

# BORDERS

IDENTITY  
DIFFERENCE  
REPRESENTATION



The Eighth International Graphic Novel, Comics Conference and  
Bandes Dessinées Society Conference



## **Borders- Identity, Difference and Representation**

**Monday 26th to Friday 30th June 2017  
University of Dundee & University of Glasgow**

Welcome to Scotland!

We have chosen the theme of borders this year. The border distinguishes one space or concept from another whether geopolitical, physical, psychological, ideological or temporal. As such it is a potent phenomenon in contemporary culture where invasion, contestation and negotiation of borders signal inclusion/exclusion or conflict. Geopolitical borders might deal with the imaginary lines on the map that distinguish one territory from another; immigration; citizenship; national and regional borders; sites of ownership; the topography of a space that can inhibit or prohibit; and the marks on the landscape made to claim one territory from another. Temporal borders include the construction of history through historical categories such as the Golden Age or the Silver Age, or the annotation of time in the comics medium.

Conceptually and aesthetically one can also explore the border on the comics page, through the variable or imaginary lines that define panels or the page. Narratively speaking, comics blur borders, including genre, such as the constant evolution of the superhero. The medium also plays with the borders between modes of expression, as sound becomes visible; words become drawn; and the material becomes digital. In turn, we can ask whether there are borders between the terms 'comic', 'graphic novel', 'sequential art', 'manga', or 'bande dessinée'?

The body too has its borders: the inside and outside; gendered and racial identities; human versus animal or machine; dead versus alive. Psychologically we might also consider the borders between sanity and madness; political ideologies; or good and evil. These borders can be challenged, negotiated or invaded. The challenge to national borders by invasion and immigration can lead to trauma and war. The disruption of the body's borders leads to abjection and the grotesque.

We look forward to learning how you have all interpreted this theme.

We are also delighted to host keynote talks by Thierry Groensteen, David Kunzle, and Ann Miller, a workshop by Caryn Louise Leschen, and a gallery talk by Frank Quitely. We hope you enjoy the conference!

The organising committee

Golnar Nabizadeh, Chris Murray, Billy Grove, Julia Round, Joan Ormrod, Phillip Vaughan, David Huxley, and Damon Herd

**LET'S HAE A  
BLETHER ABOUT  
BORDERS!**



# Conference Schedule

All sessions in The Dalhousie Building unless otherwise stated.

## Monday 26th June

9.00am Registration and tea/coffee

10.15am Welcome, **Lecture Theatre 4 [Room 2G11]**

10.50am **Session 1A: Euro Comics: History and Identity, Lecture Theatre 4 [2G11],**

**Chair: Laurence Grove**

- Lise Tannahill, Plogoff: resistance and community in Brittany
- Armelle Blin-Rolland, Expressing Identity through Memory, Fantasy and Politics in Contemporary Breton Comics

**Session 1B: Monstrosity and Masculinity, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02],**

**Chair: Helen Opara**

- Barbara Chamberlin, Borders and Monstrosity in Beautiful Darkness
- Hailey Austin: Tonight I am the Law. Let's Ride: Cowboy Masculinity and the Genre Border in Frank Miller's *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*

12.00pm Lunch

1.30pm **Plenary: Thierry Groensteen, Figures of the foreigner, the stranger and the outsider in comics, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01], Chair: Laurence Grove**

2.30pm Break

3.00pm **Session 2A: Moving Borders and Boundaries, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Damon Herd**

- Gert Meesters, Comics in Newspapers in Belgium
- Ammar Merza, Arabic Adaptations of Tintin
- Alison Mandaville, Fluid Borders and Leaky Identities: Oil, Empire, and Cartoon in the Caucasus

**Session 2B: Rhythm and Temporality in Alan Moore's works, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Chris Murray**

- Maggie Gray, Alan Moore, comics and music
- Jesus Jimenez Varea, Time in Alan Moore's works
- John Harnett, The Transcendent Gull: Documenting the Instability of Temporal Borders in Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*

4.20pm Break

4.30pm **Session 3A: Euro Comics: Ideology and Ambiguity, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Olivia Hicks**

- Robert Aman, The Phantom, socialist ideology, exoticism and Swedish foreign policy
- Chris O'Neill, Sennep and the ambiguities of press control under Vichy
- Harriet Kennedy, Text/image representations of Trudeau and Levesque

