

GRAPHIC GOTHIC



**THE 2016 INTERNATIONAL GRAPHIC
NOVEL AND COMICS CONFERENCE**



GRAPHIC GOTHIC

**MONDAY 11 – WEDNESDAY 13 JULY 2016
MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

Conference schedule

Sunday 10 July 2016

Welcome evening get together at Zouk (<http://zoukteabar.co.uk/>) from 7.30pm

Monday 11 July 2016

9.00-9.20	Registration
9.20-9.30	Welcome address
9.30-10.30	Keynote 1 (Chair: Chris Murray) Matt Green – “An altered view regarding the relationship between dreams and reality”: The Uncanny Worlds of Alan Moore and Ravi Thornton
10.30-11.00	Coffee
11.00-12.30	Panel 1a – Gothic Cities (Chair: Esther De Dauw) Alex Fitch – Gotham City and the Gothic Architectural Tradition Sebastian Bartosch & Andreas Stuhlmann – <i>Arkham Asylum</i> : Putting the Gothic into Gotham City Guilherme Pozzer – <i>Sin City</i> : Social Criticism and Urban Dystopia Panel 1b – Monstrosity (Chair: Joan Ormrod) Aidan Diamond – Disability, Monstrosity, and Sacrifice in <i>Wytches</i> Edgar C. Samar – Appearances and Directions of Monstrosity in Mars Ravelo’s Comic Novels Panel 1c – Censorship (Chair: Julia Round) Paul Aleixo – Morality and Horror Comics: A re-evaluation of Horror Comics presented at the Senate Sub-Committee Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency in April 1954 Timothy Jones – Reading with the Horror Hosts in American Comics of the 1950s and 60s
12.30-1.30	Lunch
1.30-2.30	Academic Publishing Roundtable Discussion of the shape and strategies of academic publishing today led by Bethan Ball (Journals Manager, Intellect Books), Ruth Glasspool (Managing Editor, Routledge), and Roger Sabin (Series Editor, Palgrave).
2.30-3.30	Panel 2a – Gothic Worlds (Chair: Dave Huxley) Paul Fisher Davies – The Gothic Imagination in Jamie Hernandez’ <i>100 Rooms</i> Brenda Melero – <i>The Incal</i> : A Gate Between Two Worlds Panel 2b – Gendering Gotham (Chair: Christina Dokou) Esther De Dauw – The Lesbian Gothic in <i>Batwoman</i> Kelly Kanayama – Monstrous Propagation and the Gothic Postmodern in Morrison’s <i>Batman</i>

	Panel 2c – Adaptations (Chair: Chris Murray) Camilla Storskog – Stieg Larsson Goth Style: The Graphic Novel Adaptations of the Millennium Trilogy Madeline Gangnes – Hysterical Reality: Weimar Germany and the Victorian Gothic in Mattotti and Kramsky's Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde
3.30-4.00	Coffee
4.00-5.00	Keynote 2 (Chair: Julia Round) Hannah Berry – In Conversation with Alex Fitch
7.00	Visit to John Rylands Library The John Rylands Library is a grade 1 listed building designed by architect Basil Champneys in Victorian high gothic style, located on Deansgate, Manchester. It has been described as a masterpiece, and the finest example of 'arts and crafts neo-gothic' in the UK. The library took nine years to build and was completed in 1899, and was founded by Augusta Rylands in memory of her husband, textile magnate John Rylands. It houses an internationally important collection of manuscripts and incunabula.

Tuesday 12 July 2016

9.30-11.00	Panel 3a – Autobiography (Chair: Aidan Diamond) Zsófia Bacsadi – Familiar Monsters: Gothic Narratives in Alison Bechdel's <i>Fun Home</i> and David Small's <i>Stitches</i> Olga Michael – Grotesque, the Monstrous and the Uncanny in Gloeckner and Barry Panel 3b – Superhero Gothic (Chair: Esther De Dauw) Simon Locke – Gothic Realism: Transgressive Science in the Success of Marvel Superheroes in the 1960s Chris Murray – Horror Imagery in World War Two superhero comics Phillip Vaughan – Doomsday: The theme of the Grotesque in Eric Bradbury's Art
11.00-11.30	Coffee
11.30-12.30	Keynote 3 (Chair: Dave Huxley) Toni Fejzula – Veils: Neon Demons and Rats
12.30-1.30	Lunch
1.30-2.30	Panel 4a – Authorship, Agency and Making Meaning (Chair: Paul Williams) Simon Grennan – Dumping the Body: Graphiation as Mind, Mark and Trace David Simmons – H.P. Lovecraft and the Pulp Author as Sub-Cultural Avatar Panel 4b – Fairytales and Fantasy (Chair: Joan Ormrod) Christina Dokou – Folklore Horror in Emily Carroll's <i>Through the Woods</i> Mihaela Precup – Violence and Non-normativity in Noelle Stevenson's <i>Nimona</i>

	Panel 4c – The Walking Dead (Chair: Julia Round) Stephen O'Donnell – Temporal Shifts in the Narrative of <i>The Walking Dead</i> Tyrone White – Welcome to the Zombie-Ridden Landscape of the Real: <i>The Walking Dead</i> and the Passion for the Real
2.30-3.30	Panel 5a – Cerebus the Aardvark (Chair: Joan Ormrod) Dominick Grace – Aardvarkian Gothic: Subverting gothic motifs in <i>Cerebus</i> Ian Horton – Gothic Parody in Dave Sim's <i>Cerebus</i> Panel 5b – Adaptations of Classic Gothic (Chair: Madeline Gangnes) Logan Labruno – Otherness and the Uncanny in Grimly's <i>Frankenstein</i> Dave Huxley – "A kind of incestuous, necrophilious, oral-anal-sadistic all-in wrestling match": Key themes in comic book adaptations of <i>Dracula</i> , 1953-2011
3.30-4.00	Coffee
4.00-5.00	Keynote 4 (Chair: Roger Sabin) Julia Round – <i>Misty</i> and Gothic for Girls
6.00-7.00	Gothic Psychogeography Tour of Manchester
8.00	Conference meal

Wednesday 13 July 2016

9.30-11.00	Making Gothic Comics Workshop and Exhibition of <i>Frankenstein Begins</i> artwork, with Chris Murray and Phillip Vaughan
11.00-11.30	Coffee
11.30-1.00	Panel 6a – Monsters (Chair: Stephen O'Donnell) Dragos Manea – <i>Manifest Destiny</i> and the Ethics of the Weird Maaheen Ahmed – Romanticism in <i>Hellboy</i> and <i>The Saga of the Swamp Thing</i> Adam Twycross – <i>Star of Blood</i> : The Forgotten History of Wallestein the Monster Panel 6b – Superheroes and Excess (Chair: Aidan Diamond) Billy Proctor – Reboots, Retcons and Re-Launches in Superhero Comics Joan Ormrod – The Goddess, The Iron Maiden and The Sacrilization of Consumerism in the Post Crisis Wonder Woman, 1987-1992 Paul Williams – Underground Superhero Parody: The socio-economic context of <i>Nurds of November</i> Panel 6c – Hauntings (Chair: Madeline Gangnes) Benoit Crucifix – Revisiting Hergé's Crypt: Charles Burns Haunted by <i>Tintin</i> Kathryn Dickie – Exploring the Haunted Space of the Gothic Graphic Novel Joseph Althether – The Sublime in the <i>House of Mystery</i>
1.00-2.00	Lunch
2.00-3.30	Panel 7a – Politics (Chair: Dave Huxley) Louisa Buck – The Grotesque, Caricature and the Political Cartoon

	<p>Nayma Gonzalez – Resistance and Subversion in Alberto Breccia and Carlos Trillo's <i>Buscavidas</i></p> <p>Nathaniel Golden – Baldaev's Gulag: Dark Tales of Women's Workcamp Horrors</p> <p>Panel 7b – Bodies and Boundaries (Chair: Olga Michael)</p> <p>Tina Helbig – The Corpo-Reality of Comics: Gothic Images and Physical Abjection</p> <p>E. Dawson Varughese – ‘Drawing the Line’: (Indian) Gothic Responses to Sexual Violence in the Wake of the Delhi Gang Rape</p> <p>Panel 7c – Reimaginings and Responses (Chair: Mel Gibson)</p> <p>Will Grady – Imagining the American West before the “Western”: Defining a Genre in Nineteenth-Century Cartoons and Pictorial Reportage</p> <p>Yee-Min Huang – Japanese Gothic in <i>The Breath of Copernicus</i></p> <p>Lisa Macklem – The Truth is Stranger Than Fiction: Rick Geary's <i>Gothic Murder Tales</i></p>
3.30-4.30	<p>Coffee and Reflections</p> <p>Closing comments. Sabin Award announcement and selection of judging committee</p> <p>Exhibition of artwork from Workshop</p> <p>Closing remarks and announcements of next year's conference</p>

KEYNOTE ONE

“An altered view regarding the relationship between dreams and reality”: The uncanny worlds of Alan Moore and Ravi Thornton

Matt Green, University of Nottingham, UK

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This talk explores the interconnectedness of the fictional and the real in the recent work of Alan Moore (*Providence* and *Show Pieces*) and Ravi Thornton (*The Tale of Brin & Bent* and *Minno Marylebone* and *HOAX*). Expanding on the concept of heterocosmic adaptation presented by Linda Hutcheon and reclaiming the strong sense of intertextuality articulated in Julia Kristeva's early work, I argue that both writers deploy gothic tropes and techniques in ways that emphasise the overlapping of imagination, history and (auto)biography. For Moore this intercourse between material worlds and dream worlds is closely bound up in his own magical practice and politics; for Thornton, the use of a mode of magical realism that draws heavily on the gothic and the grotesque facilitates new strategies for combining art and therapeutic practice. Moreover, this talk suggests that Thornton and Moore have a shared emphasis on audience engagement and intervention that leads them to work across multiple genres, including comics, prose fiction, performance and film. I will argue that this cross-media approach not only sheds insight into the relationship between form and content by enacting the sort of border-crossings that their works thematise, but also that it prompts productive reflections on the hybridity of the comics form itself.

Matt Green is Associate Professor of English Literature at the University of Nottingham. He has published widely on William Blake, Comics and the Gothic. Currently Matt is working on two books, one on Graphic Medicine and the other on contemporary invocations of Blakean worlds.

KEYNOTE TWO

Adamtine and horror in comics

Hannah Berry in conversation with Alex Fitch

Hannah Berry discusses the challenges of horror in the comics medium, talking us through the self-imposed 'rules' she created for her most recent graphic novel *Adamtine*. These include the use of narrative and context to build suspense and create fear (rather than gory visuals); the role of hidden symbolism throughout the story; and the level of world-building required by the Gothic.

Hannah Berry has two solo graphic novels under her belt, *Adamtine* and *Britten & Brülighly*, both published by Jonathan Cape with the latter being translated into several languages and chosen as part of the official selection for the Angoulême Festival. She is currently working on a third graphic novel, *Livestock*, to be published by Cape early next year, and produces weekly cartoon strips for the *New Statesman*. She has contributed to various collaborative comics projects around the world including publications for First Second, Casterman, *2000AD*, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, and the European Cultural Foundation. She also co-produces a podcast with Dan Berry (no relation) called *No YOU Hang Up*, which is good clean silly fun.

Alex Fitch presents the UK's only monthly broadcast radio show about comics - Panel Borders - on the Arts Council Radio Station, Resonance 104.4 FM / DAB in London. He has lectured on Cult Cinema at the Natural History and Science Museums in London, and at the University of Brighton where he is currently completing his MRes in Arts and Cultural Research. He has been published on the topics of comics and film by University of Chicago Press and University Press of Mississippi, and is an assistant editor of Electric Sheep Magazine online.

KEYNOTE THREE

***Veil*: Neon Demons and Rats**

Toni Fejzula

This talk will discuss:

1. How I started working on *Veil*.
2. Searching for characters - a description on how we got to the final *Veil*'s look and how I got to the rest of the characters, especially Dante and Cormac.
3. Style evolution - how we fixed the style. As I come from French market, I'll mention how I struggled to adapt the style to American format and American deadlines.
4. The color - it was a real challenge. My editor pushed me to change it a lot from the first version.
5. Inspiration for colors - *Enter de Void* (Gaspar Noé, 2009). In the color research this movie remained as the permanent reference.
6. Evolution of creative process throughout the series.
7. The figure of Succubus - *Veil* is a female demon seen as object of desire.
8. Demonic manifestation through animals.
9. Demon summoning in business...!

Toni Fejzula was born in Serbia and currently lives in Barcelona. He has worked on many comics and other illustration projects, particularly animation. He has drawn backgrounds for a number of Spanish animated series and movies such as *El Cid The Legend* (2003). He was creator of the science-fiction album *Central Zéro* (Soleil Productions, 2003, texts by Alex Nikolavitch), and co-creator of the series *Nephilim* (Delcourt, 2004, written by Miroslav Dragan). More recently he has provided covers for the *Cthulhu* series (2010), and worked on the comics series *Veil* (Dark Horse, 2015, written by Greg Rucka). In 2015 he also worked on a one-shot Lobster Johnson story (*The Glass Mantis*, with Mike Mignola and John Arcudi). He is currently working on a new series with John Arcudi.

