

ABSTRACTS

Better Living Through Comics

The 2023 Joint Conference of the International Graphic Novel & Comics and the International Bande Dessinée Society



Conference
art by Tanitoc

Michelle Ann Abate
The Ohio State University

One Does Not Simply Overlook New Forms of Sequential Art: Memes as Fixed-Image Comics

Memes are one of the most popular and pervasive forms of communication in the twenty-first century. Whether taking the form of Grumpy Cat, This Is Fine, and Kombucha Girl or Distracted Boyfriend, Condescending Wonka, and Real Housewives/Smudge the Cat, they combine a fixed image macro with captioned text to present a clever observation, engage in witty word play, or offer pointed socio-political commentary. In so doing, memes entertain us, comfort us, amuse us, distract us, and even anger us.

My presentation will make a case that memes are not just an important part of our lexicon in the twenty-first century, they are also an important type of digital comic. Memes engage in the complex interplay of visual and verbal elements that mirror the mechanics of cartoon art. Whether taking the form of stand-alone panels like Old Economy Steve, Overly Attached Girlfriend, and Tea-Sipping Kermit or sequences like American Chopper, Hotline Bling/Drake, and Pun Dog, memes constitute a new form of fixed-image comics.

VIGNETTES OF WAR: Representations of the Colombian intern armed conflict through Comics and Graphic Novels.

**Daniel E. Aguilar-Rodríguez, PhD
Jessica Contreras
Enrique Uribe-Jongbloed, PhD**

**School of Communication – Journalism
Universidad Externado de Colombia**

Colombia is a country with a long history of political caricature, but the comic and graphic novel scene is relatively recent (Uribe-Jongbloed y Aguilar-Rodríguez, 2021) and closely linked to an important period in contemporary history (Roncallo-Dow, Aguilar-Rodríguez y Uribe-Jongbloed, 2019). The article proposes an approach to the national comic and graphic novel produced during the last 10 years, to understand the way in which the internal armed conflict has been represented, the actors in it, the victims, those responsible for the violent acts

and, above all, the way in which this type of narratives have become an important tool for the visibility of victims' voice.

The document evidences the approaches from which the narratives about the war in Colombia was developed, understanding such narratives as fictional, documentary or by imputation, which constitutes said graphic products in important references within the participatory construction of historical memory in Colombia.

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Maheen Ahmed

Tracking Down and Tracing Images: Lynda Barry's comics

"The thing I call my mind seems to be kind of landlord that doesn't know its tenants" (Lynda Barry, *What It Is*, p. 5)

"So where's the comic? The comic is somewhere between the person who made it and the person who's looking at it. It's a relationship." Lynda Barry in an interview (Misemer, p. 174)

As suggested by its title, *What It Is* is full of pertinent questions about the processes of creating and perceiving pictures, beginning with the question, "What is an image?" and eventually, the roots of imagination. The questions continue: "What is the difference between a ghost and a image?" (p. 56), "What is a bad drawing? What is a good drawing?" (p. 76), "What makes something meaningful?" (p. 96). And of course, the central, interconnected two questions about value judgments, that continue to haunt Barry: "Is it good? Does this suck?" (p. 123).

Such fundamental questions recur in Barry's other comics, most of which are on a mission to tackle the "unthinkable", everything that remains outside the confines of language, the sources of images. This quest for a means of communicating the hidden unfolds in an almost obsessive way, filling up single-lined composition books with an energy that expresses a *horror vacui* through their intense, elaborate but also playful and philosophical pages. Often resembling the exercise books used in her classes, all of Barry's books tease the boundaries between comics, diaries, sketch books and

educational manuals: they combine exercises she uses in her own teaching, and sometimes even her students' materials, autobiographical episodes and meditations.

In elaborating on these possible constituents and methodologies of visualizing the sources of images, of bringing images to life, my paper will focus on:

- the connections between childhood memories and childish and untutored drawing styles;
- the importance of drawing by hand and by extension, the affective connections suggested through the artist's implied presence and through the visual forms of communicating; and ultimately
- the role of comics as an accessible means of collaborating and connecting

Selected secondary literature

Hillary L. Chute, "Materializing Memory: Lynda Barry's One Hundred Demons." *Graphic Subjects: Critical Essays on Autobiography and Graphic Novels*, edited by Michael Chaney, University of Wisconsin Press, 2011, pp. 282-309.

Susan Kirtley, *Lynda Barry: Girlhood through a Looking Glass*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi: 2012.

Leah Misemer, "Teaching the Unthinkable Image with Lynda Barry" interview *With Great Power Comics Great Pedagogy: Teaching, Learning and Comics*, ed. Susan E. Kirtley, Antero Garcia and Peter E. Carlson, Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi: 168-174.

Author bio

Maaheen Ahmed is associate professor of comparative literature at Ghent University and principal investigator of COMICS, a five-year multi-researcher project, funded by the European Research Council which seeks to piece together a cultural history of children in European comics. Her previous research has focused on the functioning of experimental comics and the relevance of good monsters in alternative comics. She also has a keen interest on the kinds of memories informing comics. She recently edited the *Cambridge Companion to Comics* (forthcoming in 2023).

Ibrahim Mertcan Alcinkaya

Abstract for IGNC/IBDS Conference 3-7 July, 2023

Ibrahim Mertcan Alcinkaya is a third-year PhD student at Doctoral School of Humanities, University of Warsaw. He is currently writing his dissertation on the reconceptualization of police power in its Foucauldian understanding. Alcinkaya won a conference trip grant to Dublin, Ireland, yet was unable to participate in-person due to insufficient amount of time to complete visa procedures. His research

interests include police militarization, speculative fiction, and post-2010 video games. Alcinkaya is currently teaching at American Studies Center, University of Warsaw, including a lecture titled “History of Police Militarization in the US. He also owns his online English Course named “English with Mert.” He enjoys watching and playing basketball and American football.

“Bees Know More Than We Do:” Anthropocene in Ann Nocenti and David Aja’s *The Seeds* (2020)

Realistic portrayals of the contemporary social realities—including the concurrent social issues such as state violence, socioeconomic inequality, and racial and sexual discrimination—in American graphic novels and comics have reinforced the literary status of American comics, further gaining the medium scholarly attention. Besides the widely-known titles such as Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons’ *Watchmen* (1987), Frank Miller and *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (1986) and *Batman: Year One* (1987)—all of which contributed to the popularization of the adaptation of comics narratives to cinema—multiple twenty-first century non-mainstream and non-superhero stories such as Brian Wood’s *DMZ* (2005-2012), Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home* (2006), and Richard McGuire’s *Here* (2014) allow for critical readings in their own unique ways through portraying social issues that have been categorized under Anthropocene. One of the arguably unique examples of ecocriticism in twenty-first century graphic novels is Ann Nocenti and David Aja’s *The Seeds*. *The Seeds* offers a two-faceted perspective on the current socio-ecological reality in which the counteractions against the destructive consequences of eco-engineering function as a glimmer of hope for many people. While presenting a dystopian future for the world’s ecology—caused by overpopulation and environmental pollution—the graphic novel appears to prescribe activism as a potential method of mitigating and/or preventing the human-made ecological catastrophe. In *The Seeds*, the world’s ecology is devastated by the quasi-extinction of bees and virtually all animals, which renders pollination impossible, thus the barren lands, and air toxicity. Vis-à-vis the catastrophic scenery, eco-technology corporations such as Green Ecotech consider apocalypse of ecology as an opportunity to secure a market-leading position in eco-engineering. In its dystopian representation of the future and juxtaposition of human detriment to the ecosystem with progressive activism, *The Seeds* offers a unique critique of what James W. Moore describes as “Capitalocene”—a part of which signifies the destructive consequences of capitalism—by depicting a potential future comprised virtually of no friendly habitats for animals and plants.

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Presenter: Chadwick Allen, University of Washington (callen3@uw.edu)

Paper Title: "Reimagining the Ancient Indigenous Past: Refusing Prehistory in *Dawn Land*"

Paper Abstract:

David Graeber and David Wengrow's magisterial rethinking of the distant human past, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity* (2021), is (finally) shaking up how we conceive the so-called "rise" of human civilizations around the world. And yet, even these innovative, progressive-thinking scholars of anthropology and archaeology remain wedded to a Western binary that segregates so-called proper "history" from so-called "prehistory." This paper investigates an example of an Indigenous American counter-narrative, Abenaki author Joseph Bruchac's (pre)historical YA novel *Dawn Land* (1993) and its adaptation as a (pre)historical YA graphic novel, Joseph Bruchac and Will Davis's *Dawn Land* (2010). What happens when Indigenous peoples (re)assert not only their longevity in the land, but also their inherent historicity? How do Indigenous writers like Bruchac harness the power of tribal "traditions" and "legends" to make "authentic" claims to—and "factual" assertions about—the distant past? And how might the conventions of the graphic novel either support or undermine such claims and assertions?

Presenter Bio:

Chadwick Allen is Professor of English and Adjunct Professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Washington Seattle, where he also serves as the Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Advancement. Author of the books *Blood Narrative: Indigenous Identity in American Indian and Maori Literary and Activist Texts*, *Trans-Indigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies*, and *Earthworks Rising: Mound Building in Native Literature and Arts*, he is a former editor of the journal *Studies in American Indian Literatures* and a past president of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA).

Safa Alshammary
Ph.D. University of Granada

Appropriation and Appreciation in *Habibi*

In 2011, Thompson published *Habibi*, a graphic novel about a romantic fable set in an imaginary contemporary West Asian country. On November 5, 2019, BBC News listed *Habibi* on its list of the 100 most influential novels. Craig Thompson cherry-picks cultural images and ideas for his representation of the East. The aesthetic purpose of his drawings and narrations are mere accessories to make an eye candy creation for his graphic novel. Rather than representing Eastern cultures from an academic platform and using extensive research, Thompson chooses what to include in his book, arbitrarily filling its pages with misrepresentations rather than appropriate representations. Too many artists assume this depiction of the WANA region, and some, like Thompson, have never traveled there, taking their influences from media and Western sources for their work. The representation of the East as inferior forces WANA people to accept being called and categorized as Other. Authors must levy criticisms on concepts so we do not dehumanize people. Regrettably, Thompson played a worn-out parody of Muslim men, which reproduced racial prejudices. As a privileged and entitled person, Craig Thompson engaged in cultural appropriation, failing to humanize Muslims and marginalizing them with mixed messages.

Varsha Anirudhan, Swetha Antony and Melanie E. Hughes

Title: The 'Self' and the 'Other': Towards an Understanding of the Narrative Experience of ADHD in Evi Tampold's *The Hallway Closet* and Candace Curry's *Adhd Isn't Me!*

Abstract:

This paper is contextualised by the question do comics have a role to play in well-being by focusing on the lived and narrative experiences of ADHD. This study takes forward two focal

points of the conference - life writing as a form of self-care and representations that challenge, strengthen or complicate stereotypes by analysing two autobiographies: Evi Tampold's *The Hallway Closet* (2015) and Candace Curry's *Adhd Isn't Me!* (2021). The research centres around the question of the everyday experiences of ADHD represented in the narratives from the perspective of a non-expert and how that intervention is contributing to a general understanding about ADHD, be it physiological or psychological. The methodology for the study will be inducted from the discourse of medical humanities and visuality studies. As far as the former is concerned the emphasis will be on the shift towards understanding pathographies as life writings that engage with accounts of living with maladies of mind and body, soul and self rather than memoirs of dying. The questions from visuality studies are as follows: Does visuality help in a better comprehension of a medical condition? Does it have the potential to heal the 'self'? When it comes to engaging with well-being and understanding self-care, does visuality impact you into being empathetic? This study further explores disruption as a trope on two accounts: firstly, how pain, disease, diagnosis, treatment, or recovery bring in a tangible disruption to the everyday and secondly, how the peculiarities associated with the genre of graphic medicine such as its emphasis on visuality offers a disruption from the inaccessible jargon of medical discourse.

Submitted by

Varsha Anirudhan, Swetha Antony and Melanie E. Hughes

Varsha Anirudhan (M.A), M.Phil. Research Scholar, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

Swetha Antony (PhD), Assistant Professor, Department of English, Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, Delhi, India

Melanie E. Hughes (MLS, MBA), Librarian, Coordinator of Automation and Technical Services & Coordinator of Archives & Special Collections Campus Archivist & Library Liaison to Education, Faculty co-sponsor GREENadiers, Sustainability Club Faculty co-sponsor JSU, Jewish Student Union, Indiana University Southeast Library, New Albany, US.

The Green Lantern Corps:
What can we as Western researchers learn from the Colonialist
mistakes of the Guardians of the Universe?

Alexander Ashman, University of Glasgow

From the Silver Age onwards Green Lantern comics have dealt with issues of the colonialist past of the Corps, especially the actions of the Guardians of the Universe.

Part 1;

The history of the Guardians of the Universe.

How to them, "Might was right"; they believed they had a moral supremacy that the Universe had to abide by.

Part 2;

Krona and the Manhunters

The creation of an army to apres their will that led to a genocide.

Part 3;

Red Lanterns as colony rage/case study Irish famine

Part 4;

How has the Green Lantern Corps moved on from this?

Part 5;

What can or does this tell us about our place in a post-colonial world?

Conclusions;

How we must acknowledge the role colonialism has played in both comics, their study and wider academia.

"Why Photonovels are not Comics with Pictures"

Professor Jan Baetens

Cultural Studies/Literary Studies, University of Leuven

jan.baetens@kuleuven.be

Intermediality in comics is not only "internal" (word and image relationships inside the medium) but also "external" (relationships between comics and other media). The language of comics has been often compared to cinema (a good recent example being the book by David Pinho Barros, *The Clear Line in Comics and Cinema*, Leuven UP, 2022) as well as to photographic narratives in various formats (magazines, books, installations, instagram, etc.). In light of the recent return of the photo novel in French publication, no longer in magazine format but in book format, I will expand on Pinho Barros's critical take on comics intermediality by examining the lasting impact of comics on contemporary photo novel productions in fiction as well as nonfiction, both in purely photonovel format (like in the work by Vincent Jarousseau or Benoît Mitaine) and in hybrid formats mixing drawings and photographs inside the same publication (a trend launched by authors such as Jean Teulé and Emmanuel Guibert). All these works and authors share a strong commitment to societal issues and commitment and they definitely also impact the way in which the language of comics and visual narrative in print is evolving today.

Gabriela-Alexandra Banica

SOAS, MA

Morgenstadt 2050: Stories from Today & Tomorrow- Comics for a sustainable future

The current paper is set to analyse the Goethe Institute in Taipei's project *Morgenstadt 2050: Stories from Today & Tomorrow* (2011) meant to promote public awareness of climate change, in relation to the matter of how comics can have a role to play in people's wellbeing.

The institute invited 17 comic artists from Taiwan, China, Japan, Germany and South Korea to create comics that contrast the city they lived in the year 2011 with an imagined one where sustainability has been achieved. According to the initiator of the project, back then director of the Goethe Institute in Taipei, Markus Wernhard: "Comics are a good means of addressing the issue of climate change, sustainability and ecology because it's well received among the younger generation". He came up with the idea of *Morgenstadt 2050* after reading *City of Tomorrow — A Response to Climate Change*, a report compiled by Germany's Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The comic project was one in a series of programs the institute created to relate to the issue of environmental sustainability, as part of their cultural policy agenda. It also included a two-day workshop for the artists involved in order for them to get acquainted with the different emphases that different societies place on environmental issues.

David Pinho Barros

University of Porto

Hotel Comics: Pleasures and politics of the *bande dessinée* resort

Comics, hotel, holidays, space, culture, politics, hedonism, wellbeing

The hotel is a major institution of modern times, and a space of multiple and oftentimes ambiguous functions, facilitating a wide array of experiences, from serene wellbeing activities to pivotal political meetings. Its representation in the narrative arts is as pervasive as it is fundamental for the cultural crystallisation of this establishment, and its presence in the francophone *bande dessinée* is no exception. In this corpus, *Spirou & Fantasio* is undoubtedly the series which gave the hotel its most demanding role as a stage for action, but a considerable number of less well-known comics albums of the twentieth century set their humoristic or adventurous plots in resorts, and often claimed the bellhop as their central character. Jaboune and Pinchon's *Frimousset hôtelier* (1928), Perré's *Zigoto apprenti-hôtelier* (1954), and Mat's *Bouclette hôtelière* (1957), for instance, all offer, through the depiction of hotels and their staff, fascinating accounts of their times' social expectations, habits, hierarchies, tensions, and pleasures. This paper intends to trace and discuss the portrayal of the hotel in French-speaking comics by relating it to the momentous history of modern vacationing, the political role it played at critical stages of the twentieth century, and the immense narrative possibilities it offered to comics authors.

David Pinho Barros (Porto, 1986) is a professor, researcher and curator in the fields of literature, film, and comics. He holds a BA in Modern Languages and Literatures from the University of Porto, an MA in Communication Sciences from the New University of Lisbon, a PhD in Literature from the KU Leuven, and a PhD in Literary, Cultural and Interartistic Studies from the University of Porto, with a thesis elaborated under a cotutelle agreement between both institutions. Between 2008 and 2021, he worked as a curator and producer of exhibitions and film events in Portugal, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Brazil, and taught film and comics history and analysis at the Alliance Française, at the University of Porto, at the University of Minho, at the New University of Lisbon, and at the Catholic University of Portugal. He is now an assistant professor at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto and a researcher at the Margarida Losa Institute for Comparative Literature. His book *The Clear Line in Comics and Cinema: A Transmedial Approach* has just been published by Leuven University Press.

Franco-Chinese graphic novels: heal, free, reinvent.

Jean-Baptiste Bernard

In the past decade, a growing number of publications tends to show that graphic novel may be the favorite medium for Franco-Chinese creators to reach a wide Francophone audience. At the exception of Kevin Tran's work on Youtube, no other medium has been able to offer to Franco-Chinese creators a space where their voices can be heard by many, whether they tackle stereotypes or seek to invent a personal path to happiness. This paper would aim to show, through a few examples found in Lucie Quéméner's *Baume du tigre* (2021), Kei Lam's *Banana girl* (2017) and *Les Saveurs du béton* (2021), Lin Li-Chin's *Formose* (2011) and *Goán tau chez moi* (2021), how Franco-Chinese creators address anti-Chinese and more broadly anti-Asian hate, the unresolved French imperialist past in China, the difficulty to grow up in multicultural environments or families, and to cope with the stereotypes attached to China and Chinese people (whether they concern food, language, or body and sexuality). At the same time, the intermedial nature of graphic novel would be interrogated in order to investigate why this medium seems more successful or suitable than others in allowing creators to explore those themes.

Presenter: Susan Bernardin, Oregon State University (Susan.Bernardin@oregonstate.edu)

Paper Title: "Making Memory: Arigon Starr's *Super Indian*"

Paper Abstract: During the first year of the pandemic, Arigon Starr (enrolled, Kickapoo Tribe; Mvskoke) illustrated a comic for "The Nib," a daily online US comics collection. In "How to Have a Powwow in a Pandemic," Starr and collaborator S.I. Rosenbaum place the virtual powwow movement in an ongoing story of Indigenous creative resilience in the face of viral pandemics and settler violence. A history lesson on powwows and jingle dresses hinged on Indigenous futurity, this comic directs us to Starr's broader comics project of reparative mnemonics and generative world-making. A musician, playwright, and self-described "five-tool comic player" (words, art, inks, colors, letters) best known for her multi-volume *Super Indian* series, Starr explicitly aims to nourish Indigenous communities through visual storytelling. Although she advances Indigenous thriving across her arts practices, this paper focuses on Starr's particular engagements with the restorative and animating power of memory. In Starr's comics universe, the activation of memory is not just intergenerational, invoking forgotten histories of Indigenous antecedents, but *generative*, bringing into being an alternative comics genealogy. Starr's purposeful aesthetic design of *Super Indian* repurposes the comics lexicon; in so doing, she insists on creating a past of Indigenous comics that in turn informs vital Indigenous futures.

Presenter Bio: Susan Bernardin (she, her) is Director of the School of Language, Culture, and Society at Oregon State University. She has published widely on foundational and contemporary Native authors as well as Indigenous mixed-media, visual arts, and comics. A co-author of *Trading Gazes: Euro-American Photographers and Native North Americans, 1880-1940* (Rutgers University Press), she also facilitated a new edition of the regional classic, *In the Land of the Grasshopper Song* (Bison Books) in collaboration with Terry Supahan and André Cramblit. A former president of the Western Literature Association, she is a two-time recipient of its Walker Award for best published essay in the field of Western American Studies and also recipient of the Beatrice Medicine Award, given by the Association for the Study of American Indian Literatures for the article, “Acorn Soup is Good Food: L. Frank, *News from Native California*, and the Intersections of Literature and Visual Arts.” She is also editor of *Gender and the American West* in the Routledge Gender Companion Series (2022).

A Cure for Insomnia? The lived experience of reading digital comics

Linda Berube, Centre for Human-Computer Interaction Design, City, University of London and British Library, UK

Digital comics reach such a wide audience of readers because not only do they reflect who they are and who they dream of being, but they provide a sense of fun and play at the literal click of a button. In this presentation, I will review findings from some recent digital comics readers’ observation sessions, using HCI and UX methods to encourage them to think aloud and talk through their lived experience of reading comics.

These lived experiences can then be shared in online communities where people share and are seen. According to Sean Kleefeld, the unique environment of webcomics eliminates “geography and physical barriers...and people from anywhere in the world can meet online and develop a community centered around a webcomics theme. With under-represented groups, this can be extremely important” (pp. 79-80).

The findings from my PHD AHRC-funded research supports this view, as well as the range of reader responses to digital comics, from fun to control to anticipation, and sometimes just a plain old antidote to insomnia.

References

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Deconstruction of Acid Attack Violence in Ram Devineni’s *Priya’s Mirror* (2016) and *KAIA: awakening in the deep* (2022)

Partha Bhattacharjee
SRM University AP

Abstract

“Acid attacks happen across the world, and it affects women disproportionately. Although it is also unacceptable when acid violence occurs against men, acid violence is a form of violence that has a disproportionate impact on women” (Acid Survivors Trust International). Mythological in its content, Ram Devineni’s *Priya’s Mirror* (2016) features acid attack survivors from New York City, Bogota, and New Delhi. The book is a celebration of freedom from the clutches of the scars society throw on the survivors. Along with using augmented reality, the comics shares awareness on the different dimensions of acid attack. On the other hand, *KAIA: awakening in the deep* (2022) is the mystical embodiment of Natalia Ponce de León, an acid attack survivor in Colombia, who is thrown into an abysmal situation of pain and depression that takes her on a journey of physiological and psychological “healing”. Natalia’s “Awakening” is not only the process which she has undergone, but also it is a process of self-awareness for the readers. Within the academic scope of comics studies and gender studies, this article attempts to manifest the causes and effects of acid attack violence and the physiological and psychological “healing”.

Keywords: Acid Attack Violence; Comics; Awareness; ‘Healing’

(De)Constructing the Stories of Gopal Bhar: A Lesson in Life Skills Medha Bhattacharyya, PhD Bengal Institute of Technology, India

The stories of Gopal Bhar are famous all-over West Bengal (India) and Bangladesh for their comic relief. The original stories were in Bengali, a common language spoken in the above two places. It was part of the oral tradition which later got down to being written, then were converted into comics and then cartoons. The comic strips were in English to appeal to the contemporary readers. It was said that Gopal was a court jester in the eighteenth century. These stories are humorous, often ridiculing figures of authority. The stories reveal how one can squeeze out life lessons of different situations in life using wit and humour. My paper will reveal how these stories impart important lessons of life. How are these stories anti-status quo? Why these stories cater to a wide age group of readerships? How do Gopal Bhar comic strips convey strong political thought? How does this comic strip contribute to the well-being of a community? In spite of the stories and cartoons, why did the comic strip survive?

Keywords: comic strip, humour, wit, stories, life skills, Gopal Bhar

Armelle Blin-Rolland

Abstract

Ecographic Narratives of Resistance and for Liberation: Mines, Nuclear Sites and Factory Farms in Bande dessinée

What part may comics play in a ‘more-than-human practice of resistance and liberation’ (Iovino 2017: 5)? This is the guiding question of this paper, which focuses on bandes dessinées that engage with what I term ‘hyper-sites’ of the Anthropocene: mines; nuclear sites; and factory farms. The paper explores ways in which the eco-decolonial graphics of Tétshim and Mukunday’s *Machini* militantly and creatively expose the materialities of noxious capitalist extractivism of ‘natural’ and ‘human’ resources in the DRC; the deployment of the potential of mark-making and comics’ resources for rescaling, re-framing and confrontation as part of the unmaking of France’s national nuclear narrative in Davodeau’s *Le Droit du sol* and Drandov and Alarcon’s *Au nom de la bombe*; and, in Léraud and Van Hove’s *Algues vertes*, the sensory-chromatic rendering of the contamination of the Breton environment by *hors-sol* dis/connection from the land and exploitation of factory farmed animals. These *bandes dessinées*, crucially, draw for the transformative recognition of interdependence across more-than-human graphic narratives grounded in a postcolonial and post-industrial world. As such, they are powerful case studies for an ecographics, and more broadly an ecocriticism, that is concerned with sketching out practices of creative resistance and liberation towards a just and habitable planet.

Author Bio

Dr Armelle Blin-Rolland is a Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies at Bangor University, Wales, UK. Her research specialisms include: *bande dessinée* and text/image studies; French and Francophone environmental humanities; and adaptation and intermediality. She has published widely on these topics, including in the journals *European Comic Art*, *Studies in Comics*, *Modern Languages Open* and *Modern and Contemporary France*. Her first monograph, *Adapted Voices*, was published by Legenda in 2015. Recent publications include the article ‘Towards an Ecographics’ in *European Comic Art* and a chapter on ecofeminist approaches to Breton comic art in the edited volume *Drawing (in) the Feminine*.

Michelle E. Bloom

Fighting for Quiet in Li-Chin Lin's 2021 graphic novel, *Goán tau, chez moi*

Bédéiste Li-Chin Lin depicts the fight for aboriginal, environmental rights in Taiwan in her 2017 graphic novel *Fudafudak* and portrays her struggles to defend her dual French-Taiwanese cultural, national and linguistic identities in the first 2/3 of her most recent album, *Goán tau chez moi*. The focus of this paper lies in Lin's continued activism in the form of self-advocacy to secure a quiet home environment in the last 4 chapters of *Goan tau chez moi*. Focusing on bold black and white imagery and lettering, Lin establishes the problem of the late night noise from the bar below her newly secured, subsidized (HLM) apartment. She portrays the ongoing torture, the seemingly losing battle against the various powers she is up against, from the bar owner to the HLM management to the city of Valence. Ultimately, against the odds, she triumphs in court, which requires the owners to add sound-proofing to their establishment. While compliance remains uncertain, a public health crisis of global proportions, the Covid-19 pandemic, secures peace for Lin when bars and restaurants are closed. This episode reflects the power of self-advocacy. It also reflects the up side of even a global public health disaster, which resulted in not only a huge number of lives lost and mental health problems such as depression, but also positive "side effects" such as the slowing down of life and the reduction in environmental and noise pollution.

Author Bio

Michelle E. Bloom is Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Riverside, where she teaches courses on French and world cinemas; comparative literature, la bande dessinée, food studies, Existentialism, the Holocaust, France & Asia. Her article on Guy Delisle's graphic novel *Shenzhen* appeared in *ImageText*. She has also published in *Comparative Literature*, *Film/Literature Quarterly*, *Gastronomica*, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture*, *Symposium*. Her book *Contemporary Sino-French Cinemas* was published by the University of Hawaii Press (2015). She is working on a documentary about her maternal family as Jews in France during the Holocaust.

Gareth Brookes

Materiality and Metalepsis in Small Press Comics and its Communities.

The materiality of the comic object has long been a preoccupation of small press creators. This is not simply a matter of aesthetic preference but is a factor in an alternative model of creator/reader dynamics, established through traces of the body left on the surface of a comic and reenforced by the production and distribution strategies of the small press community.

With reference to handmade comics such as Beatrice Mossman's *Daddy* (a comic which uses the device of carefully hand cut windows through its pages), I will discuss ways in which production strategies involving touch extend the agency of the reading body through interventions into the comic form.

To frame this argument, I will utilise narratological theory related to descending metalepsis, which Kukkonen (Kukkonen and Klimek, 2011) and Thoss (Thoss, 2015) use to account for transgressions of the 'real world' author into the storyworld of a comic. I will argue that small press creators have reformulated this type of metalepsis, playfully flattening the distance the author 'descends' to meet their 'audience.'