**Session 3B: Permeable Borders: the Ins-and-Outs of Comics and Sequential Narration, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Hailey Austin**

- Aidan Diamond, Sequence in serialised cover art
- Nancy Pedri, Formal expressions of subjectivity in graphic memoir
- Lauranne Poharec, Split panels

6.30pm Walk to Dundee Comics Creative Space for book and comic launches, and wine reception, Vision Building

## Tuesday 27th June

### 9.30am Session 4A: British Comics, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Laura Findlay

- Chris Murray, Superheroes and Science Fiction
- Olivia Hicks, 'No Place for Trespassers': Supercats and the British Superheroine
- Phillip Vaughan, Warriors of the Wasteland: The Origins and Influence of *Warrior*
- Ian Horton, Toxic Boundaries

### Session 4B: Formalist Approaches to Comics, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Zu Dominiak

- Bruce Mutard, Comics in Space: At the Border between Comics and Art
- John Miers, The borders are all (not) in your mind
- Tom Sewel, Liminal Matter: Comics as Objects
- Subir Dey & Prasad Bokil, The role of design elements in creating sound symbolic words

11.15am Break

### 11.30am Session 5A: Conflict, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Calum Laird

- Alex Fitch, Transgressing social norms and spaces in Fransman
- Dominick Grace, Bordering on Crazy: Rick's Story
- Philip Cass and Jonathan Ford, Commando Comics: War and Reality

### Session 5B: Euro Comics: History and Travel, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Chris Murray

- Billy Grove, Asterix comes to Scotland
- Mat Screech, May 1968 in BD
- Michelle Bumatay, Contours and Continents: Stassen's Cartography

1.00pm Lunch – Dalhousie Foyer

### 2.00pm Plenary: Ann Miller, Comics and politics, consensus and dissensus, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01], Chair: Golnar Nabizadeh

3.00pm Break

### 3.20pm Session 6A, General Session, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Megan Sinclair

- Laura Findlay, Aural and Graphic Narrative in Jessica Abel's *Out on the Wire*
- George Stremplis, Cyberman: identity, reality and science fiction
- Ian Gordon, Reading autobio as bildungsroman
- Spencer Chalifour, Swamp Thing, Ninja Turtles, and the Importance of 1984
- Christian Quesnel, Visual Anacolutha: Temporal Pathways in Comics

### Session 6B: Formalist, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: James O'Ready

- Zuzanna Dominiak, When the gutter is not just a void: panel borders as an architectural structure of comics
- Paul Fisher Davies, Goffman's frame analysis, modality and comics
- Carolina Martins, There's more where that came from: Unfolding and crossing discursive levels in the 'Augmented Space' of the Gallery
- Simon Grennan, Contradicting Cohn's Visual Language Theory

5.00pm Break

5.30pm IBDS meeting, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01]

7.00pm Close

## Wednesday 28th June – Glasgow

9.00am Coach to collect delegates outside the Tower Building, University of Dundee

11.00am Arrive at *Frank Quitely: The Art of Comics* exhibition at Kelvingrove Art Gallery, with an introduction by Vincent Deighan

1.00pm Lunch (delegates to arrange own lunch in Glasgow's West End)

2.00pm Coach to depart from Kelvingrove Art Gallery

2.30pm Arrive at Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery for *Comic Invention* exhibition

5.00pm Announcement of the Sabin Award and wine reception

6.30pm Coach collects delegates from Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery

8.00pm Arrive back in Dundee



**Thursday 29th June**

9.30am **Session 7A: Queer/Trans/Sexuality, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Kelly Kanayama**

- Jesse Allen, Representing the Queer Experience in YA GNs
- Francesca Battaglia, Gender Boundaries in Saiyuki: Masculinity and Fatherhood
- Chloé Feller, Ambiguous representation: transsexual characters in recent mainstream comics
- Bernhard Frena, Across borders and on thresholds. The rupture as a queer aesthetic in the webcomic YU+ME: dream

