerse yourself more, I'd say.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?

It's pretty much how I expected, except for us being all girls! I thought we'd get a least one guy, haha.

6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?

I think the Nabari fandom will go slow and strong for a while. It's a little unknown, but more people are starting to pick it up and read it, so I think we'll grow a little bit. Not a lot, though, Nabari doesn't have the flexibility of other stories that attracts the big fandom crowds; that is, a specific kind of "world

system". I guess I mean that Nabari is too story based and not enough of a shounen or shojo to gain anything more than its current cult following.

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

Not really! I think Thobari/Hanabusa is cute, but I don't have any sink-with-ships in Nabari. Shipping has never been that important to me.

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

How small it is! It's nice and cozy :).

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

Make it just a litttttle bigger. There aren't as many fanworks as one could hope for.

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

You can quote me as "RT" or by my username, whichever works easier!

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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

I am an 18 year old female in college as a freshmen who lives in Tennessee of the USA. I'm currently looking for a job. Yes, my friends do know I'm into this. I got at least three of my friends into it too. My mom is the only one of in my family that knows I love this fandom and doesn't mind me talking about it at random times.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

I'm not really sure. I guess because, it's a different sort of story. It's more... realistic. There's not happy endings like people seem to force onto us all. I mean, not to say I don't like happy endings just sometimes it's nice to see things happen that make sense. And it's got a little bit of everything in it.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

I think I've been in Nabari no Ou since... 2009, where I first saw a picture of Yoite from a friend who was creating a character based on his looks. Fandom in general... probably like, a much longer time. I think my first 'fandom' was Danny Phantom.

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

I feel like it's helped my writing skills since I usually participate in the fanfiction. It helps me to develop characters and delve deeper into their personalities. Like, I have to find themes, or certain points which I suppose could be called 'critical thinking'. It is sometimes good for me. I like reading like... Fluff or finding pictures of it if I'm in a sad mood or the like. Because it's like, if a fake character can find some sort of happiness then me as a real person should be twice more likely since I actually exist! Probably doesn't make much sense but somewhere in my head it does.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?

The 31+ thing sorta surprises me. It's cool though that it seems to stretch over all ages. The sexuality thing is rather interesting. I didn't expect it to be so varied.

6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?

I feel like, when it finally finishes in the English version, it may dwindle a little. Most people get into the fandom because it hasn't been completed yet and there's a certain excitement in rewriting a chapter or waiting for the next chapter to come out. I think the fandom will always survive though even if it does get smaller--or who knows, larger.

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

Yes. Actually, Miharu and Yoite were my first 'yaoi' couple I shipped. Though, I don't really consider them yaoi considering Yoite's neither gender fully but, that's what people call it. I do like KouichixRaimei as well. They're cute. And of course Hanabusa and Tobari. They're adorable! I'm not sure if it defines anything that I look for in the fandom except I do usually look up MxY more so than other couples if I do feel like finding art.

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

I like everyone's different perspectives on it. Someone might clear up an event or sentence or the like that I was foggy on. Or someone might look at a scene in a completely new light, making me see something new too. Everybody in the fandom, brings some new sort of view on the work and that's just so cool to me.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

Hm. The amount of people that make Yoite a cat... And genderswapping. It's a little creepy to me to see like... a normal male now sporting boobs. I don't know, maybe that's just me but I'm just like, uhwhat.

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

I don't think I have anything spectacular enough to go into a paper but if you do use me, Saph or Amber is perfectly fine~!

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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

My name is Tiffany and I'm a teenage girl living in California. I currently do not have a job. My friends know I'm into the fandom because we like to fangirl together, haha. I do not really discuss anything anime-related to my family besides the fact that I go to some anime conventions.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

Nabari no Ou is significant to me because it's one of the few anime/manga that actually give me some kind of emotional pang whenever I come across it again. Which is definitely a good sign because there are others that I do enjoy but have no real significant content in it whatsoever (not that it's a bad thing).

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

I've been in this fandom since I first got into it which I'm not too sure when... 2 or 3 years ago? I haven't been in any activity for the fandom in quite a while but I do still enjoy the fandom.