This alternative model of metalepsis is essential to understanding the small press community, and to its wellbeing and development, particularly as it struggles to re-establish networks post-Covid.



Beatrice Mossman - *Daddy* - 2021

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Stewart Brower

Community Engagement Through Graphic Scholarship

Academic libraries can play a vital role in supporting and nurturing the wellbeing of the campus communities they serve. In early 2021, the Schusterman Library at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa satellite campus took a new step towards building a culture of interest by creating the Graphic Scholarship Collection. This new endeavor is a curated collection of graphic novels, primarily non-fiction, aligned with the academic programs on campus, as well as promoting University initiatives in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). In addition to developing workshops and other learning activities around the collection, the library created a new Graphic Scholarship Studio environment for faculty, researchers, and students to learn more about creating new nonfiction comics. The collection's development has already had an impact by building and strengthening bonds across the campus, and it aims to mirror the growth of the University community. This paper will discuss the development of the Graphic Scholarship Collection and the events, activities, and outcomes it has generated since its founding, emphasizing its impact in campus DEI and health sciences education.

Louisa Buck

Abstract: Exhibition and Q&A

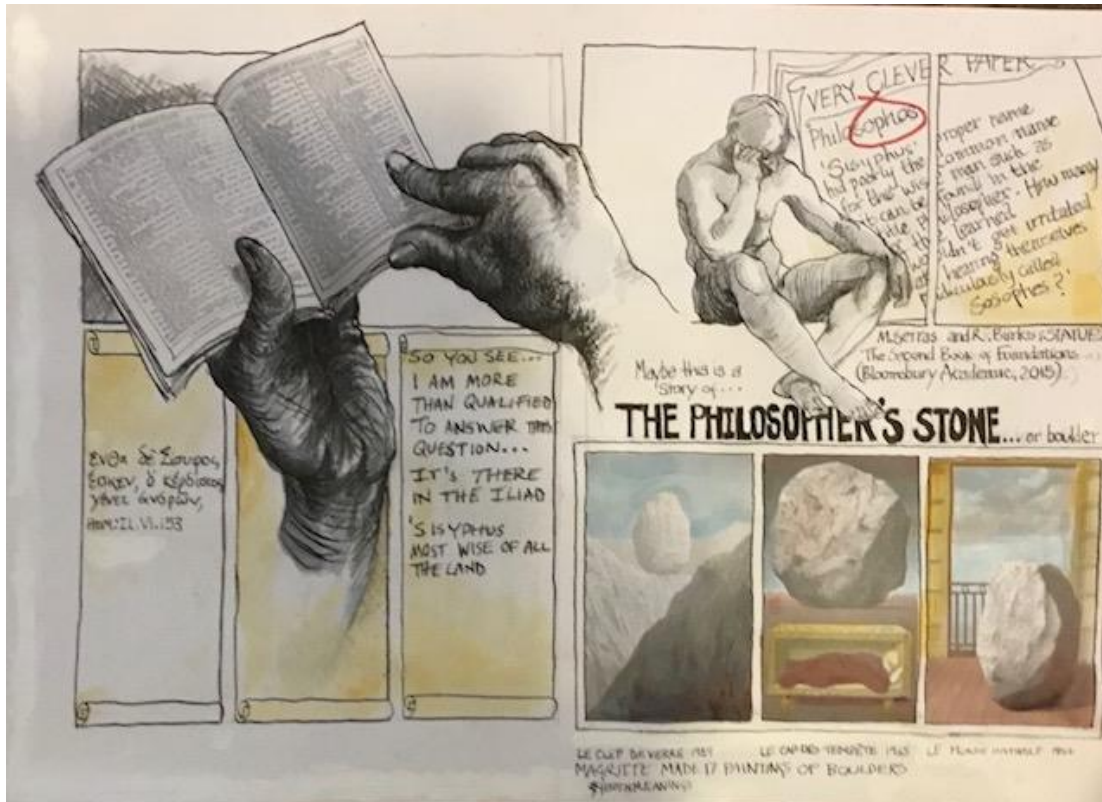
‘The Gods have become diseases’ (Jung, CW 13, par. 54)

With a research interest in classical reception and its impact on contemporary life, my recent work platforms practice based outcomes in terms of depictions of stigmatisation in language associated with mental health.

This exhibition was developed from ideas born out of my PhD research, which extended beyond my thesis remit. Whilst collecting data that contributed to the classical reception history of the mythological figure of Sisyphus, other histories became prominent that included ideas of philosophy and life meaning narratives.

This research is a novel approach to the international concern of mental health stigma. It is an original investigation into the empirical phenomenon of how Greek mythological suffering and punishment dialogues have seeped into the way that health practitioners and lay people discuss and understand mental health. The specific goal is to highlight how Greek mythology contributes to the narratives and vocabularies that are used to explain certain complexes and mental health conditions in a way that maintains stigma.

Arguably one of the first philosophers mentioned in western literature (‘most wise of all the land.’ Hom.II.6.153) and as a metaphor for meaninglessness, Sisyphus is perfectly placed to discuss these matters.



Michelle Bumatay

France in the Indian Ocean Past and Present: Tromelin and Mayotte

Taking a somewhat chronological approach, this presentation investigates France's past and present endeavors in the Indian Ocean through the islands of Tromelin and Mayotte. It first considers different kinds of shipwrecks by comparing *Les esclaves oubliés de Tromelin* by French artist Sylvain Savoia (2015) and *Droit du sol* by Réunion-based French doctor and artist Charles Masson (2009). While the first cuts between a contemporary research team investigating slave remains from a 1791 French East India Company shipwreck and imagined scenes of the slaves' experiences on Tromelin island, the second weaves together multiple characters' plotlines organized around daily shipwrecks of migrants to explore the contemporary disparity between lived experiences on Mayotte. The presentation then moves to examine how *Le turban et la capote* (2013) – an adaptation of Mahoran playwright Nassur

Attoumani's play of the same title illustrated by Madagascan artist Luke Razaka – mobilizes humor to unpack the sociocultural complexities of Mayotte's 2011 transition from a French Overseas Territory to an Overseas Department. In particular, I compare the stark contrast in tone between the three texts for, though the first two give (some) voice and space to indigenous peoples, the third centers indigenous experiences and voices as French.

Author Bio

An Assistant Professor of French at Florida State University, **Michelle Bumatay** specializes in African francophone and diasporic cultural production, focusing primarily on *bandes dessinées* as a fraught yet crucial site of meaning-making. Interested in questions of representation, migration, transcolonial violence, and historiography, she has published in *Contemporary French Civilization*, *Francosphères*, *European Comic Art*, *Research in African Literatures*, and *Alternative Francophone* and she has contributed chapters to *Postcolonial Comics: Texts, Events, Identities* (2015) and *Immigrants and Comics: Graphic Spaces of Remembrance, Transaction, and Mimesis* (2021). She is currently finishing her first manuscript entitled *Black Bandes Dessinées*.

Barbara Chamberlin

Walking the territory: connecting place, people and the comics page

The last few years have been extraordinary in terms of limits it has placed upon us all in our freedom to move, to connect, to feel safe. In times of limited mobility, walking for some became a daily means to recalibrate and reconnect, both within ourselves and with others, as well as offering opportunities for using walking as a creative tool (Overall, 2021), and thereby addressing the felt gaps in our lives. As a medium 'built on gaps and voids [that are] visible, tangible, encountered, seen, felt' (Fall, 2021: 25), comics are a rich context in which to explore the intersections of walking as process, walking as narrative frame, and creators and readers particularly within the turbulence of recent times.

This paper looks at contemporary comics that foreground walking within both creative process and narrative frame and that address limitations and gaps both within and beyond the page. These include: Lizzy Stewart's *Walking Distance* (2019) which uses walking as a tool to navigate both internal and external landscapes and considers the personal and political natures of being a woman walking in London; Oliver East's more abstract *Blocks* (2021) which was drawn while walking around the block during lockdowns; and Maxim Peter Griffin's *Field Notes* (2022) which explores the textured gaps in the landscape. Peterle's (2021) 'narrative geographies' will be used as a framework to explore the ways these texts intersect walking, author, place and comics to explore gaps. The paper will conclude by

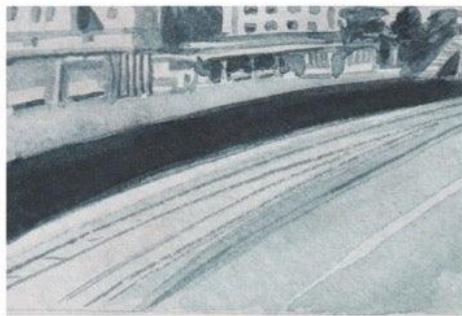
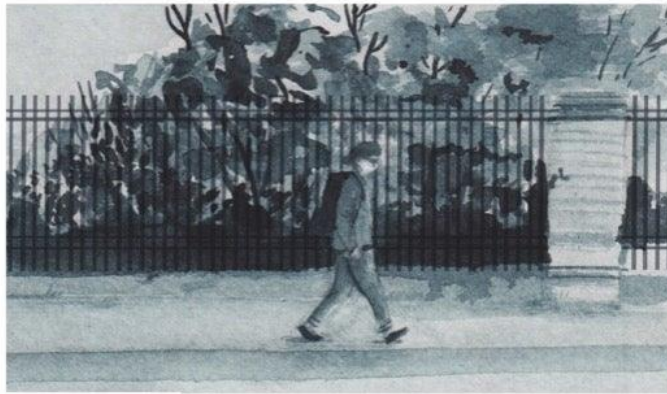
drawing on my experiences of walking as a means of ‘creative recovery’ (Reading and Moriarty, 2022) to address my own gaps in my practice-informed research.

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Example illustrations

I walk, like the women on screen, through my own life. I walk to the train and to my studio. I walk around the park, around Soho, around the streets-with-nice-houses-on, near my own, less-nice, flat.



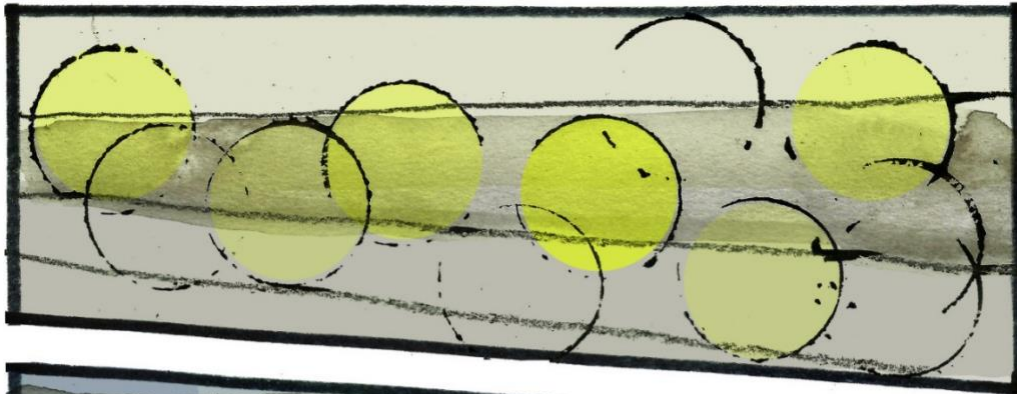
Sometimes I take a step that splits me in two, into the woman who is walking and another woman who steps back, to watch. I wonder what I look like, do I look like an adult with an adult life?



Walking Distance (2019) by Lizzie Stewart



Blocks (2021) Oliver East



Field Notes (2022) Maxim Peter Griffin

Biography

Barbara is a senior lecturer at the University of Brighton, delivering modules within the creative writing, media, literature, and English language degrees at both under and postgraduate levels. Increasingly, Barbara is able to bring comics studies into many of these disciplines, thus encouraging interdisciplinarity in her teaching as well as research. She has also co-curated the comics symposium *Graphic Brighton* across many of its iterations and is a member of CoRH!! (Comics Research Hub) at UAL. Barbara is also a part-time doctoral student at Central Saint Martins pursuing a practice-informed PhD that explores ways of reconstructing stories of British witches through paper cut, collaboration and walking in comics.

Uniting cartoonists: Covering Olympics cartoons amid the covid pandemic

Kin-Wai Chu, independent scholar

Experiencing not only a pro-longed pandemic that had seriously restricted mobility and social distance, but many Hong Kong cartoonists are also enduring on-going socio-political changes as an aftermath of the 2019-protests. Many of them who used to actively draw political cartoons expressing what are currently considered as politically incorrect have retreated from treading on the red line and shifted more to cartoon gags about current events. While most of them are freelancers working individually, they have gradually built up an informal community on the social media by posting cartoons on current affairs and popular culture and tagging each other as a form of internet challenge or using the same hashtags. These humorous cartoons shared on the social media can successfully trigger laughter. The social media also allows the public to virtually connect to one another, thus boosting a sense of togetherness and contributing to their mental well-being.

This presentation focuses on some intertextually connected cartoons covering interesting tidbits of the Tokyo Olympics 2020 created by a group of Hong Kong cartoonists. Although both the Olympics and those cartoonists worked under various restrictions, the very existence of the Olympic event and the cartoons have generated a sense of togetherness and resilience amid crises. I propose that those cartoons have a consolatory power to the creators and the readers.

Bio note: Kin-Wai Chu has recently obtained her PhD at KU Leuven. Her thesis was on post-2000 Hong Kong comics and her research interests include comics, cultural, feminist, and postcolonial studies.

Esther Claudio

Race and gender in emancipatory practices of care

Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic, the “Black Lives Matter” protests or even before the world-wide demonstrations against the effects of the 2008-9 economic crisis on the most vulnerable sectors of the population brought to light capitalism’s crisis of care. In a system built upon un(der)paid carework that heavily burdens marginalized groups, how does care play a role in narratives of emancipation? How do testimony and visualization contribute to subvert received notions of carework? How does mapping in comics operate as countergeography that challenges coloniality and colonialism? How does the body navigate but also resist intersecting forms of marginalization? In this presentation, I analyze strategies of self and communal care as anticapitalist strategies of survival and emancipation in the work of Bishakh Som’s *Apsara Engine*, Ana Penyas’s *Todo bajo el sol* (Everything Under the Sun) and Thi Bui’s *The Best We Could Do*. Drawing from the experiences of racialized women as described in these works, I study how the particular language of comics, through fragmentation, spatialization and representation provide new avenues to think of self-care and communal care as a form of resistance.

Keywords: Carework, racial capitalism, gender, critical geography, Penyas, Som, Bui.

Bio

Esther Claudio is a Postdoctoral Fellow for the “Racial Reckoning through Comics” Mellon Sawyer Seminar at the University of Iowa. She holds a Ph.D. in Hispanic Literatures from the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research studied the public articulation of trauma in Spanish graphic novels and her interests include gender studies, critical race theory, urban studies and visual culture. She co-founded the comicsgrid.com, one of the leading open access comics journals, and the Hispanic Comics Studies Collective. She co-edited *On the Edge of the Panel: Essays on Comics Criticism* (2015), and she is part of the editorial board of *Studies in Comics* and *CuCo: Cuadernos de Comics*. She features in the “*Love & Rockets: The Great American Comic Book*” Artbound documentary and she is proud to have written the Foreword for the English version of Ana Penyas’s *We’re All Fine*, published by Fantagraphics (2023). When she’s not entangled with academic work, she enjoys the company of her friends, volleyball, drawing, memes and volunteering at the dogs shelter.

Pro patria mori among the trenches: the (violent) truth of warfare in Tardi and Verney’s Putain de guerre !

Cláudia Coimbra

CETAPS/Faculty of Arts and Humanities, University of Porto (Portugal)

For almost a decade now a vast array of literature has been produced concerning the commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the Great War. While the subject has drawn attention from all quarters – political, military, sociological, economical – it is to the arts that the most challenging aspects of representation(s) of war seem to be assigned. In this regard, there are not many graphic novel authors who can claim to hold a mirror up to human nature as poignantly as Jacques Tardi. Accompanied by historian Jean-Pierre Verney's accurate narrative, Tardi recreates a universe of blood, mud and utter desolation in his masterpiece *Putain de guerre !* Published in 2014, the book is a testament to the trials of the *poilus*, the French soldiers morally trapped between civil obedience to jingoist *dicta* (cf. Horace's *dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*) and growing pacifism. In its portrayal of more than four long years of maddening violence and quest for survival (cf. the plight of the *gueules cassées*), Tardi's ingenious/genial art not only develops into a *catharsis* of the personal kind but also fosters an undeniable pedagogical approach. In this paper, therefore, it is my aim to postulate that, far from eliciting the destructive potential of comics' influence, *Putain de guerre !* poses as a means to heal both through factual history and collective memory; and ultimately, in its shock into consciousness, as a necessary and creative (though brutal) practice of therapy.

Keywords: war; suffering; art; memory; therapy.

The Paradox of Pleasure and the Perils of Reprints

Sam Cowling, Department of Philosophy, Denison University

In philosophical debates over well-being, the paradox of pleasure plays a pivotal role. Most often, it is held to show that hedonist theories – theories that identify well-being with pleasure – are self-defeating since they cannot be credibly integrated into our ordinary psychology. According to the paradox, if we are motivated by the self-conscious pursuit of

pleasure, we are more likely to find ourselves worse off. For instance, we are more likely to take pleasure in a chat with an old friend when done for the sake of catching up rather than for the sake of maximizing pleasure.

In this paper, I argue that the paradox of pleasure sheds light on a puzzle about the aesthetics of reprinted comics. This is because familiar practices for the reprinting of comics threaten to generate a variation on the paradox of pleasure—one that undermines our aesthetic engagement with the history of the comics medium. Roughly speaking, comprehensive and homogeneous reprints of historical strips or cartoons are likely to leave us estranged from the reprinted work on account of our standard reading practices. After exploring competing models for comics reprints, I discuss strategies for anthologizing historical comics and the broader implications for the aesthetics of reprinting comics.

Benoît Crucifix

The Joyful Hours: Comics in Children's Libraries in Interwar Brussels

In 1920 opened in Brussels the children's library "Les Heures Joyeuses," supported by the American Book Committee on Children's Libraries, which would also sponsor the opening of another branch in Paris four years later. Such libraries contributed to a public and social mission of literacy promotion as well as cultural diplomacy, in the aftermath of the First World War. While the educational ideals and reform goals around the founding of the library are familiar (Mitts-Smith 2007), the literary culture promoted by librarians in the interwar remains a question mark. Following up on Sylvain Lesage's study of librarians' discourses on comics in France (Lesage 2013), and relying on the library archives held at the Brussels City archives, this paper will consider the specificities of the Belgian "Heures Joyeuses" library and map out the connections with the developing culture of children's periodicals that emerged in the 1920s and 1930s. The Brussels library was located in a lower-income popular neighborhood and decidedly played a role of social service. But how did the library integrate the new print products for children that were emerging on the Belgian market? What place did librarians give to comics, illustrated books and periodicals in their choice?

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Biographical notice

Benoît Crucifix is Assistant Professor in Cultural Studies at KU Leuven and researcher at the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR), where he leads the FED-tWIN project “Popular Heritage Lost & Found.” His monograph *Drawing from the Archives: Comics Memory in the Contemporary Graphic Novel* will be published through Cambridge University Press in 2023. He is currently co-editor in chief of the open-access peer-reviewed journal *Comicalités*.

benoit.crucifix@kuleuven.be

Presenting the unrepresentable: comics, trauma and non-forgetting

Neal Curtis

n.curtis@auckland.ac.nz

There is a strong link between comics and memoir. Scholars like Hillary Chute and Adrielle Mitchell argue it is the co-presence of different temporal moments in comics that makes it amenable to representing memory, which is rarely ordered in a purely chronological sequence. When considered from the perspective of graphic memoirs dealing with trauma, however, this raises a second question regarding the representation of that which by its nature escapes memory. Trauma, whether considered from a psychoanalytic perspective or in terms of narratology is often considered something repressed and inaccessible or simply in excess of our capacity to tell a story adequate to it. In response, French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard sought to articulate a form of ‘non-forgetting’ rather than memory, an activity that emerges from the obligation to witness trauma while also testifying to the fact that something about it always escapes the need to bear witness. This paper therefore explores how the comics medium might afford opportunities for this type of non-forgetting in relation to trauma and mental health. In particular it focuses on the visual, borrowing the term ‘de-gridding’ from Chute to consider the explicit breakdown of panel structure in Lucy Sullivan’s *Barking*, and the deliberate paucity and strategic absence of images in Margaret Kimball’s *And Now I Spill the Family Secrets*.

Rodolfo Dal Canto

Peripheral spaces and marginal bodies: practices of resistance to subalternity in contemporary Italian graphic novel.

Narratives dealing with urban contexts have been central to European cultural production since the late 18th century, increasingly focusing on peripheral spaces. Comics are no exception, and in recent years Italian comics in particular have witnessed a blooming of narratives focused on marginal urban spaces: from Zerocalcare's *Rebibbia* to Fumettibrutti's Sicilian province, it seems that with the centrality of the graphic novel, the periphery as a storytelling space is catalyzing attention.

This paper aims to discuss the metaphorical representation of the dominance-subordination relationship between center and periphery within Italian graphic novels, proposing an analysis of some practices of resistance to this relationship. Moving from a text by Zerocalcare, *Dodici* (2013) and *I Sopravvisuti* by Hurricane (2018), I will show how the authors establish a correspondence between the socially marginal body and marginal urban space. Subalternity is staged and symbolized as a disease, enshrining the body-city parallelism and metaphorizing what de Certeau defines as the "creation of a city space": the production of a space of one's own; the imposition of a non-time; and the creation of an anonymous universal subject. Opposing these practices involves the crossing of space and memory, proposing counter-narratives and attempts at territorialization of space. The body, from a subordinate element, acquires new centrality and becomes an instrument of resistance and reappropriation.

This talk will travel along such intersections, showing the potential of comics to translate on the page the daily practices of the spaces we inhabit.

Short Bio

Rodolfo Dal Canto is PhD student at the University of L'Aquila, with a project investigating precariousness and the absence of future in contemporary Italian comics production through the Derridean notion of *hauntology*. He graduated in Italian Studies at the University of Bologna with a thesis on the comics narrative of urban transformation processes. He is an editor for the website "Lo Spazio Bianco" and the magazine "Le sabbie di Marte." He is interested in comics studies, cultural studies, literary criticism, spectrality and hauntology.

Inner-Integration and the Comics of Aline Kominsky Crumb

Surangama Datta
University of Bristol
Abstract



Fig. 1 Aline Kominsky-Crumb's "Goldie: A Neurotic Woman", in *Wimmen's Comix #1* in 1972.

Aline Kominsky Crumb's 1972 comic strip "Goldie: A Neurotic Woman" published in *Wimmen's Comix #1* emphasises ugliness, self-loathing and the neuroses of her protagonist. Goldie's representation is directly related to her self-perception, sometimes looking like a "giant slug" on the page, and at others, a regular teenager. These variations of the character's visual representations within the same strip highlights possibilities of "seeing" through a reflexive gaze that foregrounds psychological realities. The ebb and flow of her consciousness is captured in comix form. Throughout her comics career, Crumb arguably experiments with this gaze, accommodating complex modes of being, and engaging with varied aspects of the self. By interrogating the evolution of Aline Kominsky Crumb's art through the decades, my paper will unpack the question of radical self-acceptance through confronting varied, sometimes conflicting, aspects of the self in her comics, including the "grotesque", taboo sides. In other words, I will argue that her comics represent a process of inner integration, and though scholars have emphasised aspects of self-loathing in her work, I suggest that this is part of a larger process of self-acceptance and self-care. My paper will also contextualise her experimental, grotesque art in the context of feminist/women's underground comics.

Keywords: Aline Kominsky Crumb, *Love That Bunch*, Women's Comics, Underground Movement, Reflexive Gaze, Self-Acceptance, Self-Care, Feminist Controversy.

Paul Fisher Davies

Learning toki pona with comics (and comics with toki pona)

Toki pona is a minimalist language created by Sonja Lang in 2001. With only 120 core words and a simple grammar, it aims to be easy to learn but flexible and expressive, following a philosophy of focusing on the simple and good ('pona' means both).

A small but significant community of tokiponists has developed, and it is now second only to Esperanto in popularity. Given toki pona's reliance on context to settle its considerable ambiguity, it is unsurprising that comics have been used to explore its possibilities. It lends itself to meme-making with images, often translated, and to comics-making and translation, with the images carrying elements of story and specificity, enabling the toki pona to shine.

Further, given its minimal vocabulary, it lends itself to logographic systems of writing. Alongside Latin script, it has a system of 'hieroglyphs' created by Lang ('sitelen pona', simple/good image/writing) and an extensive system of writing based on Mayan glyphs, 'sitelen sitelen'. Seeing these used in toki pona comics in particular challenges thinking about comics as 'sequential art' or 'visual language'.

This paper, then, will explore how comics creation and adaptation supports toki pona, and how toki pona illuminates our thinking about comics.

Transnational pedagogy and the joy of academia through graphic narratives

Subir Dey^a and Eleanor Chiari^b

^a*Department of Design, IIT Delhi, India*

^b*SELCS, University College London, UK*

Graphic narratives have remained a crucial part of communication to deliver messages. In this article, we present an ongoing transnational project in which two researchers from different countries collaborate to find a common language of joy, dialogue, and pedagogy through graphic narratives and comics. The project results from the collaboration between UCL and IIT Delhi to develop academic ideas and deliverables for students. The research project aims to understand the existing creative methodologies in higher education and identify the lacunae in approaching pedagogy. We then present our findings from the project that can be used to address the needs of educators to use creative visual methodologies such as graphic narratives and comics in their teaching and assessment. The method of using comics for education by educators and practitioners anchors the

project in a practice-based research framework. This transnational project aims to develop a creative pedagogy for higher education by using comics as a medium of expression. Through academic dialogue, both researchers try to navigate the empowering and restorative ways comics can be used in academia and present a tangible methodology for a larger audience. The article finally discusses the critical findings from the project and their utility in the domains of language and communication design from an interdisciplinary perspective.

Meriel Dhanowa

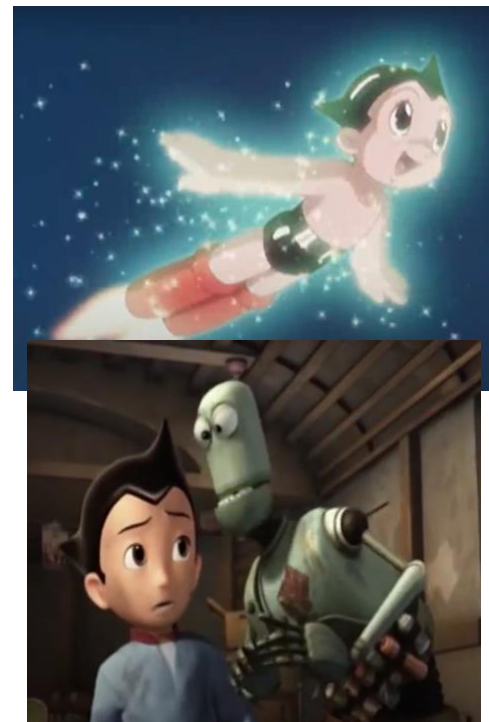
Does Manga produced by Netflix make you feel good?

This paper will explore the desire among Western film studios and streaming services to create adaptations of popular manga, which in most cases, have been live-action. We might imagine that these companies have noticed the increasing popularity of manga and anime during the pandemic, and are therefore trying to capitalise on the comics' success through appropriating recognisable names with their own adaptations. This is also apparent with the recent news that Disney is trying to acquire anime as content for Disney plus, as well as commissioning manga adaptations of their classic films.

However during the adaptation process, many of these have made deliberate changes that do not fit the spirit of the original in either a tonal or narrative sense. Whilst films must make changes out of necessity, it is also true that they often purposely change the narrative without care for the source material, or its pre-existing audience. Using elements of adaptation theory, I would examine this process.

One main example I will be discussing to highlight this is the 2009 CG-animated *Astro Boy* film, since this is a case where the source material contained a significant amount of content that was finally not used. While they attempted to keep one important narrative point, it was altered due to poor reception by American test audiences, as well as other serious topics from the manga being treated as jokes. The aesthetic changes made to the protagonist were also for the purpose of attracting a new audience, though it alienated the older fanbase in the process. This is evident when Rotten Tomatoes has it at 50% ratings for both critics and audience scores.