KEYNOTE FOUR

Misty and Gothic for Girls

Julia Round, Bournemouth University, UK

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This paper will analyse the British girls' comic *Misty* against a backdrop of gothic theory. It discusses the ways in which the comic uses a number of established gothic tropes and uses these findings to argue for a definition of 'Gothic for Girls'.

It begins by providing a brief introduction to *Misty* itself. This anthology horror comic was devised by Pat Mills for a young female readership and was published by IPC between 1978-80 (running for 101 issues) before merging with *Tammy*. It then proceeds to examine the ways in which the comic uses established gothic archetypes (including vampires, zombies, werewolves, witches) and provides quantitative data on their appearances alongside qualitative analysis of their treatment. It then moves to discuss the appearance of various gothic motifs (including doubles, others, and masks) and the use of gothic structures (issues of authenticity, embedded stories, excess) and a gothic aesthetic (the use of surface, transgression, and the grotesque). It looks at the use of gothic themes (past, transgression, the uncanny, social commentary) and then uses its findings to demonstrate the ways in which *Misty* reframes many of these elements to have relevance for its young female readership. It sets these conclusions against definitions of the Female Gothic and the Domestic Gothic, and concludes by summarising the ways in which the above gothic tropes are twisted into metaphors for puberty or identity, particularly by using Gothic tropes such as the body or the journey. It concludes by using these findings to suggest a tentative definition of 'Gothic for Girls'.

Julia Round (MA, PhD) is a Principal Academic at Bournemouth University whose research and teaching interests include gothic, comics, adaptation and children's literature. She is co-editor of *Studies in Comics* (Intellect), co-organiser of the IGNCC, the convenor of BU's Narrative Research Group, and an established peer reviewer for multiple journal boards, publishing houses and funding bodies. She has recently completed two AHRC-funded projects as co-investigator and has published numerous peer-reviewed articles, a monograph entitled *Gothic in Comics and Graphic Novels: A Critical Approach* (McFarland, 2014), and the co-edited collection *Real Lives Celebrity Stories* (Bloomsbury, 2014). She was awarded Bournemouth University's Vice Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning in 2011 and received the Popular Culture Association's Inge Award for Comics Scholarship in 2015.

Good Monsters: Legacies of Romanticism in *Hellboy* and *The Saga of the Swamp Thing*

Maaheen Ahmed, Ghent University, Belgium

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Focusing on the somewhat paradoxically good monsters (since monsters were often, and with the modern age's penchant for strict categories, almost compulsively labeled as negative entities), this paper will draw out the affiliations of protagonists such as *Hellboy* and *The Swamp Thing* to Romantic literature and visual imagery. Clearly a movement like Romanticism is more complex (and contradictory) than suggested by the neat connotations of the category. In contrast, the monster is often seen as a trope representing the inexplicable *per se*. Hence, the intention here is to avoid a fixed definition of Romanticism and the monster is used as an untamable entity that can essentially point in certain directions but shies away from definitive conclusions. Consequently this paper focuses on the remediation of certain features associated with Romanticism that are filtered through positively rendered monsters. The persistence of the following four themes in particular is seen as indicating the continuation of Romantic concerns:

- Solitude of the protagonists
- Prominence of emotionality
- Nostalgia for forgotten worlds and stories
- Romantic and proto-modernist fascination with the similarities between humans, animals and machines (referring to both the desire to break away from the physical limits of the body and the Kleistian emphasis on the beauty of the marionette and its similarities to the human body as described in the famous essay, "On the Marionette Theatre").

This paper concludes that the Romantic inclinations of somewhat alternative comics like *The Swamp Thing* and *Hellboy* contribute towards the allure of such comics which position themselves on the margins of the mainstream without divorcing themselves from it.

Funded by the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO), Maaheen Ahmed is a postdoctoral fellow at Ghent University's Department of English. She is currently working on the portrayal of disturbed individual and collective memories in comics and has recently co-edited *European Comic Art's* special issue on the Great War in Comics. Her articles have appeared in *European Journal of American Studies* and *International Journal of Comic Art*. A monograph, *Openness in Comics: Generating Meaning within Flexible Structures* will be published by the University Press of Mississippi in 2016.

Morality and Horror Comics: A re-evaluation of Horror Comics presented at the Senate Sub-Committee Hearings on Juvenile Delinquency in April 1954

Paul Aleixo, Sheffield Hallam University, UK

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In 1954, following a great deal of public pressure, the US Government set up a series of congressional senate sub-committee hearings to investigate the causes of delinquency. These were to investigate a number of influences including film, television and paperback novel covers. The first set of hearings took place in April 1954 and dealt with the role of Crime and Horror Comics in juvenile delinquency (see Park, 2002 for a summary). Despite the fact that the hearings concluded that there was no evidence to link comics and delinquency, these hearings resulted in the creation of the Comics Code Authority which created the comics code. This was a system of self-censorship by the comic book industry in an attempt to appease its critics. Several authors have noted the stifling effect of the code on the development of comic books as an art form until its eventual dissolution in 2010. The hearings were concerned with the morals of children being corrupted by the then very popular horror and crime comics. However, little analysis was carried on the stories within the comics themselves. The present paper aims to look at some examples of comics presented at the hearings and analyse the morality in the stories using Kohlberg's Moral Reasoning theory (e.g. Kohlberg, 1958) as a basis.

Paul Aleixo Ph.D. FHEA, is a senior lecturer in Psychology at Sheffield Hallam University in the U.K. and is the writer of the comic book textbook *Biological Psychology: An Illustrated Survival Guide*, published by John Wiley and Sons. A textbook aimed at introducing biological psychology to undergraduate psychology students, it has received a number of favourable reviews and has been translated into both simplified Chinese and Greek.

House of Mystery and the Sublime

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Symbols and structures in comics today still reflect a gothic influence. Whether it is the design of the buildings in the Gotham city skyline, cemeteries, crypts, castles, or the style of the artist, the influences are there. These buildings are reminiscent of the surrounding environment described in the stories of Anne Radcliffe and Edgar Allan Poe. Their words evoked certain images and stimulated our imagination, creating a particular sensation or emotion. Over the years, our imagination and idea of the sublime has changed. From Nathaniel Hawthorne's *House of Seven Gables* to the infamous crypts and vaults of presented by EC comics to the various mystery houses of DC, how has this evolution, particularly within comics, occurred? Are we still able to achieve an aesthetic ideal? Comparing Edmund Burke's definition of the sublime with the evolution of DC's House of Mystery underscores how the idea of what is imaginary to that of real has changed. This in turn allows the House of Mystery to achieve the sublime. Through such a comparison, it can be shown how DC comics' House of Mystery has become the prominent gothic structure in comics.

Joseph Altnether received BA in Russian language from Arizona State and an MA in English Literature from Morehead State University. He currently teaches composition classes while continuing to search for jobs teaching literature and is applying to be admitted to a PhD program this year.

Familiar Monsters - Gothic narratives in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and David Small's *Stitches*

Zsófia Bacsadi, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary

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Autobiographies – although they are often considered non-fiction – sometimes apply archetypal narrative frames or elements like those of the Bildungsroman, coming-of-age story or detective story. In certain cases even the components of the Gothic horror can be found in autobiographical narratives. The strong, expressive visuality of the genre can be adopted in comics – even in autobiographical ones. In certain graphic memoirs (Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and David Small's *Stitches*) the trope of the haunted house is used as a tool to express anguish, mental or psychological torment and as a metaphor for the dysfunctional family life depicted in these works. Family homes become labyrinths, tombs where autobiographical selves are trapped. In both works the shame and the frustration of the parents creates an atmosphere of angst for children and parents themselves – who otherwise offer comfort and safety – become the monsters, the threat lurking in dark corridors and deserted stairways. In both graphic memoirs the ultimate goal of the narrators is escaping from their cold, grim „homes”. In my paper I will examine how the trope of the haunted house becomes an organizing principle and how the genre-elements of the Gothic horror can express the anxiety and fear of the children living in a cold, abusive families. I will also show how the narrators eventually break free from their own „horror story” by engaging in artistic activities and how the practices of autobiography (for example the retrospective interpretation) can become a tool for understanding, deconstructing the parent as a monster and reconstructing them as complex (and often flawed) human beings.

Zsófia Bacsadi was born in Debrecen, Hungary in 1991. She is a Master's student in Media Studies at Eötvös Loránd University. She has written her BA thesis on the connection between second generation Holocaust narratives and detective stories (examining Art Spiegelman's *Maus* among others). In her MA thesis she will examine autobiographical graphic novels and marginalized groups. Her research interests include comics studies, politics of representation, popular culture studies and film studies. She regularly writes film reviews in the Hungarian weekly political-cultural magazine *Magyar Narancs*.

Arkham Asylum: Putting the Gothic into Gotham City

**Sebastian Bartosch, Universität Hamburg, Germany
and**

Andreas Stuhlmann, University of Alberta, Canada

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The Elizabeth Arkham Asylum for the Criminally Insane appears to be a fixture of the Batman story-world and an important piece of Gotham City's infrastructure. Yet it was only introduced in 1974, and its introduction marks a new departure for the comic in dealing with the "mad" and "insane" villains who have populated Gotham since Batman's origin. As Batman has his origins in *Detective Comics*, he was focussed in his first years on crime fighting in an ambivalent cooperation with Commissioner Gordon and his police force: The more or less faceless villains were brought to justice and remanded in the Gotham Prison, and later, the more sophisticated Blackgate Penitentiary. The darker the story-world became, the more the architectural iconography borrowed from colonial Gothic Revival architecture with its gargoyles and spires, its towers and their shadows, the more the trope of madness took center stage, as personified by villains such as the Scarecrow, Bane or obviously The Joker. These "criminally insane" minds aim to destroy Gotham through fear and mayhem. "Madness"/"insanity" is a constitutive trope of the Gothic. Dealing with mental derangements, fears and desires, the latter is closely linked to the rise of psychoanalysis, whose concepts have in turn been applied to gothic texts (cf. Freud 1919; Kristeva 1980). And within Gothic fiction, the asylum is a prime example of the so-called "antiquated spaces" (Hogle 2002), where hauntings and horrors regularly emerge. The gothic is a topos of transgression, home of the marginalized and the abjected, brimming with fear, loathing and shame. All this becomes part of the narrative of the asylum as a place and institution where society deals with its others (Foucault). In his lectures on *Psychiatric Power* Michel Foucault passionately denounces the dominant trajectory of the history of psychiatry as a linear, progressive, and scientific developmental towards a humane liberation of patients within the institution. As a symbol of this ideology, asylums, even in the former British colonies, were built in a modern Neo-Gothic style that, at the same time, harked back to an imagined past. In this sense, Arkham Asylum is a pre-modern institution, serving as a reminder of a bygone era. Consistently, it has lend itself to many decidedly Gothic takes on Batman. Starting with Grant Morisson's and Dave McKean's classic *Arkham Asylum* (1989), we will show how Arkham has been cast and recast as a failed sanctuary in a failing city, where the distinctions between the mad and the sane are by no means clear.

Andreas Stuhlmann teaches Modern German Literature and Media Culture at the University of Alberta in Edmonton - where comics are an integral part of his teaching an research - and a member of the Research Center for Graphic Literature (ArGL) at the University of Hamburg. While his current main interest is in German avant-garde comics, he is recently also working on Canadian comics, especially in the work of indigenous artists. Sebastian Bartosch studied Media and Communications as well as Political Science at Universität Hamburg, where he graduated with a MA thesis on Orientalism and the representation of otherness in Craig Thompson's 'Habibi'. Since 2015, he holds a PhD scholarship granted by the Faculty of Humanities, Universität Hamburg. His dissertation project focuses on the medium-specificity of comics and its on-going re-articulation within intermedial relations and remediation processes.

The Grotesque, Caricature and the Political Cartoon

Louisa Buck, University of Brighton, UK

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Caricature can be described as a picture, description, or imitation of a person in which certain striking characteristics are exaggerated in order to create a comic or grotesque effect.¹ By grotesque we refer to something perceived as strange, fantastic, ugly, incongruous, unpleasant, or disgusting, utilizing concepts of exaggeration, hyperbole, and expressiveness. The portraiture in the political cartoon is in some ways indistinguishable from the political caricature. From the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci we begin to see that while artists of the Renaissance were exploring ideas of beauty; they were also intrigued by ideas of the grotesque. It is a tradition continued through the work of Hogarth, Gillray, Cruikshank and Rowlandson to the present day through newspaper cartoons and television programmes such as *Spitting Image*.²

Highlighting Baudelaire's³ key theory of the Comic, residing in its duality; the recognition of superiority and inferiority. He found dualism in the ugly and the beautiful, the ephemeral and the eternal, the particular and the universal, all characteristics of the political cartoon. From the Italian *caricare*, meaning loaded, it is essentially a 'loaded portrait'. Navasky⁴ theorises that the brain responds more quickly to a caricature than to a photo of the same person. Caricature tends to emphasise the same features as the brain to distinguish from person to person. In some ways, the caricature shows a better likeness, as they reveal the 'essence' of a person, and it is because of this that the cartoon caricature can have such a lasting impact and create long-term damage to the ridiculed victim. It is impossible to imagine David Cameron without a condom pulled tightly over his head every time one views his shiny skin, thanks to the grotesque portrait so mercilessly invented by Steve Bell and adopted by so many other cartoonists since.