**Session 7B: Human Rights and Difference 1, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Edzia Carvalho**

- Dragos Manea and Mihaela Precup, Conflict, Human Rights, and Personal Narratives in Benjamin Dix's Positive Negatives
- Golnar Nabizadeh, Visualising Difference in Blue by Pat Grant: Xenophobia and Graphic Narrative
- Fionnuala Doran, Interpreting the Irish Divisions
- Julia Round, Buildings, Borders and Breakdowns in Arkham Asylum

11.20am Break

11.30am **Session 8A: Fandom and Readers, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Joan Ormond**

- Yao Zhao, Animal themes in Chinese and Yaoi fandom
- Kenan Kocak, Reading War in Syria in Comics
- Judit Ferencz, Graphic Novels as conservation in architectural heritage

**Session 8B: Latin American Comics 1, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Marc Casilli**

- Edward King, Borders in Brazilian Comics
- James Scorer, Borders of Belonging in the Work of Power Paola
- Anne Magnussen, On the Border in Mexican Comics

1.00pm Lunch – Dalhousie Foyer

2.00pm **Session 9A: Education and Comics, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Andrew Godfrey**

- Paul Aleixo, Edu/entertainment borders: textbooks in comics format
- Tasos Anastasiades, Creating comics beyond the conventional drawing approaches
- Randy Scott, The MSU Collection

**Session 9B: Manga/Anime, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Chloé Feller**

- Tien-yi Chao, Border Crossings in Yuri!!! on ICE
- Stella Oh, Living Dolls: Policing Borders in Ghost in the Shell
- Jessie Kerspe, Crossing Borders in Kiriko Nananan's Blue

3.40pm Break

4.00pm **Session 10A: American Comics, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Will Grady**

- Guy Lawley, Colour, process and American Comics
- Francisco Veloso, Page layouts from 1940s to 2010
- Joan Ormrod, Bodies without Borders: Wonder Woman Does Emma Peel

**Session 10B: Superheroes & Identity, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Phillip Vaughan**

- Lucia Jackson, Connecting superhero and romance genres in Harley Quinn
- Nyla Ahmad, The importance of Kamala Khan's Authentic Pakistani Identity
- James O'Ready, Kamala Khan and gender
- Mark Hibbett, Latverian Incursions: Dr Doom and Cold War Politics

5.40pm Break

6.00pm **Plenary – David Kunzle, Töpffer the would-be amateur and Cham the super-professional, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01], Chair: Chris Murray**

7.00pm Conference Dinner

## Friday 30th June

9.30am **Session 11A: Graphic Medicine, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Golnar Nabizadeh**

- Megan Sinclair, Educating through Comics: Superheroes as Parables of Hope and Discovery
- Andrew Godfrey, Diagnostic Performatives: Comics & illness as ritual criticism
- Rebecca Rosenberg, Limitless Suffering: Representing Depression in comics

**Session 11B: Temporality, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Julia Round**

- Neal Curtis, Timeframes: Co Presence versus Sequence
- Harriet Earle, Using space/time to represent intimacy
- Jesse Prevoo, Temporality in Superhero comics

10.50am Break

11.00am **Session 12A: Bildungsroman/Autobiography 1, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: David Huxley**

- Candida Rifkind, Spectral Lines, Luminous Lives in Redniss' bio of M. Curie
- Ana-Maria Gavrila, American Splendor: Blending Life, Comic Art and Film
- Damon Herd, A Ludic Model of Autobiographical Comics

**Session 12B: Latin American Comics 2, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Marc Casilli**

- Palacios Luis Arturo, The Independent Comic in Cuba
- Esther Claudio, Persecution and Exclusion in Roca and Oesterheld

**Session 12C: Adaptations – conceptual and thematic, Lecture Theatre 3 [3G02], Chair: Daniel Cook**

- Katie Quinn, From Page to Stage: the relationship between comics and the theatre
- Joshua Gowdy, Meaning from Movement: Blurring borders between animation and comics
- Graham Johnstone, City of Signs - Visualising the Conceptual, Karasik and Mazzucchelli's comics adaptation of Paul Auster's City of Glass

12.30pm Lunch – Dalhousie Foyer

1.30pm **Workshop: Caryn Louise Leschen, Drawing comics on the iPad, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01], Chair: Phillip Vaughan**

2.30pm Break

3.00pm **Session 14A: Bildungsroman/Autobiography 2, Lecture Theatre 1 [3G02], Chair: Damon Herd**