Another significant instance is the case of the 2009 film *Dragonball Evolution*. Not only is it known as one of the worst adaptations ever made but also one of the worst films ever made, receiving backlash from *Dragonball* fans to the extent that the writer apologised for it in 2016. This is also one example that can demonstrate how not all narratives translate well into live action, highlighting that comics are



the best medium to tell these particular stories. To conclude, this paper will argue it is important to consider the factor of motivation behind adaptation.



Tess Do and Charlotte Mackay

The Drawn Counter-Archive: Marginalised Memories, Violence and Resistance in the Graphic Novels *Descente en enfer* (2005) and *Quitter Saigon* (2010)

This talk proposes to examine how French-language graphic novels can contribute to the preservation of individual and collective memories of violence acting as powerful sites of counterinscription against dominant representations of History. Graphic novels contribute to important processes of community healing through the representation (recognition) of ignored or highly sanitised past traumas filtered, yet nonetheless present, through the subjectivity of the graphic artist. We will draw on two graphic novels: the first volume of Cécile Grenier, Pat Masioni, Ralph and Alain Austini's Rwanda 1994 series and the first volume of Clément Baloup's *Mémoires de Viet Kieu* series. Though concerned with distinct historical contexts and periods, both Grenier et al.'s *Descente en enfer* (2005) and Baloup's *Quitter Saigon* (2010) give voice to sensitive histories and memories that have been marginalised. This panel discussion will frame these graphic novels as engagé texts seeking to address gaps in official national and international historical records. They offer a more nuanced account of history through visual memory constituting, it will be argued, "a substitute of lost or physically inaccessible places of memory," a visual archive or textual lieu de mémoire whose importance in the context of contested and violent histories and memories is paramount.

Author Bio

Tess Do is Lecturer in French Studies in the School of Languages and Linguistics at the University of Melbourne in Australia. Her research interests lie in the field of Francophone literature and deal with issues related to (de)colonisation, displacement, and transnational identity. Focusing particularly on Indochina and the areas of food, memory and cultural heritage, her main publications include articles and book chapters on Francophone writers of Vietnamese origin. Her latest publication investigates the history of the Vietnamese indentured workers in New Caledonia in the colonial era via the translation of Jean Vanmai's novel *Chân Dang*.

Charlotte Mackay is Lecturer in European Languages (French and Francophone Studies) at Monash University in Australia and holder of a PhD from The University of Melbourne and Sorbonne Université in French and Comparative Literature. Her research focuses on contemporary literature written by Francophone Sub-Saharan African writers. She has published book chapters and journal articles on the literary works of Franco-Cameroonian author Léonora Miano and Franco-Senegalese author Fatou Diome and is currently researching literary representations of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in the works of both Rwandan and non-Rwandan authors.

Zu Dominiak

Wellcome Collection's webcomic series: Community Building and Self-Expression

Between the years 2017-2020, Wellcome Collection published *Body Squabbles*, a webcomic by Rob Bidder. It commented on a wide range of issues and experiences (dealing with health, interpersonal relations, environmental issues, and many more), often in humorous and poetic ways. One of the unexpected effects these comics have prompted is the discussions about certain topics among the audience (Bidder, 2020). Since the series' cessation, it has been followed by several shorter ones by artists from different backgrounds (Ruby Elliot, Lesley Imgart, Nikolina Sika, Sarah Akinterinwa, and others), again tackling experiences of being human – the core interest of the institution (Dornan, 2020). This paper will explore the various approaches to self-expression present in those comics, as well as the discussions they have prompted.

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Dornan, R. (2020) Interviewed by Zu Dominiak for *Comics Art in Museums and Galleries: New Methods for Engagement and Education*. PhD thesis. University of Dundee. Unpublished.

Zu Dominiak is a comics creator, researcher, and programme leader in Concept and Comic Arts at De Montfort University, Leicester. They completed their PhD, *Comics Art in Museums and Galleries: New Methods for Engagement and Education* at the University of Dundee. Their research interests are mainly in formalist approaches to comics, curation and exhibition of comics art. As a creator, they produce public information and healthcare comics, having worked for a wide range of clients, including the Imperial College of London, Bournemouth University and the NHS.

Anuradha Dosad
Research Scholar at Adamas University
Email id- anuradha.dosad@stu.adamasuniversity.ac.in

Queer Resistance and Sexual Orientation: Representation of Psychosexual Well-being in the Comics of *Batwoman*

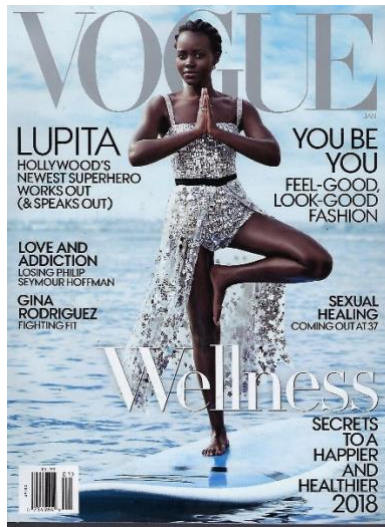
Hillary Chute suggests “. . . if comics is about mapping, it is also about bodies- about locating them in space and time” (“Comics Form and Narrating Lives”). The present paper analyses the way queer is represented in the comics *Batwoman: Elegy* (2009-2010) by Greg Rucka and J.H. Williams III. Here we find Batwoman as a lesbian character. The paper explores the sexual orientation of Kate Kane (Batwoman) and her relationship with her room-mate Sophie in the Military Academy. As she confirmed her gender identity she was expelled from the academy. I will also analyse how flexibility appears in queering comics i.e., how comics defy categorisation of binaries, and this flexibility parallels the undetermined status of queer. The research in its core analyses the relationship between words and pictures vis-à-vis the hierarchy between the genders. This paper offers an insight into the mechanics of sequential narratives of Batwoman. The paper will show utilizing the theories of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Hillary Chute that *Batwoman: Elegy* represents queer issues in a positive light.

Keywords: Comics, Lesbian, Psychosexual, Queer, Sexual Orientation, Well-being.

Parallel Forms: Does *Vogue* have the Same Effect as a Comic?

Rachel Eager

University of Glasgow



The notion of 'parallel mentalities' was firstly introduced by Laurence Grove (2005) where he argues that bande dessinée follows similar forms to the renaissance emblem. I suggest the addition of a useful application to this methodology which layers archival and literary sources to a framework of feminism, decolonialisation, "parallel mentalities" (Grove, 2005) and a socio-historical approach. Through this methodology, I interrogate whether *Vogue* magazine can be analysed in the same way as a comic, and how this influences our societal views.

Conclusions can be drawn including: parallel forms allow us

to draw wider conclusions concerning the representation of stereotypes; and this framework can be applied beyond magazines and comics. I open to wider questions concerning to what extent representations impact our view on the world from makeup and self-care to how we spend time and choose hobbies.



Rachel Eager is a PhD candidate in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Glasgow. Her research focuses on *Vogue* magazine and emblematics in wider society. She investigates whether stereotypes have been challenged or reinforced through sixteenth century emblem books to *Vogue* magazine.

Teresa Ferreiro-Peleteiro.
Universidade de Vigo.

"The Strange". A Story of Humanity.

This presentation focuses on Jerome Ruillier's work, "The Strange", a comicbook that challenges stereotypes related to immigrants while analysing the concept of 'otherness'. "The Strange" tells the story of an illegal immigrant's journey after arriving in a new country. Ruillier constructed this story using real testimonies from a variety of perspectives. It is an example of how the medium of comics can be used to combine testimonial and historical research to create a map of multiple perspectives, encouraging political consciousness while opening a door for communal reflection on the effects of diaspora in society and the hostile reaction towards newcomers.

The study identifies the characteristics that define Ruiller's style and analyses their importance in creating a dialogue with the reader that aims to trigger a political response through emotional assimilation. Thus, throughout this paper I will highlight four defining traits, as follows: 1. connection to reality (testimony and research); 2. Perspectivism; 3. abstraction and 4. metaphorical narrative. Ultimately, this study analyses how these characteristics are used in Ruiller's work and aims to prove the effectiveness of testimonial fiction for promoting social consciousness within the medium of comics.

Alex Fitch

Wellbeing and identity in Sabba Khan's comics

Through self-published comics, anthologies and her graphic novel 'The Roles we Play', cartoonist Sabba Khan has explored people's wellbeing through interpersonal relationships, and ideas of self and community. To quote the artist, *The Roles we Play* investigates: "explores themes of identity, belonging & memory within the East London Azad Kashmiri Muslim diaspora". In this book, Khan traces the history of her family being expelled from Mirpur, and how emigrants from this area settled in Britain. As well as her short comics being linked to notions of community, gender and religious identity, Khan notes that when creating her graphic novel "during covid, contact with people was minimal, (which) amplified the feeling of inward reflection".

As such, while Khan's stories are personal, but intended to include recognisable scenarios for readers to engage with, creating comics when isolated from the world during the pandemic also gave her "more reason to put our history into a larger context". This paper will look at themes of inclusion, exclusion and identity in the artist's work, and how these ideas are linked through her rendering of characters in architectural spaces, reflecting not only unsettling periods from history, but also the times we live in now.

Alex Fitch is the presenter of the UK's only monthly broadcast radio show on comics – Panel Borders – on Resonance 104.4 FM, the Arts Council station in London. He has been published on the topics of comics and film in *The Conversation*, and by Cambridge Scholars, University Press of Mississippi, Intellect, University of Chicago Press, *Strange Attractor*, and *McFarland*. Alex is currently pursuing a PhD looking at 'The Portrayal of Architecture in Sequential Art and Comics' at the University of Brighton, where he lectures on 'Historical and Critical Studies in Media', and 'Critical Readings in Architecture' to Visual Communication, and Interior Design students.

***Alan Ford* comics in Italy: satire and irony in response to consumerism and materialism**

by **Piero Garofalo** (auto.organo@gmail.com), in-person, and **Giorgio Farabegoli** (g.farabegoli@libero.it), online

The Italian comic *Alan Ford* debuted in May 1969 and depicted the espionage/humorous adventures of a group of secret agents, known as the TNT Group. Set New York, the comic highlighted disparities in the era's society: glittering for the rich, miserable for the poor. Among the marginalized were the ramshackle agents of the TNT Group, who grotesquely satirized the ultimate secret agent, James Bond 007, in their dangerous and techno-free missions. This group of anti-heroes 'heroically' resisted consumerism, materialism, and the dominant class's hegemony.

In this Gramscian reading, *Alan Ford's* characters denounce the enormous wealth gap: the rich are corrupt and driven by power and money, the poor are intent on survival. Nevertheless, the subalterns resist the rot and malfeasance of Western capitalism, even if they are unable to redeem their poverty. Ultimately, they triumph because, in resisting the economic order, they redeem their own human condition. *Alan Ford's* scathing satire of customs and politics allowed readers of all ages to laugh, to feel connected, and to be empowered in an otherwise alienating and disenfranchising social reality.

"Rastapopoulos" and "Leopard-Man": Curation and Contradiction in the Tintin Heritage Industry

Hugo Frey (Professor of Cultural and Visual History, University of Chichester).
H.Frey@chi.ac.uk

This paper addresses a seemingly banal adaptation from the world of Hergé's Tintin comics. It addresses the Tintin figurines collections which have remediated the comics into small children's or collector's plastic or metal sculptures. Dating from at least the 1970s, but still made today, these, in general, quite harmless and even charming items are entirely banal commercial items. They are collectible trophies that allow fans of the Tintin books to play with or display the core characters in home-made curations of their own. However, the figurines also offer a fascinating and problematic barometer on the ideology of the Tintin-storyworld and its public dissemination by the right's owners, Moulinsart. Focussing on the history of two key and politically disturbing figurines reveals the underlying social and political-psychology of the commercialization of the Tintin series and its meaning. Thus, in this paper I want to consider for the first time, quite seriously, the figurines of Rastapopoulos (a caricature that resembles anti-Semitic stereotype drawing) and, from *Tintin in the Congo*, the African stereotype, Leopard Man. On the one hand, there are now an extensive range of Rastapopoulos figurines which include late twentieth century cheaper figurine representations to more elaborate and expensive collector's pieces. I note that recently there has also been a figurine of Bohlwinkel – the anti-Jewish stereotype – from *Tintin and the Shooting Star* (first published under Nazi occupation). On the other hand, Leopard Man –

is only more recently produced, and not as an individual “character”, but rather as a scale model of Hergé’s own model, the colonial-racist sculpture originally displayed at the Royal Museum of Central Africa. In summary, these two seemingly innocuous figurines are mythologies (following Roland Barthes) that merit closer re-reading and deconstruction.

Taken from comics and frozen into sculpture, one can assess what Tintin commercial industries imagines the essence of these characters to be – modelled and suggestive in the one-off display. Properly understanding the mythology of the figurines is a window on social psychology of images and their wider public mediation. They reveal to us what stereotypes are deemed commercially and socially acceptable and what sculptures are no longer appropriate to values and context. The paper therefore discusses and will show intrinsically racist and from my point of view *offensive* iconography. These deeply problematic figurine sculptures magnify the stereotypes in the Tintin books and look back to the era of profoundly racist comics. By way of conclusion, the paper makes a short comparison between the figurines and the curation occurring at the Moulinsart Hergé Museum, Louvain-la-Neuve. What “works” for toys and figurines is contrasted with a more sophisticated and nuanced approach developed at the museum itself. Very astute and powerful appropriations and critiques of the Tintin mythology abound in Belgian and elsewhere. This paper returns to the official ideology of the series and its derivative commercial and heritage products and sites of memory.

Sophie Fuggle

Beyond Narratives of Sexual Violence: Exploring Solidarity, Friendship and Love in the Penal Colony

This paper explores the treatment of themes of homosexuality, friendship and solidarity in the two-volume *Paco Les Mains Rouges* by Fabien Vehlmann and Éric Sagot (2014-17). *Paco* offers a fictional rendering of life in French Guiana’s notorious penal colony [known as the *bagne*] as seen through the eyes of a young-but-guilty convict who must navigate the complex power hierarchies operating amongst the convict population including sexual violence. *Paco*’s account of life in the *bagne* works to re-humanise a convict population that has been frequently dismissed as monstrous by historiographies, reportages and memoirs all of which have adopted reductive, homophobic accounts of relationships between convicts. Attention is given to the use of narrative and visual techniques that both evoke and contest dominant imaginaries of the *bagne*. Notable here is the ‘cahier graphique,’ a form of paratext which re-works the idea of the ‘mug shot’ as creative process, emphasizing the different ways the figure of the convict can be framed and reframed, humanised and de-humanised. The paper considers how this creative reworking of the ‘mug shot’ resonates with other art projects including Edmund Clark’s use of prison bedsheets to create pinhole camera images of men serving sentences at HM Prison Grendon.

Author Bio

Sophie Fuggle is Associate Professor of Postcolonial Studies and Cultural Heritage at Nottingham Trent University. Between 2018 and 2020 she held an AHRC Early Career Fellow for the project 'Postcards from the *bagne*' looking at heritage associated with France's overseas penal colonies in French Guiana, New Caledonia and Vietnam. She is currently completing an edited collection *Framing the Penal Colony* (forthcoming Palgrave) with Charles Forsdick and Katharina Massing and a new project focusing on the legacies of the Plan Vert and other postwar agricultural migration initiatives in French Guiana.

Dominick Grace

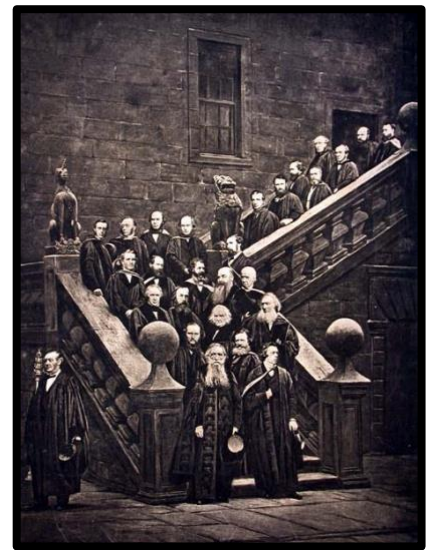
Zorka Petrovic and Sexual Agency

The humanimal hybrid protagonist of Nina Bunjevac's "The Bitter Tears of Zorka Petrovic" owes much to classic comics and cartoons. Bunjevac repurposes the anthropomorphized funny animal in ways comparable to the work of Robert Crumb or the Air Pirates. Zorka is a catwoman whose sexuality is explicitly linked to her liminal status and lack of agency. Zorka's value is defined, as even her own body insists, in the essentialist, biologically-determined role of wife/mother. The strangest sequence in the story suggests this disturbingly. During a conversation with her sister Mirka, in which Mirka is trying to talk her into accepting the attentions of an unsuitable suitor, Zorka's dress peels down, exposing eight breasts. Elsewhere, Zorka's clothing is sufficiently form-fitting to make clear that she has the usual human two breasts. However, while being pressured to conform to a socionormative sexual role, not only do her clothes peel off of their own accord, they also expose a feline-esque set of breasts. Pressured to follow her sister's path into motherhood and suburban anonymity, Zorka's body begins to regress into a less humanoid form. What Zorka (or we)

should make of this sequence is open to interpretation, but it speaks to Bunjevac's critique of gender and gender-normative limitations.

NEW THOUGHTS ON THE COMICS CANON (AND WELLBEING)

Laurence Grove
University of Glasgow

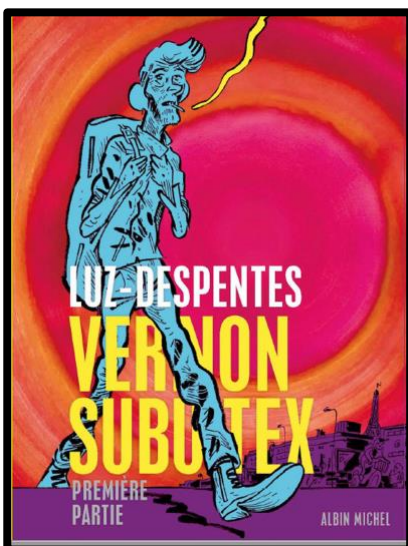


In 2021, when the world was a different place, I suggested Richard McGuire's *Here* (2014), Chris Ware's *Rusty Brown* (2019) and Virginie Despentes and Luz's *Vernon Subutex 1* (2020) as candidates for the comics canon. This

was jovial but online, with virtual Cambridge punting. Now



it's for real. Since then, we have come out of the



pandemic and returned to Cambridge, and I have pushed forward with my *Collapse of the Canon* book project. As part of this, in March 2022 I asked friends and colleagues, via the Comix Scholars and Francofil listings, to suggest works for inclusion in a hypothetical comics canon. This paper will discuss the responses, and their links to the themes of Gatekeepers and of Personal Journey Criticism. And that is where the notion of wellbeing comes in...



Laurence Grove is Professor of French and Text/Image Studies and Director of the Stirling Maxwell Centre for the Study of Text/Image Cultures at the University of Glasgow. His research focuses on historical aspects of text/image forms, and in particular *bande dessinée*. He is President of the International Bande Dessinée Society. As well as serving on the consultative committees of a number of journals, he is joint-editor of *European Comic Art*. Laurence Grove (also known as Billy) has authored (in full or jointly) twelve books and approximately sixty chapters or articles. He co-curated *Comic Invention* (Hunterian, Glasgow), *Frank Quitely: The Art of Comics* (Kelvingrove, Glasgow) and *Demon Drink* (Hunterian, Glasgow), is co-author of their accompanying books, and is currently working on further exhibitions in Narbonne and Brussels.

Title of paper: Illustrating Memory: Clément Baloup's *Vietnamese Memories* and the Visual Representation of the Past

Presenters:

1. **Abhilasha Gusain**, PhD Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India.

2. **Dr Smita Jha**, Professor (English), Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India

Abstract

The present study aims to highlight the role that Clément Baloup's graphic narratives, *Vietnamese Memories: Leaving Saigon* (Volume 1) and *Vietnamese Memories: Little Saigon* (Volume 2), play in the creation of an alternate archive that validates the forgotten tales and the memories of a neglected past. These texts provide an alternate form of remembrance by materializing the past in the form of images. The two volumes present the unheard experiences of the Vietnamese diaspora that Baloup recorded during his travels to the different parts of France and the US. Such experiences bring to the forefront those memories which are otherwise kept at the margins or suppressed by the dominant discourse. If not recorded, they will be lost forever. The counter memory, thus, calls for a reassessment of the idea of a singular past that denies the marginalized memories. It claims representation and restoration in the cultural memory. As works of postmemory, these texts form a link between the past and the present, through mediation, and give memorability to the unremembered accounts. The memories are illustrated and hence visual representation becomes important to the task of postmemory here.

Keywords: Comics, Baloup, Vietnamese Diaspora, Memory, Postmemory, Visual Representation

Biography:

Abhilasha Gusain is a doctoral research fellow at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India. Her research focuses on the graphical representation of the Vietnam War and related issues like trauma, ethics of representation, memory, history, and violence, mainly through the reading of graphic narratives.

Dr. Smita Jha is a Professor of English at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India. Her areas of specialization include Indian Writing in English, Linguistics, Critical Theories, Technical Communication, and Soft Skills.

Cassia Hayward-Fitch

The 'Gaily Life' of *Wendel*: Queerness as Communal Identity in Howard Cruse's Comic Strip

Howard Cruse's *Wendel* comic strip was the first of its kind when it began publication within *The Advocate* in early 1983. Here, for the first time, the LGBTQ+ community could see comics representations of 'gaily life' – depictions of queer people as parents, friends, colleagues and lovers, gay men who were, in Cruse's own words, "people not penises". In this paper I argue that these revolutionary depictions of gay men enabled Cruse to build a storyworld that, to quote Michel Foucault, presented queerness as a "'way of life' rather than as a way of having sex". Using archived letters between Cruse and then editor of *The Advocate*, Robert McQueen, I show how *Wendel*'s recentring of queerness as a communal identity came out of Cruse's fears over making humour out of casual sex in the face of AIDS. The resulting focus on queerness as a "way of life" also mirrored the ways in which the AIDS crisis united many queer men and women, engendering heterogeneous LGBTQ+ communities built on shared aims and values. *Wendel*'s depictions of queer communities therefore not only came out of the AIDS crisis, it also reflected how AIDS was reshaping LGBTQ+ identities to be both sexual *and* communal.

Presenter: Joanna Hearne, University of Oklahoma (jhearne@ou.edu)

Paper Title: "Elizabeth LaPensée's cosmic waters"

Paper Abstract:

This paper traces the integration of North American Indigenous digital art aesthetics (across games, comics, and animation) with interrelated relationships and obligations around water and water protection. I focus especially on images of water in digital artwork by designer, writer, and artist of games and comics Elizabeth LaPensée (Anishinaabe/Métis/Irish). LaPensée often works with water or space as background in their digital artworks, sometimes combining these settings to imagine Indigenous futures as "a river of spacetime" (*Along the River of Spacetime* is LaPensée's 2020 virtual reality game, now adapted as a planetarium show). Examples from their comics, games, and short animations—especially *Honor Water* (2016), a game for healing water, *Thunderbird Strike*

(2017), a game for protecting water, and the comic “They Come for Water” (2020), a futuristic story of water pollution and space travel—reveal an Indigenous digital imaginary that connects instruction with care. LaPensée’s cosmic visions of water presents viewers with instruction towards action: water conveys a teaching. Following Lenape critic Joanne Barker’s turn to water as an analytic—“a water that (in)forms, a water that instructs”—I explore LaPensée’s images as both pedagogy and technology, a conjunction that decenters the human in favor of water as a teacher.

Presenter Bio:

Joanna Hearne is the Jeanne Hoffman Smith Professor of Film and Media Studies at the University of Oklahoma, where her research focuses on Indigenous media studies, archival recoveries of Indigenous presence in cinema history, and contemporary digital storytelling and animation. She is the author of *Native Recognition: Indigenous Cinema and the Western* and *Smoke Signals: Native Cinema Rising*, and co-editor of the new collection *The Films of Wallace Fox*.

Organizers:

Katja Herges (University of Wrocław, katja.herges@uwr.edu.pl), Maureen Burdock (mburdock@ucdavis.edu)

Lines of Connection: Comics in Times of Planetary Crises

In the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic, other planetary crisis and catastrophes emerge or re-emerge. Particular issues affect our human species, such as mental health, physical health, displacement, and racism; these often intersect with problems that affect nonhuman plant and animal species, such as climate change and animal extinction. In response, scholars in health humanities have engaged with theories of environmental and planetary health, decolonial and cross-cultural approaches to health, as well as transdisciplinary, collaborative and engaged scholarship across science, medicine, and the arts.

This roundtable examines the contribution of comics and comics scholarship to such a diverse range of planetary crisis and pandemics. How do planetary, decolonial and transdisciplinary approaches by makers and scholars of comics reveal new interconnected and entangled concepts and practices of health and wellbeing? How do comic aesthetics challenge or reinforce new or lasting stereotypes of race, gender, sexuality, disability, illness and age in times of planetary crisis? What forms and ethics of care and collaboration can comics envision in the face of global and cross-cultural (and cross-species) challenges?

We have invited international comics scholars to address these questions at the roundtable. The following scholars have confirmed their participation: Susan Squier (Pennsylvania State University), Laura H. Kahn (Princeton University), Sathyaraj Venkatesan (National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli) and Anne Rügge-meier (University of Freiburg).

Why aren't we talking about the Beano?

Mark Hibbett, m.hibbett@arts.ac.uk

The Beano is the world's longest running weekly comic and a central part of British culture, yet it is almost never discussed in British Comics Studies journals or conferences. This paper will use an analysis of journals and past conferences to show how little research and discussion there has been about one of Britain's best-loved comics, especially in comparison to other, supposedly adult, texts. It will examine some of the possible reasons why this might be, including the history of Comics Studies as a field and its ongoing quest for academic respectability. It will also discuss why The Beano - and other ignored childrens' series like The Dandy, Buster, Whizzer and Chips and many more - matters, and what we lose as a field by focusing our energies on so-called "Posh Comics" instead.

Biography

Mark Hibbett is Research Data Manager at University of the Arts London. His academic research focuses on transmedia character cohesion.

Andrea Hoff

PhD Candidate, Language and Literacy Education University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada

Application for live-stream online participation

Future Themes: Understanding through thematic analysis how crafting speculative comics impacts young people's feelings and attitudes about the future

Abstract: When one is employing arts-based practices in participatory workshops, it is often assumed that the participants are gaining something worthwhile from the process. At the very least, according to recent research (Camargo-Borges & McNamee, 2020; Leavy, 2018; Rolling & Bey, 2016), fostering creative agency provides meaningful engagement to participants through both the process and product of the creative practice. This paper seeks to better understand the impact of creative agency as experienced by a group of adolescents who

participated in a comics workshop focused on the future. By applying a thematic analysis of the comics created by the teens, as well as their artist statements and exit interviews, this research offers a qualitative assessment of how the workshop impacted the participants. Moreover, expanding the thematic analysis to incorporate how participating in the comics workshop itself may have impacted the teens' feelings and attitudes about the future, offers insight into the potential impact of arts-based research—and specifically comics-based research—that engages with young people's concerns and attitudes about the Anthropocene and of the world to come.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2016.1204525>

Conference Themes

- How communities (scholarly and otherwise) built around comics have a role to play in wellbeing
- The Anthropocene and environmental justice

Keywords: speculative comics; comics-based research (CBR); youth empowerment; creative agency; thematic analysis

Community and Communication: The 'Caricature, Cartooning, and Comics' Seminar Salon

Ian Horton

In November 2020, as further Covid restrictions came into force across the globe, Jared Gardner of Ohio State University posted a message on various comics scholar listserves and discussion boards saying he wanted to invite others from outside his university to join his Spring Semester Seminar Salon 'Caricature, Cartooning, and Comics'. Since I was already

looking at this subject-matter for a research project examining the relationship between Art History and Comics Studies, I jumped at the opportunity to meet online for two hours a week with like-minded individuals. At this time in the UK social interaction was once more severely restricted with all teaching moved online again, a feeling of academic isolation was taking hold with planned conferences temporarily cancelled, so the Seminar Salon promised a welcome distraction from daily life.

This paper will examine the curriculum for ‘Caricature, Cartooning, and Comics’, which started with the development of caricature and etching in the 17th century and concluded with the emergence of the Sunday newspaper supplement and the origins of modern comics in the late 19th century. It will reflect on what it meant to be a student again, particularly in terms of the online delivery, and how this impacted on my own teaching. The paper will conclude with some thoughts on the community created through this initiative by examining the topics covered in a one day symposium convened at the end of the Seminar Salon with contributions from 15 members of the ‘class’.