This paper will look at definitions, history, purpose and approaches to meaning that bind together ideas of the grotesque, caricature and the political cartoon.

Louisa Buck's initial training was in Fine Art Sculpture at Wimbledon school of Art, London. She co-founded Tower Bridge studios and worked as a sculptor and taught for a number of years. Later she became more interested in drawing and printmaking and undertook an MA in Sequential Design and Illustration at the University of Brighton. She is now in her 5th year of a part time practice based PhD, also at the University of Brighton, researching the use of Greek mythology in the British political cartoon, with a case study of *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

Revisiting Hergé's Crypt: Charles Burns Haunted by *Tintin*

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One of the recurring motifs in Charles Burns's recent *X'ed Out* trilogy is an intercom, a rounded shape that is braided through the three volumes in various forms, visually linked with the open sewer that repeatedly appears in the 'Nitnit' storyline. As revealed in a "Random Access" strip Burns drew for *The Believer*, this braided motif goes back to a sequence in Hergé's *The Secret of the Unicorn*, which Burns appropriated by replacing the intercom with a hole spilling out blood. In the original sequence, Tintin is locked up by the ruthless antiquarians Loiseau into a crypt of the Moulinsart castle, from which he escapes by breaking through the wall, accessing another crypt hiding the spoils of the Loiseau brothers. Jean-Marie Apostolidès has read *The Secret of the Unicorn* and *Red Rackham's Treasure* as a reconfiguration of the social relationships between the characters around the treasure, a "ghost" from the past that binds together Tintin, Haddock and Tournesol in contrast with the "bric-à-brac" piled up in the crypt by the two antiquarians. These motifs of the treasure and the crypt hint at a distant past that is kept invisible, hidden or secret but nonetheless directly impacting on the present. The prominent role that this sequence plays in Burns's trilogy also reflexively designates the 'haunting' presence of Hergé's 'old' comics in the contemporary graphic novel, both as a cultural heritage and as memories of childhood reading. Drawing on Julia Round's arguments on the crypt and the archive in comics I will use the symbol of the crypt to read Burns's gothic take on *Tintin*, analyzing how it dialogues with Apostolidès's reflections and stretching it to Burns's relationship towards the history of comics.

Benoît Crucifix is a FNRS doctoral fellow at the Université de Liège and Université catholique de Louvain. He holds MA degrees in Modern Languages and Literature (UCL) and Literary Theory (KU Leuven). His research project focuses on the histories of comics produced by contemporary graphic novelists in their engagement with the past of comics. He is a member of the ACME comics research group and frequently contributes to online platforms *Graphixia* and *du9*.

The Gothic Imagination in Jamie Hernandez' *100 Rooms*

Paul Fisher Davies, University of Sussex, UK

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Not normally thought of as a 'gothic' creator (though Tony Venezia (2011) has written of the 'California Gothic' in some of his work), Jaime Hernandez nonetheless draws on dark fantasy elements strikingly redolent of the gothic in his story of Maggie and Hopey's stay in HR Costigan's mansion in the early Love and Rockets story *100 Rooms* (1983). A labyrinthine 'castle', an avenging heir, an imperilled heroine and a demonic proprietor all enrich the urban narrative of these young women's experience. Where the earliest Mechanics stories had used comic-book motifs of superheroes, robots and spacecraft, *100 Rooms*, in transitioning to work more interested in the interiority of his central characters, marks the entry of recognisably later-gothic tropes into Hernandez' comics. Elements of these continue to resonate later in his work.

In this paper I will offer a systematic close reading of *100 Rooms*, using a framework drawn from MAK Halliday's threefold systemic functional approach to meaning-making, attending to the represented experiences, the interpersonal play of the text, the use of modality and the visual and verbal bonds that tie the text together, in order to disclose the gothic undercurrents in Hernandez' work. The reading will enact a methodology for detailed study of comics texts, and will suggest a 'multimodal poetics' on which more hermeneutic endeavours may be founded.

Paul Fisher Davies is undertaking Ph.D. research in graphic narrative theory in the school of English at University of Sussex. He teaches English Language and Literature at Sussex Downs College in Eastbourne. As well as studying comics form, he has written a collection of graphic short stories which can be previewed at www.crosbies.co.uk.

The Lesbian Gothic in *Batwoman*

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This conference paper focuses on the depiction of the lesbian gothic in the *Batwoman: Elegy* graphic novel and the *Batwoman* comic, both of which engage almost exclusively with the more fantastical and gothic elements of the DC universe. Batwoman's enemies are shape-shifters, mythological monsters come to life, ghosts, vampires and witches haunting the streets of Gotham City, with its exaggerated art deco style, gargoyles and dank atmosphere.

This conference paper will discuss how Batwoman is doubled and cast as the Other through her relationship with her twin sister Beth. Despite her status as the hero, Batwoman is consistently depicted as the dark twin who enacts masculinity and is openly gay. Her villains are nearly all monstrous mothers, seeking to escape the bounds of the homo/heteronormative and transgress traditional feminine and subservient gender roles. Their defeat at the hands of Batwoman represents the struggle between the queer, which is framed as a gender role transgression, and the homonormative within Batwoman herself. The homonormative functions as the only space where homosexuality can exist safely because it is depoliticized and functions to perpetuate the heteronormative and its gender roles. Batwoman continually seeks to escape the monstrous and reach safety in the homonormative. When she, who signifies the Other, fails, she transforms into a gothic icon: the vampire. Referencing work from academics such as Paulina Palmer, Barbara Almond, Jane M. Usher and others, this conference paper will examine how the gothic elements in both the artwork and the narrative inform Batwoman's gender identity and what this signifies considering Batwoman's representation of the lesbian superhero.

Esther De Dauw is currently a third-year PhD student at the University of Leicester, working on a thesis entitled *Hot Pants and Spandex Suits: Gendered Representation in American Superhero Comics*. She completed her MA at Cardiff University and did her undergraduate degree at Antwerp University in Belgium. She has previously presented papers at the Talking Bodies conference at Chester University and the 5th Annual ROLES conference at Birmingham University.

"I Pledge You!": Disability, Monstrosity, and Sacrifice in *Wytches*

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In the introduction to *Freakery*, editor and disabilities scholar Rosemarie Garland Thomson charts a shift in the cultural perception of and relation to "freaks," arguing that the extraordinary body once viewed with wonder became, in the 19th century, a site of error. Michel Foucault, in *Madness and Civilization*, identifies the same trend on a broader scale: that certain populations — the mad, the criminal, the impoverished, the queer — were rewritten as a social disease blighting normative society. This social equation endures to this day; one has only to scan recent blockbusters to identify the monstrous body as the evil one, the deformed body as deficient and expendable, the able body as the hero who will survive. In this context, the thematic achievement of Scott Snyder and Jock's *Wytches* is nothing short of incredible.

Wytches, a Gothic horror from the first gouged-out page, inverts the traditional equation of horror with madness and monstrosity. While the comic's eponymous characters are unquestionably monstrous, inhuman and child-eating to boot, they are easily escaped and mainly act in response to the vile, selfish morality of the townsfolk they neighbour. In this paper, I argue that *Wytches*' monstrous use of normative bodies against the dedicated rescue of its neuroatypical protagonist subtly and compellingly reinscribes the freaked body not only as a heroic body, but as a wondrous one, and argues fiercely against the longstanding social equation of difference as inherently evil. In support of my argument, I will draw theoretically upon the work of Garland Thomson, Foucault, and Roy Porter, and will use as concrete evidence close analyses of the colouring, lettering, and use of time throughout *Wytches*.

Aidan Dubhain Diamond is a graduate student in English at Memorial University of Newfoundland, where she researches visual multimodality in comics with Dr. Nancy Pedri and Lauranne Poharec. She is a contributor to the forthcoming *Essays on DC's Harley Quinn* (McFarland & Co. 2017) and, with Lauranne Poharec, a guest editor of the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Sept. 2017). Her research interests include colour and lettering in graphic narrative, visual representations of othering and the graphic body, apocalypse fiction, and constructions of social order in comics.

Coming Home: Exploring the Haunted Space of the Gothic Graphic Novel

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Scholars have recently begun exploring and articulating the “haunted” nature of the gothic graphic novel. Julia Round in particular has argued that the comics panel itself can become a haunted place, through the use of braided resonances in both content and layout of the page, as well as the co-present temporality of the page, and this concept of haunting merits fuller investigation and wider application. This paper pursues such an investigation of the “haunted” nature of the gothic graphic novel by examining it in terms of psychological temporality and in light of the readers’ expectations accompanying the horror genre, as described by scholars such as Isabel Pinedo and Carol Clover. Specifically, it expands upon the concepts put forth by Round in *Gothic in Comics and Graphic Novels* by applying ideas related to psychological time and the unconscious, as understood by Melanie Klein, to the notion of the “haunted” comics. Moreover, it explores the ways that readers’ understanding and expectations of the postmodern horror genre may inform and effectively “haunt” the reading experience. Drawing on diverse texts such as Joe Hill and Gabriel Rodriguez’s *Locke and Key*, Grant Morrison and Dave McKean’s *Arkham Asylum: A Serious House on Serious Earth*, and Kelly Sue DeConnick and Valentine De Landro’s *Bitch Planet*, this paper contributes to a more complete understanding of the “haunted” nature of the gothic and horror graphic novel, and sheds new light on one of the most engaging genres within a rapidly growing field of media study.

Kathryn Dickie is a graduating senior in English at Niagara University, soon to be beginning graduate study in writing center administration at Canisius College. She has previously co-authored "Functional Variety in Freewriting: A Response to Fontaine," presented at the 2014 Council of Writing Research Conference in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

“Un(th)Ink-able Tales: Unimaginable Folklore Horror in Emily Carroll’s *Through the Woods*”

Christina Dokou, The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Emily Carroll’s revisionary graphic gothic retelling of well-known fairy tale motifs in *Through the Woods* (2014), is one of the latest in a long list of a rich genre featuring, notably, Angela Carter’s dark feminist short stories in *The Bloody Chamber* (1979), Kate Bernheimer’s collection of *nouveau* fairy-tales in *My Mother She Killed Me, My Father He Ate Me* (2010), and Disney’s 2014 film adaptation of the 1986 hit musical, *Into the Woods*—not to mention Neil Gaiman’s masterful illustrated dark remix of the tales of Snow White and Sleeping Beauty in *The Sleeper and the Spindle* (2014). Folklore retellings, in fact, whether fairy-tale or myth, are an integral part of the original genre, as the oral, widespread and trans-generational nature of folklore material entails constant revisions and shifts in didactic and ideological content to fit the popular tastes of each era. What can account, however, for the decisively gothic character of most modern retellings, often relocated at the crossroads where explicit sexual perversion meets psychotic violence? While arguably (post)modern angst, with its post-Freudian clinical awareness of the potential of the human psyche validating the early intimations of Romantic Gothic masters, can account for such a twist, one could equally argue that such uninhibited forays into past tradition simply bring to the fore the smoothed-over primal horror and rawness of the myths and tales in their “original” form, before the intervention of literary-minded, eponymous storytellers. Integrating the above viewpoints, my paper aims to focus mainly (but not exclusively) on the first story of Carroll’s collection, “Our Neighbor’s House,” as well as on the embedding of Carroll’s tales, both literal (“Introduction”) and (meta-)fictional (“In Conclusion”). Based on textual and visual clues offered by the lead story and repeated, symptom-like, throughout the collection, I intend to show how, first, the author reinterprets formally the notion of retelling as a form of inter-familial cannibalization, and secondly how, by employing a figure from North Amerindian folklore, tackles the issue of unimaginable (and therefore, un-illustratable) horror of the human soul that persists throughout the ages.

Christina Dokou is Assistant Professor of American Literature and Culture at the Faculty of English Language and Literature, at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. Her main interests include myth retellings in modern Anglophone literature, gender- and psychoanalysis- informed approaches to literature, American folklore and pop Americana (especially comics). She is the co-editor of two collections of essays, *The Periphery Viewing the World* (Athens, 2004) and *The Letter of the Law: Literature, Justice and the Other* (Berlin, 2013) and the author of numerous journal articles and essays/chapters in anthologies, mostly on the aforementioned areas of scholarship.

Gotham City and the Gothic architectural tradition

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In 1998, the various monthly Batman titles published by DC Comics depicted the fictional Gotham City as being rocked by an Earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter Scale. The 18 issue storyline explored all the dramatic potential of this event, but a primary reason why this story was included in DC's output was to have an excuse to make the comic book Gotham look like the city as portrayed in the 1990s Batman movies. On screen, thanks to the work of set designer Anton Furst who had worked on Tim Burton's first *Batman* in 1989, the city was depicted as a retrofitted 16th Century urban nightmare, with gargoyles and buttresses jostling space for neon lights and advertising hoardings.