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

For sure I do get an enjoyment out of the fandom for hobby-like purposes but I can't say that I have developed any kind of skill from it, haha. Therapeutic? I'm not too sure. But I do understand some of the themes or messages underlying Nabari no Ou such as friendship and freedom, etc.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?

I have to say that I am surprised by the results. Like for the age of fans, I would have thought there were more fans in the 17 & younger section as well as fans that are 31 & older. It is also interesting how you also conducted a section of the

survey for the sexuality of the fans, which I believe is a nice addition. As for the gender of the fandom, that is what I generally expected.

6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?

I'm sure the fandom will still survive in the future, although on a much lower scale than when it was first introduced. If there were some kind of promotion or merchandise advertising for Nabari no Ou, then I'm sure the numbers will definitely go up. Otherwise, the increase in the fandom will just be on a quieter scale.

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

Yes, I am definitely a shipper. I do support Yoite x Miharuru part of which is canon and is shown very often (according to a shipper's mind, haha) which just fuels the fangirl inside of me. Though the relationship between Yukimi and Yoite does make my heart happy. In any kind of anime, shipping a certain pairing will always give fans a certain biased view. The pairings that I ship has definitely given me delightful experience with Nabari no Ou although they can just as well tear at my heartstrings. I'm a pretty open person so as long as my personality does not clash with another character, I have no reason to ignore their existence, haha~

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

I like Nabari no Ou and how it is a quiet fandom. This is actually kind of surprising but I have been into a rigorously active fandom. As fun as they are, it is a very demanding kind of fandom, I participate in the Hetalia events and all, but sometimes it's all just too hard to keep up with! Quiet fandoms like Nabari no Ou are nice because there is nothing I feel compelled to do, as there is a natural flow to it, I'm not sure how to explain it really. It's probably because the series is considered completed and it's popularity is not as loud, but I still like the anime/manga all the same.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

This may sound hypocritical, I like the Hetalia fandom which is extremely popular, and because they do have ways to get the fandom up and running. For example, the manga-ka has his own live comic strip events of the series. Also because of the merchandising which is a huge factor of it. In this way, I would like something (I don't know what exactly) as a way of keeping the Nabari no Ou fandom alive and together. I do like how homey and comfortable Hetalia fans are with each other and it would be nice if the Nabari no Ou fandom is the same.

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

Ah, I think for convenience's sake, referring to me as the LiveJournal user dorkishgrin is fine.

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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

Well, first off, my name is Rhiannon. I am a second-year university student and will turn twenty years old this upcoming March 19. I'm from the United States of America and was born in the Midwest. I am a full-time student but work at a local bookstore. My close friends are quite aware that I am into fandom and three of the four are quite involved in it, as well.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

It's been awhile since I've read the manga/watched the anime, but there are two things I distinctly remember about it: Raimei and Raikou's mother and what she says to them about the nature of a sword, and Miharu and Yoite's relationship (though this is probably obvious). Raimei's mother (I wish I could remember her name!) just really hit me in the gut with what she said. Killing is killing is killing, no matter the reason you did it. A sword can only damage; it cannot heal, it cannot save. Only take. It's just a nice bit of realism that made me sit back and think for awhile. And god, I could write an entire essay on Yoite and Miharu's relationship, so I won't go on for too long. No matter how one interprets the relationship between them, that was love. Deep, unconditional, absolute love, and Miharu breaking down and clawing at his throat hit me harder than even Yoite's death did (which made me cry for weeks on/off because damn it, I just wanted them to live happily together :( ). This manga truly taught me something about love, friendship, family, etc. What 'saves' a person and what does not. How much love can hurt and just how wonderful it really is, even when it tears you asunder.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

Nabari fandom: hmm. I would say, four or five years, maybe? Perhaps even six. Though my involvement has really nothing been more than that of a lurker. Fandom in general: ten-twelve years.