Biographical Information

Ian Horton is Reader in Graphic Communication at London College of Communication. In 2014, along with Lydia Wysocki and John Swogger he founded the Applied Comics Network and a founder member of the Comics Research Hub ([CoRH!!](#)) at the University of the Arts London. His book *Hard Werken: One for All (Graphic Art & Design 1979–1994)* [co-authored with Bettina Furnee] is the first academic study of this influential avant-garde Dutch graphic design studio and was published by Valiz in 2018. In 2022 he published two books in collaboration with Maggie Gray the monograph *Comics Studies and Art History: Past, Present and Potential Futures* and the edited collection *Seeing Comics through Art History: Alternative Approaches to the Form*.

Jennifer Howell

Humor and Revolution in Tunisia: Cartooning during and after the ‘Arab Spring’

In Tunisia and elsewhere, internet-based forms of communication, including web comics, blogs, and social media, have allowed citizen-activists to disseminate and comment on information quickly and anonymously while circumventing state-controlled media outlets. This was particularly true during the 2011-2012 Arab uprisings. The popularity and historical significance of cartoons and caricatures can be attributed to their ability to build community, encourage civic engagement, and promote collective action through satire and other forms of

comedy. Humor and the communication tools that depend on it nevertheless bear a considerable amount of risk, especially in the politically charged contexts of social protest and change. A complex and somewhat unwieldy instrument, humor can divide just as easily as it can unite. And those in power clearly understand humor's propensity for mobilizing the masses – lest we forget George Orwell's oft-quoted maxim: "Every joke is a tiny revolution." Several Tunisian artists have in fact been arrested and sentenced for the publication of political satire ever since the beginning of the Jasmine Revolution. Largely inspired by contemporary research on comics activism and humor, this paper proposes a contextualized close reading of select cartoons from Nadia Khiari's *Willis from Tunis* chronicles that use humor as a narrative framing device.

Author Bio

Jennifer Howell is an Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies at Illinois State University. Her research focuses on the Francophone cultures of North Africa and the Vietnamese diaspora, as well as on comics, the graphic novel, photography, and crime fiction. She is particularly interested in how political trauma is historicized, remembered, and transmitted via popular culture and the visual arts. Her scholarship has appeared in various journals, including *Journal of North African Studies*, *European Comic Art*, and *French Review*. In 2015, she published her first monograph, *The Algerian War in French-Language Comics*, with Lexington Books.

Representation of global warming and ecological challenges in comics

Noelia Ibarra¹, Álvaro M. Pons²

1. Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura, Universitat de València
2. Càtedra de Estudios del Cómic Fundación SM-Universitat de València

Corresponding autor: Noelia.Ibarra@uv.es

Keywords: Global Warming in Comics, Climatic Change in Comics

Climate change caused by global warming, accelerated by armed conflicts and the reluctance to abandon fossil fuels, is the greatest threat to humanity in a future that is no longer seen as distant, but within this very century. Although science has issued worrying warnings about this reality, it is paradoxical that one of the first media to raise awareness of this problem was precisely the ninth art, which already in the 1950s presented informative comics about climate change in popular series such as Athelstan Spilhaus's *Our new age*. At the same time, the problems that man's intervention creates in the environment became a common theme in apocalyptic comics, transferring it to fiction as a form of denunciation that took centre stage in the 1970s, showing the ecological awareness that was beginning to take shape. The use of comics as a means of raising awareness of the ecological problem accelerated until the end of the 20th century, while in the following century it also began to be used as an educational tool with the development of graphic essays on climate change and the adoption of the SDG

2030 agenda. This paper analyses this representation from the scientific and social context of each historical moment.

MORPHING IDENTITY

Cartooning & emotions in Inio Asano's "Goodnight Punpun"

José Andrés Santiago Iglesias

(Universidade de Vigo)

Inio Asano's (1980) manga works are usually defined by a realistic approach to human emotions, and the ongoing struggle between his characters and the world they live in. *Goodnight Punpun* (Shōgakukan, 2007-2013) is his most introspective manga so far. Cleverly disguised as a slice-of-life, it follows Punpun's painful journey from childhood to adult life (first love, family disputes, broken friendship, sexual awakening, work and social expectations, etc.), shaped by the protagonist's shy nature. *Goodnight Punpun* also embraces Asano's signature style: detailed backgrounds; photographic sources; stylized characters; nihilistic, subjectivist and existentialist ideas; and a realistic depiction of everyday's issues, without a sugar-coated approach. However, the most striking element is the design of Punpun and his family —portrayed as cartoonish and poorly drawn birds— which ultimately allows to convey a vast array of emotions beyond the realistic features of the other characters.

This presentation takes my contribution to the recent volume *Precarious Youth in Contemporary Graphic Narratives* (Routledge, 2022) as a starting point, and seeks to analyze *Goodnight Punpun* attending to its formal aspects and manga's material specificity, paying special attention to Punpun's graphic traits as a way to describe his psyche (his morphing shape responding to an emotional state) while he comes to terms with his own persona.

José Andrés Santiago Iglesias (PhD) is a visual artist and Assistant Professor at the Fine Arts Faculty (Universidade de Vigo, Spain), focused on expanded-field comics, manga and *anime* studies from a visual perspective. Member of the ACDCómic [Spanish Association of Critics and Researches of Comics] since its inception in 2012. Former fellow of the Japan Foundation's Japanese Studies Program and invited researcher at the Graduate School of Manga (Kyoto Seika University, Japan, 2014 - 2016). His doctoral thesis was revised into a book entitled *Manga. Del cuadro flotante a la viñeta japonesa* published by Comanegra in 2010, and has recently edited the collected book *Anime Studies: media-specific approaches to 'Neon Genesis Evangelion'*, an open-access volume published by Stockholm University Press (2021).

Jeanne Jégousso

Abstract Theorizing Contemporary Mauritian *Bandes Dessinées* as a Pluriversal Praxis

According to Ellen Cushman, Damián Baca, and Romeo García, pluriversality “centers, values, and validates multiple pathways and mediational tools for storied meaning making” while offering options to break away from the duality of the modernity/coloniality discourse. Furthermore, “what the pluriversal approach has the potential to do” writes Charles Masquelier, “is to provide a basis for reimagining identity, by rethinking the way difference and otherness are apprehended” (620). Adopting this approach, this essay examines *bandes dessinées* from the Indian Ocean island nation of Mauritius to analyze how authors challenge preexisting socio-historical and cultural narratives –inherited for the colonial past of the country or its 1968 constitution– in order to deconstruct the colonial and current political historical discourse still dominated by cultural Western hegemony, and to bring forward a creolized universal by way of elaborating a pluriversal praxis.

The island hosted several festivals dedicated to BDs, even launching a three-issue special journal entitled in Mauritian creole *Ticomix*. Despite these numerous initiatives, BD in Mauritius remains today a marginalized genre with a small readership due in part to the lack of governmental supports and initiatives, apart from that of the local Alliance Française. The primary corpus of this essay includes *Histoires de Maurice* by Shenaz Patel and Jocelyn Chan Low, *Nous les Mauriciens et Vive la Patrie* by Eric Koo Sin Lin.

Author Bio

Jeanne Jégousso is an assistant professor of French and Francophone studies. Her areas of specialization include the French Speaking Caribbean and Indian Ocean, Louisiana Literature and Folklore, Cultural Anthropology, and Postcolonial Studies. She co-edited the collective volume *Teaching, Reading, and Theorizing Caribbean Texts* (Lexington Books, August 2020) and the special issue *Les Mondes d'Édouard Glissant (Francosphères)*, Liverpool University Press, Summer 2022). She is the author of several peer-reviewed articles on the work of Édouard Glissant, Alfred Alexandre, and Ananda Devi. In addition, she is the cofounder and codirector of the *Library of Glissant Studies*, a digital project dedicated Martinican author Édouard Glissant (1928-2011).

Anna Johnston

Decolonising French: moving away from canons and Franco-centric perspectives towards more intertextual and intermodal approaches.

Languages have long suffered from being taught in a monolithic manner in terms of content, skill, language and medium in so far as the approach is often Franco-centric, essay-based and canon-focused. The current emphasis on decolonisation has however provided a useful space to explore different ways of teaching the language. In this paper, I will examine how using comics can provide a useful platform to decolonise the curriculum. Focusing on the example of *L'hôte* by Jacques Ferrandez, a graphic rewriting of *L'hôte* by Albert Camus set in colonised Algeria, I will demonstrate how students are presented with an opportunity to:

- learn about the 'Other', in this case via the perspective of the colonised and through a reflection on historical representation;
- develop intertextual and intermodal literacy and interpret the intertextuality between visual and written cues (Jacobs, 2007 & Sealey-Morris, 2015) ;
- simultaneously decode a new kind of grammar both figuratively - in the sense of 'comics grammar' (Chute, 2008)- and literally - in the sense of language grammar;
- create their own narrative based on the above, a narrative that is far away from the prescriptive essay-writing so prevalent within universities.

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Don Joseph

Riad Sattouf's "Ethic of Care" in L'Arabe du future

Riad Sattouf's *L'Arabe du futur* (2014-2022) is a series of six autobiographical graphic novels that trace the life of the author/illustrator from 1978 to 2011. Covering everything from the political regimes of former Syrian President Hafez Al-Assad and Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi to the complex relationship that mixed-race individuals have with their identities and subjectivities. I argue that Sattouf's graphic novels create space for us to think about the graphic novel, as a genre, as a productive medium to engage with care and well-being through life writing as a form of therapy. On 2 April 2010, in an interview with the independent French investigative newspaper Médiapart, French politician Martine Aubry announced that "il faut passer d'une société individualiste à une société du care." The notion of care is not new, dating back to the 1960s in the context of the American feminist movement and American psychologist Carol Gilligan's thinking on the ethics of care which she details in her book *In a Different Voice* (1982). I read Sattouf's graphic novel through the lens of Gilligan's notion of the ethics of care and well-being to argue for the therapeutic potential of the graphic novel.

Author Bio

Don Joseph is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Pittsburgh in the Department of French and Italian Languages and Literatures. He works on 20th and 21st-century Middle Eastern and Maghrebi literature and cultural production in French, Arabic, Catalan, and Spanish through approaches engaged with migration studies, masculinity studies, queer theory, cultural studies, and critical race studies. He has published in or has forthcoming papers in Contemporary French & Francophone Studies, Edinburgh University Press, and Composition Studies.

Delinking the capitalist episteme: Bio-empathy and decolonial turn in Amitav Ghosh's *Jungle Nama*

- Goutam Karmakar

goutamkrmkr@gmail.com

Amitav Ghosh's *Jungle Nama* (2021), a graphic verse, is a symbolic rendering of the repercussions of the capitalist episteme that sanctions resource extraction, ecological commodification, and anthropogenic activities. Set in the Sundarbans, the largest mangrove delta, *Jungle Nama* illustrates a confrontation between Dhona, an avaricious merchant who

wants to extract and plunder the forest resources, and Bon Bibi, the goddess who presides as the benevolent protector of the region. Through his critique of Dhona's greed, the paper studies how Ghosh deliberates on the necessity to go beyond the capitalistic notions of accumulation, profit, and objectification of ecology and the non-human world. Emphasizing Ghosh's stance as one of the notable public intellectuals of contemporary times, this paper analyses how he calls for an epistemic revival by recuperating the indigenous knowledge system that believes in the intricate connection between humans and the environment. Ghosh attests to the urgent necessity of discarding the binary perceptions enunciated by Western modernity and systemically fostered by capitalist missions and developing intellectual comprehension and cultural empathy toward nature and ecology. The primacy of nature should be acknowledged and respected for its own sake. In doing so, the paper contends that Ghosh advocates for a "decolonial turn" (Grosfoguel 2007), which includes epistemic transcendence as well as "epistemic disobedience" (Mignolo 2009), as a necessary step in countering hegemonic exploitations and ushering in planetary sustainability.

Keywords: Episteme, bio-empathy, decolonial, capitalism, sustainability

Notes on the contributor

Goutam Karmakar is an NRF Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of the Western Cape, in South Africa. He is one of the editors of the Routledge book series on South Asian literature. His areas of research are South Asian literature and culture, Women and Gender Studies, Postcolonial studies, and Ecological studies. His forthcoming and recently published edited volumes are *Nation and Narration: Hindi Cinema and the Making and Remaking of National Consciousness* (Routledge, forthcoming), *The Poetry of Jibanananda Das: Aesthetics, Poetics, and Narratives* (Routledge, forthcoming), *Narratives of Trauma in South Asian Literature* (Routledge, 2022), *The City Speaks: Urban Spaces in Indian Literature* (Routledge, 2022), and *Religion in South Asian Anglophone Literature: Traversing Resistance, Margins and Extremism* (Routledge, 2021). He has also published articles in over a dozen academic journals. He can be reached at goutamkrmk@gmail.com

Panelizing Non-Normative Female Bodies: Body Acceptance, and Wellbeing in Comics

Aishwarya Katyal
Shri Venkateshwara University, India

Dr Pritesh Chakraborty
Acharya Sukumar Sen Mahavidyalaya, India

Abstract

Body image is a complex construct that represents our perceptions and feelings about our physical appearance. This internal perspective has a significant impact on our self-esteem, mental health, and well-being. Individuals, particularly women find themselves compelled to monitor their bodies by adhering to conventional beauty standards reinforced by media images that are often unattainable. When their bodies fail to align with these unrealistic body standards, they develop a negative body image which has a detrimental effect on their well-being. Alternatively, a positive body image is related to a positive relationship with one's body, acceptance of the body as it is, and acknowledging its uniqueness. While deploying the framework of *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf, this paper attempts to look at the female characters in comics- *Bum Power*, *The Tyranny of Beauty*, *Aranyaka*, *Miss Moti*, *X-Men* and *Doom Patrol* to understand how the rejection of a conventional understanding of beauty is codified to broach the concept of positive body image, body acceptance, and well-being.

Keywords: Body image, body positivity, iron maiden, the beauty myth, well-being.

Peter Kessler

Comics in secondary schools. Three case studies.

While working as an English teacher in a North London State School from 2016 to 2018 I used comics as a learning resource in intervention sessions, daily classroom routine, and as an after-school club. My findings are based purely on personal experience rather than extensive quantitative analysis. Through three case studies I examine the impact of comics on pupils' progress and enthusiasm both for English as a subject and school in general.

The case studies focus on:

- Jack, a 14-year-old boy recently reintroduced to formal education after an extensive period of suspension due to violence and psychiatric assessment.
- Daniel, an 11-year-old with limited reading and writing ability.
- Niall, a 12-year-old 'comics nerd' who was the subject of bullying.

Although the outcomes for these children were different in each case, comics provided each of them with a step forward to mental wellbeing and learning. This benefit was linked, crucially, to the method of employing the comics resources, fitting them to the needs of the particular student. In my talk I will outline and illustrate these methods and show the effects they had.

Peter Kessler

While not an academic, Peter studied English for his first degree. He worked primarily as a TV producer, making comedy and factual programmes. More recently, after retiring, he worked as an English teacher for two tumultuous years. He is the Chair of the Lakes International Comic Arts Festival and the founder of the Oxford University Comics Network.

Title: The Unbearable Incompleteness of Being in a Korean Webtoon, *Misaeng*

Presenter name and affiliation:

Soonbae Kim, Chungbuk National University, South Korea (ROK)

Summary of Content:

Tae-ho Yoon's online-based Korean comics, *Misaeng* (2012-), showcases an ordinary life of a temporary office-worker named Grae Jang. As its title literally signifies "an incomplete life" and it is also subtitled as "a man who does not live his own life yet," the iconic graphic narrative illustrates a young intern's incomplete life in the claustrophobic office of a large company. He is thrown into the space where he constantly faces fierce competition with the others. To the young man as well as to the other characters in the story, it seems that the life is full of nothing but inevitable incompleteness despite the fact that they strive desperately for some elusive goals in their career. There is no such thing as romance in this story. The visual narrative has reverberated and resonated through the young generation (so-called "the generation MZ") who have encountered its particular medium on their fingertips or smartphones since its first publication. Thus, I will examine how the story have created public resonance among its target audience, particularly those young Koreans (including the webtoon writers including Yoon himself) who identify themselves as *misaeng*, and also how it has motivated them to rethink about the conventional values they have cherished in their own lives and eventually about the sense of well-being in Korean culture.

**FRAGMENTS OF A DISILLUSIONED LIFE:
CEM GÜVENTÜRK'S CARTOONS AS A CRITIC OF MODERN PERSONA**

Dr Kenan Koçak

kenankocak@erciyes.edu.tr

Department of English Language and Literature, Erciyes University / Türkiye

Submitted for "online presentation."

Cem Güventürk is one the most appreciated cartoonists in Turkey, especially among young people. For nearly ten years, he has been drawing in Turkish humourous weeklies like *Penguen* and *Uykusuz*, and has published four books *Sanki Sen Aynı Ben* (It's Like You're the Same Me), *Yine Öyle Hissettiğinde* (When you feel that way again), *Çünkü Bir Anlamı Vardır* (Because it means something) and *Öyküler* (Stories).

He mixes compelling text and visceral drawings in a single panel with chaotic lines in the background using acrylic, gouache or dry paints. He produces "neither a complete cartoon nor a complete illustration, an intermediate form with a literary side", in his own words. In his art, he

discusses the modern *persona*, which Jung defines as "a complicated system of relations between individual consciousness and society, fittingly enough a kind of mask, designed on the one hand to make a definite impression upon others, and, on the other, to conceal the true nature of the individual" (1928: 305). His cartoons primarily focus on the disillusionments we all experience in our lives.

This paper will study Cem Güventürk's cartoons in the light of the Jungian *persona*.

MODERN İNSAN DEKORASYONU

ŞURAYA DA ŞÖYLE AHŞAP BİR RAF
YAPTIRALIM DİYORUM, ÜSTÜNE
ANTİDEPRESANLARIMIZI KOYARIZ...



MODERN İNSAN DEKORASYONU

*ŞURAYA DA ŞÖYLE AHŞAP BİR RAF YAPTIRALIM DİYORUM, ÜSTÜNE
ANTİDEPRESANLARIMIZI KOYARIZ.*

(MODERN HUMAN DECORATION

*I SAY WE BUILD A WOODEN SHELF OVER THERE AND PUT OUR ANTIDEPRESSANTS
ON IT.)*

Zoned Out: Time, Memory, and Narrative in Julie Doucet's *Time Zone J*

Frederik Byrn Køhlert F.Kohlert@uea.ac.uk

In-person

In *Time Zone J*, her 2022 return to comics after several years exploring other approaches to visual arts, celebrated Quebec artist Julie Doucet reinvents the graphic memoir—and perhaps the medium of comics along with it—by thoroughly and playfully scrambling the various temporalities involved in memory, storytelling, and comics-making/reading. In military time zones, “J” indicates the subject’s local time, and while Doucet’s comic is a retrospective engagement with a romantic affair from her formative years, her narrative approach places both herself and the reader in a kind of perpetual present, from which experiences, conversations, and a freely associative sense of cultural context flows in every direction. Visually, this narrative approach is represented by Doucet’s innovative use of comics imagery and page layout, in which she eschews both panels and any separation of individual images, opting instead for a collage-like style that bleeds to the edge of every page while also asking to be unintuitively read from the bottom up. In this paper, I read *Time Zone J* as a radical reinvention of the comics memoir, one which provides yet another dimension to Doucet’s continued and career-long examination of the visual comics self both *as* and *in* process.

Frederik Byrn Køhlert is Associate Professor of Media and American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He is the author of *Serial Selves: Identity and Representation in Autobiographical Comics* and the editor of two companion book series for Routledge on Gender, Sexuality, and Comics. In addition to his work on comics and related visual media, he is also the author and editor of two books on the literary and cultural history of Chicago.

Catherine Labio Associate Professor of English University of Colorado Boulder
labio@colorado.edu

Asked for reactions to the exhibition Inoue Takehiko: The LAST Manga at the Ueno Royal Museum in Tokyo (2008), one visitor reflected:

I was most pleased with the fact that
Musashi's last thorn was the desire to be held by his mother . . .
and that I was holding my daughter in my arms as I passed through that space. . . . I had the
sensation that the people
who just happened to be gathered there at the same time by chance
gazed at the picture of the baby being held by its mother,
and drifted into the same state of mind.
My daughter was humming a song as she was cradled in my arms,
appearing to be totally relaxed.
Perhaps she was being held not just by me,
but was actually being cradled by the entire room."¹

In this paper I argue that comics exhibitions let visitors experience the role readers/viewers play in their creation, epitomize the experiential scenographic trends that have distinguished comics exhibitions in recent decades, and create a sense of community.

To make this case I focus on two examples of "site-specific comics exhibitions": Inoue Takehiko: The LAST and Viñetas Desbordadas/Overflowing Panels at the Centro José Guerrero in Granada, Spain (2019). Curated by Francisco Baena, the latter showcased "cómic de exposición" by Max and Sergio García and poetry by Ana Merino. Both exhibitions were constrained—in the OuBaPian sense—by architectural features and could not be replicated in codex form without inflicting a significant experiential loss to the reader. In the case of Viñetas Desbordadas, for instance, two of Max's comics, "stuck" to facing comics/walls, could only "overflow," or enter into a dialogue, if readers/viewers walked back and forth between the two. This in turn initiated an obvious complicity among the visitors "who just happened to be gathered there at the same time."

¹ AKIKO Nakano, *Inoue Takehiko: The LAST Manga: Inoueno Mangetsu (Inoue's Full Moon)* (n.l.: I. T. Planning, 2008), 207.

How to Draw Academics the Marvellous Way: Creating Academic Comics that Engage Diverse Audiences

Julian Lawrence

julian@julianlawrence.net

This presentation analyses a body of academic writing, original comics, and creative practice I authored / co-authored from 2014 to 2023. The ten articles, book chapters, and graphic novels discussed braid together three significant themes: 1- Narrative drawing and identity; 2- Making comics in the classroom; and 3- Material production of comics. These three themes framework my comics-based activities as an artist, researcher, and teacher. Autobiography, community art education, and critical pedagogy provide methodologies through which the works are analysed. Most of the pieces are narratively drawn as academic comics (or *academics*) and document research into identity and difference. Reading, making, and studying comics are expanding in educational settings, thus themes of narrative drawing and identity flow into making comics in the classroom. As a comics-based educator, I observe and document the ways making comics in classroom settings impacts student experience. Making comics raises questions regarding creative process and material handling: In what ways are comics created in the classroom? What are the benefits and drawbacks of digital over traditional techniques? I present the comics medium as a counterrevolutionary pedagogical tool: the medium supports author negotiations of identity and difference which can subvert reactionary and revolutionary ideologies such as Intensified Digital Colonialism and the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Keywords: arts-based research; community art education; authorship; narrative drawing; comics; comics-based research; identity; sustainability

Cinematic Flow and Graphic Braiding: Intermedial Configurations in Jules Feiffer's *Cousin Joseph* (2016)

Professor Fabrice Leroy, University of Louisiana (Hybrid)

Fabrice.leroy@louisiana.edu

Cinema is one of the core subjects of the Film Noir-inspired graphic trilogy that Jules Feiffer composed between 2014 and 2018 (*Kill My Mother*, *Cousin Joseph*, and *The Ghost Script*), which constitutes the crowning achievement of his long and diverse career as a comics writer, satirist, playwright, and children's books author. Film is indeed a central component of these three fictions, to the extent that they not only feature actors, agents, and film producers involved in tangled mysteries and conflicts, but also reflexively interrogate the simulacrum of filmic images themselves, dissecting the illusion mechanisms of the Hollywood industry and probing the ideological role of cinema in the era of the Great Depression, World War II, and the "Red Scare."

This paper will focus on the complex page layouts and the singular graphic devices that Feiffer employs to translate film aesthetics and syntax to the comics page, at the formal level. By experimenting with narrative and visual continuity without resorting to the standard comics grid or multi-frame, Feiffer systematically plays with ingenious forms of “iconic solidarity” (to re-use Thierry Groensteen’s term) that blend the filmic language with the braiding possibilities inherent to graphic art: effects of framing and perspective, creative uses of objects and decors, encroachment and reiteration of visual motifs, rhythmic patterns, multidirectional gazes, textual polyphony, etc. Such stratified layouts, which can accommodate sequential progression within a single image, as a composite rendition of the fluidity of film, are employed throughout the novel to explore unusual expressions of speech, time, or space, as well as interweave several diegetic strands.

Fabrice Leroy is Professor of French and Francophone Studies at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. He has published numerous book chapters on French and Belgian Francophone literature and graphic novels, as well as articles in leading journals (*Image & Narrative*, *European Comic Art*, *Revue des Sciences Humaines*, *Neuvième Art 2.0*, *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies/Sites*, *The International Journal of Comic Art*, among others). He contributed essays to Thierry Groensteen's *Le Bouquin de la bande dessinée: Dictionnaire esthétique et thématique* (2020). His most recent monographs on comics are *Sfar So Far. Identity, History, Fantasy and Mimesis in Joann Sfar's Graphic Novels* (2014), and *Pierre La Police: Une esthétique de la malfaçon* (with Livio Belloi, 2019). With Jan Baetens and Hugo Frey, he co-edited *Intermediality in French-Language Comics and Graphic Novels* (University of Louisiana Press, 2022). He is currently writing a monograph on Jules Feiffer’s Noir graphic novels.

Isabelle Licari-Guillaume

"the story must be told": women creators and self-published science-fiction in the 80s and 90s

Paper proposal (200 words):

The American self-publishing movement of the eighties and early nineties gave new visibility to unconventional works by creators interested in telling personal stories outside of the mainstream superhero genre. Among them was a small yet consistent group of women who wrote, drew and published their own science-fiction and fantasy comics. Looking at *A Distant Soil* (Colleen Doran), *Elfquest* (Wendy Pini), *Finder* (Carla Speed McNeil), *Wandering Star* (Teri Wood) and *Galaxion* (Tara Jenkins), my presentation will explore the path of five women who set out to tell the stories that had been with them since childhood, and, in some cases, turned out to be lifelong projects that saw them grow from talented amateurs to seasoned professionals. Tackling issues of marginality, gender roles and self-discovery, they crafted narratives that allowed them to express their inner struggles. Their creative and financial difficulties were chronicled in the paratexts of their comics, where they provided extensive behind-the-scenes information and refined their authorial personas. In a medium where so many women creators chose to turn to the autobiographical genre (From Julie Doucet to Alison

Bechdel and from Aline Kominsky to Phoebe Glockner), the sci-fi comics created by Pini, Doran and the others function as reflections of their authors' selves, fulfilling their need for self-expression.

Bio:

Isabelle Licari-Guillaume is a senior lecturer in English studies at Université Côte d'Azur, Nice, France. She specialises in the study of visual culture and comics history. Her new book, *Vertigo Comics: British creators, US editors, and the making of a transformational imprint* was published by Routledge in 2022.

Harold Liu Chunwei

Well-being and same-sex bonding in Shonen Manga: the paradox of homoeroticism and asexuality in Mob Psycho 100

Shonen Manga, or boys' manga, is a genre of Japanese Manga that targets primarily teenage boy readers and usually features a few specific topics and narratives for labelling and marketing (Johnson-Woods, 8). Its frequent focus on affirming the value of personal struggles and quests (Drummond-Mathews, 71-74) gives it a unique space to discuss self-realisation and well-being with younger readers, and departing from the usual adventure-growth narrative, Mob Psycho 100 provides an interesting example of emphasising the influence of same-sex bonding to teenagers' psychological happiness. Mob Psycho 100, a Shonen Manga and anime series initially written and illustrated by One and adapted by Bones, tells a story of how a middle-school boy develops confidence and self-acceptance under the support of his family and friends despite his inherent, uncontrollable psychic power and the following habitual self-restraint (One, 2012-2018, Bones, 2016-2022). In the story arc, the arguably strongest support the protagonist Shigeo Kageyama receives is from his mentor Arataka Reigen, which eventually helps Kageyama resolve his ultimate conflict with his hidden nature. Their relationship reflects a paradoxical mix of visual homoeroticism and asexual exclusive pairing, resonating aspects of platonic love between mentors and mentees (Reeve, 2006) and the so-called asexual Boston marriage (Rothblum and Brehony, 1993). The manga's narrative intentionally correlates their mutual love and guidance to the realisation of happiness, providing a clear and positive visibility of such an asexual-erotic relationship, which has been noticed in psychological studies (Sadlier, 2018) but yet to be explored in creative writings. From this unorthodox depiction of same-sex bonding, it can be argued that Mob Psycho 100 breaches the boundary

of categorising relationships and affirms the eroticism in asexuality in Shonen Manga, successfully giving a possible answer to the quest for mental well-being: via a mixture of interpersonal bonding.