While Batman in the comics had always been seen as a modernist urban hero, Burton's influences came from the tradition of European fairy tales and horror films, so his collaboration with Furst - who had previously designed the film of Angela Carter's *The Company of Wolves* (1984) - was apt in bringing a very different sensibility to his vision of the superhero film. This paper will look at representations of the gothic aesthetic in the pages of *Batman: Cataclysm* and other visions of the caped vigilante which highlight the gothic potential of the character and his city, and whether a more Gothic Gotham suits a darker Dark Knight.

Alex Fitch presents the UK's only monthly broadcast radio show about comics - *Panel Borders* - on the Arts Council Radio Station, Resonance 104.4 FM / DAB in London. He has lectured on Cult Cinema at the Natural History and Science Museums in London, and at the University of Brighton where he is currently completing his MRes in Arts and Cultural Research. He has been published on the topics of comics and film by University of Chicago Press and University Press of Mississippi, and is an assistant editor of *Electric Sheep Magazine* online.

Hysterical Reality: Weimar Germany and the Victorian Gothic in Mattotti and Kramsky's Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

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In creating their graphic novel adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde: A Graphic Novel* (2002), Italian comics creators Lorenzo Mattotti and Jerry Kramsky transposed the narrative from Victorian London to Weimar Germany. Mattotti called the book "a voyage into Expressionist culture," in which he drew on Expressionist painters like Otto Dix, Max Beckman, George Grosz, and Francis Bacon to create the highly varied visual style for the piece. This style, Mattotti said, evokes "an hysterical idea of reality"—a phrase that can be applied not only to German Expressionism and to Stevenson's text, but also to Gothic fiction and the Gothic tradition.

Mattotti uses German Expressionist visual techniques to create a grotesque vision of Hyde whose appearance is constantly in flux, reflecting the ambiguous descriptions of Hyde that Stevenson provides and making the character more frightening and unpredictable. The graphic novel also incorporates the history and culture surrounding the Weimar Republic, particularly national and personal trauma in the wake of the First World War and anxieties regarding the impending rise of Nazism. This magnifies the trauma and anxiety present in the novel and creates a heightened sense of chaos, uncertainty, and terror that is characteristic of Weimar art and film.

By situating their adaptation of Stevenson's novel in Weimar Germany, Mattotti and Kramsky draw connections between the Gothic and Modernism, blending Gothic and Modernist tropes and taking them to new extremes, both visually and narratively. Using images from the graphic novel and German Expressionist paintings and film, this paper examines Mattotti's and Kramsky's presentation of Gothic and Modernist themes—the grotesque and the uncanny, mutability and distortion, primitivism and atavism, and haunted or oppressive environments—and explores the relationships among German Expressionism, Modernism, and the Gothic in this adaptation of a Victorian novel.

Madeline Gangnes is a PhD student in English at the University of Florida and a graduate of the University of Dundee's Master of Letters in Comics Studies program. Her research focuses on the relationship between image-text works (comics, graphic novels, illustrated fiction, etc.) and other media. She is particularly interested in image-text adaptations of literature, especially Nineteenth-Century British science fiction, and much of her research concerns visual depictions of monstrosity and otherness in illustration, comics, and film. She has also presented and published on film adaptations of manga.

The incarcerated Balloon: The Other as Weird

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It is an analogy of how the human (in extremis) is like a balloon, who contorts, turns, and who unexpectedly squeezes out in different areas with external pressures in camp comic novels (CN). It also fits in with the notion of the Weird within the Grotesque paradigm of the Camp systems. The Other becomes the Weird. The incarcerated human reacts differently to all kinds of stressors, and cuts across different concentration camp systems, indeed across time. I will therefore be looking for the Weird contortionist within the CN and see where and how the balloon as The Other shapes, moulds and re-organises itself 'weirdly' in order to survive.

This paper will therefore present the Weird and The Other as not mutually exclusive, and essentially, it will explore how the Weird manifests itself in the CNs of camp life.

Nathaniel Golden's Masters and PhD were on Holocaust and Gulag life as portrayed within the survivor literature. Her MPhil was published by Rodopi complete as a monograph which looked at a Formalist take on Varlam Shalamov's short stories. Her PhD looked at the authors(s) as witness, cycles of socialisation and survival techniques across both systems, such as Levi, Ginzburg and Borowski. The often neglected area is the comic, the art and combination of the two that reveal intricacies of survival of the camp. Although, not a new phenomena, no work has delved into both systems and the comic or graphic representations that survivors made of their experiences.

Resistance and Subversion in Alberto Breccia and Carlos Trillo's *Buscavidas*

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Buscavidas was drawn by Alberto Breccia and written by Carlos Trillo in Buenos Aires, 1981, during the military dictatorship in Argentina. Its main subject is the life of a hollow man who feeds off other people's stories to fill his void. Using satire and the grotesque (in James C. Scott's terms) as tools of resistance and counter censorship, Breccia and Trillo constructed a metaphor of the Argentine dictatorship (1976-1983) that concludes with a daring demand directly aimed at the military. This paper proposes a narrative analysis of the comic, focused on "point of view" and "monstration" (Thierry Groensteen's terms).

Nayma González is a PhD student studying Art History at National Autonomous University of Mexico. Themes of interest include Latin American comics, especially Argentine and Mexican comics pre 1990s.

Aardvarkian Gothic

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It is doubtful whether, when considering Dave Sim's comics series *Cerebus*, one thinks first of the gothic as a major element therein. *Cerebus* is perhaps more widely thought of either in terms of Sim's parodies of comics or of his sexual politics. However, gothic motifs figure strongly in several storylines. Indeed, one of Sim's earliest multi-issue arcs, comprising issues 23-25 ("The Beguiling," "Swamp Sounds," and "This Woman, This Thing"), involves not merely parody of specific mainstream comic elements (e.g. Marvel Comics' Professor X and his school for mutants, as well as the Man-Thing and Swamp Thing characters, from Marvel and DC) but also of gothic tropes, notably through its evocation of the cult classic Clint Eastwood film *The Beguiled* (1971). Sim's genre-bending is one of the strengths of *Cerebus*, and this arc demonstrates Sim's skill in weaving gothic elements into the book, not merely for parodic purposes but also to serve Sim's gestational thematic interests. While the result is predominantly humorous, Sim exploits several characteristic elements of the gothic to trouble questions of gender and representation. The initial plot reverses the gothic trope of the vulnerable woman in a mysterious space, threatened explicitly with violence and implicitly with sex, by making the male *Cerebus* the vulnerable figure, surrounded by sexually tempting adolescent girls. The story further complicates questions of gender both by putting *Cerebus* in drag and then taking Madame Dufort out of it, climaxing its interrogation by invoking a surprising take on the *doppelgänger* motif by introducing Woman Thing and Sump Thing as parodic monstrous others whose violent/sexual encounter literalizes Sim's sexual politics, not to mention the crisis of representation sometimes seen as a key element of gothic (see for instance Meyers 17). This paper will explore how this story arc invokes and subverts gothic motifs.

Dominick Grace is an Associate Professor of English at Brescia University College in London, Ontario. He is the author of articles on topics ranging from medieval literature to contemporary pop culture, including comic books, as well as being the author of *The Science Fiction of Phyllis Gotlieb* (McFarland) and co-editor with Eric Hoffman of *Dave Sim: Conversations*, *Chester Brown: Conversations*, and *Seth: Conversations* (University press of Mississippi). Forthcoming projects include a co-edited (with Eric Hoffman) collection of essays on Canadian comics and a *Conversations* collection of interviews with Jim Shooter, co-edited with Eric Hoffman and Jason Sacks.

Imagining the American West before the “Western”: Defining a Genre in Nineteenth-Century Cartoons and Pictorial Reportage

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The term, “Western”, originated at the dawn of the twentieth-century as a means in which to describe and categorise the narrative film genre. Retrospectively, the “Western” has since become a blanket term that incorporates the various incarnations of the fictive West before it; found in nineteenth-century painting, performance and literature (amongst other things). Whilst scholars tend to integrate these former versions into broad histories of the Western genre, few have looked to the word and image instances from newspapers and cartoon-based magazines of the nineteenth-century. In a time before the reprinting and mass circulation of photography in the press was made possible, cartoonists were at the forefront of popular image creation, offering readers sensational, humorous, and politically motivated visualisations of unfolding events from America’s inexorable westward expansion of the latter 1800s.

This paper will argue that some of the earliest conventions, images and themes commonly associated with the Western genre at the turn of the century were cast in these illustrated depictions of the American West from the late 1800s. After exploring a sample of cartoons featuring dramatic frontier action and heroism, loaded racist imagery of the Native American, and humorous caricatures of frontier life, the paper will situate the influence of these cartoons within the broader canon of the Western genre from the twentieth-century. However, in meeting with a series of scholars positioning of the nineteenth-century cartoon as a form of antecedent medium to comics, this paper will be particularly concerned with mapping this process in the Western genre comics from the twentieth century.

William Grady is a PhD student from the University of Dundee. His doctoral research looks to map a cultural history of Western comics in American and Franco-Belgian comics traditions. This year, his research on the relationship between Spaghetti Westerns and Western comics will be published in the edited collection, *Spaghetti Westerns at the Crossroads* (Edinburgh University Press), and he will be organising a conference on comics and genre.

Dumping the body: graphiation as mind, mark and trace

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Gilles Deleuze describes how the painter Francis Bacon used the word “graph” to describe his conception of the function of marks made by the body – that of clearing away existing ideas of image, representation, depiction and function. In this conception, the mark is a phenomenal impression that is not itself a trace of either an immanent mind or an originating body, but rather remains of itself, distinct and unmotivated, relative to other, imagined motivations or categories of knowledge.

This paper will examine the implications of a bias in theorisations of narrative drawing towards graphiation (Marion’s visual remediation of utterance) as indexing a distinct, phenomenal, originating body (a graphiatuer), that motivates inner capabilities to think and act. The paper will further discuss and interrogate the idea that the acts of phenomenal bodies divulge thought or represent knowledge. Currently, narrative models of drawing theorising relationships between subjects (in Mikkonen, for example), often develop an idea of graphiation akin to Robert Luzar’s summary of theories of drawing as cognition, as a “...kind of performative activity, expressing and revealing a mind-bestowing concept unfolding between the hand and imprints/figures on the page.”

The paper will discuss how drawn marks are theorised as making an activity manifest, and how agency might be considered as the appearance of a subject, charting various iterations and characteristics of ideas of ‘thinking through drawing’ (in Marion, Baetens, and Rommens, for example) and returning to the radical system proposed by Bacon, in which mark is not trace and the phenomenal body is not an origin but a para-phenomenon, a concept or a category of knowledge.

Dr Simon Grennan is a scholar in the field of visual narratology. He is author of the forthcoming *A Theory of Narrative Drawing* (Palgrave Macmillan 2016), co-editor, with Laurence Grove, of *Transforming Anthony Trollope: 'Dispossession', Victorianism and 19th century word and image* (Leuven University Press 2015) and contributor to *Representing multiculturalism in comics and graphic novels*. (Routledge 2014), *Visualising the Verbal: Graphic Novel Adaptations of Literary Classics*, with Professor David Skilton (McFarland 2014) and *'Real lives, Celebrity stories: narrative of ordinary and extraordinary people across media* (Intellect 2013). He is the creator of *Dispossession*, a graphic adaptation of a novel by Anthony Trollope (Jonathan Cape and Les Impressions Nouvelles 2015) and, since 1990, half of international artists team Grennan & Sperandio, producer of over forty comics and books (www.kartoonkings.com). Dr Grennan is Research Fellow in Fine Art at the University of Chester and Principal Investigator for the two-year research project *Marie Duval presents Ally Sloper: the female cartoonist and popular theatre in London 1869-85*, funded by a £200,000 AHRC Research Grant: Early Career (2014). www.simongrennan.com.

The Corpo-Reality of Comics: Gothic Images and Physical Abjection

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Half-buried skeletons, ripped off body parts, rotting zombies, insects feasting on human flesh – these and other nightmarish scenarios, in which the healthy, living human body has been grotesquely deformed, forcefully violated or almost unrecognizably altered are well-known topoi in Gothic Comics. Scenes like these depict Kristeva's understanding of the abject – something that (metaphorically, sometimes literally) threatens to chip and munch away the fragile border which we have erected to separate and defend our-selves from everything other, and which we desperately try to fend off.

Yet, why do mere images as they are presented to us in comics have such a strong effect on us, given that they are not the 'real thing'? W.J.T. Mitchell argues that "we are stuck with our magical, premodern attitudes towards [...] pictures," and that we take them as "vital signs," meaning "not merely signs for living things but signs as living things" – or, in the case of some Gothic images, as deceased or undead things, which seem to be nevertheless quite 'alive' in their impact on the reader's psyche. Even though Ian Jackson states that comics "don't involve more than one physical sense," namely the visual one, in this paper I argue that in the case of images of the abject, the haptic sense plays a decisive role as well. At the same time that we imagine to see the real thing, we also fear to touch the real thing. Thus, in comics, the fear of "death infecting life" – to use Kristeva's words – is heightened by the reader's direct physical contact with the medium in which the abject is depicted. Uncannily, the border between the images and our own corporeality is transcended and thus the ability of comics as a medium to provoke abjection is enhanced.