- Lisa Macklem, Borders of Memory: Lucy Knisley
- Camilla Storskog, Border Breaking in Kverneland's Munch
- Pinaki De, Relocating the Borders in 'I See the Promised Land'
- Marcos Casilli, Breaking down the barriers between fact and fiction in comics

**Session 14B: Human Rights and Difference 2, Lecture Theatre 2 [3G05], Chair: Golnar Nabizadeh**

- Anna Vuorinne, Immigration in Bulling
- Andreas Stuhlmann and Sebastian Bartosch, Memory and Migration in Bulling and Weyhe
- Kristian Hellesund, Migration in early American comics
- Aura Nikkila, Transnationalism in Tietavainen

4.45pm **Roundtable discussion, Lecture Theatre 3 [3F01]**

5.30pm Close of conference

# Keynote Speakers

## Thierry Groensteen

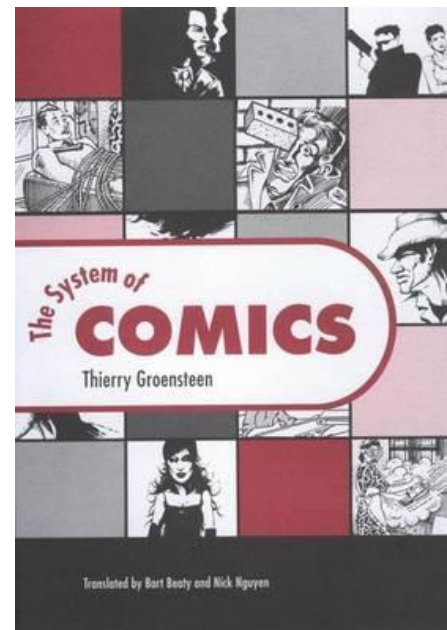
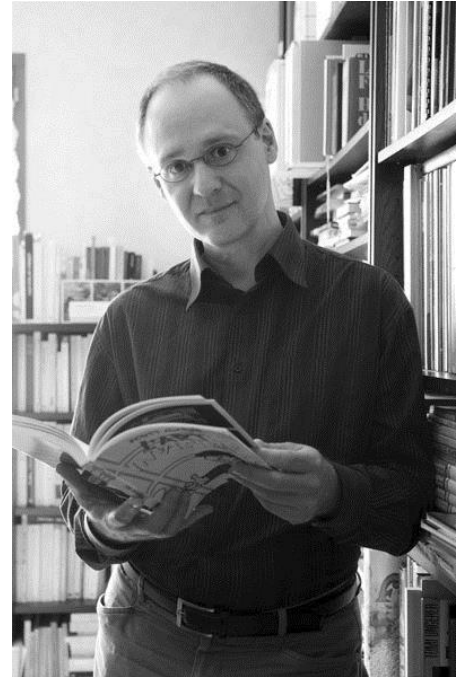
### Figures of the foreigner, the stranger and the outsider in comics

Classical comics heroes are usually impenitent travellers. In the various and often distant countries where adventure leads them, they have the status of strangers. We shall see how two iconic heroes, Tintin and Corto Maltese, deal with this position. We will then more specifically examine how cartoonists bypass or confront, with distinct methods, the question of linguistic diversity.

From *The Four Immigrants Manga* by Henry Kiyama to *Cities of the Fantastic* by Schuiten and Peeters, from *Astérix* to *The Arrival* by Shaun Tan, we will see various figures of immigrants and people in exile and we will discuss how comics deal with the question of the culture shock. Finally, we shall talk upon the phenomenon of the rejection of the foreigner, notably through the example of *Brodeck's Report*, drawn by Larcenet and based on the book by Philippe Claudel.

**Contributor Notes:** Born in Brussels in 1957, Thierry Groensteen has curated the Comics Museum in Angoulême from 1993 to 2001. He has also been the chief-editor of two important journals: *Les Cahiers de la bande dessinée* and *Neuvième Art*. The latter has become the online journal *NeuvièmeArt2.0*. Groensteen is the founder of the publishing company *L'An 2*, now a department of the group *Actes Sud*. He has long taught at the *Ecole européenne supérieure de l'Image*, in Angoulême, and curated many exhibitions.