Keywords: Shonen Manga, homoeroticism, asexuality, same-sex bonding, well-being

Lisa Macklem

A Band of Sisters: Women Write For Women as Inspiration, Community, and Sisterhood

Paul Fisher Davies points out that “comics making and comics consumption [should be recognized] as a social exchange, engaged in by human beings, whose mutual experience is a valid object of interest” (3). Much has been written on the history of comics for, by, and about women. Roger Sabin points out that while Britain did not have “a ‘women’s scene’ like there was in America [in the late 60s and early 70s]... [women’s comix in Britain and America] served the same twin purposes of providing a platform for women creators, and a venue for women’s issues to be aired” (111). Feminism and trauma are frequent subjects of women creators as they search for a community of support and understanding. Mel Gibson states that the “spaces for women to create comics were... located in the growing field of feminist underground newspapers” in the late 60s and early 70s (246). Furthermore, these opportunities “led to the creation of the all-woman anthology, [*It Aint Me Babe* (sic)]”, in 1970 (Gibson 247). Several recent anthologies continue this tradition. *Femme Magnifique: 50 Magnificent Women Who Changed the World* (2018) and *Noise Makers: 25 Women Who Raised Their Voices & Changed the World* (2020) clearly have a lot in common. The similarities begin with the titles and both anthologies chronicle inspiring women. By using a plethora of styles and keeping the biographies short, readers are encouraged to find role models that they identify with. *Noise Makers* is more clearly geared toward a younger audience, and elements of the text demonstrate this. Women creators also come together to provide support for other issues that society often ignores, and in *Menopause*, another recent graphic anthology, women share their personal experiences with this natural phase in life, again presenting a plethora of individual stories in which community can be found. This paper will explore the value of such a community that supports the well being of women from girlhood and throughout their lives.

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Jennifer Boum Make

Abstract 'Draw Me My Childhood': Trajectories of 'the Children of Creuse' Traced Through Interactive Fictional Archiving

In *Piments Zoizos*, Téhem, in collaboration with historian Gilles Gauvin, retraces the steps of the children forcibly sent away from the French overseas department of Réunion to hexagonal France between the years 1962 and 1984. At least 2,150 children and adolescents were separated from their families as they were registered with the misnomer ASE (Aide Sociale à l'Enfance or Social Service for Children) to repopulate the French countryside. Recounting a historical event that has so far received very little scholarly or narrative interest, Téhem purposefully opts for the lens of the fictional to tell the story of the displaced Réunion children, imagining the characters of Jean and his little sister Madeleine (or Didi) taken in charge by the AS at a young age. The graphic narrative opens with Jean at an adult age arriving at the Roland Garros airport in Réunion. From then on, Jean seeks to track down his sister, Didi, whom he has not seen since they were separated in 1965.

In this paper, I argue that *Piments Zoizos* moves away from graphic non-fiction elaborating instead an interactive fictional archive to piece together the fragmented trajectories of 'the Children of Creuse'. Analyzing the interactive function of an archiving project in the making, this paper will show how the graphic narrative both emphasizes the materiality of historicized traces while also reinforcing processes of deciphering and historical reconstitution. This way, *Piments Zoizos* helps us reflect on the ethical and aesthetic potential of graphic fiction to bridge the gaps at the intersection of imagination and historical investigation.

Author Bio

Jennifer Boum Make is an Assistant Professor in the Department of French & Francophone Studies at Georgetown University. Her research is focused on the French Caribbean, the legacy of colonialism and the French Atlantic slave trade, and care studies. She is currently developing a monograph entitled, *Decolonial Care: Reimagining Caregiving from the French Caribbean*. This project is a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between the legacies of colonialism and the dynamics of caregiving that have emerged from the French Caribbean.

Paul M. Malone

Schmutz und Schund” From Dime Novels to Comics: The Post-World War II Revival of the “Smut and Trash” Discourse in Germany

The aftermath of World War II in West Germany was not only military occupation, but also German fear of cultural occupation by an American mass culture considered inferior and superficial. Particular stress lay on the alleged deleterious effect on young people of American-style comic books—an especially salient danger, given that an entire cohort of boys socialized under Hitler was now being raised under the supposedly inadequate discipline of widowed mothers.

The resulting “Schmutz-und-Schund-Kampagne,” or “Smut and Trash campaign,” has been seen both as an importation of American postwar anti-comics panic and as part of a wider European resistance to Americanization; however, the campaign was also a local revival of a previous German anti-popular culture movement using the same vocabulary. Beginning before 1900, based on anecdotal and circumstantial evidence, authority figures had inveighed against popular entertainments, especially dime novels, as contributors to juvenile delinquency and criminality.

This earlier campaign peaked at the end of World War I, as a young Fredric Wertham was completing his doctoral studies in Würzburg, raising the possibility that Wertham’s later work was influenced by this campaign’s tenor and rhetoric. In any case, the discourse of the older campaign would be recapitulated in the later anti-comics movement—a connection which remains under-researched.

(Note that this proposal is for an online presentation, given both budgetary and health concerns for the coming year.)

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30 years of Megan Kelso's Comics: Wellbeing is Local

Alison Mandaville, MFA, PhD

Professor, English

California State University, Fresno

MODE: HOPE to present **in-person** (can be virtual online if it becomes necessary). I love coming to this conference and have sorely missed it these last 4?! years.

As comics have become globally ubiquitous and slick, how do independent makers stay grounded in the form's power as a material creation of individual hands in specific locations? From her early 1990s Olympia, Washington Riot Grrrl influenced mini comic "Girl Hero" to her fourth book and new collection of graphic short stories (novellas?) *Who Will Make the Pancakes* (2022 Fantagraphics), independent US maker Megan Kelso's comics examine the balance and merging of politics, community and individuality in lives at ground level, in specific places. She watches and considers: How does each person cope and find joy?

Emerging from the same creative epicenter in the Pacific Northwest as Lynda Barry, Charles Burns, and Matt Groening, Kelso is one of the finest makers of short form comics (alongside the stories of Yoshihiro Tatsumi). Labor activism, sexism, racism, political corruption, the intergenerational trauma of war, poverty, serial femicide, mental illness: One by one her (usually fictional) stories anchor well-being writ-large in the daily lives of specific people, in specific places. Her comics – including an 85-foot-long steel plate public art installation – are markedly tangible, careful, slow pieces that invite a quieting of the mind, and allow the body to participate in stories that evoke hard, but also deeply pleasurable feelings. Well-being, like a good comic, is experienced locally.

Bio:

Alison Mandaville is a professor of English literature and pedagogy at California State University, Fresno. She has taught courses in comics as literature, creative form, and pedagogical tool for over twenty years. Her articles on comics have appeared hither and thither; and she occasionally publishes her own poetry and literary translations from Azerbaijani. She is currently at work on poetry about play and a series of lyrical essays about history, industry, race, war, and gender set on the United States West Coast.

Comics as Sex Machine. Retracing Italian Comics Soft-Core from the 70s to the Present

Nicoletta Mandolini and Lorenzo Di Paola

Between the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, Italian newsstands got flooded with erotic/pornographic comics for adults. Notorious examples include *Jacula*, *Sukia*, *Zora la Vampira*, but also Milo Manara's *Jolanda de Almaviva* and Guido Crepax's *Valentina*. These comics introduced Italian readers to a plethora of heroines whose sexual adventures were later interpreted by (even feminist) critics both as a sign of women's right to bodily liberation and as a demonstration of their long-lasting implicit subjugation to the power of the male gaze. More recently, Italian comics creators have drawn from the adult comics tradition to shape comics stories that retrieve the soft-core posture and update it to the mores of contemporary Italian society, a society where intersectional feminist stances are slowly being taken into account. Titles include the serial comics project *Sweet Paprika*, by the Neapolitan author Marika Adinolfo, and *Occhi ovunque*, a webcomic by Ratigher and Francesco Cattani distributed through Patreon during the covid-19 pandemic. This paper aims at retracing the long trajectory of Italian adult comics by studying the social practices connected to the production and consumption. Departing from the hypothesis that adult erotic comics have mirrored and, at the same time, challenged Italian moral codes by feeding a sexual imaginary that have introduced readers to new ways for exploring desire and pleasure, we will discuss, in particular, the role that these narratives have played in (re)shaping the always gendered relationship between sex and its representations.

Dr Nicoletta Mandolini is FCT Researcher at CECS (Centro de Estudos de Comunicação e Sociedade), at Universidade do Minho (Portugal), where she is working on the project *Sketch Her Story and Make It Popular. Using Graphic Narratives in Italian and Lusophone Feminist Activism Against Gender Violence* (<https://www.sketchthatstory.com/>). She worked as FWO Postdoctoral Researcher at KU Leuven (Belgium) and she holds a PhD from University College Cork (Ireland). Funded by the Irish Research Council, her doctorate project resulted

in the monograph *Representations of Lethal Gender-Based Violence in Italy Between Journalism and Literature: Femminicidio Narratives* (Routledge 2021). Among other articles on sexist abuse in contemporary literature and media, she co-edited the volume *Representing Gender-Based Violence: Global Perspectives* (Palgrave 2023). She is an active member of the CASiLaC (Centre for Advanced Studies in Languages and Cultures) research cluster on Violence, Conflict and Gender, that she co-convened from 2016 until 2019. She is founding member of SnIF (Studying'n'Investigating Fumetti).

Lorenzo Di Paola is research fellow at the Department of Ancient and Modern Civilisations, University of Messina. He is adjunct professor of "Teorie e sociologie del fumetto dalla stampa al digitale " at the University of Salerno. He works on the mediology of comics and literature and the sociology of digital cultures. He has written numerous articles for scientific journals and collective volumes and has participated in numerous national and international conferences. He is part of the international research group on Italian comics SNIF - Studying 'n' Investigating Fumetti and is a member of the "Centro Studi Media Culture Società" at the University of Salerno. He also co-edits the scientific series "L'Eternauta, Collana di studi su fumetti e media", together with Luigi Frezza and Mario Tirino. He has edited with Mario Tirino the volume *Poi piovve dentro a l'alta fantasia. Dante e i fumetti* (Polidoro Editore 2022). His most recent publications include: *The dawn of the living communities: for a mediology of horror fandom in Dylan Dog* (H-Ermes 2022); *In the maze of media education: The TESEO toolkit* (Sociétés 2022); *From Virtual Reality to Augmented Reality: Devices, Bodies, Places and Relationships* (Ismar-adjunct 2021). He is the author of the book *L'inafferrabile medium. Una cartografia delle teorie del fumetto dagli anni Venti a oggi* (Polidoro editore, 2019).

Name: Dragoş Manea (University of Bucharest)

Title: “The Arms of the True Gods”: Religion, Estrangement, and Adaptation in Søren Mosdal’s *Erik the Red: King of Winter* (2016)

Abstract: Søren Mosdal's *Erik the Red: King of Winter* (2016) explores the cultural and political fractures that accompanied the Christianization of Scandinavia and the larger Viking world. A loose adaptation of the medieval *Saga of the Greenlanders* and *Saga of Erik the Red*, the graphic narrative largely proposes a nuanced perspective on the appearance of Christianity in Greenland, which—without downplaying the crimes committed in the name of Christianization—foregrounds the agency of the Norse in the process of religious conversion (Winroth 2012). In doing so, it allows, perhaps, for a better understanding of the religious and political tensions that marked the period of Christianization, while also engaging with the profound spiritual experiences of pagans and Christians alike.

Drawing on the work of scholars that have explored the enigmatic presence of magic and the supernatural in the secular world (Nelson 2001, Landy and Saler 2009), my paper argues that the fantastical and deliberately estranging elements that the graphic narrative employs—such as the power of holy words or the apparition of gods—have the potential to offer contemporary readers a better understanding of the Norse relationship with the divine in all its manifest strangeness. Without resorting to presentist representational conventions grounded in realism and historical accuracy, *Erik the Red* testifies to the enduring allure of religious imagery and myth-making.

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Bio: Dragoș Manea is a lecturer in the American Studies Program at the University of Bucharest, where he teaches courses in contemporary American literature, cultural memory studies, perpetrator studies, and media studies. His main research interests include the adaptation of history, cultural memory, and the relationship between ethics and fiction. Relevant publications include *Religious Narratives in Contemporary Culture: Between*

Cultural Memory and Transmediality (edited with Maria Sabina Draga-Alexandru, Brill, 2021) and *Reframing the Perpetrator in Contemporary Comics: On the Importance of the Strange* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022). He is a recipient of the Sabin Award for Comics Scholarship (2017).

E-mail: dc.manea@gmail.com, dragos.manea@lts.unibuc.ro

Bruna Martini's Proposal: "Graphic History"

What is **Graphic History** and how can it connect us?

To be a migrant is to be disconnected. A nation is an imagined community - it's the feeling of being related to people who we have never met.

What happens when you leave your country? Some migrants recreate their communities in small in their adopted homes; others live a life disconnected from the people around them. Most end up absorbing new cultural and social habits. They expand and contaminate their identity, ending the exclusive bond with their country of origin.

How can those bonds be rebuilt in a new place without resorting to the jingoism of petty nationalism? **Graphic Histories** are a way of situating the migrant in a wider historical context. They tell the story of a person and the story of a society showing how the two are linked.

In this paper I aim to focus on diaspora, community healing and memory. I will do so by using examples from two of my published graphic novels: *Homeland* (BeccoGiallo, 2021) and *Roots* (BeccoGiallo, 2023). *Homeland* tells the story of those who stayed back at home during the second world war. *Roots* focuses on a modern Italian migrant rediscovering migrations of generations before her.

Their stories are told through the **Graphic History** approach. Through historical research a family album becomes an investigation of a Nation.

Graphic History has the goal of keeping memory alive. It enhances the experience of reading a book by making it more immersive, approachable and impactful.

Ultimately, it brings ordinary stories to life, making the readers feel connected to one another.

Who is Brunna Martini?

I am a published graphic novelist. I have promoted my books in public events in Italy and the UK, from festivals to talks and university lectures both offline and online (including national TV). My graphic novel *Homeland* has been judged one of the five

best graphic novels published in Italy in 2021. It was longlisted at LDC Comics Awards 2020 and received a public commendation from the President of Italy for its anti-fascist content.

I have been awarded a grant from the Art Council for developing my graphic novels.

Tel: +44 07972870201 Email: hello@brunamartini.com

Witch-hunt – an Eloquent Answer by Dylan Dog

Roberta Matkovic

In the '90s in Italy, there was a political witch-hunt against splatter and horror comics, which was held up as the main and only reason and cause of the violence and similar problems in society. Even if the famous comic *Dylan Dog* was never mentioned, the authors could not just step aside and ignore the political affair. The answer appeared in the form of number 69 in 1992, with a significant title – *Witch-hunt*.

This specific episode is interesting as it is a meta-comic – a comic that deals with the world of comics in all its aspects – author(s), reader(s), society, culture, the time frame and the relations between all mentioned aspects. The paper will offer an analysis of the episode highlighting the main aspects that it brings to readers. For many of the readers (and not only), the arguments could seem plain and logical. But it is obvious that there was a critical percentage of bigots who deliberately choose mental blindness and deafness pointing to the harmless phenomenon as the main cause of their own cultural and social failures.

PhD. Roberta Matkovic

Faculty of Humanities at Pula/Pola (Croatia)

email: roberta.matkovic@outlook.com

Marie McDonough

Revolutionizing Self-Representation: Crips Aesthetics in French BD

Disability can claim us, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson writes, or we can claim disability as an identity for ourselves. Many disabled authors have recently turned to BD to depict their experiences with neurodiversity and autism (Dachez's *La Différence invisible*), brain seizure disorder (Durand's *La Parenthèse*), and mental illness (Meurisse's *La Légèreté*, Larcenet's *Le Combat ordinaire*), and to narrate how they have come to terms with their own evolving (disabled) identities. This presentation explores how BD's formal qualities – its interplay of text and image, its narrative ruptures and restitching – allow for a uniquely "crip" aesthetic in order to represent non-normative embodiment, pain, or other disability perspectives. BD also allows authors to mark graphically and textually the confrontation between the expectations of the social world and their own lived realities. In so doing, the texts discussed challenge the notions both of the fixity of bodies and of a medically "fixable" body, while resisting the hegemonies of ableism and narrative coherencies; they shore up disability as a valid and valuable source of creativity and artistic insight.

Bio

Marie Satya McDonough is a Senior Lecturer in Writing at Boston University. Her research and teaching interests include comics and bandes dessinées, feminist and gender theory, and Indigenous and critical race studies. She is the translator of *Young Foucault: The Lille Manuscripts on Psychopathology, Phenomenology, and Anthropology, 1952-1955* (Columbia UP, 2022) and of Michel Foucault's 1954 course *Binswanger and Phenomenology* (forthcoming from Columbia UP in 2023).

Rhiannon McGlade

Sketching Senescence: Third and Fourth-Age Female Subjectivities in Contemporary Spanish Comics

In the context of persistent preoccupations with the past, ageing subjects have come to occupy the imaginations of Spain's contemporary comic artists. Ana Penyas' *Estamos todas bien* [We're All Fine] (2017) and Daniella Martí's *Carmenza* (*Quiero pensar que no es demasiado tarde* [I Want to Believe It's Not Too Late], 2021), underscore the heterogeneity of older female experiences. Meanwhile, Antonio Altarriba/Kim's biopic, *El ala rota* [The Broken Wing] (2019) and Paco Roca's care-home narrative *Arrugas* [Wrinkles] (2011) reflect on life between the third and fourth age. What unites these texts is their mobilisation of graphic narratives to offer reflective responses to ageing in contemporary Spain. Moreover, their foregrounding of doubly-marginalised *female* ageing voices is

particularly pertinent to questions of wellbeing and community building, given recent studies have shown women to account for the majority of Spain's care-home residents. Penyas, Martí, Altarriba/Kim and Roca's female protagonists embrace alterity as they disavow established notions of the aged woman, underscoring comics as the ideal locus from which to make invisible subjects visible. Indeed, as the authors-artists contend with broader questions of isolation, illness, and dependency, they harness the comics medium—so often tethered to youth culture—to explore the experiences of senescence in a language that transcends generational divides.

Borders in a Belgian comic

Mark McKinney (Miami University, Oxford, OH)

mckinnm@miamioh.edu

Le cheval sans tête was an innovative comics periodical in which artists explored many kinds of borders and cross-border connections between art forms, media, national cartooning traditions, ethnic groups, and historical epochs. In my paper, I analyze a short comic-strip story by two Belgian cartoonists, Eric Lambé and Philippe de Pierpont. Exhuming it now from the history of European avant-garde comics is useful because the cartoonists' sophisticated reflection on intermediality and their approach to world history and to immigration to Europe from the global South are just as strongly compelling today as when they first published their story decades ago. It dialogizes discourse of several sorts in different media, including xenophobic language from a far-right tract, televised war imagery, and fictional language from a novel. In their comic strip, the cartoonists juxtapose, for example, televised news reporting, an apparently transparent discourse purporting to depict reality as it is, and, on the other hand, fictional discourse from the novel and the figurative representations of their comic strip itself. In so doing, they encourage readers to develop the ability to read images and texts in a sophisticated, self-reflexive manner.

Lauren McShane, Queen's University Belfast.

Redrawing Family Boundaries: Bande Dessinée as Retroactive Care for Family Alcoholism in *Mal de Mère* (Éditions Soleil, 2015)

In the wake of COVID-19, we are confronting ancillary epidemics hidden in the home and shrouded in taboo, at the limits of traditional narrative language. One of these is alcoholism. Comics have already played a role in family therapy sessions in helping go beyond where language fails to represent an alcoholic household (Robinson, 1997). In this clinical setting,

parentification is understood as the transgression of family boundaries to place responsibilities upon a child of caring for an alcoholic family member (Heck and Janne, 2011). Taking Rodéric Valambois' *Mal de Mère* (2015) as a case study, an autobiographical BD which recounts his adolescence with his alcoholic mother and her unsuccessful rehab experience, this paper proposes that writing bandes dessinées is retroactive self-care for the parentified child. The form navigates and redraws the boundaries of interactions with family and health professionals to recentre the parentified child's experience of an alcoholic household. Bandes dessinées thus circumvent insufficient traditional language to 'give voice' to the former child in the interplay of family care dynamics with institutional care dynamics. The bande dessinée is a generative tool for the adult child of the alcoholic to create their own family-centred care located at the limits of institutional care provision.

Title: New Directions of Holocaust Representation via Solidarity and Self-Care in Collaborative Graphic Narratives between Artists and Child Survivors: On Charlotte Schallié's *But I Live* Project (2022)

Author: Dana Mihăilescu (University of Bucharest)

Abstract: Ever since the 1986 and 1991 publication of the two volumes of Art Spiegelman's ground-breaking *Maus*, a growing number of second and third plus generation artists have published nuanced graphic narratives about the Holocaust. Therefore, at present, comics is a highly efficient medium to represent Holocaust experience and its challenges for new generations, as well delineated by Hillary Chute (2016), Victoria Aarons (2020), Ole Frahm et al. (2021) or Matt Reingold (2022). Building on these scholars' insights, I will explore a new direction of graphic narratives over the past few years, that of addressing not just the traumatic aspect of the Holocaust but also the importance of (sometimes transnational) solidarities as acts of resistance during World War II ensuring survival and self-care. I will show how this is a major point of interest in Charlotte Schallié's recently edited book *But I Live: Three Stories of Child Survivors of the Holocaust* (2022), a volume comprising three graphic narratives of child survivors of the Holocaust from Romania, the Netherlands and Germany, resulting from the collaboration of the child survivors with well-known graphic artists from Canada (Miriam Libicki), Israel (Gilad Seliktar) and Germany (Barbara Yelin). I will explore how this collaborative project aims to fulfil a nuanced didactic and ethical mission by the way the book structurally presents the three graphic narratives featuring various forms of solidarity in diverse geographical locations and gender-specific types of experiences in ghettos, hiding or concentration camps and intersperses them with an interactive "Behind the Scenes" section involving a dialogue among the artists about their cooperation with the child survivors.

Bio: Dana Mihăilescu is associate professor of American Studies at the University of Bucharest. She was a Fulbright Junior grantee at Brandeis University and the Edith Kreeger Wolf Distinguished Visiting Professor at the Crown Family Center of Jewish and Israel Studies at Northwestern University. Her main research interests and publications focus on Jewish American Studies, Holocaust (survivor) testimonies, trauma, ethics, and memory. She is the author of articles in venues such as *Holocaust and Genocide Studies*, *Shofar*, *Studies in Comics*, *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, *French Cultural Studies*, *American Imago*, and of the monograph *Eastern European Jewish American Narratives, 1890-1930: Struggles for Recognition* (Lexington, 2018).

Linda Miller

This workshop relates to the conference themes of ;

Diaspora and community healing, formation, and memory (Attendees are often IMG's International Medical Graduates and discrimination is rife in healthcare work, recognised as "Differential Attainment " in medical education and bullying and undermining in practice).

Establishing an ethics of care and shaping solidarity

Exhibits as spaces for private and public pleasure and connection

Representations that challenge, strengthen, or complicate stereotypes. (The stereotypes of doctors as heroic, invulnerable, and lacking empathy and compassion are challenged)

Interdisciplinary approaches that build connections between researchers...or that fail to do so. (The workshop series bridges disciplines, involving Medical Humanities researchers, arts practitioners, health care practitioners, and coaches, and recognises us all as recipients of care.)

Cross-cultural or global perspectives on authorship, collaboration, and readership. (The workshops have been well received internationally and cross language and cultural boundaries)

Creative practices of therapy. (though the focus is on creative practice for salutogenesis rather than therapy for burnout).

Title

'Better living' for patients through the 'better living' of doctors; cartooning 'sparkling moments' in care. An interactive graphic medicine workshop.

Abstract

Healthcare practitioner (HCP) well-being has never been more important. The Covid pandemic has exacerbated a burnout epidemic. Healthcare sustainability means resources and

'...considering the health and wellbeing of staff – *arguably the single most important entity in the sustainable delivery of healthcare.*'[\[1\]](#)

Negatively biased, mandated reflection focuses on 'self-flagellation'[2]; significant events, errors, and complaints, further impacting morale. The media fuels unrealistic patient expectations of the under-resourced NHS.[3][4][5] Violence has been incited[6]. Doctors suffer more depression, dependence, divorce, and death by suicide[7][8] than others, increasing understaffing.

The global health workforce crisis demands that we 'motivate and manage healthcare teams in a fundamentally different way....to better support and care for staff.'[9] Supervision is valued in coaching, counselling, and psychiatry, serving formative, normative, and restorative functions[10], but doctors suspiciously perceive it as "performance management".

Award winning workshops[11][12] combining coaching, and arts[13][14] support practitioner well-being and reflection; 'supervision in disguise'. Cartooning "sparkling moments", elicits rich insights about joy, and meaning in work. Cartooning is 'serious play', embodied 'thinking with the hands' Collegiate, appreciative inquiry supports self-efficacy, highlights compassion, and energises. The resulting engagement is the opposite of the low self-efficacy, detachment, cynicism, and fatigue of burnout. It is restorative for doctors. (200 words)

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“Human laws are meaningless here”: Ecofeminism and Ecological Wellbeing in

Aranyaka

Amrutha Mohan

PhD scholar, University of Kerala, India

Dr. Nair Anup Chandrasekharan

Assistant Professor, Bishop Moore College (University of Kerala), India

ABSTRACT

This paper analyses how Devdutt Pattanaik and Amruta Patil’s graphic novel *Aranyaka* engages with the concept of ecological well being. The inextricable connection of human beings with nature and all other living forms on earth which constitutes the crux of ecological thinking is emphasised in the graphic novel. The forest appears as a recurrent motif in the story. It is not depicted as a mere exotic landscape, but as an impregnable, multifaceted, mystic and subversive space. Richly embedded with visual-verbal metaphors, allusions and philosophical wisdom from ancient literary texts, the graphic narrative takes impetus from the mythological story of an Indian sage Yajnavalkya, his wives Katyayani, Maitreyi, and his disciple Gargi. Y’s (Yajnavalkya) unlettered wife Katyayani the Large embodies the essence of the forest and is positioned as the narrator of the story, thereby foregrounding the intimate association between women and nature. Borrowing extensively from eco critical theories and

intersectional ecofeminism, this research focuses on how the graphic narrative proposes the principles of eco-sensitivity and mutual co-existence. The paper also argues that the text offers sustainable ecological perspectives and also contributes to our contemporary responses to the Anthropocene.

Keywords: Anthropocene, ecofeminism, ecology, forest, gender, graphic novel.

Lines of Hurt and Care: The Journey of Healing in Amruta Patil's *Kari*

By: Sayan Mukherjee

PhD student

DA-IICT, Gandhinagar, India

Graphic novels have been a space for the exploration of personal and social experiences. Will Eisner in *Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* (1978) spoke of the Jewish experience in tenements within America, while Art Spiegelman's father tries to come to terms with his traumatic past in the Nazi concentration camps in *Maus* (1991). In the same manner, Amruta Patil's *Kari* (2008) is a graphic novel which revolves around the titular character, who is a gay woman struggling to find her place within the city of Mumbai. The story of *Kari* is one of gradual healing, of finding oneself and making peace with the harshness of the world. Patil's explorations are aided by visual references to paintings, maps, etc. These images create a connection between their original and current contexts, providing the graphic novel with a palimpsest-like depth, consisting of multiple layers. Thus, while the text deals with solemn topics such as suicide, loneliness, and mortality, the underlying tone is one of hope and rejuvenation.

In this paper, I will conduct a semiotic analysis of Amruta Patil's *Kari* in order to understand the importance of the graphic narrative medium in this story of rehabilitation and acceptance.

CAFe: the Comic Art Festival examined as instrument in comic-maker wellbeing.