Tina Helbig is a PhD student at the English Department at the Georg-August University in Göttingen, Germany. She holds an MA in English Philology from the University of Mannheim and has taught Graphic Fiction and Film Studies in Göttingen, Media Studies at the University of Mannheim and English Literature courses at the Free University of Berlin.

Gothic Parody and Mainstream Comic Books in Dave Sim's *Cerebus the Aardvark*

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Cerebus the Aardvark (1977-2004) is a remarkable achievement in the field of comic book publishing. Over the course of 300 issues what started out as a parody of Roy Thomas and Barry Windsor Smith's *Conan the Barbarian* became perhaps the most sustained example of self-publishing in the medium. Given its origins as a parody of the fantasy genre it is not surprising that *Cerebus* used many of the tropes of the Gothic. These visual and environmental elements included bleak pine forests, ruined castles and the catacombs; as well as archetypes such as mad monks, man-made monsters and melancholy maidens. These Gothic devices initially emerged through parody but as the series became more serious in tone they formed an increasingly bleak backdrop to Sim's introspective narrative.

This study will focus on examples of Gothic parody that highlight Sim's fanboy credentials and his engagement with mainstream comic books, factors that were crucial in developing and maintaining an audience for his work. It will focus on the transformations of *The Roach*, an archetypal character who starts out as *The Cockroach*, a direct parody of *The Batman*. During the course of the series he undergoes many other transformations in parodying mainstream comic book characters such as *Moonknight*, *Wolverine* and *The Punisher* to name but a few. Later in the extended *Women and Daughter's* storyline in *Cerebus* Sim transformed *The Roach* into *Swoon* a parody of Neil Gaiman's *Morpheus*, *Lord of Dreams* the central character in the acclaimed *Sandman* series. Through tracking these examples of parody and the reaction of Sim's fans to the work in the letter column pages of *Cerebus* it is possible to also analyse the shifts in representations of the Gothic in mainstream American comic books from the 1970s to the 1990s.

Ian Horton is Contextual and Theoretical Studies Coordinator across the School of Design at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. His Ph.D. focused on the codification of British architectural education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to research on architectural education he has published papers on national identity and architectural aesthetics, oral history and text-based public art and colonialist stereotypes in European and British comic books. His present research is focused in three related areas: experimental typography, Dutch graphic design and comic books. He is currently working on a book about the Dutch graphic design group *Hard Werken* to be published by *Valiz* in spring 2017. Along with Roger Sabin he currently organises the *Comic Studies Network* at the *University of the Arts London*. He has recently presented papers on self-published comic books and creative freedom; experimental typography and curatorial practices; information design and graphic narratives at international conferences by organisations such as the *Association of Art Historians*; *International Association of Word and Image Studies*; *International Conference of Comics and Graphic Novels*; *Comics Forum*; and *Comics Grid/Graphixia*.

Grotesque constellations: Japanese Gothic in *The Breath of Copernicus*

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Following academic debates around the authenticity and cultural legitimacy of Japan's Gothic industry, this essay investigates Nakamura Asumiko's psychological manga, *The Breath of Copernicus* (2002), and proposes that it demonstrates a Japanese Gothic that arose from a long literary history predating the emergence of its Western counterpart. Instead of blatantly appropriating canonical Gothic, the manga is a uniquely Japanese construct that reflects the country's capacity to indigenize yet still retain its cultural core—the fascination with the supernatural and the grotesque integral to its narrative tradition has undergone a postmodern metamorphosis, transforming into a monstrous hybrid that projects ubiquitous human conditions while juxtaposing familiar cultural paradigms with strange elements adapted from foreign territories. Therefore, Nakamura's illustrations invoke Art Nouveau images as well as references to Japanese *bishōnen* attributes and the aesthetic of eroticism and death. Content-wise, the manga inverts the Orientalist gaze by portraying through the circus a Western otherness brimming not only with exotic spectacles but with perversion and depravity. Situating the Gothicized circus in 1970s metropolitan Paris, the manga maps a spatial duality in which borders between inside/outside and chaos/order is always already transgressed only to highlight an ultimate return to hegemonic stability. This collapse of boundaries has summoned forth both the protagonist's traumatic memories and his deceased brother as his haunting double. Apart from the Gothic staples, the protagonist's eventual reconciliation with and transcendence of the self-embrace the philosophy of *mu* (nothingness), a self-emptying practice common in Eastern Gothic texts.

Nakamura's manga examined here is a Gothic hybridity representative of contemporary Japan. Far from being a fragmented, superficial pastiche of Western conventions, the motley of imageries in popular visual narratives forms a dynamic continuum that recontextualizes and re-creates cultural experiences—by celebrating its uncanny reincarnation in a phantasmal universe.

Yee-min Huang is a graduate student at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, National Taiwan University. Her research focuses broadly on gender and sexuality, queer theory, comparative literature, and visual culture. Her current work concentrates on narratives of transnational queer subjects under biopolitical/necropolitical governance.

**“A kind of incestuous, necrophilious, oral-anal-sadistic all-in wrestling match”:
Key themes in comic book adaptations of *Dracula*, 1953-2011**

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On its publication in 1897 Bram Stoker's novel was seen by many reviewers as a rather straightforward 'horror thriller'. It has since been almost ubiquitous to see the novel as a hotbed of sexual repression and metaphor, as in the quote from Maurice Richardson which forms the first part of the title of this paper. More recently other critics of the novel have perceived other potential themes, including issues around Christian parody, disease, social commentary and feminism.

This paper will look at three adaptations of the novel; Avon's *Eerie* comics no. 12 (1953) Russ Jones 1962 paperback version and the Classical Comics version of 2011 to see if any of these approaches are reflected in the comics. A wider range of adaptations will also be considered in relation to the key early scene in the novel which deals with the attack on Harker by the 'brides of Dracula'. It will be argued that the many comic book/graphic novel adaptations provide not only rich and effective interpretations of *Dracula*, but also some of the most faithful to the novel that have been produced in any medium.

David Huxley is a Senior Lecturer on the BA (Hons) Film and Media Studies course at Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University. He is the editor of the Routledge publication *The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*, and co-organiser of the annual International Conference of Graphic Novels and Comics (2011-). His subject specialisms and research interests are the graphic novel, comic book & comic strip, horror film and censorship, Hollywood film, animation and British Music Hall performers. He is the author of *Nasty Tales: British Underground Comics* (Critical Vision) and has written widely on comics, including entries in *The Critical Survey of Graphic Novels* (Salem Press) and various chapters on underground and war comics. He was co-editor of *European Cinema: Horror Cinema in Europe Since 1945* (Wallflower) and has written on British music hall in *The Journal of Early Popular Visual Culture* and *The Journal of Comedy Studies*. He has written and drawn for a range of comics, including: *Ally Sloper* (1976) *Either Or Comics* (1977-8) *Comic Tales* (1981) *Heavy Metal* (1982) *Pssst* (1982) *Oink* (1987-8).

'Hello, again, you little monsters!': Reading with the Horror Hosts in American Comics of the 1950s and 60s.

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This paper discusses the EC Comics of the early fifties, such as *Tales from the Crypt*, *The Vault of Horror* and *The Haunt of Fear*, and touches on the later Warren publications, *Creepy*, *Eerie* and *Vampirella*. Comic books were a major narrative medium amongst young readers in the American fifties; their lurid depictions of violence and the grotesque unsurprisingly produced a sensation and ensuing difficulty for their publishers. Famously, EC's horror and lurid crime lines were decried by crusading psychologist Fredric Wertham and deplored by the Senate Subcommittee to Investigate Juvenile Delinquency. One of the distinctive features of these anthology comics was their use of horror hosts. In this paper I argue that the hosts did more than simply introduce narratives and provide a sense of continuity between the discontinuous tales that characterise anthology comics; they provided instructions to their readers about how the horrific materials being presented ought to be read and responded to, outlining a distinctive set of reading strategies native to Gothic narrative that emphasise what Poe might have described as the 'the delight of its horror'.

This paper suggests that the moral outcry was not just about whether comics might have a corrupting effect on younger readers, but was rather a dispute over different ways of reading. Wertham and his followers espoused a highly interpretative style of reading that stressed the interpellative power of text – that is, its ability to fashion its readers – whereas EC's Bill Gaines echoed the horror hosts, insisting that reading was basically disconnected from the troubles of the real and instead offers a carnivalesque space in which readers might playfully and naughtily revel, and even find consolation.

Timothy Jones is the author of *The Gothic and the Carnavalesque in American Culture*, part of University of Wales Press' Gothic Literary Studies series. He is lecturer in English at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand, and this April, takes up a lectureship in Gothic literature at Stirling.

The Wire Mother and the Hole in Things: Monstrous Propagation and the Gothic Postmodern in Grant Morrison's *Batman*

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Much of Gothic art and literature is preoccupied with the abject, terror-inducing body transgressing against its 'natural' functions of production. For instance, Frankenstein can be read as a tainted inversion of childbirth, while vampire narratives such as *Carmilla* and *Dracula* centre on sexualised physical liaisons that render reproduction impossible. Such anxieties regarding the frustrated or grotesque propagation of bodies are at the forefront of Grant Morrison's 2006-2013 run on *Batman*, which revisits the series' ongoing themes of parent-child relationships and legacies through this Gothic lens to portray mainstream comics as Gothic terror objects and loci of anxiety.

The chief antagonists of Morrison's *Batman*, Dr Simon Hurt and Talia al-Ghul, are portrayed as monstrous parents: a father figure defined by lacunae, and a mother who seeks to destroy and devour on a global scale. In addition to blurring boundaries of standard oppositional gender categories, Talia and Dr Hurt's characterisations as artificial propagators of nullity, destruction and death establish a context wherein the propagation of the body is self-defeating and unnatural.

As with many Morrison-authored comics, *Batman's* themes of monstrous parentage and self-defeating propagation also serve to argue that mainstream comics, in which major characters are inherited from previous narratives in seeming perpetuity, are trapped in similarly unnatural cycles of propagation. The combination of this meta-narrative significance and the above themes corresponds with Beville's concept of the Gothic-postmodern, which argues that, much like the postmodern, the presence of terror and supernatural elements in the Gothic depends on the existence of multiple layers of reality. In Morrison's *Batman*, this connection between the Gothic and postmodernism as they relate to comics is underscored by the recurrence of both action-based and object-based simulacra, motifs of circularity, and themes of immortality and grotesque reproduction to suggest that contemporary mainstream comics are, like sources of Gothic terror, monstrous products that exist in defiance of natural cycles of creation.

Kelly Kanayama is a PhD researcher in contemporary transatlantic comics at the University of Dundee. She has written on comics for SciFiNow, NPR: Code Switch, Bitch Media, and acclaimed sites Women Write About Comics and Mindless Ones. She also co-hosts the FONFLIF! podcast with comics critic, scholar and author Douglas Wolk. Her creative work on comics has been published in Lighthouse Literary Journal and Room Magazine. Her public engagement experience includes teaching on comics with Oxbridge Academic Programs and being a solo speaker and/or featured panelist with Nine Worlds Geekfest and the London Graphic Novel Network'.

Grasping the Monster: the Concepts of Otherness and the Uncanny in Grimly's Frankenstein

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This paper focuses on Gris Grimly's Frankenstein (Balzer+Bray, 2013), an American comics adaptation of Shelley's literary classic. The graphic retelling, which uses selected but unaltered parts of the original 1818 text, is characterised by its innovative artwork and experimentation with the medium of comics, in particular the gutter, text/image relations, or page layout. I will study the concepts of the uncanny and otherness in this work by focusing in particular on the creation scene as well as examining the urban 'sublimation' of the settings and the macabre art style.

Grimly's adaptation offers a strikingly original version of this canonical story by relocating it within a steampunk atmosphere and a visual reinterpretation of key aspects of Shelley's text, most notably the uncanny and the concept of otherness. Drawing on concepts such as Bryant's "fluid text" or Sanders's "appropriation", I argue that Grimly's work builds and maintains a close relationship with both the 19th-century novel and the subsequent cultural myth. Consequently, this innovative and contemporary retelling incessantly reshapes and questions the reader's perception of the story.

I would suggest that many different elements feed into the uncanniness of this graphic work. Shelley's Frankenstein has been widely read as a monster story and a gothic tale inducing an experience of the uncanny. However, I would argue that this is heightened by the graphic dimension put forward by Grimly. The American artist plays and experiments as the monster and his creator appear as shapeshifting and ungraspable individuals. In a broader sense, the comic itself embodies the uncanny, which pervades through textual elements, the characters and the environment, through the emphasis on the urban sublime via oppressive cities, overwhelming technological innovations and destabilising progress. Consequently, what should be familiar rather transports the reader in a steampunk version of our world haunted by ever-changing characters.