An occasional scriptwriter and novelist, he is the author of numerous books about the history, the semiotics and the aesthetics of comics. The University Press of Mississippi have already published his authoritative essays *The System of Comics* and *Comics and Narration*, and will release *An Expanding Art* in 2017.



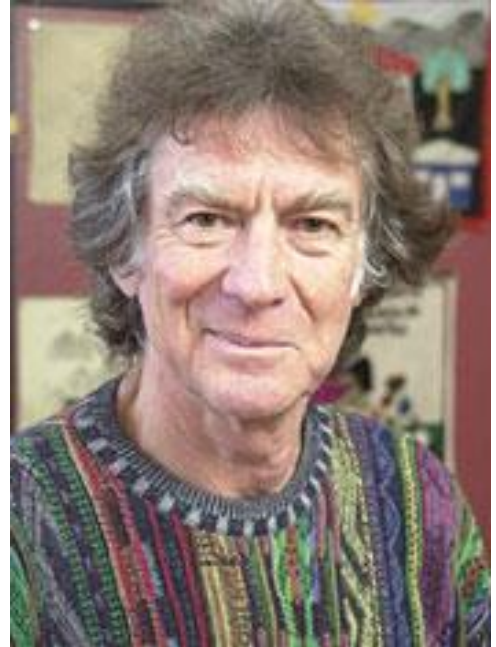


## David Kunzle

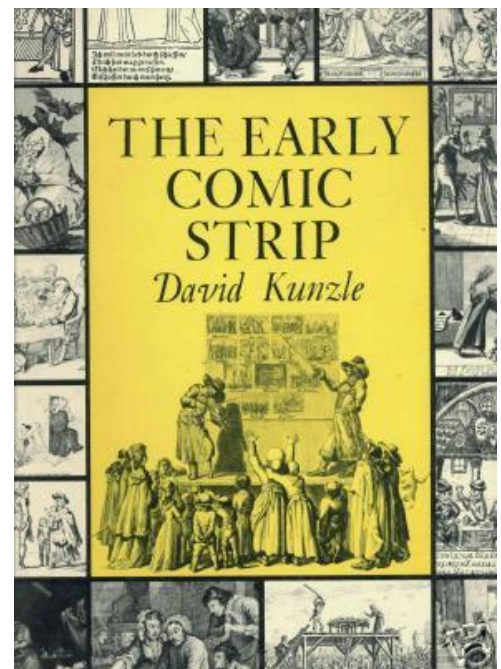
*University of California Los Angeles*

### **Töpffer the Amateur Professional and Cham the Super-Professional**

The Swiss Töpffer, a professional schoolmaster and university lecturer, was at pains to pretend he was an amateur at what what we remember him for: wide-ranging writings on art, social questions, and accounts of travels he undertook with his schoolboys. He was also well-regarded and as a novelist. His comic strips or picture stories, which now earn him undying status as the Father of these new genres, he pretended to disparage as “little follies,” despite the fact that they gave him, to his surprise, a good income, and reputation. His French disciple Cham, by birth an aristocrat birth, by contrast, was a thoroughly professional and immensely productive caricaturist in all the known departments of that profession, excelling in numerous comic strips in journals and albums, which have never been reproduced. He was actually more popular than Daumier, well-known at the time and undeservedly forgotten today.



**Contributor Notes:** *David Kunzle was educated at Cambridge and London Universities, and since 1965 has taught in the U.S., since 1977 as Professor of the History of Art at UCLA. His books include aa two volume History of the Comic Strip (1456-1825, 1826-1896); Posters of Protest (1971); Murals of Revolutionary Nicaragua (1993); Che Guevara: Icon, Myth and Message (1998); From Criminal to Courtier: the Soldier in Netherlandish Art 1550-1672 (Brill, 2002). A book on the (Disney) Carl Barks Duck comics subtitled World Conquest from Duck Perspective (Fischer, Kunststück) was published in German 1990. More recent works are a much updated 2nd edition of his Fashion and Fetishism: The Corset, Tight-lacing and other forms of body-sculpture (2004, soon in an enlarged Chinese edition). He has two books on Töpffer, a monograph Father of the Comic Strip, Rodolphe Topffer and a facsimile edition, with English translation and critical apparatus, Rodolphe Töpffer, The Complete Comic Strips (2007); plus Gustave Doré, Twelve Comic Strips (2015), all published by the University Press of Mississippi. His Chesucristo: The Fusion in Word and Image of Che Guevara and Jesus Christ, with c. 350 ills., was published 2016 in English, German and Italian editions. He has written in addition over 130 articles on various aspects of political, protest, mass-medium and public art, from the Early Modern period to the present, published in six different languages.*