Dr Bruce Mutard (Independent Researcher)

Dr Stuart Medley (Edith Cowan University, Australia)

The years of the Covid pandemic severely disrupted the presentation of comic arts festivals around the world, leading to virtual festivals in place of in-person events, if not outright cancellations in many cases. 2022 saw many of these festivals return to in-person events,

bringing much joy to those who organise, present, table at, and visit them. This paper seeks to understand the role that the comic art festival has in promoting well-being among comics makers and comics readers. The comic art festival is not to be confused with pop-culture ‘Comic-Con’s,’ which celebrate a far wider range of media and can be readily identified by the presence of celebrities and cosplayers. The authors of this paper are organising committee members for the Perth Comic Arts Festival, and have attended a number of other comic art festivals around the world as makers tabling, participants in festival programs and as general attendees. The anecdotal evidence derived from our experience is that by being a locus and draw for makers and readers alike, comic art festivals provide a space and time to discuss, inspect and celebrate comics in a myriad of ways. Most importantly, it cements and develops the comics community, which the work of Maynard (2017), Woo (2015) and Grant, Clark, McFarlane and Scott (2020) have shown is a core positive value about making, reading and/or being involved with comics in some way. This will be a qualitative examination, relying primarily on interviews with festival organisers, comics makers, comics readers and other attendees.

From Giotto to Drnaso: the common well of pictorial schema in ‘high’ art and ‘low’ comics.

By Dr Bruce Mutard

In the *Aesthetics of Comics*, David Carrier argued that at the time of Giotto, all of the visual technology required for making comics was present (2000). This term is analogous to Michael Polanyi’s concept of tacit knowledge (1966) which refers to knowledge that is not explicable, such as how to hold a brush loaded with ink to make a certain mark, allied with knowledge of composition, perspective, colour, shape, line, texture etc. to depict say, a building. Gombrich describes all this as a schema, specifically that of Western Art (1959). This chapter, presented in the comics register, will show how Western comics schemas, originated from the break that Giotto made with the Byzantine iconic, hierarchical tradition, to a humanist form best Susan Vogel described as the ‘Western Eye’ (1997). I show how comics schemas arose through the Western art training and interests of 18th century caricaturists and Toppfer, leading to the work of Nick Drnaso (2016, 2018), who I argue is as much an adherent of the Western Eye as Giotto and all who came in between. I will explain why pictures in Western comics appear as they do and that it is not unreasonable to posit Giotto as the father of Western comics, and not just because his astounding fresco cycle in the Arena Chapel (ca. 1300) is a visual narrative.

Note: This was published as a book chapter in comics form in *Comics and Art History* (Gray, M and Horton, I. Eds) by Palgrave Studies in Comics and Graphic Novels in 2022. I propose to present this in the format of Read to Me, wherein the panels of the comic will be shown one by one and I will read the text out aloud. It makes for a vivid type of engagement with comics and the maker, also affording a different approach to the encounter with comics

that can problematise such encounters. But the focus of my presentation is still the content in the abstract.

Keywords: western eye, tacit knowledge, schema, Giotto, caricature, comics.

Bio:

Dr. Bruce Mutard is a comics maker, publisher and researcher. His graphic novels include *The Sacrifice*, *The Silence*, *A Mind of Love*, *The Bunker* and *Post Traumatic*. His latest graphic novel *Bully Me*, was published as *Souffre Douleur* in France in 2019. He completed his PhD at Edith Cowan University with his thesis *The Erotics of Comics* in 2021, and likes to make comics as scholarship. He is director of the Comic Arts Awards of Australia and editor/publisher of the *Australian Comic Annual*. He has been a curator and program director at the Perth Comic Arts Festival.

Juanita Navarro-Páez

Comics, Healthcare, and Shame

Shame greatly affects the experiences of patients, carers, and healthcare professionals. Most people will take on one or more of these identities throughout their lifetime, and the COVID-19 pandemic brought an increased awareness of this reality. This context calls for more discussions of emotions, particularly shame, and healthcare. However, one of the main difficulties in studying shame is its elusiveness. Since it is not a pleasant emotion, people are not prone to openly disclosing their shame, preferring to hide it behind other emotions which are easier to admit. Nevertheless, I propose that the language of comics offers valuable tools for studying shameful experiences within healthcare contexts. The medium has already been recognised as one that allows for addressing and processing complicated or distressing situations, such as the ones that can arise from shame in healthcare contexts. Furthermore, shame is a visually charged emotion, as shown by the theory on shame talking about “shame spirals”, heightened visibility (Dolezal and Lyons, 2017) and intersubjective surveillance (Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen and Smith-Crowe, 2014).

With comics enabling these conversations, healthcare settings have the potential of improving people’s experiences within those spaces. This can also open the space to reflect on experiences of shame as events that shape a person’s identity (Sedgwick, 1993; Dolezal 2017), to approach the emotion from a perspective that does not dwell exclusively on the negative.

Profile: Juanita Navarro-Páez.

PhD Student in Art History and Visual Culture at the University of Exeter, funded by the Wellcome Trust and the College of Humanities. Currently part of the Shame and Medicine project.

WHAT COMICS CAN DO IN A COUNTRY OF THOUSAND LANGUAGES: EXPLORING THE SYSTEM OF INDIAN COMICS

--Debanjana Nayek.

“Comics as language”, “comics and language” and “the language of comics” have been some of the most significant queries of comics scholarship. In order to locate comics within the larger fabric of language, scholars have looked into the combination of linguistic and visual codes (Groensteen, 2007) in comics, have delineated the grammar of comics with its form, meaning and “sequential units” (Cohn, 2005: 7) and have also questioned the theories of hybridity in comics (Miodrag, 2013: 83). This presentation will examine Indian comics and graphic novels in the light of these existing theories of comics arthrology and lexicon.

This paper, which is a part of a larger research, aims to understand the codes and systematic patterns of Indian graphic narratives which makes it a crucial communicative tool in a country which has 121 mother tongues with 19,500 languages (Linguistic census, 2018) and an immensely diversified populace. It will focus on the graphic novels, *Bhimayana* and *Munnu*, on the *Priya* comics trilogy and a number of other webcomics. All these graphic narratives have a social message, or a feminist issue or a political matter which has been highlighted by the work and is intended for an extensive number of readers. The paper further investigates the “cognitive system” (Cohn, 2005) that enables Indian visual narratives to become a familiar and shared language for the people of India.

Patoimbasha Nikiema

Caricaturing Life from the Inside: An Exploration of the Extremes in *Aya de Yopougon*

This talk analyzes Marguerite Abouet and Clément Oubrerie’s hyperbolic representation of postindependence Africa in *Aya de Yopougon*. The bande dessinée which was first published in 2005 follows a long line of Ivorian caricaturists and satirists whose works in *Fraternité Matin*, *Ivoir’Soir*, and the well-known *Gbich!* delved into the Ivorian daily realities with the intention to “pleasantly chastise” the society. Abouet reinterprets the existence of a community she left at a youthful age, but of which she kept vivid memories of the joy of living and the inevitable difficulties that characterize it. She is then a writer that narrativizes life from the inside, blending postcolonial specificities that belonged to the Ivory Coast of the 70s to sociopolitical experiences that occurred much later. This article explores the exaggerations and the extremes in Abouet’s narrative as a subtle social criticism. Such culminations range from the sexual representation of the inhabitants of Yopougon, Aya’s

welcoming understanding of same-sex sexuality which contrasts with Félicité's hetero-normative vision, the women revolt, to the aesthetics of migration Aboutet constructs.

Author Bio

Patoimbasba Nikiema is an Assistant Professor of French and Francophone Studies / Global Black and Afropean Studies at the University of Miami. He received a master in French and a certificate in university teaching at West Virginia University, and a PhD in French and Francophone Studies as well as a doctoral certificate in Gender, Sexuality and Women Studies at Pitt. Patoimbasba Nikiema serves as the President of the Francophone Caucus of the African Literature Association (FRACALA).

Black Product.

Traces of Black Popular Culture in the Comicbook Magazine *Produkt*.

Dr Bartosz Nowicki

'Magazyn Komiksowy Produkt' is a phenomenon of the Polish transformation period. Published between December 1999 and July 2004 it links the post-communist stagnation period of the 1990s with the slow rejuvenation of the Polish 'mainstream' comics publishing brought by the twenty first century. Its unprecedented popularity (in comparison to other Polish comics published at the time) is often linked to the subject matter of its contents. For example, to a cult series 'Osiedle Swoboda,' which tackled issues faced by the youth living in the post-communist and pre-European Union reality. Filled with humour and highly unapologetic 'Produkt' quickly became a voice of the young generation. Read today it can be seen as historic because it 'rehabilitated Polish locality, became a proof of Polish cultural specificity, Polish everyday life (Bazylewicz and Jankowski, 2012, p. 55).'

There is no surprise that a magazine of such importance attracted the attention of scholars, which resulted in a fair number of articles written about 'Produkt', its creators, and the comic series published on its pages. In this text, I focus on a subject that escaped their examination – the influence of black popular culture on Polish locality and the representation of black people in the magazine.

Bazylewicz, T. and Jankowski P. (2012) A (Non-)universal Housing Estate. Critical Analysis of 'Osiedle Swoboda.' *Zeszyty Komiksowe*, 14, 54-57.

Andrea Hormaechea Ocaña

Queer identity has a new superheroine: America Chavez

Traditionally, the cultural sector has been challenged by social movements to show those subjectivities that have been marginalized. Comics, since the 1960s, tried to echo these claims by movements such as feminism or the LGTB collective, who longed to find in their cartoons characters with whom they could identify and who represented other ways of being outside the normativity.

During the 21st century, a number of negative events are threatening the rights acquired so far. Campaigns such as Black Lives Matter, Me Too or the recent protests against the repeal of abortion rights point to a response to the setback experienced in terms of fundamental rights for marginalized subalternities.

The struggle of social movements to achieve full visibility in all spheres of society has found its loudspeaker in the comic book sector, especially among superheroes. An example of this is America Chavez, a young racialized superheroine, belonging to the LGTB IQA+ collective. This character, despite her brief career, is presented as a figure whose identity categories speak of subjectivities practically absent until now. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to propose how this character can empower those belonging to the LGTB IQA+ collective, by finding a superheroine in whom they can see themselves reflected.

Title - Collecting comics: one of the ways in which library collecting practices can support wellbeing

"Sam Orchard (Assistant Curator Cartoons and Comics) and Dr Abi Beatson (COVID-19 Digital Archivist) from the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand, share their experiences of how the collecting of comics can help increase diversity, representation, and wellbeing.

The Cartoon and Comics Archive underwent a simple change of scope in 2019 and, after 27 years of collecting, the Alexander Turnbull Library, in discussion with the then Guardians of the Cartoon Archive, agreed to extend the scope of the Cartoon Archive to include comics. By changing this scope, the Archive was able to broaden the diversity of artists represented within the archive, expand the subject matter that these cartoons and comics represent, and was also able to support researchers and historians to understand, and explore, how cartoons and comics reflect, and tell the stories of, Aotearoa New Zealand's people and cultures.

Sam Orchard will talk about his role in rebalancing and reshaping the collection, and how a wider scope can address some of the harms caused by misrepresentation and under-representation of marginalised groups. Dr Abi Beatson will talk about collecting cartoons and comics during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the breadth of comic and cartoon art that was collected - editorial cartoons, webcomic diaries, and science communication comic graphics - that all contributed to telling the wider story of New Zealand's COVID-19 community experiences, including how comics were used by New Zealanders to make sense of and process their pandemic experiences, share important science information, bring levity, and enhance wellbeing, during a chaotic time."

Alice Parrinello

Flash dance: mental health and queerness in Percy Bertolini's *Da Sola*

Percy Bertolini's *Da Sola* (Alone, 2021) depicts a non-conforming, pink-furred, fluorescent-jumpsuit-wearing protagonist roaming the streets of a dystopian brutalist city in the course of a night. The narrative starts with the main character's escape from a mental health facility, and it continues by depicting their constant attempt to avoid being institutionalised. Alongside the powerful images created by Bertolini, the graphic novel intermixes the panels with quotes from Vaslav Nijinsky's diaries about his own mental health struggles.

The paper will investigate how the text engages with issues of mental health, their depiction in the graphic form, the impact of institutionalisation, and the connections across space and time, which can provide a (albeit temporary) relief. Furthermore, the paper will also engage with queerness and gender non-conformity and their relationship with medical structures. Finally, dance will be explored as a form of queer liberation and expression.

The theoretical backbone of the paper will be based on Paul Preciado's analyses on the body (2002), on Clare Croft's work on queerness and dance (2017), and on collapse as the only form of queer escape, following Jack Halberstam's argument that the only way is to unbuild, unmake, and collapse (2021).

Alice Parrinello
St Cross College, University of Oxford
alice.parrinello@stx.ox.ac.uk

Rhys Pasternack

Applying Game Theory to Comics

What does it mean to be immersed in an artwork, and why is it so good for our wellbeing? In the context of games, we often hear about 'flow'. As Turner (1974) describes, the 'flow' state allows us to separate ourselves from our insecurities to exist wholly in the moment and emerge with a stronger sense of self.

However, flow theory does not fully capture our experiences of interactive art. In such media, we are immersed, yet also detached, able to reflect on its beauty and the skill with which it is deployed. I call this state 'liminoid flow', and I am using it to build a framework for interpreting video games.

In this piece, I will share my framework. Then, we will apply it together. As both games and comics are interactive, I invite participants to have a conversation about how my framework can also be applied to interpreting comics. To facilitate this, we will watch a recording of the *Sister Friede* boss-fight in *Dark Souls III*, taking note of how a story is conveyed and how we receive that story. How can a similar experience be evoked in comics? Through this exercise, I hope to grow my understanding of comics studies and build a bridge between comics and games as tools for improving our lives.

Nicos Philippou and Tasos Anastasiades

Our proposed paper will present our collaborative project titled ‘**The Hyperphantastic Fortino**’. The project, a comic book about a lone traveller is informed by the aesthetics of Noir and draws from real life experiences. Even though the script is simplified, and it aims at a wide comic book audience it’s informed by several 20th century philosophical texts. It draws from Albert Camus’ ideas about the ‘absurdity of life’, Deleuzian theories on ‘rhizomes’, ‘assemblages’ and ‘becoming’ combined with the concept of the ‘mind’s eye’ in photography. The hero is ‘plagued’ by a condition which in neurology is considered an abnormality but in our story is elevated to the status of the super power that allows our superhero to imagine and see beyond the imitate visible surfaces.

Even though the comic book is aimed at a commercial circulation among comic book lovers, we hope at the same time that it could be a useful introductory text for use in photography, philosophy and cultural studies classes.

Nicos Philippou is a photographer with a strong interest in Cypriot topography and material culture. He has participated in several exhibitions in Cyprus and abroad. In 2010 he co-curated the exhibition Re-envisioning Cyprus and co-edited the volume with the same title. In 2012 he participated in the exhibition Sense of Place/ European Landscape Photography at the BOZAR in Brussels and in at Maroudia’s, a component of the major NiMAC exhibition Terra Mediterranea-In Crisis. In 2015 his book Coffee House Embellishments was shown in The PhotoBook Exhibition at the Benaki Museum in Athens.

He is also the co-editor of Photography and Cyprus: Time, Place, Identity. In 2016 NiMAC hosted his solo exhibition Sharqi, and published a photobook with the same title. His writings on photography, vernacular culture and Cypriot Identity have been published in journals, art magazines and collective volumes whereas his photography has been showcased in periodicals like photographies and Exposure. He is currently lecturing at the Communications Department of the University of Nicosia.

Tasos Anastasiades is an Assistant Professor at the European University Cyprus. In 2004, he started publishing "Plastic Comics", the first comic book series created in Cyprus. In 2014, he illustrated the graphic novel titled ‘Fascista’ and became a publishing partner and contributing artist at the first Cypriot comic book anthology titled “Current”.

Tasos has been involved in numerous cultural events and in 2017, he was selected by the Cyprus Embassy in Romania and the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture to represent his country at the 5th European Comics Festival organized by the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC). In addition, he is a webinar instructor and artist at ‘Digital Art Live’.

In 2019 he published the graphic novel titled ‘The Traveller’ which was done in collaboration with Neil Gibson publisher of T-Pub comics in London.

Currently he is involved in various comic book projects including the ‘The Traveller’ volume 2.

The change in the Spanish educational community through comics. Case study: Pedro Cifuentes, the reader who became a teacher and later an author.

The didactic options of comics are endless. As a cultural object allows the approach to any type of didactic needed, but taking into account that not all comics are designed with an educational intention, who has been responsible for this change? And what role have they played in the comics industry? The use of comics in class is more and more widespread, but in Spain there is a very specific case that perfectly exemplifies the union of the comic industry and education. Pedro Cifuentes was an avid comic book reader who studied to be a high school teacher. After gaining experience in the classroom, he became an author of educational comics. Creating a symbiosis between his two works. Today, his published series explains topics like History of Art, History of Spain, History of Literature and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. In 2023 his comics will begin to be sold in other languages, since its content rejects Eurocentrism and sexism drawing the attention of countries like Korea. This presentation aims to explain through Cifuentes' works and experiences how comics are a fundamental part of the educational society, inside but also outside the classroom. How comics, and their different formats, can explain complex issues in an accessible way and how this has made the educational system evolve for the best.

APPLICANT **Iria Ros Piñeiro**

CONTACT INFORMATION **iria.ros.pineiro@gmail.com**

Title: The Tangent Factories

Name and Affiliation: Alexander James Pollard (Senior Lecturer in Fine Art Painting and MA Fine Art at the University of Brighton)

• Adaptation, appropriation, and who owns comics • Life-writing as a form of self-care

*Paper: 20 minutes

Summary of Content:

The Tangent Factories is a graphic novel 'mash-up'. The story is created using an unconventional and experimental treatment of existing texts. Essentially using an approach which overlaps/relates to 'cut-up' (Burroughs/Gysin) and 'uncreative writing' techniques (Kenneth Goldsmith).

The fictional narrative of The Tangent Factories is built out of existing lines from Philip K Dick's oeuvre, cut-up and re-arranged to tell a story very similar to that of Roald Dahl's

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. But the new carved-up narrative deviates away from Dahl's original story. Instead, the mashed-up text tells the story of an eccentric art school in 'After the Bomb London' – a post-apocalyptic city covered in radioactive dust. As the story takes shape, aspects of my life begin to influence the narrative, appearing in both the 'fiction' and the 'real' meta-voice within the footnotes. These footnotes increasingly pull-focus and contaminate the visuals, forming an auto-fiction bridge between the two.

Essentially, the fiction becomes a synchronicity trigger (Carl Jung), or cue card system, igniting autobiographical stories/incidents and auto-theoretical (Lauren Fournier) themes.

The visuals of the graphic novel are plundered from various sources. They consist of cut-up and rearranged AI generated imagery/scenarios born from placing cut-up sentences into an online image generator. Other visual elements are taken from crypto currency logos, clip art, emojis, and other graphic novels, all galvanised using a 'low-fi' cut and paste and sketchy casual use of acrylic colour mixed directly on the page.

My paper would consist of a short reading from The Tangent Factories graphic novel. I would then discuss/unpack some of the issues at stake within the work.

Because my wife and her family are Ukrainian (she is from Zaporizhzhia), many of the meta-narrative footnotes refer to the situation unfolding in Zaporizhzhia, a city (with a nuclear power plant nearby) very close to the front line in south-eastern Ukraine. The extreme nuclear anxiety created by this dire situation feels like a throw-back to many cultural moments of anxiety at the height of the Cold War in the 1980s.

The work explores a personal response to this troubling context (from the outside). The absurdist fiction created is perhaps a cathartic and/or creative/reflective response to the madness of war, and frustration with the 'post truth' nonsense of disinformation.

I feel that this work/and paper could make an interesting contribution to discourse around the themes of

• Adaptation, appropriation, and who owns comics • Life-writing as a form of self-care

Keywords:

Ukraine, Ukraine/Russia war, Autotheory, Hauntology, Fiction, Non-conscious cognition, Intuition, Collage, Appropriation, Philip K Dick, Roald Dahl, Precognitive, Cut-up, Collage, Detournment, Science-fiction, Post capitalism, Carl Jung, Synchronicity, Lauren Fournier, experimental writing, low-fi, graphic narrative, Situationism.

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Biography:

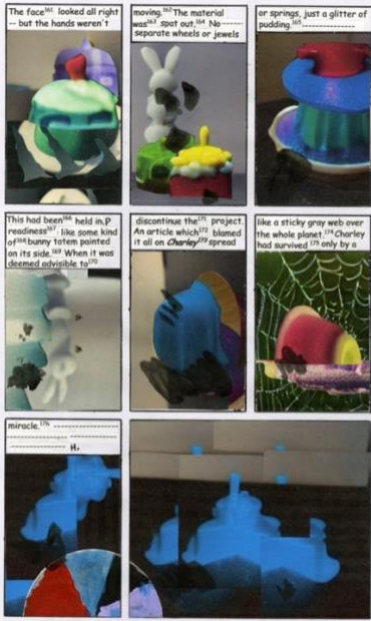
Alexander James Pollard studied BA (Hons) Painting and Drawing at Glasgow School of Art from 1996-99. His MPhil titled *A Genealogy of Bad Painting – Legacies, Soft Objects and Networks* was undertaken at Goldsmiths College, London (2017). He is currently a PhD candidate at Kingston School of Art – undertaking a practice-based PhD titled: *The Tangent Factories*.

In 2005 Pollard represented Scotland at the Venice Biennale. Other selected exhibitions include: *Reboot: Ruins In Reverse*, La Plate-forme, Dunkerque, France (2020), *Paleo Fauvism*, Hop Projects, Folkestone (2018), *Jungle*, Celine Gallery, Glasgow (2017), *WoW PAINTINGS*, Young Team HQ, London (2016), *Black Marks*, Talbot Rice Gallery, University of Edinburgh (2007), *Counter Fature*, Luhring Augustine, New York (2007), *The Santorini Biennale* (2012) and *The Irregular Correct – New Art from Glasgow* at the Fremantle Art Centre, Fremantle, Australia (2012). Pollard is currently working on a graphic novel titled: *Aleister Crowley and Charles Dawson: The Order of the Dawn Man*, (with Luke Pendrell) which will be published in 2022.

Pollard has worked as a lecturer in Fine Art Painting and Printmaking at the Glasgow school of Art (2006-2013), and a Lecturer in Painting at Wimbledon College of Art (2013-14) and presently at the University of Brighton (since 2014), where he is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art Painting and MA Fine Art.

His work is held in major international private and public collections including: The Arts Council of England collection, Scottish National Gallery, Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon, Portugal, The Government Art Collection. Pollard lives and works in London.

Two example pages from *The Tangent Factories* (a work in progress)



Presenters: **Elizabeth Ann Pollard** and **Pamela Jackson**, Co-Directors of SDSU Center for Comics Studies

In Fall 2019, seven faculty gathered around a conference table to brainstorm building a comics initiative. Three years, and a pandemic, later, that comics initiative has become an award-winning Center for Comics Studies with more than 25 faculty from units across the institution, and partners at other universities in our state system and beyond. How was such growth possible in so short a time? We'll make the case that the community we built around comics – and, more specifically, comics' unique ability to address social justice issues – brought purpose to our pandemic isolation. "Comics and History," a group-sourced course first taught in Fall 2020 and exploring social justice in comics over time demonstrated the "better living" comics-study brought to students and faculty alike. That success catalyzed a curriculum explosion, prompting many new courses exploring how comics challenge and complicate stereotypes. Social justice is also central to our two fully-funded grants from national agencies. More than the extrinsic pay-off of these awards, however, the Center and its participant faculty (and students) have experienced the intrinsic value of comics in bringing connection and power at a time when so many felt isolated by, and powerless to face, the social ills outside our door.

CLI-MIC: an Erasmus+ Project for teaching global warming through comics

Álvaro M. Pons¹, Noelia Ibarra², José Segarra³

1. Cátedra de Estudios del Cómic Fundación SM-Universitat de València
2. Departament de Didàctica de la Llengua i la Literatura, Universitat de València
3. Asociación Cresol

Corresponding autor: Alvaro.Pons@uv.es

Keywords: Global Warming in Comics, Climatic Change in Comics

One of the main challenges of the wellbeing society is the threat that the climate emergency is generating, with a demonstrable growing impact on our daily lives that requires immediate solutions and measures to be taken to develop feasible solutions based on the IPCC reports and which are embodied, to a certain extent, in the Sustainable Development Goals that aim for the year 2030. Part of this philosophy requires dissemination and awareness-raising tools through teaching at different educational levels. The Erasmus+ CLI-MIC project, led by the University of Valencia and with the collaboration of educational and environmental institutions from Austria, Italy, Portugal, Finland and Cyprus, proposes methodologies and tools to support this work developed from the use of comics, both as transversal work material in the classroom and as an active and inclusive methodology of practices that transform students into active agents against climate change. This paper presents the strategies developed to achieve this and the first results of this European project.

Panel Title: Better Teaching through Comics – A Discussion

Prospective panellists:

Barbara M. Eggert (Merz Akademie – University of Applied Art, Design and Media, Stuttgart)

Frederik Byrn Køhlert (University of East Anglia)

Elizabeth Allyn Woock (Palacky University)

Barbara Postema (University Groningen) (Organiser)

Description:

Comics can be taught or included in courses in many different ways, and this panel aims to demonstrate how using comics can lead to good teaching, and how we can teach comics well. Together, the panellists have experience with teaching a great variety of comics-related courses, from courses that specialise in the form and history of comics to theoretical courses; practical courses that focus on making comics and comics-related objects; and courses on other topics or themes that only partially include comics, such as medievalism, trauma, popular genres or media. The panellists will each present a short statement regarding their specific experiences in teaching comics, and then we will open the floor to discussion and questions. We will talk about specific class activities and assignments related to comics, tailored to various kinds of students or courses. With a focus on academic settings, we will analyse the many different ways in which comics can be made relevant and appealing to programs, and be tailored to various pedagogical approaches. Other aspects under discussion will be teachable texts, whether a “canon” of comics is desirable, and some of the challenges of using comics in the classroom, such as text cost and availability.

Biographies:

Dr Barbara M. Eggert:

In November 2022, Barbara M. Eggert was elected as the next president of Merz Akademie – University of Applied Art, Design and Media, Stuttgart. Dr. Eggert’s research, teaching, and curatorial projects focus mainly on comics. In her habilitation project, Eggert investigates the functional spectrum of comics in exhibitions focusing mainly on Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. As of 2020, she is responsible for the comics symposium at *NEXTCOMIC*, Austria’s annual comics festival. She also works as a curator, blogs for Karikaturmuseum Krems, Austria, and creates (web)comics, using her nom de plume, Eggy.

Email: barbara.margarethe.eggert@merz-akademie.de

Dr Frederik Byrn Køhlert:

Frederik Byrn Køhlert is Associate Professor of Media and American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He is the author of *Serial Selves: Identity and Representation in Autobiographical Comics* and the editor of two companion book series for Routledge on Gender, Sexuality, and Comics. In addition to his work on comics and related visual media, he is also the author and editor of two books on the literary and cultural history of Chicago.

Email: F.Kohlert@uea.ac.uk

Dr Elizabeth Allyn Woock:

Elizabeth Allyn Woock an assistant professor in the Department of English and American Studies at Palacky University in the beautiful city of Olomouc, in the Czech Republic. She teaches courses on British and American history, modern American literature, and special topics such as horror or medievalism. Her research topics focus on medievalism and history in popular media, comics, and graphic novels. Her most recent projects include the *History in Comics* conference and illustrated comics-based research articles in forthcoming publications.

Email: elizabethallyn.woock@upol.cz

Dr Barbara Postema:

Barbara Postema is a Lecturer at Groningen University in the Netherlands. Her monograph *Narrative Structure in Comics* was published in a Brazilian translation in 2018. She has contributed work to *Image and Narrative*, the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, and the *International Journal of Comic Art*. Postema is co-editor of *Crossing Lines: Transcultural/Transnational Comics Studies*, a book series from Wilfrid Laurier University Press, a former President of the Canadian Society for the Study of Comics, and a current Member-at-Large for the Comics Studies Society.