Logan Labrune is a Belgian PhD candidate in French Studies as well as the Graduate Teaching Assistant for French at Bangor University (UK). His research focuses on graphic adaptations of literary classics and the formation of the cultural canon. He previously studied at the Université Catholique de Louvain (Belgium) where he wrote his MA dissertation titled Post-Punk Monsters: a Study of Graphic Instability and the Uncanny in Grimly's Frankenstein.

Gothic realism: transgressive science in the success of Marvel superheroes in the 1960s

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The growth in popularity of Marvel superheroes in the 1960s is often attributed to the characters being 'heroes with problems', a feature said to lend them greater 'realism' than the heroes of other publishers, notably DC. Here, I argue that a possible contributor to this sense of realism came from Gothic influences in the representation of science and scientists. Early Gothic literature features many types of scientist and other characters who represent or espouse a scientific outlook. Often, their scientific activity is marked by moral-normative transgression, whether through an occult orientation or from breaching ordinary moral boundaries taken to be the natural order of things. The grand triumvirate of Victor Frankenstein, Dr Jekyll and Professor Van Helsing are only the most prominent amongst many other Gothic scientists, who contravene the natural order and/or involve themselves in magic and the supernatural. The price often paid for such transgression is monstrous transformation, a theme that re-appears in many Marvel characters, including heroes such as the Hulk and the Thing. Similarly, the consequences of breaching the moral order through scientific instrumentalism are represented by heroes such as Spider-Man and Doctor Strange, the latter also incorporating occult themes. Meanwhile, the heroes' villainous counterparts, such as Dr Doom and the Green Goblin re-envision Gothic tropes of science gone mad, while Doctor Strange's nemesis, Nightmare, articulates in magical form a scientised rationale for horror as monstrous fears emerging from the unconscious. I suggest that this recrudescence of the Gothic concern with the monstrous other produced by transgressive science lent the Marvel characters an emotional realism that resonated with longstanding social concerns about the moral implications of scientific research and that this was a contributory factor to the success of their comics in the 1960s.

Simon Locke is Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Kingston University. He has published papers on comics in a wide range of refereed journals, including *Studies in Comics*, *Public Understanding of Science*, *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, *Participations*, and *SCAN: The Journal of Media, Art and Culture* – and he *is* the monstrous other. Be afraid!

The Truth is Stranger Than Fiction: Rick Geary's Gothic Murder Tales

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Rick Geary weds Gothic horror tropes with comic true crime traditions in *A Treasury of Victorian Murder Compendium I and II*. Marshall Brown posits that "gothic ghosts come alive in the shadows.... What keeps the stories going is ambiguity" (161). Geary retells the familiar lurid tales of some of the most famous murderers in both Victorian England, such as Jack the Ripper, and nineteenth and twentieth century America, such as HH Holmes and Lizzy Borden. The fascination with these horrors stems in large part from the uncertainty of the facts. In the case of Jack the Ripper, no arrest was ever made. George E Haggerty states that "[g]othic fiction depends on a ... production of 'facts' and needs to be structured formally"(1). Julia Round concurs that the "gothic structure is ... linked to the theme of veracity. Paratextual material such as footnotes or purportedly extratextual material (letters, extracts from historical documents or manuscripts) are frequently used to raise the questions of authenticity" (56). Geary employs a number of these paratextual elements, such as bibliographies, maps, and timelines. He employs these tropes of veracity in retelling stories about which there are essential ambiguities. Readers are still enthralled by these stories because of the lack of a definitive "truth." Round points out that "Gothic ... holds the active reader at its center" (56). This paper will examine the ways in which Geary's Gothic retellings engage the reader.

Lisa Macklem is a PhD Candidate in Law at the University of Western Ontario and has an LLM in Entertainment and Media Law as well as an MA in Media Studies. She is on the editorial board for *The Journal of Fandom Studies*. Recent publications include "From Monstrous Mommies to Hunting Heroines: The Evolution of Women on *Supernatural*" in *The Canadian Fantastic in Focus: New Perspectives* edited by Allan Weiss (McFarland, 2015), and "I See What You Did There: SPN and the Fourth Wall" in *Fan Phenomena: Supernatural* edited by Lynn Zubernis and Katherine Larsen (Intellect, 2014). Among her conference papers in 2015 was "A Journey Into the Past: *Manifest Destiny* Re-Imagines How the West Was Won" delivered at the Voyages Conference in Paris, France, in June.

**Western Nightmares: *Manifest Destiny* (Chris Dingess, 2013–) and the
Narrative Ethics of the Weird**

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Manifest Destiny (Skybound Comics, 2013–), Chris Dingess' subversive reimagining of the 1804–1806 Lewis and Clark expedition, raises several important questions with regards to the ethics and aesthetics of weird fiction. The comic book series, created and written by Dingess, with art by Matthew Roberts and Owen Gieni, finds the American explorers battling various fantastical creatures – including giant frogs, sentient duck-like creatures and vampire-like beings – as they set out to chart and civilize the Louisiana territory. Their encounters with such monsters – and our experience of their adventures – create a variety of effects, from the horrific to the humorous to the unsettling.

My paper is largely interested in the last of these effects and examines *Manifest Destiny* as a work of weird fiction (although it is certainly not the only genre that the graphic narrative draws on). The series, I argue, is grounded upon a formal realism which makes it highly effective in depicting scenes of weird fiction, whose defamiliarizing effect can rely on combining conventional, highly-realistic settings, characters or tableaux with strange elements that pervert yet do not render them unrecognizable (one such example is the last page of issue 5, a spread that depicts a forest infected by a flower-like creature that has turned the insides of both men and wildlife plant-like. The creatures depicted – a bear, a squirrel, a snake, some men, among others – are at once instantly recognizable and markedly strange, which helps create a feeling of profound unsettlement and defamiliarization). In conversation with critics and writers such as S. T. Joshi, Brian Richardson, James Phelan, and Ann and Jeff VanderMeer, I attempt to explore the formal strategies adopted by the series in order to create scenes of weird fiction, as well as their ethical implications both within the narrative and outside of it.

Dragoş Manea is an assistant lecturer at the University of Bucharest, where he teaches seminars in British and American literature, translation, and academic writing. His main research interests include the adaptation of history, cultural memory, and the relationship between ethics and fiction. His publications include "Arenas of Memory: *Spartacus* and the Remediation of Historical Narratives" (in *Spartacus in the Television Arena: Essays on the Starz Series*, ed. Michael G. Cornelius, McFarland, 2015) and "Bad Girls from Outer Space: Brian K. Vaughan and Fiona Staples's *Saga* and the Graphic Representation of Subversive Femininity" (with Mihaela Precup, in *Bad Girls: Recalcitrant Women in Contemporary Pop Culture*. Eds. Julie A. Chappell and Mallory Young. Forthcoming).

The Incal: A Gate Between Two Worlds

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The present essay is trying to analyze the symbolic influence of the Major Arcana from the Tarot of Marseilles in the graphic novel carried out together by the writer Alejandro Jodorowsky and the illustrator and graphic designer Jean Giraud – popularly known as Moebius–, entitled *L’Incal*, published in the French magazine *Métal Hurlant* between 1980 and 1988, and, more particularly, the resilient connection between the card which represents The Fool and the main character of this saga, class ‘R’ detective John Difool. Due to the complexity of the issue, I decided to follow a classic method to elaborate this paper and, in order to do it properly, I analyzed this graphic novel from both a psychoanalytical and anthropological approach to provide a coherent guiding thread to the study.

The methodology that has been used departs from Jodorowsky’s bibliography linked to the restoration of the Tarot of Marseilles and its subsequent reconstruction, and also the considerations offered about this study by the author himself. Next, I revised the most purposeful works related to Tarot’s meaning, symbolism and history to include Jodorowsky’s considerations into a wider and well defined trend of thought. Besides, I tried to carry out this research under the perspective of literary theory and criticism and, because of that it has been necessary to appeal to key studies in the interpretation of the literary and artistic contemporary production. Finally, I analyzed *The Incal* in detail, defining it inside Moebius and Jodorowsky’s trend of thought, and connecting it with Jodorowsky’s studies on the Tarot of Marseilles.

Brenda Melero is currently undertaking a PhD at the University of Salamanca. She is author of the forthcoming *A Clockwork Orange y el estado mecánico del bienestar. Literaturas Europeas*, nº6, 1616: *Anuario de Literatura Comparada*. Salamanca: USAL (2016) and *L’Étoile de mer: Luces y sombras en el cine poético de Man Ray. El canon y sus circunstancias*. Santiago de Compostela: Andavira.

Reading the Grotesque, the Monstrous and the Uncanny in Contemporary American Women's Graphic Memoirs: Phoebe Gloeckner and Lynda Barry

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This presentation will examine the use of the grotesque, the monstrous and the uncanny in two contemporary American women cartoonists' graphic memoirs. It will focus on Phoebe Gloeckner's *A Child's Life and Other Stories* (1998) and *The Diary of a Teenage Girl: An Account in Words and Pictures* (2002) and Lynda Barry's *One Hundred Demons* (2002) and *What It Is* (2009), to investigate how the grotesque, the monstrous and the uncanny influence plot development in these domestic-childhood-abuse narratives. The two cartoonists' works construct, through their visual/verbal combinations, two different examples of childhood trauma and abuse in the domestic domain. Gloeckner's graphic memoirs primarily focus on the girl protagonist's sexual objectification and abuse by her mother's boyfriend. Barry's graphic memoirs concentrate on a problematic mother/daughter relationship and recreate a monstrous mother and a daughter who is striving to survive maternal verbal and physical abuse. This presentation will investigate the ways in which the monstrous, the grotesque and the uncanny influence the development of each traumatic story in different ways. It will then argue that these elements function reparatively on two levels: Firstly, in the *mise-en-scene* narratives of abuse, by becoming coping mechanisms in the two autobiographical avatars' struggles to survive trauma. Secondly, in the broader cultural domain, where the female body, and specifically the maternal body, have been marginalized and insidiously abused through different discourses (mythological, psychoanalytic, artistic and literary) that introduce them either as a mere sexual objects, or as the domains of the monstrous and the uncanny. This paper will conclude by noting that the visual/verbal hybridity of comics allows the demonstration of reparative uses of the grotesque, the monstrous and the uncanny, which subvert preconceived, marginalizing notions of femininity and maternity and introduce new feminist formations of the female body.

I have finished my PhD Studies in English and American Studies at the University of Manchester and am currently an associate lecturer in English literature at UCLan Cyprus. I teach modules covering from early modern to contemporary literature. My thesis examines the representation of different forms of insidious trauma and the use of pastiche as reparation in contemporary American women's graphic memoirs. It also demonstrates how the graphic memoir can become a site where feminist reconfigurations of femininity and of elements from dominant male artistic and psychoanalytical canons can be performed. My research interests include women's autobiographical performances, feminist reconfigurations of trauma, trauma in relation to the visual and contemporary uses of intertextuality.

Horror Imagery in World War Two superhero comics

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Many American superhero comics of World War Two employed the imagery of gothic horror. This was partly in response to the horror imagery deployed in propaganda cartoons and posters, but also stemmed from the relative lack of government regulation of comics compared to other print media and broadcasting. As a result, the use of horrific imagery was occasionally more pronounced than in other media. This was also influenced by the government's clamp down on horror films during the war, and the popular demand for such imagery was transposed to comics. This paper will examine the ways in which gothic horror was used in comics during the war, and the political reasons for this, alongside a consideration of how this impacted on the depiction of the enemy.

Dr Chris Murray is a Senior Lecturer in Comics Studies at the School of Humanities, University of Dundee. He is course leader of the Masters in Comics and Graphic Novels (MLitt) and Director of the Scottish Centre for Comics Studies and Dundee Comics Creative Space. He is co-editor of *Studies in Comics* and *UniVerse Comics*. Dr Murray is author of *Champions of the Oppressed: Superhero Comics, Popular Culture and Propaganda in America During World War Two* (Hampton, 2011) and *The British Superhero* (University Press of Mississippi, forthcoming 2017).

Apocalyptic Anachrony: Temporal Shifts in the Narrative of *The Walking Dead*

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The zombie is an inherently Gothic monster. It invokes uncanniness, abjection, body horror, and crises of identity. Recent study into the zombie argues that it is a creature of revenance, continually returning, cannibalising its past, and generating new forms of metaphorical horror. The serialised format of *The Walking Dead* comic series has allowed for a representation of this revenant nature on the comics page. Throughout its 150 and counting issues, the series has built the zombie as a recurring threat; an ever-present danger to be survived but not defeated. The struggles of its characters follow patterns of tragedy befalling a place of safety, and the search for another. Its narrative similarly places dangers (zombie or human) as obstacles to be overcome, only to reveal greater threats arising through such action. Gothic revenance exists throughout the series, with landscapes, imagery, and the medium itself creating horror through the subversion of previously established ideas.