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

God, I honestly do not know what I would do without fandom. Through fandom I have encountered so many incredible people and gained some lifelong friends. As far as useful tools go: I have gotten pretty handy at video-editing, photoshop, html, etc. It's also helped me refine my writing skills, which is especially helpful considering I want nothing more than to be a novelist. It's also sharpened my critical thinking and analytic skills, as well as aiding me in constructing a well-founded argument, which is extremely helpful in class, papers, and everyday discourse. Fandom is also provides me a creative outlet, where I feel free to be completely myself, not to mention being a blast! (Well, most of the time.) This may be a little bit too TMI, but, fandom also helped me come to terms with my sexuality, made me a much more open-minded person than I may have been otherwise, and has made me much more aware of the issues in today's society and the continual fight against them.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?

I have to say the 'sex in fandom' one really surprised me. The age one is about what I expected. I find it really interesting that the sexuality is so fifty-fifty, with heterosexuality actually falling behind. I expected to be part of the minority, honestly.

6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?

I imagine it will probably die out slowly, as it has been. I don't expect any huge changes to take place unless something new is released, such as an anime remake/season two or manga continuation/side story.

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

Oh, goodness, yes! I am a bit of an oddball shipper, so forgive my peculiar tastes! While reading Nabari no Ou, I shipped: Yoite/Miharu (I just couldn't not); Kouichi/Shijima ;; Shijima/Yoite ;; Yukimi/Yoite ;; Raikou/Yoite ;; Gau-->Yoite ;; Miharu/Raimei ;; Raimei's mother/Life ;; Raikou/Gau ;; and Thobari/Hana. Wow. I ship Yoite with a lot of people...I really just wanted everybody to love the poor baby. As for how it defines my experience in the fandom: depends of the fandom. It usually directs me to what I will read, watch, or what graphics I will save. But there are plenty of shows I watch where I don't really ship anything or not fanatically, such as the Nabari fandom, where I am pretty chill with everything, as long as I find it a well-written story, a well-made amv, etc.

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

From what I've seen, everybody is pretty laid back, which I greatly appreciate.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

More activity would be awesome.

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

You can use my first name Rhiannon, if you'd like. If you need any clarification/fixing up of quotes should you decide to use them, just let me know!

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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

I'm a junior at the University of Pittsburgh, I live in the suburbs just outside Pittsburgh, I'm 21 and female. I'm a Japanese major (planning to become a translator) also working toward a certificate in women's/gender studies. I work part-time in a store at the local mall. My family and close friends know I'm in fandom, but my close friends definitely know more about it, like that I read and occasionally write fanfiction and am interested in BL/yaoi. Actually, my parents don't know at all what yaoi is and I think I'd like to keep it that way for now. I'm pretty sure that they don't fully understand the depth of fandom either, like that it encompasses more than just the series itself or that it's a kind of subculture altogether.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

I find the intersexual/hermaphroditic character intriguing in any story. They're often overlooked in "normal" literature/drama and certainly less expected to be found, I think, in graphic novels or manga. It seems like society tends to avoid topics like sex and gender identity in literatures with pictures, as if drawings aren't an appropriate way to present mature ideas. Also, I like the series in that it's a story about ninjas without being a "ninja series". It's very character- and relationship-driven (of which kind I'm partial to), not so much about ninja techniques or learning new attacks which don't really interest me.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

I've been in the Nabari fandom since about winter or early spring of 2009, I think. I've never been as immersed in the series as some of my other fandoms though,

probably because around the time I got into it until present I've had less time to dedicate to fandom activities. I've been in a fandom of some sort since... jeez, early 2000s? (I feel old now.) My first was Harry Potter, which is technically how I got into fanfiction, but I wasn't as keen on live-action based fanfic than I was anime based, so by 2004 or 2005 (which is when I started reading manga) I dropped HP fanfiction altogether. I stay in most fandoms about a couple of years, but I've noticed that if there is less fan material (like fanart or fanfic) for a series, but still a steady-ish trickle, I can stay in for years.

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

I like to read. Like, alot. To me fandom gives me more story after the original story is done. It's also introduced me and got me interested in topics related to specific series with real-life implications. For example, prior to being in anime fandom, I didn't have any opinion on homosexuality nor did I really give much thought to my own sexuality or (future) sex-life. Fandom also opened the doors to an entirely new culture that I now consider one of my own. I definitely think fandom can be theraputic, but it's hard for me to say if it's done anything significant for me in that sense. I suppose my attraction to H/C stories might be a result of desiring comfort for myself when I was younger and struggling in school. However, I'm fairly certain that when I started reading hurt-comfort fic in early high school I projected myself more on the character being comforted, while today I think I identify more with the character doing the comforting.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?