Email: b.postema@rug.nl

Mihaela Precup

Title: Through the Looking-Glass: Distortion, Transformation, and Self-Care in Autobiographical Comics

Abstract: This paper examines an important trope of self-representation in autobiographical comics: the depiction of subjects contemplating themselves, either in mirrors or through other methods of self-reflection. Such moments sometimes act as straightforward meta comments on the autobiographical process and its challenges. However, I am more interested here in those situations when the mirror-image, instead of being a mimetic representation of the cartoon self of the autobiographer, offers a space where the self-perception of the author is literalized on the page as something other than the subject staring in reflective surfaces or spaces. In such moments, monsters, animals, blurs, broken-up images, and various other characters look back at subjects that are already depicted as cartoon versions of themselves. In this paper, I am interested in exploring the potential of such images to offer an important space of self-contemplation as self-care for subjects whose various life experiences (usually moments of crisis, trauma, and/or illness) complicate their self-perception. I examine a selection of comics by cartoonists such as Ellen Forney, Rachel Lindsay, Maia Kobabe, and others, while also engaging with Hillary Chute, Jared Gardner, Gillian Whitlock, and other critics who note the ability of autobiographical comics to make (self-)narrative bias legible.

Bio: Mihaela Precup is Associate Professor in the American Studies Program at the University of Bucharest, where she teaches American visual and popular culture, contemporary American literature, and comics studies. Her work explores the graphic representation of violence, post-traumatic memory, autobiography, and subversive femininity. She has co-edited three special issues of the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (on *War and Conflict* and *Sexual Violence*;

with Rebecca Scherr). She is the author of *The Graphic Lives of Fathers: Memory, Representation, and Fatherhood in Autobiographical Comics* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

Jesse Prevoo

Was Wertham Right?

Discussing the potential influence of Comics on its readership

One of the most controversial statements to make in Comics Scholarship seems to be ‘Wertham was Right’. His analysis of the influence Comics have over their readership – a negative influence, at best – did not only affect the ways Comics are perceived, but also the way they were published and even their appearance and what their stories could entail. But, such claims as made in ‘Seduction of the Innocent’ have been around for nearly every new medium, from books to radio, to Videogames and movies. They seem to be of all ages and ever present.

I would like to discuss the possibility that Wertham may have been right – not in the destructive influence of Comics, but in stating the idea that Comics do have an impact on their readers. Ideas, concepts and beliefs are shared through stories, and – as with so much of reading – what is learned from the story is not only dependent on the story, but also on the reader. And, of course, if there is a potential for destruction and evil in Comics – as Wertham claimed -, there is also a potential for growth and good.

Jesse Prevoo is an independent researcher with an interest in narratology and reader-interaction in Comics, who never seems to finish his PhD. He has published several articles in The Comics Grid focusing on reader interaction and has been a book and music reviewer for a while on 8weekly.nl. During the day, Jesse is the Digital Archivist for TNO (Organization for Applied Sciences in the Netherlands)

Ernesto Priego

Co-Designing Comics to Understand People’s Experiences of Public Health Challenges



Dr Ernesto Priego
Centre for Human-Computer Interaction Design, City, University of London
Ernesto.Priego.1@city.ac.uk

Proposal

In this presentation I will describe the user-centred research methods involved in the creation of comics focusing on people's experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following up on our previous comics work on dementia care (Priego, Wilkins & Grennan [2017](#); Wilkins; Priego & Martins [2020](#)), I will focus on the work I led on between March 2020 and March 2022: "A Comic Visualising the Experience of Video-conferencing with Aging Parents During the COVID-19 Pandemic" (Wilkins & Priego [2020](#)); "Community Matters: Please Be Kind. (A COVID-19 Response Comic)" (Priego, de la Mora & Huddy [2020](#)); "A Day in Lockdown (A COVID-19 Response Comic)" (de la Mora, Priego and Scott [2021](#)); and "Living with Covid" While Clinically Vulnerable: A Real-Life Story." (Priego, Pérez & de la Mora, [2022](#)).

I will engage with the theoretical and practical underpinnings of these works, engaging with the concepts of empathy and wellbeing from a self-conscious auto-ethnographic perspective. Beyond creating further scholarly awareness of these comics, a main objective of the presentation will be to offer practical methodological insights, including ethical and technical issues in the creation of comics investigating people's experiences of public health challenges.

Collaborative graphic narrative: *Le 5 fasi* and Progetto Stigma, an Italian case study in comics industry

Maya Quaianni

Is it possible for comic artists to leave the solitude of ink and pencil to embrace team job dynamics? *Le cinque fasi* (Edizioni BD, 2011) is a graphic novel created by six Italian comic artists known as Collettivo Dummy (Alberto Ponticelli, Officina Infernale, Squaz, AkaB, Tiziano Angri, Ausonia). Inspired by the theory of the five stages of grief from the psychiatrist Elisabeth Kübler Ross and with a fulcrum in the chapter about depression realized by AkaB, *Le 5 fasi* is a collaborative project born by the artists themselves. Writing and drawing about the necessity to process loss, the six artists coordinated their collaboration via email. An artistic experiment that made AkaB reflect on the political power of association among artists, leading him to establish Stigma in 2017, a publishing project created from expert comic artists (such as Collettivo Dummy) as well as young artists from underground and DIY culture after observing the limits of the comic industry. In this presentation, we will try to understand how artistic collaboration can take place in the Italian comics industry, and how it can be used in the creation of a graphic narrative work.

Lisa Maya Quaianni Manuzzato (Milan, 1984) has a master's degree cum laude in performing arts, cinema and multimedia communications (Università degli Studi di Milano) with a dissertation on history of animation. She has written about Japanese animation in *Animation: A World History* (Routledge, 2015) and *Animazione: Una storia globale* (UTET, 2017), curated by Giannalberto Bendazzi. Later she extends her interests to Spanish comics, Italian comics and self-publishing comics, issues that she covers in conferences and articles. She works as communication manager at WOW Spazio Fumetto – Museo del Fumetto di Milano, where she has also led exhibitions and events related to Japanese Culture and DIY comics. She has organized comics exhibitions for various Italian Cultural Institute with the label MaMa Comics, founded with Maria-Angela Silleni. She is member of the COST Action iCon-MICs – Investigación sobre el cómic y la novela gráfica en el área cultural ibérica and a founder member of SNIF Studying 'n' Investigating Fumetti; she is a member of the *Neuróptica. Estudios sobre el cómic* Editorial Committee, as well as collaborating to the Italian comics critic website *Lo Spazio Bianco*. She is currently a research collaborator at Scuola IMT Altì Studi Lucca for the project "L'Italia a nuvolette - Indagine sulla filiera del fumetto italiana".

Giorgio Busi Rizzi (Universiteit Gent) – giorgio.busirizzi@gmail.com

The raise of the machines: AIs, comics creation, and comics labor

Multimodal generators (commonly referred to as AIs) are neural network-based models that, having been trained on large datasets of images, can create original art. Although we are still far

from a hegemony of comics made this way, 2022 has seen the emergence of a new generation of AIs, and with it a proliferation of AI-created comics and graphic novels (McKean's, Grubaugh's, and Manouach's).

The use of AIs has the potential to automate certain aspects of comics creation, potentially reducing the need for human labor and transforming the comics industry. This opens new opportunities but also raises several concerns, including ethical issues related to definitions of creativity, intellectual property rights, and fair compensation for the labor of human creators. Indeed, while it takes the principle of prosumerism one step further, the process also seems capable of eroding the industrial production chain of comics as we know it. This democratization of production, beneficial in itself, potentially points to a paradigm turn that would uncontrollably subvert the creative economy of comics, which has already profoundly changed recently, following the logics of platform economy and tactics of free sharing, remix and reuse (e.g., piracy practices).

This paper aims to explore the potential implications of using AI in comics creation: is it necessary to radically rethink our idea of authorship - and with it, the whole mechanism of production and dissemination based on it? Is the current comics market a bubble destined to burst, and what could come next?

Bio

Giorgio Busi Rizzi is adjunct professor of English Literature, co-lecturer of the Comics and Graphic Novel course, and post-doctoral fellow at Ghent University, working on the ERC project *Children in Comics*. He holds a PhD in Literary and Cultural Studies with joint supervision from the Universities of Bologna and Leuven. His PhD thesis, analyzing nostalgic aesthetics and practices in contemporary graphic novels, is currently submitted for publication. His first post-doctoral project investigated experimental digital comics.

He is a founding member of the international research group on Italian comics SNIF - Studying 'n' Investigating Fumetti, and a member of several international research groups on comics (CSS, ComFor, La Brèche, ACME).

Dr. Amanda Roberts, University of Hertfordshire; PATCHATT Community Group

Title:

Re-imagining and change-making: comics as catalysts for palliative care patient well-being

Abstract

An individual's sense of wellbeing can be severely diminished by a terminal diagnosis. Patients often cite lack of agency, the ability to make a difference to things they care about, as a key contributor to a shrinking sense of positive self. Sharing issues with others in a similar position can curb this negative trend. However, to increase patients' sense of agency requires more targeted support. The PATCHATT initiative (Patients Changing Things Together) seeks to provide this. In online peer support groups with a difference, individuals share something they wish to make a difference to, develop a plan of action and act to bring about their desired change.

We use comics within PATCHATT to exemplify and support this patient leadership process. The visceral, symbolic power of comics allows patients to engage in a unique way, learning from other's narratives and making them their own. Drawing on the theoretical constructs of figured worlds, communities of practice and service design, this paper explores the conceptual basis for our use of comics to support patient-led change. It argues that comics' ability to enhance patient well-being rests on their unique way of supporting the human capacity for re-imagining and change-making.

Creativity and Community in the Letters Pages of British Girls' Comics

Julia Round

jround@bournemouth.ac.uk

This chapter analyses the creative and community-building practices of readers in the 1970s British girls' comics *Spellbound* (DC Thomson, 1976-77) and *Misty* (IPC, 1978-80). It opens by giving some context to the girls' comics industry and the complex/exploitative relationship between publishers and readers (who were often abandoned as titles would be merged or withdrawn without warning). It surveys the different spaces in the comics where readers were addressed overtly and their voices were heard (such as the inside cover welcomes, voting slips for favourite stories, clubs and societies, and the letters pages) and proceeds to close analysis of the letters pages. It analyses the entire corpus of letters pages from *Misty* alongside proportional sampling from *Spellbound*, and identifies common themes that emerge. It concludes that despite the top-down hegemonic nature of the comics industry, the readers of girls' comics read critically and creatively, and that the letters pages are highly visible spaces that demonstrate creative collaboration and community building, often with supportive and therapeutic qualities.

Deblina Rout

Life Writing as Self Care in Erin Williams' *Commute: An Illustrated Memoir of Female Shame*

Erin Williams' *Commute: An Illustrated Memoir of Female Shame* draws upon universal themes of the female body and its cultural association with the idea of 'shame'. Recounting her experiences of navigating the world in a cisgender female body, she speaks of the several violations that a woman faces in terms of expressing bodily autonomy throughout the course of her life: male objectification, sexual harassment, cultural vilification of women's bodily affectations and even intimate biological experiences, such as childbirth. As a graphic autoethnography, *Commute* paints a vivid picture of Williams' vulnerability in relaying a difficult phase in her past: being an alcoholic, and being a woman in a culture that scrutinises every move made by them, essentially 'shaming' them. My paper analyses how the creation of this graphic memoir becomes a feminist act of assertion against a patriarchal status quo on part of the author, and through this process, becomes a transformative experience of 'self-care' for her. By telling her story, she not only struggles against the crippling stigma of shame associated with women's bodies and actions, but also, calls for a universal display of vulnerability as strength in a culture that resists the same.

Bio: Deblina Rout is a PhD Student at Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad. Her research focuses on contemporary graphic narratives from India. Apart from comics studies, her fields of interest include gender studies, graphic medicine, memory studies, feminist theory and South Asian literature(s).

Exploring the Graphic Narratives on Environmental Wellbeing in Priya and the Twirling Wind

Preferred Mode- Online

First Author [1] Dwaipayan Roy** & Second Author [2] Dr.Shuchi ***

1.**Research Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology Mizoram, Chaltlang, Aizawl, Mizoram, India. Corresponding Author Email- brucewayne130@gmail.com.

2. *** Assistant Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology Mizoram, Chaltlang, Aizawl, Mizoram, India.

Abstract

Priya is India's first female brown-skinned superhero. Her superpower, however, does not involve firing webs or leaping off of buildings. Priya is quite typical, yet thanks to her ability, she is dismantling the persistent societal values and customs that promote injustice. In the past, she had raised her voice against rape culture and patriarchal evils. This article critically analyzes the storyline of her new adventure, titled *Priya and the Twirling Wind*, showcasing how it motivates both adults and children to gain more environmental awareness. The comic realistically focuses on the condition of Delhi, which is heralded by black smog grabbing headlines in real life. The problem got worse by the year and started taking a health toll on children. As a pall of smog and gloom engulfs the city, Somya, a little girl out for a stroll with her mother, falls sick. She is taken to a hospital, where Priya visits her on the flying tiger, Sahas. They together go to Priya's enchanted forest—lush with palatial green cover—under threat from industrialists seeking to turn it all into dust. The comic tries to capture the spirit of the iconic Chipko movement. The struggle presented an ideal opportunity to talk about the effects of climate change and deforestation in India. It was also a story of a women-led movement. Chipko was one of the first popular environmental protests in the world, led by poor rural women who saw the effects of environmental degradation on their land and community. In short, our article explores the graphic narratives of this South Asian comic and how they influence the global environmental movement and systematic changes in ecological policies in India creating awareness for the same in young adults and children alike.

Keywords- Priya, Deforestation, Ecological Well-being, Environmental Pollution

BIO NOTE

➤ Dwaipayan Roy (Corresponding Author) is a research scholar based in the department of Basic Science and Humanities Social sciences, National Institute of Technology, Mizoram India. He is actively engaged in research of American Literature & popular culture under supervision of Dr. Shuchi, Assistant Professor, Basic Science and Humanities & Social Sciences at the National Institute of Technology Mizoram (NIT Mizoram). He has a major in English literature followed by M.A in American Literature. Apart from this he also has a B.ED specializing in English language teaching under his belt. He is also actively involved in philanthropic activities with few NGOs. The author can be contacted at Email-id-brucewayne130@gmail.com

➤ Dr. Shuchi is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Basic Science and Humanities and Social Sciences at the National Institute of Technology Mizoram. Her vivacity and dexterity towards abiding commitment to sublime work ethic conferred her with the M.Phil. & Ph.D. degree on the novels of Shashi Deshpande from cultural point of view. Her resolute research niches are in the field of Indian Writing in English, Cultural Studies, Post-Colonial studies, popular culture, Comparative Literature etc. She teaches Communicative English, Soft Skills and Social Sciences to B.tech Students and Research Methodology to research scholars. Her academic laurels include research publications in international/national referred journals and conference proceedings. She also chaired sessions in reputed International conferences abroad.

Robert Rozema
Grand Valley State University

Not With, Instead: Freeing the Source-Bound Graphic Adaptation in Teaching Contexts

Graphic adaptations of literary works have their roots in the Golden Age, when Albert Kanter began producing comic book versions of canonical texts such as *The Three Musketeers*. This line of comics eventually became the well-known *Classics Illustrated*, and by the mid-century, many of these adaptations—illustrated versions of *Treasure Island* or *Moby Dick*—entered secondary schools, where they were used to appeal to struggling or uninterested readers. But within schools, graphic adaptations have long existed in subjection to their source texts, even as adaptations have proliferated and improved in craft, ingenuity, and ambition. This paper argues that this latest generation of adaptations, exemplified by Renée Nault’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* (2019), should be freed from their source texts in secondary and post-secondary schools. Simultaneously, they must be liberated from the fidelity standard (Hutcheon, 2013) used to judge their value as teaching tools. Treating graphic adaptations as independent works elevates the reader, privileging the interpretive complexity involved in making meaning from comics (Cohn, 2020) over the typically unquestioned authority of the written text. Doing so also promotes an interrogation of the graphic narrative medium—an interrogation that begins, as Wilkins (2022) argues, by asking what comics “make visible and [make] obscure.” This is an especially productive approach for understanding Nault’s *The Handmaid’s Tale*, an adaptation deeply concerned with concealment and revelation.

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The Power of *Kawaii*: Medical Infotainment in Contemporary Manga

Ananya Saha

aries.jnu@gmail.com

Manga fans are not strangers to inspiring sagas about characters overcoming ailments, or succumbing while fighting for their lives. *A Silent Voice*, *Your Lie in April*, *I Want to Eat Your Pancreas* from the recent times, have been quite the tearjerkers. However, certain mangakas have approached the idea of health, caregiving, and rehabilitation from a different perspective. With an emergence of manga texts such as *Moyashimon* (2004-2013), *Comical Psychosomatic Medicine* (2010 onwards) and *Cells at Work* (2015-21), the representation of health and sustenance has taken an objective yet humorous turn, which can perhaps be categorized along the lines of medical infotainment. In the past, Japanese promotional campaignsⁱ have resorted to manga and anime for the dispersal of proper information regarding public health and sanitation, which has become vital in the post-Pandemic era. In this context, I would like to focus specifically on the potency of *kawaii* or “cute”-ification, which has been the spearhead of the ‘Cool Japan’ⁱⁱ soft power boom. Usually, *kawaii* is employed for the sole purpose of amusement, as they have a distinct quality to lure the audience. In the proposed article, I would explore the use of the *kawaii* for health awareness through a critical perusal of select manga titles.

Bio Note

Ananya Saha is an assistant professor in the department of English, St. Xavier’s University, Kolkata, India. She has done her PhD on manga studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. She has been a DAAD fellow (2018) at the University of Tubingen. She has several publications to her name, of national and international repute. She has designed, and currently teaches a special paper at Master’s level on comic studies St. Xavier’s University.

A vulnerable poetics of the everyday: autobiography and solidarity in Erin Williams’s

Commute

María Porras Sánchez (m.porras@ucm.es)

Universidad Complutense de Madrid

Erin Williams’s *Commute: An Illustrated Memoir of Female Shame* (2019) is an example of “autographics” (Whitlock, 2006) and an illustration of the power of comics to engage with representations of trauma (Chute, 2016; Romero-Jódar, 2017; Nabizadeh, 2020; Davies and Rifkind, 2020). Williams recreates a day in her life —commuting to New York city from a

suburban town— interspacing it with memories of rape, abuse and alcoholism, and reflections about the objectification of women and female shame.

The author uses commuting as an extended metaphor for the everyday, evoked by skin routines, dog-walks, tea-making, train rides or breastfeeding. Trauma slowly emerges between the crevices of everyday life, triggered by situations of female objectification and what Laura Bates (2014) defines as everyday sexism. In doing so, Williams partakes of well-known Modernist tropes: the one-day narrative (Randall, 2016) and the poetics of the everyday (Phillips, 2009; Randall, 2016), in which a single day becomes both “metaphor and synecdoche” of human experience (Randall 596). Graphically, Williams uses a matter-of-fact, detached and ironic tone with a poetic penchant. One-day-ness and everydayness are shown through laconic, black and white drawings, with concessions to colour for illustrating less repetitive aspects of her experience. Williams’s self-representation replicates the same facial features and gestures, a metaphorical recreation of the everyday occurrence of abuse. Sadly, Williams’s experience is common, since many women suffer rape, abuse and sexism on a daily basis, and so she suggests that they all have in common everyday abuse. However, there is resistance in their common vulnerability. As Butler (2009) suggests, vulnerable lives are more grievable when exposed and acknowledged. “And we women, remember you” (Williams 222), Williams claims surrounded by women faces staring at the reader. By sharing her own vulnerability and everyday sexism as a recurrent feature, William’s invokes solidarity among women against abuse.

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Logan Scott

Doctoral Candidate

University of East Anglia

Title

Comics in the Anthropocene: Communicating the Slow Violence of Climate Change

Proposal

The scale and complexity of climate change presents a challenge for traditional literary forms. In particular, the impact on the global south has seen critic Rob Nixon, coin the term “slow violence” in reference to the insidious effect of continuous environmental disaster in these regions. As a result, Nixon argues that we must “plot and give figurative shape to [these] formless threats”.

In this paper, I will present a new hybrid graphic novel format that combines comics with non-sequential images and prose to provide a means of communicating the scale and complexity of the climate emergency. I call this hybrid form “Ecosystemic Writing”.

I will introduce the concept and supporting theory in relation to the challenges facing writers engaged with climate change and showcase specific pages from my creative work as a demonstration of how Ecosystemic Writing can be used to communicate the contemporary experience of the climate emergency.

Biography

Logan Scott is a doctoral candidate at the School of Art, Media and American Studies at the University of East Anglia. His PhD project is a creative and critical response to the challenge of articulating through fiction the contemporary experience of living with climate change. As a South African, he is focussed specifically on climate-related issues around water scarcity within the Western Cape region of South Africa.

Clari Searle

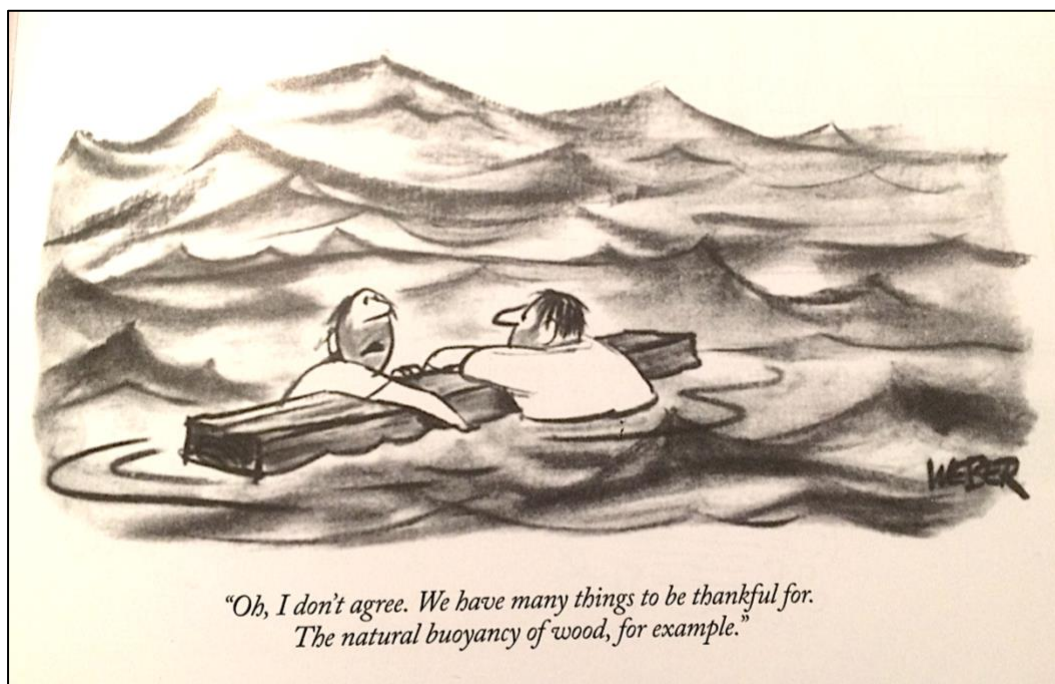
University of the Arts, London (UAL)

Preferred format: in-person workshop (and/or a paper if more suitable with conference timing).

PROPOSAL FOR WORKSHOP:

Wellbeing & Creating ‘Funnies’ for ‘Flipping’

This workshop explores how the creation of humorous comics or ‘funnies’ could be a vehicle for developing ‘flip-thinking’. This kind of alternative thinking could also build better wellbeing in the reimagining of lives and ideas. Robert Weber’s cartoon below posits this potential with two contrasting mind states for the same situation,



Flip-thinking is used in various contexts such as business, coaching, and education to galvanise creative thinking (Davies 2013). Therefore, this workshop is not rooted in arts therapy, but in educational practices that promote positive processes for learning, collaboration, and creativity. The workshop will investigate such processes by:

- Using playful warmers and ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi 2013)
- Using the creative community for collaboration
- Using creative prompts for funny styles
- Using ‘humour triggering mechanisms’ for funny ideas (Roukes 1997)

Stanford Professors, Jennifer Aaker and Naomi Bagdonas consider humour to be a ‘superpower in work and life’ (2020) and this workshop explores the potential of this humour superpower for developing creative thinking in positive creative communities. Over time, such humorous practice could develop new cognitive habits for maintaining a humorous mindset through constant changes in wellbeing (Davies 2013, Graziano-Breuning 2016).

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Looking beyond ‘Anthropocene’: Environmental justice and planetary solidarity in Rohan Chakravarty’s *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* and *Naturalist Ruddy*

Ms. Shreya Sharma, Research Scholar

Dr. Payel Pal, Assistant Professor of English, Orcid ID: 0000-0002-6240-7856 Humanities and Social Sciences Department, LNMIIT, Jaipur, India

The philosophical tenets of Western modernity and enlightenment have always perceived the human, and the natural and non-human world as binaries, in which the former has been accorded a position of privilege and power to signify, while the latter is conceived as silent and subservient ‘other.’ This othering has been instrumental in perpetuating capitalist visions of progress, commodifying the ecology and the non-human entities and culminating in various forms of planetary jeopardizations and environmental injustices. Rohan Chakravarty’s collection of cartoons and comic strips in *Green Humour for a Greying Planet* (2021) and *Naturalist Ruddy* (2021) comes out as a significant critique in bringing to the foreground the discrepancies informing the dominant perceptions of Western modernity. The paper studies Chakravarty’s comics in engaging with the adversities of ecological and wildlife crisis has been the first of its kind in Indian comics to deliberate satirically on the underpinnings of the discourse of ‘Anthropocene’ and advocate the necessity of moving beyond these prevailing demarcations and think of solidarities on equitable terms. The paper argues that Chakravarty’s intervention is crucial in elucidating the urgency of affirming the primacy of ecology, animal, and the non-human world, as that can only garner planetary justice and envisage collective well-being on sustainable grounds.

Keywords: Planetary justice, Anthropocene, Green Studies, Ecology, Wildlife

Proposer: Letícia Castro Simões

University: Universidade do Porto, Portugal.

PhD Student in Literary, Cultural and Interarts Studies

University advisor: David Pinho Barros

In person participation

Title: “Bruma”: an artist who grew up between two worlds uses the dimensions of image and text to think, in comics, the pains and delights of not belonging anywhere.

200-word proposal:

Amanda Baeza grew up in Chile and, at the age of nine, returned to Portugal. Her mother is Portuguese, but she’s the image of her Latin American father. The prejudice she encountered when she returned to the Northern Hemisphere as a child, as well as her childish memories in the Southern Hemisphere, permeate her autobiographical comics. However, the forms that

appear in her first comics book, “Bruma”, are not exactly human or even animalistic; they are more like “drawings from another world”, as she herself defines them on the back cover. Her real thoughts and feelings - often linked to inadequacy, not belonging and the loneliness of these conditions -, are transformed into two or three spatial dimensions in the same sequence, creating a sense of fragmentation and chaos in the relationship between image and text that run parallel. As in a cartoon map, Baeza explores autobiographical moments and transforms them into small diamonds of absurdity in the construction of a self-image or, perhaps, a policy of self-care. Could we call this operation visual poetry? Can a visual poem in comics be an instrument in the construction of self-care?

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Marc Singer

Hybrid bodies: A visual history of Cyborg

This paper examines the highly fraught visual representations of race, gender, and disability in the character Cyborg, one of DC Comics’ most prominent Black superheroes.

Scholars such as Blair Davis criticize Cyborg’s original, skin-baring character design for sexualizing him. Conversely, comics writer David F. Walker and critic Robert Jones Jr.

criticize more recent, roboticized designs for dehumanizing and emasculating him. These conflicting readings suggest that Cyborg has not only been subjected to the stereotypes commonly applied to Black superheroes, but also that the visual depiction of his disability has affected how some readers interpret his masculinity.

These readings also highlight a further tension between Cyborg's singular appearance in any given comics issue or storyline and his varied representations across more than forty years of adaptations in comics, animation, live-action television, and film. Critical accounts that fail to acknowledge this history run the risk of selectively essentializing particular moments in Cyborg's history, mistaking the decisions of individual creators for fundamental attributes of the character. But accounts that insist we can only read serialized characters against the totality of their appearances effectively serve to nullify any criticism of individual creators or stories.

This paper will discuss how the changing representations of and critical responses to Cyborg demonstrate ongoing tensions within comics' depictions of race, gender, and disability. These tensions can only be negotiated by reading these characters visually, textually, and historically, treating them as serial characters shaped by multiple creators with clashing priorities.