This paper looks at the significance of the use – or lack of – analepsis within the narrative of *The Walking Dead*. The current storyline involves a three-year jump ahead in time, and yet, despite all the notions of revenance created within the series, the literal 'returning' of the flashback device is seldom used. This rationing has allowed each analepsis to function more powerfully than simple exposition. Each flashback acts as the eruption of repressed memory, revealing characters' secrets and fears, or as moments of significance. It can also function meta-textually, marking a change in creative personnel. The portrayal of these flashbacks are examined using Gothic theory and comics analysis, to discuss their role in adding to the horror of the comic. The 'return' of these previously unseen moments haunts the text, and I will discuss Thierry Groensteen's concept of arthrology to emphasise the medium's echoing of these temporal anomalies.

Dr Stephen O'Donnell completed his PhD on the zombie figure and *The Walking Dead* comic series at the University of Dundee in 2015. He is currently teaching on the University's Comics Studies MLitt programme, and is a member of the editorial board of *Studies in Comics*. He is developing further research into the zombie and horror comics, and pursuing research interests in Gothic studies, psychogeography, and Scottish history and mythology within comics.

The Goddess, The Iron Maiden and The Sacrilization of Consumerism in the Post Crisis Wonder Woman, 1987-1992

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In 1987 Wonder Woman was revised as part of an overhaul of the DC Universe, in the Crisis on Infinite Earths story arc. This paper analyses the representation of Diana in George Perez's revision of the character, Feb 1987-December 1991. Perez discarded her Diana Prince secret identity and Steve Trevor as love interest. However, influenced by spiritual and feminist discourses of the mid-seventies onwards, he made her into a Goddess-like fantasy figure split into two identities. She is Diana, Princess of Themyscira a private, spiritual neo-liberal, but she is branded in consumer culture as Wonder Woman, goddess. The discourses constructing Wonder Woman as goddess, however, clashed with other discourses circulating in popular culture and politics that aimed at disempowering female autonomy and highlighted paradoxes in Wonder Woman as female icon.

Joan Ormrod is a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her research is in popular culture particularly comics, gender, fantasy and science fiction. Her current research is in romance comics, Wonder Woman and time in comics. She is editor of *The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (2010-) and organises The International Conference of Graphic Novels and Comics with David Huxley. Her recent publications include *Superheroes and Identities* (2015), *Time Travel in Popular Media* (2015), essays on Wonder Woman, Roger Corman's adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe and vampire fandom.

Sin City: social criticism and urban dystopia

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The communication will consider the graphic novel *Sin City*, by Frank Miller, from urban dystopias point of view. *Sin City* is in the dystopian artistic production trajectory of twentieth century that, after the belle époque collapse and many values related to it, highlighted the ambiguity of urban areas perhaps more sharply than in the previous century. It was in the twentieth century Dystopia was consolidated as a literary genre, as opposed to Utopias, and gained projection due to the development of other communication media such as radio, television, cinema and comics.

By dealing with the story of a city specifically, *Sin City* brings out political and social aspects of urban development of large cities, which permeated the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with emphasis on its negative consequences for society: problems arising from population growth; economic inequalities and disparities of power, crime and violence, the phenomenon of crowds, the disciplinary spaces to control and subdue those same masses etc.

The aesthetic and narrative structure of *Sin City*, by presenting a physically degraded city, politically corrupt, with glaring social chasms and large differences in power between the characters, allows us to understand urban and social representations of major US cities at the time of its creation, especially New York, where the author worked. Violence, corruption, social inequality, segregation, abandonment etc. are traces of reality evoked mimetically to show problems that are not located in the future or the past, but at present, experienced in everyday life, often by the readers themselves. So in addition to inserting *Sin City* in the genre of dystopias, we seek to understand it in its relationship with some of Frank Miller's previous works to better understand its historicity.

Guilherme Pinheiro Pozzer has a master's degree in History from UNICAMP (State University of Campinas - SP, Brazil) with specialization in the area of "politics, memory and City". He worked in institutions for the defence and preservation of historic, artistic and cultural heritage in Brazil, such as the "City Museum" and "Museum of contemporary art", both in Campinas (SP, Brazil), "Cultural heritage coordination sector" (agency linked to Campinas city Culture Ministry and to its City Hall). Between 2007 and 2014 served as a teacher for elementary school, collaborated in the production of history textbooks and the training of teachers to work with heritage. In 2014 started the doctorate degree at Minho University funded by the CNPq (National Council of Scientific and Technological Development – Brazil) to develop research in History with focus on Industrial Archaeology and Heritage. Since areas of interest are Cultural Heritage, Contemporary History, Industrialization, Industrial Heritage, Urban History, Urban dystopias, Cultural and Social History.

“To All the Monster Girls”: Violence and Non-normativity in Noelle Stevenson’s *Nimona*

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Situated in a world that incorporates well-known tropes from medieval romances, as well as fantasy and science fiction elements, Noelle Stevenson’s *Nimona* (2015) attempts to establish “monster” as an ambiguous non-normative category and a pretext for interrogating common definitions of what makes one human. A graphic narrative for young adults that started as a successful webcomic, *Nimona* initially appears to be about the evil plans of villain Ballister Blackheart, who attempts to use science and weaponry to create havoc in the kingdom and destroy his archnemesis Ambrosius Goldenloin. When the young and unruly shapeshifter Nimona suddenly offers her services as a sidekick to Ballister Blackheart, the villain is astounded not only by her capacities and apparent invulnerability in battle, but also by her almost uncontrollable thirst for violence. Nimona’s history as a child who was abandoned by her parents and used as a lab rat by people who tried and failed to harness her powers provides half of her background story; the other half revolves around a mysterious immortal dragon that inhabits her body and controls her bloodiest impulses. In this paper, I am interested in examining the manner in which the ambiguous nature of the title character—a combination of human-animal, vulnerable-immortal girl-monster—helps unveil the questionable nature of pre-established definitions of good and evil, as well as the arbitrariness of social roles. I also argue that *Nimona*’s quirkiness and humor work to subvert the stability of categories such as “hero” and “villain” in a world where rules are turned on their head with carnivalesque celebration but also the grim acknowledgement that mistrust and vanity can have fatal consequences.

Mihaela Precup is an Associate Professor in the American Studies Program at the University of Bucharest, Romania. Her main research interests include American graphic narratives, memory, trauma and autobiography studies. Her most recent publications are *Mourning Women. Post-mortem Dialogues in Contemporary American Autobiography* (University of Bucharest Press, 2014) and “That Medieval Eastern-European Shtetl Family of Yours”: Negotiating Jewishness in Aline Kominsky Crumb’s *Need More Love* (2007), *Studies in Comics* (December 2015). She guest edited (with Rebecca Scherr) a special issue on *War and Conflict of The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Routledge, June 2015).

“Every Ten Years, the Universe Needs an Enema”: Reboots, Retcons and Re-Launches in Superhero Comics

Billy Proctor, Bournemouth University, UK

In February 2016, DC posted a cryptic image on Twitter. Consisting of a pair of blue theatre curtains with the word ‘Rebirth’ at the centre, the image provoked much debate across various Internet platforms, with many fans recoiling at the possibility that DC Comics would be wiping the slate clean and beginning again, only five years after ‘The New 52’ was launched. Across seven decades, both ‘the big two’ superhero publishers, DC and Marvel, have employed various strategies of regeneration to ward against ‘spandex fatigue’ and to invite new readers to ‘jump on-board.’ Indeed, one of the primary reasons why superhero comics have enjoyed such a lengthy life-span is that regeneration and revision are built into the genre’s ‘survival code’ (Klock, 2002: 13). As Jenkins explains, ‘there is not a moment in the history of the genre when the superhero is not under active revision’ (2009: 29).

However, since the publication of DC’s *Crisis on Infinite Earths* maxi-series (1986) -- an ‘event-series’ which ‘sought to revise and calibrate the entire fictional universe in which DC superhero comics took place, streamlining the company’s previously confusing parallel universes and multiple earths’ (Booker, 2010: 127) -- the superhero comic book industry has been racked by a steady decline in readership. Since the turn of the Millennium, both DC and Marvel have attempted to reboot, retcon or re-launch their shared universes to stimulate the readership and the cash nexus. This presentation looks at the contemporary superhero comic book genre to illustrate that Julius Schwartz’s maxim, ‘every ten years the universe needs an enema,’ requires readjustment (quoted in Kaveney, 2008: 191 – 192). Despite the economic triumphs of superhero blockbuster adaptations, the comic book industry is struggling. Indeed, without these ‘wildly successful movie franchises, the state of the comic book industry is somewhat tenuous’ (Phillips & Stroble, 2013: 12). Faced with a welter of competition from other media platforms, both ‘the big two’ publishers utilise a variety of strategies of regeneration to try and repair the ailing fortunes of the industry. As such, ‘the “product life cycle” is becoming shorter and forcing companies to innovate at a much faster rate’ (Heise, 1997: 21).

Dr. William Proctor is a lecturer in Media, Culture and Communication at Bournemouth University. He has written on a varied number of topics including Batman, The Walking Dead, James Bond, and One Direction. William is currently writing a single-authored monograph for Palgrave, *The Contemporary Reboot: Comics, Film, Brands*. He is co-editor of 'The Scandinavian Invasion: New Perspectives on Nordic Noir' (Peter Lang, 2017) and the two-volume *Disney's Star Wars* (University of Iowa Press). William is also the director of 'The World Star Wars Project' and is a researcher for the *Game of Thrones* audience project alongside Martin Barker and Clarissa Smith.

Appearances and Directions of Monstrosity in Mars Ravelo’s Comic Novels

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Mars Ravelo is considered as “one of the greatest things that ever happened to the [Philippine comic] industry,” and two of his most popular comic novels first serialized in the 1950’s, *Darna* (1950, illustrated by Nestor Redondo, who eventually worked to illustrate for DC’s *Swamp Thing*, among others) and *Dyesebel* (1952, illustrated by Elpidio E. Torres), are critical in their imagination of two appearances and directions of monstrosity: via the gorgon-like Valentina, the superheroine’s nemesis in *Darna*, and the mermaid Dyesebel in the eponymous novel. The paper looks into the implications of snake/fish and head/tail in their monstrous appearances and how they direct the women’s lives into two different endings: one in tragic death, and the other in a romantic love. In the end, the study attempts to locate the contributions of these imagined monstrosities to our imagination of what it means to be truly human.

Edgar C. Samar teaches literature, pop culture, and creative writing at the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. He finished his PhD in the University of the Philippines where his dissertation, a novel and a critical analysis of the manananggal (a type of monster in the Philippines), was awarded the Best Dissertation. The book based on the dissertation, *Halos Isang Buhay: Ang Manananggal sa Pagsusulat ng Nobela* [trans. “Almost a Life: The Manananggal in the Writing of Novels”] won the Philippines National Book Award for Best Literary Criticism in 2013. He has also published novels, including *Eight Muses of the Fall*, which was longlisted in the 2009 Man Asian Literary Prize. In 2010, he was invited as writer-in-residence to the International Writing Program of the University of Iowa. He also curates the website *NobelangKomiks.com* [trans. “ComicNovels.com”].

“No writer worth a smear of ink ever found a decent story in the adversity of their own existence”: H.P. Lovecraft and the pulp author as sub-cultural avatar.

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The last ten years have witnessed the influence of Lovecraft and his writing permeate the U.S. comic book industry to a previously unheard of level. From the Lovecraftian themes of Mike Mignola's immensely popular Hellboy series, to the references that pepper Joe Hill's *Locke and Key* (2008 – present), right up to the full-blown Cthulhu Mythos of comic maestro Alan Moore's *Neonomicon* (2010) Lovecraft's cultural cache in the field of horror comics has never been higher. This chapter examines a sub-sector of this contemporary spate of comic books and graphic novels: focusing on those examples that incorporate a version of H.P. Lovecraft in a quasi-biographical manner (a process traceable back to Robert Bloch's 1936 short story "The Dark Demon"). In particular, the chapter analyses the post modern appropriation of Lovecraft as a fictional character in titles based on or around his stories and explores why this form of pseudo-biographical narrative has become one of the defining modes of recent Lovecraftian graphic fiction. Centring on Mac Carter's successful comic book mini-series *The Strange Adventures of H.P. Lovecraft* (2010), but referring to other examples such as Hans Rodionoff's *Lovecraft* (2004) and Bruce Brown's series of 'children's' Howard Lovecraft volumes, the chapter argues that such incarnations consciously utilise many of the coded practises of fan-fiction in order to meet a desire amongst fans to re-assert Lovecraft's sub-cultural capital in light of the growing mainstream (and academic) acceptance of the author and his writings. Furthermore, these incarnations of Lovecraft prioritise the author's outsider status; as pulp writer, as clinically insane, as a lonely child, in order to position him in opposition to the bourgeois familial, business and religious structures of the hegemonic mainstream.

Simmons has published extensively on twentieth century American literature and culture. He is the author of *The Anti-Hero in the American Novel: from Heller to Vonnegut* (Palgrave, 2008) and the editor of *New Critical Essays on Kurt Vonnegut* (Palgrave, 2009) and *New Critical Essays on H.P. Lovecraft* (Palgrave, 2013). In addition to this he has written on a wide range of subjects including depictions of the cowboy in 1960s American literature (*Westerns: paperback Novels and Movies from Hollywood* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2007), the work of H.P. Lovecraft (in the academic journals *Critical Engagements*, *Symbiosis* and *The Romanian Journal of American, British and Canadian Studies*), and the fiction of Chuck Palahniuk (*Reading Chuck Palahniuk*, (Routledge, 2009).