Well, I'm a little surprised that not all of us identify as female, but I can also see how some guys might enjoy reading Nabari... they can't all only be into Naruto! I'm frankly glad that only 20-21% of us are under 17; you feel awkward when you're technically an adult but feel like you're surrounded by junior high students. Although that also explains why the Nabari fandom always seemed more intelligent and socially-conscious than other fandoms, even those two or three time the size. Wasn't really expecting to see so many asexual people, but hey, perhaps they can identify with Yoite.

6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?

Seeing as both the anime and manga are done (at least in Japan, as far as the manga is concerned) I expect it's popularity to decline steadily once all of the manga is released --officially-- in English. I doubt it will disappear into fandom-

oblivion though, as the fans seem like their strongly connected to the series; we would be hard-pressed to find another series that gives us what Nabari did but better or more satisfying.

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

Oh yes, lol. I ship Miharu/Yoite and Raikou/Gau. I'll also read Yukimi/Raikou or Yukimi/Yoite, but I don't consider it as canon or 'legit' as Miharu/Yoite or Raikou/Gau. It might sound weird, but I only seem to read fanfic for shipping purposes. There are a lot of series I follow but don't read fanfic of, usually because I don't ship any couples that don't get what I consider a sufficient amount of attention in the actual series or if I don't really consider any 2+ characters in the series to be a couple or to have the possibility of a romantic relationship that wasn't or was insufficiently touched on in the actual series.

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

Besides the series itself, I really like the other people in it. I mean, I'd actually enjoy meeting them in real life, unlike some other fans.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

I wish the anime covered more of the manga! Like if they delayed making the anime until more of the manga was released or if they made OVAs or continuations... especially since they killed off Raikou in the anime and never saw Yoite through to his end. I also wish that iTunes (America) would carry more of Velpunch's music because "Crawl" is an awesome song.

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

You can just refer to me as Meghan.

1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

I'm a senior in highschool somewhere in Indonesia. Yes, my family and friends know that I read a lot of mangas and most of my friends know that I'm active in fandoms.

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

The plot is beautiful--and the fact that it makes me cry.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?  
Nabari fandom--four months at most. Fandom in general--five years.
4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.  
Useful skills, not so much, but internet-socializing skills, yes. Friendlier in real life, yes, probably.
5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?  
Not surprised. Especially the gender and the sex--I suspect females would enjoy Nabari more.
6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?  
The future looks bleak, I think. I don't see an growth in the fandom--like maybe meme or just authors writing a fic, even though the manga itself just finished not long ago. Fullmetal Alchemist, for example, still has tons of fans and the fandoms are updated regularly even though it's ended like a year ago--I don't think Nabari has this kind of fans (who's loyal to boot), maybe because the fact that FMA is shonen therefore kind of hard to be replaced, while Nabari gives off a softer, lulling feeling. Nabari is great, but internationally it's not really known, that's why I'm kind of pessimistic about the fandom's future.
7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?  
Yes, I am. Tobari/Miharu, or All/Miharu in general. It does matter--because the thing that makes me watch the anime in the first place is because in the opening clip there's this super cute main character with bunch of cool guys; I feel the need to pair them. I watched the first episode without skipping parts--I found it entertaining and intriguing enough--and in the later episodes trying to figure out the pairing helps me focusing into the anime. Soon after that, however, I don't care about the pairing anymore because I don't really want to ruin the awesome plot (squealing a little bit when Yoite hugged Miharu, probably, but that was all).
8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?  
Truthfully, I don't know--I haven't been here long, and I'm not exactly active on it.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?  
I would wish that more authors wrote fanfictions and I hope there are some generous fans who translated some doujins for us.
10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.  
Just use this initial: FB.
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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.  
College student somewhere in Southeast Asia. My family doesn't know what fandom is, but they know I like animated movies/series and that I talk about them with friends.
2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?  
Because it's a character development>>fight scenes kind of shounen. I like how the girls are treated in Nabari. I like slash.
3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?  
Nabari... at least three years. If you count all the poking around I did on CCS fansites, I've been in fandom since grade school.
4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.  
Therapeutic, definitely. Fandom is my preferred form of relaxation. Also, shipping. I love shipping. And making friends. As for useful skills... my English is SO MUCH BETTER for it.
5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?  
I don't really think about that kind of thing, but yeah it's more or less how I'd pictured it.
6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?  
Hmm. Depends on what you mean by "survive." New people will always eventually stumble across it, maybe write a fic, draw some art, mention it to friends, hit up Nabari archives and wikis. It'll pop up from time to time in