Aesthetics of Solidarity: Probing Collaboration in Graphic Life Narratives

Amrita Singh
University of Delhi

Abstract:

This paper reads two graphic life narratives published in India which push the boundaries of graphic representation and auto/biography. *I See the Promised Land* (Tara Books, 2013) is a graphic biography of Martin Luther King Jr. which brings together two storytelling traditions – the oral form of the griot performed in an African American context by Arthur Flowers and the verbal and visual performance of the patua form by folk artist Manu Chitrakar. From narrating King's individual life story within the context of the Civil Rights Movement, the text extends to verbalising and visualising the problem of racism in America, while also creating affective solidarity with folk communities in India. On the other hand, *Finding My Way* (Navayana, 2016) is a collaboration between Gond artist Venkat Raman Singh Shyam and publisher S. Anand to bring forward Shyam's life story as a tribal artist, and extends to a narration of the life of the Gond community. It employs the diverse vocabulary of folk, indigenous practices, multiple authors, verbal and visual practice to represent social marginalisation. Both these narratives explore how texts, authors, forms and methods are capable of moving from specific local contexts to participating in a more globalised economy of affective and creative attachments. This paper argues that the collaboration in these texts reimagines the graphic life narrative into an aesthetic object, while also enabling the

“authors” to dent and reshape political positionalities across transnational and translocal spaces. It probes the nature of the alliance between the authors, as they coming from different socio-cultural contexts. The visual narration in both these texts is by indigenous artists, and therefore it is necessary to examine how the visual language evades appropriation by the “voice” or verbal narration of the collaborators. Furthermore, the role of the small, independent publisher is evaluated to see how they construct networks of solidarity in visibilising and making audible and recognizable the marginalised identities in these texts, especially as they are conscious of not ventriloquising or “managing” these identities. The paper also focuses on the expectation of ethical readership generated by these texts, requiring readers to respond with a critical literacy that allows them to cross not only modal or medial but also local, regional or national boundaries during the reading process, and that they demonstrate sensitivity to the awareness of discourses of marginality, oppression and social injustice.

Bio Note:

Amrita Singh is a PhD Scholar at the Department of English, University of Delhi. Her areas of research include graphic narratives, life writing, rethinking culture and power, and English language teaching. She has presented in international conferences and published articles and book chapters in these areas. Her most recent publication is ‘Photographic Silence: Remediating the Graphic to Visualize Migrant Experience in Shaun Tan’s *The Arrival*’ published in *Studies in Comics* (vol. 11, no. 2, Nov 2020). She has been teaching literature for a decade and is currently an Assistant Professor in the English department at Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi. She also writes and edits short stories.

Sidney Singh UBC (University of British Columbia)

Frickin Chogs! An Examination of Multimodal Resentment against GMOS

Comics can be ideal medium to discuss the fears and apprehensions of new technologies and their effects on society. This is case for geneticaly modified organisms or GMOS in Chew, a comic series by John Layman and Rob Guillory. In this paper I will examine how anti-GMO rhetoric is utilized in Chew. The comic setting is an alternative reality where the USA enforces a strict poultry ban. The protagonist, Tony Chu is an FDA agent who enforces this law as well as managing his Cibopathic abilities that enable him to learn the past history of any food he eats. As Chew “creates a funhouse mirror version of [society’s] cultural obsessions around food,” (Roan 3) some academics have studied how food is used to deconstruct stereotypes, disgust (Roan) masculinities, (Parascelio) and the law (Lam). However, Tony’s numerous encounters with the food industry appear to be unexamined including his interactions (along with other characters) with a fictitious chicken-frog hybrid called Chogs or Frickens. This is fansincating as GMOS continue to attract controversy as some consumers believe the technology disrupts the natural order. While

food scientists try to reassure the public that GMOs are safe but also vital to the survival of humanity. Deconstructing the representation of GMOs in *Chew* highlights that the public does hold a very sophisticated public perception of GMOs that should not be ignored.

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Biography

Sidney Singh received her BFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia in Vancouver. She has lived in the Metro Vancouver region all her life and loves it because of and in spite of the frequent rain. Her interests in comics include South Asian representation, food and music. Singh also enjoys creating her own comics in her spare time.

The quantification and commodification of violence in contemporary comic books and manga

Petros Tsakaliadis Sotirakoglou
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

The promise of violence is currently one of the most popular narrative tools in a comic book artist's arsenal, often used in great effect to generate excitement and interest in their stories. This is often expressed through recognizable genre conventions and artwork which emphasizes the characters' physical prowess and weapons in phantasmagoric album covers and promotional material of various kinds. In this presentation we are going to talk about the archiving and commodification of comic book violence, the quantification of strength and the growing appeal of martial arts tournaments and competition; narrative formats that often remind us more of video games than traditional story structures. Violence, which is often seen as something wild and raw, is thus tamed through narrative convention and is made to be digestible, fun and approachable.

What's often left unexamined is the exact nature of that violence and the specific motifs and similarities between some of the most popular comic books of the past forty years. We are referring to a subtle, but important modern phenomenon: the archiving of characters in detailed biographies and ID cards, the analysis and comparison of various special moves and powers, the fan obsession with *power levels* and theoretical comparisons of various characters' abilities, even between different works by different authors. That instinct, alongside the vast compendium of information that modern internet encyclopedias (wikis) allow, has had a huge impact in how people approach stories. Recently this style of storytelling has been unambiguously dominant when it comes to sales, cultural influence, media adaptations and merchandising and is popular with practically all age demographics.

We are going to talk about the preponderance of this style of narrative in American comic books throughout the 20th century and the sudden, *upstaging* appearance of Japanese manga in the international scene. The gradual decline of the influence of francophone *Bandes dessinées* is also going to be contextualized through this lens, more specifically in their incapacity or refusal to play this game of playful violence and of unending competition between colorful fighters and superheroes.

Petros Tsakaliadis Sotirakoglou is a PhD in the Department of French Language and Literature at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. His current research examines the representations of sexuality and violence as seen in the francophone bandes dessinées. His other research interests include: history, literature, cinema, video games and intercultural comparisons.

Fi Stewart-Taylor

Better Living Through Theft: Piracy, Scanlation, and Transnational Web-Based Comics Readership

In this paper, I contrast fan appropriations through practices like piracy and scanlation with the microtransaction-based services of comics reading applications like Webtoons, Tappytoons, and Tapas. Comic aps have changed the practices of readers, publishers, and creators. With newly abundant professionally translated titles available for free or cheap, changes have also arrived for piracy sites like MangaFox. These aggregators used to host manga published in print and purchased, scanned, hence the term “scanlation,” and translated, but now host screenshots of translated Webtoon titles as well, with users who pay for early access often illegally resharing those chapters.

While my title, “Better Living Through Theft,” is tongue in cheek, I do raise concerns about the ethics of practices like gamification in comics aps, while also considering the economics of pirate sites, which “steal” labor from fan translation groups, which often have strong community and social practices although they, in turn, often distribute content in ways which do not remunerate artists or IP holders. I disaggregate the aggregators, showing how fan practices and creator expectations have changed now that what used to be a niche, often piratical, mode of readership: in translation, online, and across borders, is increasingly common, and increasingly commonly monetized.

Tanitoc “En transe: *working title*”

How does the hypnotic trance operates? What have been the debates around this phenomena, since Franz Anton Messmer (1734-1815) and the marquis de Puységur (1751-1825) established its healing virtues in Europe, in the wake of the Age of Enlightenment? Why was Dr Milton Erickson (1901-1980) so keen on storytelling as a therapeutic tool? Would bande dessinée, with its very unique way to operate, not be the perfect mean of communicating to readers the hypnotic process experienced by patients? These are some of the issues I am currently trying to address in what's to become my next comic book. This illustrated talk will be the opportunity to share some insights into the specific creative process for such an editorial endeavour.

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A graduate from Angoulême School of Art, holder of a Master's degree in Bande dessinée (Université de Poitiers) and former lecturer at The Glasgow School of Art, Tanitoc writes, draws and lectures on comic-strips, in France and abroad, since the mid 90's. He has been involved with the IBDS since 1999. His most recent publications in English include stories in Stripburger (Stripburger, Slovenia) and in Longform (Penguin Books, India). His latest book is a tribute to Rabelais (“La Pépie dès Potron-Minet”, éditions Polystyrène).

Dr. Gwen Athene Tarbox, Professor
Department of English
Director, WMUx Office of Faculty Development
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5331
269-615-1705
gwen.tarbox@wmich.edu

Title/Abstract:

“Telling Well-Being and Showing Well-Being: Genre, Narrative Positionality, and the Problem of Advice Giving in Comics for Young Readers

In *The Narratology of Comic Art* (2017), Kai Mikkonen explains how the distinction in literary criticism between diegesis and mimesis can be applied to the comics medium. In prose-only narratives, the “telling mode,” which puts emphasis on the presence of a narrator, differs

from “the showing mode,” which de-emphasizes the narrator through techniques such as the direct representation of characters’ dialogue. Referencing comics, Mikkonen argues that “the images in comics, cartoons, and animated films are drawn in a way that maximizes their narrative meaning and function...; what they show, then, is a form of telling” (77).

Using Mikkonen’s assertion as starting point, I turn to children’s and YA comics—almost always written *by adults for young readers*—and containing advice on emotional and physical well-being. While it has been customary in recent decades for authors to place this advice within what Perry Nodelman terms “the shadow text” (8), where adult prerogatives are masked, this move becomes difficult with a genre such as comics memoir because the narrator is both telling the story and showing themselves living the story. My presentation looks at the way comics memoirists such as Raina Telgemeier and Jarrett T. Krosoczka contend with issues of narrative positionality and didacticism in their middle grade and YA texts.

Presenter: Lisa Tatonetti, Kansas State University (tatonetti@ksu.edu)

Paper Title: “Indigenous Refusal & Two-Spirit Pedagogy in *Surviving the City, vol. 2: From the Roots Up*”

Paper Abstract: In *From the Roots Up*, writer Tasha Spillet (Cree/Trinidadian) and illustrator Natasha Donovan (Métis) follow up their award-winning first graphic novel, *Surviving the City, vol. 1*: which engaged #MMIWG2S (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people) through the friendship of two female-identified protagonists, Miikwan and Dez. *From the Roots Up* builds on and expands that foundation with its focus on Des’s acknowledgement of their Two-Spirit identity and their embrace of a male identification. This paper reads the graphic novel as a pedagogical project that teaches readers healthy ways to engage the intersections of queerness and Indigeneity. On one hand, Spillet and Donovan explicitly teach Two-Spirit histories and illustrate productive approaches to queer Indigenous presents, while on another, they directly critique the ways in which conservative understandings of “tradition” can be used as anti-queer hegemonic tools. As a pedagogical project, *From the Roots Up*, deploys the format and possibilities of the graphic novel to address settler colonial gender strictures, introduce gender expansive traditions, and boldly question certain forms of gatekeeping.

Presenter Bio: Lisa Tatonetti is a settler scholar and professor of English at Kansas State University where she studies, teaches, and publishes on queer Indigenous literatures. She is a founding member of K-State’s Indigenous Faculty and Staff Alliance, co-editor of *Sovereign Erotics*, and author of *The Queerness of Native American Literature* and *Written by the Body: Gender Expansiveness and Indigenous Non-cis Masculinities*.

We all take care of ourselves

The collectivization of cares in Ana Karenina's comics journalism

Alfredo Guzmán Tinajero

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos

Life writing in comics has taken many paths; one of them is comics journalism. In recent years, it has had an important boom in Latin America; Mexican magazines like *El Chamuco* (1996) account for the good health of the genre. One of the authors who has stood out the most is Ana Karenina. Since 2019 she has established through her reportage a space to develop and discuss feminist aspects of the national situation. These have a marked intimate regard, which creates an important combination with the autobiographical and gives them an openly emotional foothold that creates a different way of doing journalism. Karenina addresses issues that are often silenced and rarely addressed in a mostly male genre such as menstruation, violence, homosexuality, fatphobia or abortion in order to give voice to women's problems. Thus, this presentation will address the way in which Karenina traces her reportages from a feminist perspective and from the everyday to establish a collectivization of the intimate as a way of establishing a care network that is elaborated from empathy and pedagogy. In this sense, I will investigate the different mechanisms of writings of the self that she uses to propose a feminist perspective within the reportages in which she creates a counter-hegemonic narrative in which she seeks to influence the lives of women from mutual recognition. Likewise, I will show how her work is established as devices of feminist commitment and a trigger for social claims.

Alfredo Guzmán Tinajero studied English Literature at the Autonomous University of Mexico. He completed a Master in Comparative Literature (2011) at the Autonomous University of Barcelona with a dissertation on the narrative space in the *Palomar* by Gilbert Hernandez. At the same university, he completed his doctorate (2017) in literary theory with the thesis about autobiographical/autofictional comics. He has participated in various

international congresses on comics and autobiography. He is currently a postdoctoral researcher at Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos

Alfredo Guzmán Tinajero
(+52) 5539047465
alfredoguzmant@gmail.com

Partition Trauma and Wounded Memories: Decoding the Visual Semantics of Select Indian Comics

Priyanka Tripathi
Indian Institute of Technology Patna

Abstract

History stands witness to two major partitions: Indo-Pakistan (1947) and Indo-Bangladesh-Pakistan (1971), in which many people, irrespective of their caste, class, and gender, had to lose not only their home but also their identity. *This Side, That Side* (2013), an anthology curated by Vishwajyoti Ghosh, comprising narratives entitled “Which Side?” by Ravish Kumar and Ikroop Sandhu, “Know Directions Home?” by Nina Sabnani, and “Milne Do!” by Beena Sarwar and Prasanna Dhandarphale reflects the “lived-experiences” of these migrants. The visual language, avant-garde style, and semantics in these aforementioned comics urge the readers to probe into the dark and deep crevices of the effects of partition. The concept of collective and personal memories in comics (Chute 2016; Mickwitz 2016; Ahmed and Crucifix 2018) is used to locate the traumatized past and violation of human rights due to the “b/ordering” practices (Rifkind 2017). In this presentation, I intend to locate how these partitions and their concomitant aftermaths continue to echo as a living trauma in the psyches of migrants and victims.

Keywords: Visual Language; Camp Narrative; Trauma; Memory; Partition

Dreams of Youth: Comic Strips in the *Daily Mirror*, 1935-39

Adam Twycross

During the latter half of the 1930s the *Daily Mirror* established itself as a major producer of adult-oriented comic strips. This occurred as part of a wider strategy to move the *Mirror* away from the ageing and conservative audiences that had sustained it in the recent past and instead position the paper as a brash, confident, and forward-looking publication that was youthful in its content, attitude and outlook.

This was also a decade in which the *Mirror* was produced for a majority-female audience, with women making up some 70% of the paper's total readership. As the paper adopted a more youthful address, therefore, its comics content became one of the primary mechanisms through which the paper was able to both reflect and help shape the shared experience of young people in general, and young women in particular, during an age of enormous social and political change.

Using contemporary sources and rare archival material, this paper will examine how the *Daily Mirror's* comics of the 1930s blended with the paper's wider output to create an audience address that prioritised the mental and physical health and wellbeing of its many female readers, and that strove to give voice to the hopes, dreams and fears of the younger generation.

Biography

Dr Adam Twycross is a British comics scholar and a Senior Lecturer in Games Art at Anglia Ruskin University. His research centres on adult British comics of the 20th century and their interplay with the social, cultural and political environments in which they were born, and he is the author of Palgrave Macmillan's upcoming history of British newspaper strips, *British Newspaper Strips: A Contextual History* (2024). From 2020 to 2021 he was Course Leader for VFX at Arts University Bournemouth, and between 2012 and 2019 he was Programme Leader for the MA in 3D Computer Animation at Bournemouth University's National Centre for Computer Animation. He has previously worked as a 3D modeller, with credits including the Xbox title *Disneyland Adventures* and the Games Workshop graphic novel *Macragge's Honour*.

Eva Van de Wiele

United in Times of War: Reading Mickey in 1940-1944 France

Keywords: peer culture, correspondence, reception, children's periodicals, *Le Journal de Mickey*

Abstract

Comics have long used reader participation to buttress the “contract” with their readers that Martin Barker theorised (257-258). Roger Sabin has shown how the nineteenth-century *Ally Sloper’s Half Holiday* papers became people’s ‘friends’. Readers invested naturally in what seemed to be a reciprocal friendship, as their opinions were being published and heard. Audible conversation was also a marketing ploy used in children’s periodicals. By no means the first, but undoubtedly one of the most popular French children’s weeklies, *Le Journal de Mickey*, welcomed French children from 1934 to join a community. My paper will discuss those *Mickey* sections that invited readers’ letters and readers’ participation in the 1940 to 1944 issues produced in free-zone Marseille, which have rarely been studied. Keeping in mind that these sections are more likely to reflect implied than real readers (Sabin 2021 132), I study how during World War II children were connecting and connected through *Mickey* magazine? I explore what kind of social cohesion originated in *Club Mickey* (Grove 127). *Le Journal de Mickey* exemplifies how with the disappearance of the magazine in 1944, a community was dismantled, as the culture from which the magazine originated no longer fit the local political ideology or regime.

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Lessons from the Future: Comics as Socio-Technical Imaginaries of Wellbeing

Kyle P. Vealey, Ph.D. Associate Professor of English West Chester University

In keeping with the joint conference’s theme of “Better Living Through Comics,” this presentation explores the intersection of comics, wellbeing, and sociotechnical imaginaries. Specifically, I argue that one of the key components of collective wellbeing is the ability to imagine futures that are socially, economically, and environmentally stable and/or just. Our wellbeing, in other words, is always bound up with our collective ability to generate meaningful visions of the future—a task for which comics are more than well-suited. This presentation thus aims to situate comics as *sociotechnical imaginaries*, which Jasanoff and Kim (2009) describe as “collectively imagined forms of social life and social order” that shape people’s understandings of science, technology, and health (p. 120). Comics act as sociotechnical imaginaries by publicly circulating visions of the future that can have a significant impact on our sense of wellbeing. I establish this connections among comics, collective wellbeing, and sociotechnical imaginaries through an analysis of two case studies: (1) US-based propaganda comics describing peacetime applications of atomic energy (and the social wellbeing such applications sought to depict), published in the aftermath of the 1945 bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and (2) recent

publications of solarpunk comics, such as *No One's Rose* (2020), that imagine and work toward actualizing alternative visions of what it means to live well in a sustainable future.

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Tearing down stereotypes: *La casa transparente* of María Luque

Ximena Venturini Universidad de Salamanca x.venturini@usal.es

In this paper, I will work on the self-fictional and gender portrait present in the graphic novel *La casa transparente* (2017) by the Argentine illustrator María Luque. In the graphic novel, María's character is a young, single woman who takes care of other people's houses where she lives seasonally while transforming them with her drawings. The self moves between Rosario, Buenos Aires, Bariloche or Cusco, where she proposes the representation of a woman artist whose way of life often seems not to be understood by those around her: from the shampoo saleswoman in a supermarket to the couple who know her through mutual friends and whose son does not understand that she does not own a house.

I am interested in working on the representation the artist makes in this invisible house, her home the identity portrait that by an itinerant suitcase of clothes, which also symbolize the happiness and freedom of movement of María, a traveler and stroller. Like a true flâneur, the artist draws as a way of understanding the world and recreating considers other forms of the familiar -friends, travels, virtual conversations- far from the traditional ones, where the artist highlights the freedom of not having material obligations. Her present wandering is painted by the colors she chooses.

Charly Verstraet

Abstract
The Independence Eleven:

Football and Memory in the Algerian Revolution

This talk not only tackles the role of football as a political weapon for the recognition of Algeria as a sovereign nation during the Algerian war of Independence, shedding light on the silenced non-violent anticolonial resistance vis a vis France through football, but also reflects on the value of the *Front de Libération Nationale (F.L.N.)* football team's journey as historical memory into contemporary realities. Written by Kris and Bertrang Galic and illustrated by Javi Rey, the bande-dessinée *Un maillot pour l'Algérie* retraces the struggle of the *F.L.N.*'s team, twelve Algerians professional footballers playing for the best clubs in the French top league who decided to leave the country to form the first Algerian national team. I notably argue that *Un maillot pour l'Algérie*, written by two French (rather than Algerian) writers, is not the story of a conflict but of a reconciliation between two nations through football. If the war that opposed France and Algeria tends to be portrayed as a fracture, the *bande dessinée* offers the point-of-view of Rachid Mekhloufi who returns to France to play football as soon as the independence of Algeria is proclaimed. His return reminds the reader that, in the end, football, just like French-Algerians within the French nation, is the celebration of difference around a universal game.

Author Bio

Charly Verstraet is an assistant professor of French Studies at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. His research and teaching focus on Caribbean Studies, Environmental Studies, Migration Studies, Football and Politics, and Translation Studies. He has co-published a book translation of award-winning Martinican writer Patrick Chamoiseau's *L'empreinte à Crusoe* (Crusoe's Footprint), with The University of Virginia Press in 2022. He is also co-editing a volume on francophone bande-dessinée entitled "Un/Making Graphic History: BD and Narratives of Resistance in French" with Edinburgh University Press. He is currently working on a monograph on the representations of the shoreline in Caribbean painting, photography, and literature.

Proposal: Computer Vision and North American Cartoons: Detecting Comic Panels, Captions, and Paratext with the Distant Viewing Toolkit

Presenters: Taylor Arnold, University of Richmond
Lauren Tilton, University of Richmond
Justin Wigard, University of Richmond

In this presentation, we share recent work from University of Richmond's Distant Viewing Lab, where we applied distant viewing to a corpus of over 100,000 cartoons from fourteen popular North American comic strips, including *For Better or For Worse*, *Luann*, , *Peanuts*

alongside several webstrips. We demonstrate how distant viewing reveals trends in large visual corpora through computer vision, trends that are difficult enough to examine across one strip's entirety, let alone across fourteen strips at once over 70 years of cartoons.

Case studies include: panel detection (variations in panel length over a cartoonist's career); caption detection (reliance on verbal or nonverbal final panel-gags); comics paratext (computer vision analyses/exclusions of copyright text, signatures, dates, etc.); figure detection, and more. Understanding these formal qualities and aesthetics afford greater insights into long-term cartooning practices, readership, and evolution of the medium.

We end by sharing our distant viewing toolkit, designed in part for comics scholars unfamiliar with DH or programming, which will include video tutorials and a public programming notebook built in R featuring built-in tutorials. Ultimately, we hope to contribute much-needed attention to understudied contemporary comic strips and demonstrate the powerful potential that distant viewing holds for understanding comic strips at scale.

**Recognition and Truth in Comics
Depictions of Dementia and Stroke**

Peter Wilkins

wilkinsp@douglascollege.ca

Douglas College

Having participated in comics projects about people with dementia or who have had a stroke, I want to explore what it means to create a likeness of such people, or perhaps any person, in comics. This activity risks caricature in the worst sense, like the depictions of black people in Asterix comics. It risks sacrificing accuracy and depth for speed and superficial stereotypes. But then comics are hugely invested in speed and surface, in quick recognition without having to dwell. Comics are a kind of shorthand of the image, enabling speedy identification but at what price? What if recognition of likeness is inherently stereotypical and generic? What role do non-pictorial textual labels and the supplementary relationship between text and image play in this recognition? These questions show that the depiction of the ailing or differently abled mind and/or body in comics raises all the crucial issues of the comics medium: referentiality, representation, abstraction, objectification, visibility, reality and truth. My talk will discuss how the depiction of stroke and dementia engages with such issues to critique any easy connection between comics and well-being and to show comics as an unsettling example of the imposition of the symbolic order on the real.

**(Re)Producing Minicomics:
Further Adventures in Photocopying**

Paul Williams

Associate Professor of Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture
University of Exeter, UK

This paper explores what minicomics are, how minicomics enter the world, and what they do once they are in it, focusing on the role of photocopying. Is there something special and important about making a comic on a photocopier (or Risograph duplicator) compared to other printing processes? Do minicomics imply different audiences? How do these objects establish relations between people – or between people and the machines through which minicomics are (re)produced?

In starting to answer these questions, I draw on multiple scholarly trajectories, not least comics history, media archaeology, phenomenology, queer theory, and the ontology of paperwork, the latter represented by Lisa Gitelman's *Paper Knowledge: Toward a Media History of Documents* (2014). Understanding minicomics somewhere between the handmade object and the mass-produced commodity, this paper thinks through how the minicomic form transgresses habits of consumption and domesticity associated with other reading matter, and I will venture some of the utopian impulses caught up in the photocopying of comics.

From the Comical to the Cosmical:
Becoming Alive to the Volatility of Life on Earth Through Cartoons

Dr Joshua Wodak
Senior Research Fellow
Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University

A rupture of life on Earth is currently unfolding. The consequences of this Sixth Mass Extinction have no parallel in the history of life on this planet. What then does this rupture mean for the human individual; not only in terms of being alive *during* such an upheaval, but actually being alive *to* upheaval itself? This presentation will sketch one response to being alive *during* and *to* this rupture, by reframing the current human-induced ecological crisis in the context of just how volatile life on this planet actually is.

I will sketch this response through discussing two of Gary Larson's inimitable cartoons. Cartoons and comics are so central to better living, that my recently completed book *Petrified: Living During a Rupture of Life on Earth* open and closes with two of Larson's cartoons. This lyrical, playful, and deadly serious crossover non-fiction work about climate crisis and our response to it, aims to quietly explode the familiar themes, narratives, and vocabularies of the unfolding ecological and climate crisis, by taking the reader on a distinctly unconventional journey. The purpose of this journey is straightforward: to formulate the basis of a philosophy for living during this rupture of life on earth. A philosophy for living in the twenty-first-and-last century of life as we have known it on our planet. A toolkit, as it were, for living at the confluence between *being petrified* at the thought of extinction, and *becoming petrified* in the most real and physical sense.

I discuss how both Larson cartoons can be read as metaphors for the unfolding rupture, and of how comics may offer a unique gift to the reader, which is to bring together the tragic topic and comedic tone. Therein, I argue, lies better living through comics.

Author Biography

Dr Joshua Wodak is a researcher, writer, and artist whose work critically engages with the socio-cultural dimensions of the climate crisis and the Anthropocene, with a focus on the ethics and efficacy of conservation through technoscience, including Synthetic Biology, Assisted Evolution, and Climate Engineering. He holds a BA (Honours) in Anthropology (Sydney University, 2002), a PhD in Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Research (Australian National University, 2011) and has exhibited his media art, sculpture and interactive installations in art galleries, museums and festivals across Australia and internationally. He is currently a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University, and a Chief Investigator at the Australian Research Council Centre for Excellence in Synthetic Biology. This presentation is drawn from a chapter of his recently completed book *Petrified: Living During a Rupture of Life on Earth*.

Center-Periphery Dichotomy in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*.

Riham Yassin

Studies on post-colonial issues like diaspora, immigration, and cultural hybridity have been prioritized by a number of psychologists, sociologists, and philosophers among the various literary movements that have found their way into the Contemporary English Literary Canon. Due to the marginalization of non-western art, Homi Bhabha is credited with coining the term “Third Space” in order to describe the developing crevice between clashing cultures which in turn gives rise to new hybrid identities and center-periphery dichotomy. This dichotomy has resulted from the western domination by universalism which creates fragile relations between the center and the peripheries; one of power and authority rather than geography. A third space or hybrid realization is nurtured in migrants who are frequently exposed to other cultures. In other words, this in-between space has led to the consequences of alienation, cosmopolitanism, diaspora, displacement, hybridity and transnationalism. Hence, this research aims to investigate how the novelist Salman Rushdie has decentered the dominant canon by advocating a hybrid world, in which diversity and heterogeneity are passionately cherished as a source of cultural novelty. The paper highlights how *The Satanic Verses* is clearly dedicated to the ideas of center-periphery dichotomy and third space by resisting the chimera of plausibility and opposing calls for homogeneity. And *Bombay* represents Rushdie’s ‘third principle,’ a space that attempts to include both sides of the east/west, secular/religious, real/fantasy, colonizer/colonized binary in ever new combinations that foreground hybridity over clarity and open-endedness over closer. Rushdie puts his protagonists in a difficult diasporic condition as a background for his suggestion that no other option rather than hybridity can cure the cultural wound and decrease the gap between the center and the margin, that hybridity is the perfect option for the disillusioned, disoriented diasporic states.

Key words: Third space, Bhabha, Hybridity, Diaspora, postcolonial identity, The Satanic Verses, Salman Rushdie.

Short bio

Riham Mohamed Hamed Yassin is an Egyptian leading researcher in the field of English literature and she is currently working as an Assistant Lecturer at the faculty of Linguistics and Translation at Badr university in Cairo. In 2015, she graduated in the faculty of Arts and Humanities, English Department, Suez Canal University. She has got a Master's degree in English Literature in 2020 entitled "Iconoclasm in Selected Short Stories of Alice Munro," Excellent with Honors degree.