Stieg Larsson Goth Style. The Graphic Novel Adaptations of the Millennium Trilogy

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A modern classic and a true cross-medial phenomenon, Stieg Larsson's *Millennium Trilogy* (2005-2007) has been adapted into two films and two graphic novels. Glaswegian crime writer Denise Mina, together with illustrators Leonardo Manco and Andrea Mutti, published the graphic transposition of the first novel in the trilogy, *Män som hatar kvinnor* (2005; *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*) in 2012 and 2013 (two volumes), closely followed by Franco-Swedish Sylvain Runberg's, José Homs's and Manolo Carot's adaptation in six volumes (2013-2015).

My conference proposal will investigate the adaptation process from novel to graphic novels with special attention to the visual representation of what Heta Pyrhönen has identified as "the gothic core" of the trilogy (2012; *Putting out Fire with Gasoline: the Gothic Core of Stig Larsson's Millennium*) and Sian MacArthur as the "gothic footprint" (2011; *Crime and the Gothic. Identifying the Gothic Footprint in Modern Crime Fiction*). I will also look at the graphic artists' visual glossary when representing the complex female protagonist, goth hacker Lisbeth Salander, and attempt a comparative reading of the visual renderings in the two graphic adaptations.

Camilla Storskog, PhD, is Assistant Professor in Scandinavian Studies at the University of Milan, where she has been teaching Scandinavian literature since 2003. Her main research interests include encounters between verbal and visual language (literary impressionism, illustrated books, graphic novels, comics), but she has also worked on subjects such as autobiography, travel writing and the historical novel. Her current research project focusses on graphic novel adaptations of Scandinavian classics.

Star of Blood: The Forgotten History of *Wallestein the Monster*.

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Wallestein the Monster, which appeared on Italian newsstands during the 1970's and 80's, was one of a number of adult pocket digests from publisher Edifumetto that offered readers a heady mix of gothic horror, fantasy, sex and violence. It focussed on the exploits of a handsome and enigmatic aristocrat, Jimmy Wallestein, whose desire to avenge his murdered father was personified by a monstrously deformed, sadistically violent alter ego, in whose guise Wallestein enacted terrible retribution upon the criminal classes. Thematically and structurally, *Wallestein the Monster* owes a debt to a number of classic texts, including *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, *Sherlock Holmes* and *Batman*, whilst the bold and highly saturated covers, from the likes of Alesandro Biffignandi and Emanuel Taglietti, recall the Italian horror cinema of Mario Bava and Dario Argento.

Wallestein's is a world in which the gothic and the contemporary collide. Ruined castles, deserted cemeteries and grotesque monsters coexist with a world of fast cars, guns and glamour. The stories revel in depictions of extreme sex and violence, filtered through the symbols and structures of the gothic imagination. Wallestein himself emerges not only as a visceral embodiment of brutal justice, but as the personification of base human desires, freed of all societal, physical and sexual constraints.

This paper will discuss the history, symbols and structure of *Wallestein the Monster*, as well as other examples of Italian fumetti, including *Sukia*, *Ulula*, *Zora the Vampire*, and *Candida the Marchesa*. It will also examine the surprising links that existed in the 1970's between Italian sex and horror digests and the British comics market.

Adam Twycross is currently engaged in PhD research on the development and evolution of adult comics in Britain, with a particular focus on those produced between 1932 and 1986. He is Programme Leader for the MA in 3D Computer Animation at the NCCA, Bournemouth University, and has previously worked as a 3D modeller, with credits including the Xbox 360 title *Disneyland Adventures* and the Games Workshop graphic novel *Macragge's Honour*. He is co-founder of BFX, Bournemouth's annual festival of animation, visual effects and games.

'Drawing The Line': (Indian) gothic responses to sexual violence in the wake of the Delhi gang rape

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Following the unspeakable event of December 2012 where a young woman lost her life through brutal, sexual violence, there has been an increase in feminist visual art within India. This paper explores a short graphic story by an artist from Kerala (South India) entitled 'the prey'. Dark in both form and content, the story narrates one young woman's attempts at re-ordering a violent world where women are regarded as (sexual) 'prey'. Replete with dark, gothic semiotic, this graphic short story portrays India in a challenging light, usurping traditional paradigms of representing India in auspicious ways. This paper is particularly interested in how the 'double marginality' of form and content allows for a certain creativity through which unsavoury or inauspicious representations of Indian society are communicated. Furthermore, whilst the gothic tropes capture the horror and violence of a narrative which is of the contemporary Indian moment, equally so the genre displaces the narrative, moving it into an otherworldly realm; this employment of the gothic is also reflected upon here. Significantly, the post-millennial presentations of Indian society manifest in 'the prey' are in complete divergence from the comics of the 1970s and 80s, particularly the *Amar Chitra Katha* series wherein India is portrayed as honourable, virtuous, and auspicious. Subsequently, this paper closes in consideration of the role Indian graphic novels are playing in storying New India and their place in usurping established modes of visuality.

E. Dawson Varughese is a global cultural studies scholar and her specialism is India. She is the author of *Beyond The Postcolonial* (Palgrave, 2012) and *Reading New India* (Bloomsbury, 2013) and is a co-author of *Indian Writing in English and Issues of Visual Representation* (Palgrave, 2015). August 2016 will see a monograph published, entitled *Genre Fiction of New India: post-millennial receptions of 'weird' narratives* (Routledge). She is currently writing a book on visuality and the Indian Graphic Novel in which she explores 'new ways of seeing in New India'. See her work at: www.beyondthepostcolonial.com

Doomlord: The theme of the Grotesque in Eric Bradbury's Art

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Eric Bradbury (1921-2001) was a largely unsung hero of British adventure and horror comics yet his distinctive style was instantly recognisable on the many stories he illustrated over the years for Amalgamated Press and IPC. Detailed brushwork, heavy black inking and a touch of the noir are what set Bradbury apart from his contemporaries. He worked on many different genres and stories over his extensive career, including strips such as 'Mytek the Mighty', 'The House of Dolmann', 'Cursitor Doom', 'Joe Two Beans' and 'Death Squad'. In the 1980's, he worked on a number of strips for *2000ad*, including many 'Future Shocks', and 'Tharg The Mighty' stories. These stories often showcased Bradbury's flare for comedy, however, he thrived when working on horror themed scripts.

In March 1984, IPC launched a new horror weekly anthology called 'Scream!'. The 'lead' strip was 'The Dracula File' and was written by Gerry Finlay Day and Simon Furman. Bradbury was chosen to illustrate this story of a modern day Dracula, who is mistaken for a defector, and gets caught up in some British espionage, biting a few necks on the way! Bradbury's art on this is some of the best of his career, however it is what he went onto next that was probably his most consistent and popular comics run - the New Eagle's 'Doomlord'. Bradbury's science fiction sensibilities, along with his mastery of horror and gothic, fitted with the themes of the strip, as written by Alan Grant. Over the years Doomlord battled the Gemini Plague, became a TV host (!), fought the original Doomlord Zyn, travelled to a parallel universe after a brush with the Carnival of Tibor, fought terrorist organization S.M.O.G from sister strip MANIX, bore an evil son called Enok, battled Lord Kev and Lady Shal, led the Noxian Dread Council and eventually turned evil and was neutralized by the Souster Enok.

This paper will look at Bradbury's contribution to the gothic horror genre, through his art, and particularly his extensive run on 'Doomlord', but will also look at the role of the anti-hero, as most of Bradbury's career was spent working on characters whose goals and motivations were ambiguous at best!

Phillip Vaughan is the Course Director for the MDes in Comics & Graphic Novels and the MSc Animation & VFX programmes and also the creator and coordinator of the Level 3 Comic Art & Graphic Novels module at the University of Dundee. He has over 20 years' experience in CG working as a 3D Animator and FMV Cutscene Producer. He has worked on high profile licenses such as Braveheart, Star Trek, Deathtrap Dungeon, Urban Chaos, Tom and Jerry, Teletubbies, and Wallace & Gromit, subsequently working as a cut-scene producer for Farscape, a Jim Henson production. He also worked on Brave and the highly successful State of Emergency franchise. Phillip has also worked as a freelance animator and comics creator. Most recently he completed all of the animation and front-end work on Superman for DC Comics/Warner Bros, a No.1 selling App on iOS, and also created Bantah Six, with Rossi Gifford, for David (V for Vendetta) Lloyd's Aces Weekly. He also co-edits UniVerse Publications and is the Art Director of the Scottish Centre for Comics Studies and the Saltire series for DiamondSteel Comics.

Welcome to the Zombie-Ridden Landscape of the Real: *The Walking Dead* and the Passion for the Real

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This essay is part of a larger study on the ways in which *The Walking Dead*, the ongoing comic book series from Robert Kirkman, negotiates ideas of the Real, (in)authenticity, and ideology. In particular, this paper will examine how *The Walking Dead* stages the 'inauthentic' experience via the development of its characters. Using Althusser's notion of Ideological State Apparatuses, the operative question of this project is: What does *The Walking Dead* say about our social reality when we see ideologically imbued characters slowly repudiating the very ideological apparatuses that they represent? A police officer realizes the instability of the law and religious characters renounce their faiths. Such ideological positions are deemed weightless in what Kyle W. Bishop calls "the zombie economy" and *The Walking Dead* suggests that perhaps they always were weightless. The claim here is, consequently, that the text seeks to imagine a world less stained by the material force of ideology. The fantasy is that we can grasp 'the real thing' (the 'authentic' experience) as opposed to our immersion within late-capitalist consumer society—which is more and more seen as a virtual entity. The horror comic book that is *The Walking Dead* wants to reveal 'truths' about humanity; it wants to shake us out of our ideological numbness and reveal to us 'the way things truly are' when we are stripped of our artifices, which is, as stated above, pure fantasy. *The Walking Dead*, in the spirit of Badiou's (and then Žižek's) passion for the Real, wants to unmask our ideologies as inauthentic by staging the semblance of the Real against our symbolic disavowals, as epitomized by the comic book's maxim: "In a world ruled by the dead, we are forced to finally start living."

Tyrone Thomas White, Jr. was born and raised in South Dakota in the United States. I attained my Bachelor's degree in American Indian Studies and sociology from Black Hills State University in Spearfish, South Dakota in 2011. In 2012, I found my way to Leipzig, Germany, where I received my Master's degree in American studies from Leipzig University in July of 2014. I am currently a doctoral candidate from the American studies department at Leipzig University working on my dissertation which looks at America's fascination with all things zombie related.

Underground Superhero Parody Seeks Job (President of United States Preferred)

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In 1980 the underground comix publisher Rip Off Press released Gilbert Shelton's *Wonder Wart-Hog and the Nurds of November*, a "Cartoon Novel" following the adventures of the Hog of Steel as he tried to find a job in 1970s America. The narrative culminated in Wonder Wart-Hog's unsuccessful attempt to be elected President of the United States in 1980.

This paper will discuss the various institutional and socio-economic contexts that led to *Nurds of November's* publication. In terms of the political economy of the comix industry, I will outline how this reprint collection was partly the result of the formation of the ROP Syndicate that distributed material to the underground press in the second half of the 1970s. Further, the division of material into chapters, and the insertion of new episodes especially created for the book, are important for aping the superhero reprint volumes that were *de rigour* in the decade. The inclusion of earlier Wonder Wart-Hog comix as an appendix, out of position in the narrative, was an attempt to parody and mock the elaborate layering of continuity in mainstream comics universes, where continuity was spread out over many titles and extended with each new issue. Several competing impulses exist in *Nurds of November*: reading it as a continuous narrative is encouraged by the inclusion of new material, but the original intention to parody mainstream superhero comics means certain interruptions are left in. The contemporary response to the book indicated that reviewers made contradictory comments about *Nurds of November's* status as a novel too.

Broadening out the historical contexts considered in this paper, I will also reflect on how Wonder Wart-Hog's long search for a job was indicative of the endemic unemployment in American society during the 1970s. With industrial productivity feared to be in decline, and the US's flagship industries – steel and automobile manufacture – under threat, it is legible for *Nurds of November* to dramatize these anxieties by rendering the Hog of Steel more directionless than ever. In a significant contrast to the adventures of Wonder Wart-Hog from the 1960s the comix in *Nurds of November* are overwhelmingly dedicated to the mundane exploits of the Hog's alter ego Philbert Desanex. By the crude measure of counting the number of panels in which he appears, Wonder Wart-Hog is in danger of disappearing from the "Cartoon Novel" that bears his name.

Dr Paul Williams is Senior Lecturer in Twentieth-Century Literature at the University of Exeter in the UK. He has written two books, *Paul Gilroy* (2012) and *Race, Ethnicity and Nuclear War* (2011), and he co-edited the collection *The Rise of the American Comics Artist: Creators and Contexts* (2010) with James Lyons. He is currently working on the AHRC-funded project "Reframing the Graphic Novel," which explores the novelization of comics in the long 1970s.

Graphic Gothic!



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