discussions/imagedumps/etc. But constant, organized fandom activity? Will definitely keep petering out, IMO. ;\_;

7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?

HAHAHA am I ever. Yoite/Miharu, Kouichi/Raimei (forever bitter about this one KOUICHI!!!) and Raikou/Gau are my top three. As for how shipping defines my experience... see: [http://media.tumblr.com/tumblr\\_ly0z9e1qDx1qfh0xg.gif](http://media.tumblr.com/tumblr_ly0z9e1qDx1qfh0xg.gif) I try to be nice about it, though. Ship and let ship, etc.

8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?

It's nice. I've yet to see people being mean and spiteful.

9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?

Population increase by 1000%. :/

10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.

"AT," if you please. :D

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1. Who are you in real life? Location? Occupation? Do your family/friends know you are into fandom? Please give whatever details who feel comfortable giving.

18. University of Pennsylvania. College freshman. Friends know I'm very interested in anime, sister also, parents don't realize how serious it is (but that's parents for you).

2. Why is Nabari no Ou significant to you?

I enjoyed the characters, particularly Raikou Shimizu. Usually the series I like have characters that are role-models to me or characters I really identify with. Aside from murdering people, I really admire Raikou's funny, composed personality. Plus he's cute. Nabari was also one of those wonderful series that strongly develop relationships of all kinds (not just unhealthy ones) between its characters. I found Thobari and Hanabusa very sweet.

3. How long have you been in both the Nabari fandom and fandom in general?

I discovered Nabari two years ago?

4. What do you get out of fandom in general? For example, has participating in fandom helped you develop any useful skills? Is fandom therapeutic to you? Etc.

The fandom is therapeutic definitely. For some bizarre reason, nothing cheers me up more than seeing fanart or reading fanfiction of my favorite characters happy. It's strange actually because reading about other real life people happy sometimes makes me jealous, but with fictional characters, it's almost like they're an extension of myself almost? Even though I don't TALK to them or anything, it's just interesting how my relationship with fictional characters is different from that with real people I know, or even real people I don't know well.

5. What are your reactions to the demographic breakdown of the Nabari fandom that came out of my survey? Does anything surprise you? Or is it mostly how you expected?  
Was expected sex-wise. Surprised there was so much variance in gender, and even more impressed by the variance in sexuality. Impressed overall by all the data you've gathered.
6. What do you think the Nabari fandom's future will be like? Do you think it will survive further into the future-- if so, how far out? Do imagine it might change in any way? Why?  
I don't mean to offend but I don't believe Nabari is a fandom that will survive the test of time to the degree of say, Star Wars or Harry Potter, or even Bleach. I believe it effects a rather smaller demographic, but those effected are effected strongly. It's a difficult series to discover, but also difficult series to forgot.
7. Are you a shipper? If yes, what Nabari pairings do you ship? How much does your shipping define your experience in the fandom?  
When a series is over, all we have is fanfiction to fully explore all remaining possibilities. So I intend to ship as much as I can--no character is safe!  
RaikouxGau are my OTP though, and I feel bad shipping Miharu with anyone but Yoite.
8. What do you like about the Nabari fandom?  
It has a nice atmosphere that attracts very aesthetically-oriented, poetic/romantic types, I feel.
9. If you could change something about the Nabari fandom, what would it be?  
Fanboys would be nice.
10. If I quote you in my report, how would you prefer I name you? (First name, a username, initials?) If you wish to be anonymous, please tell me.  
Anonymous is nice.