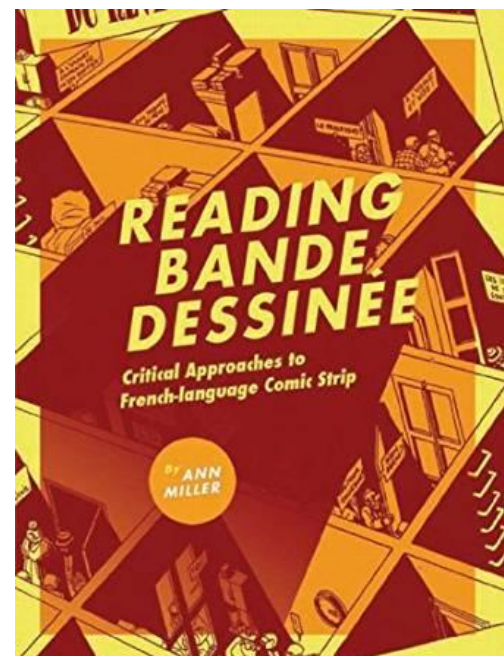
## Ann Miller

*University of Leicester*

### Comics and Politics; Consensus and Dissensus

This presentation reflects on the recent upsurge in political comics in France, both in relation to politics as practised by politicians, and to politics as Jacques Rancière conceives of it, the promotion of dissensus. The talk begins by reviewing some insider and outsider accounts, in comics format, of political campaigns, which uphold the assumption that politics is a matter of competing communication strategies, and some examples of far more vituperative political caricature and parody. It points out, though, that Rancière is sceptical about the “pedagogical” model that would see caricature, with its focus on moral traits, as politically mobilizing, just as he doubts the efficacy of “critical art,” a category in which he includes parody, in the present climate of consensus. The talk goes on to propose *Les mauvaises gens* by Étienne Davodeau as an example of political art as Rancière would see it, the struggle to be heard by those not considered as having a legitimate right to speak. It argues that the potentially demobilizing hindsight that readers bring to Davodeau’s album can be countered by invoking Rancière’s definition of “heterochrony” as a way of reframing the present.

**Contributor Notes:** *Ann Miller was formerly Senior Lecturer in French at the University of Leicester, and is now a University Fellow. She is joint editor of European Comic Art, and has published widely on French-language comics. Recent publications have included essays on Dominique Goblet and Pauline Martin, on Joe Sacco and on formal approaches to comics. She has also translated the work of many French-language comics theorists, including most recently Thierry Groensteen’s The Expanding Art of Comics: Ten Modern Masterpieces.*



# Presenters

## **Nyla Ahmad**

*University of Glasgow*

### **The Importance of Kamala Khan's Authentic Pakistani Identity**

The aim of the proposed talk is to discuss how the authenticity of the characters found in G. Willow Wilson's Ms. Marvel series helps to defy how brown bodies in comics have been treated as homogeneous. It will also focus on how Khan fits into the comics context but will place a greater emphasis on the nuances of her and her family's characterisation. The way in which Khan contrasts other brown characters, both within her own title and comics in general, shows that the title is full of varied and unique representation. This individuality is emphasised further by how authentic Khan's identity as a Pakistani-American is, as her racial and cultural heritage is weaved seamlessly into the storyline, giving Khan depth and personality, which defies damaging tropes popular within the comics industry. This talk will therefore discuss the following preferred themes: Khan's national identity, her transition from 'normal' teenager to Ms. Marvel, her status as the child of immigrants, and her shape-shifting powers.

**Contributor Notes:** *Nyla Ahmad is Chair of the SICBA Awards at Scottish Independent Comic Book Alliance and completed her Master's degree in Theology, Literature and the Arts at the University of Glasgow.*

## **Paul Aleixo**

*Sheffield Hallam University*

### **Edu/Entertainment Borders: Textbooks in Comics Format**

In 2008, after four years of creation and several more years of preparation, *Biological Psychology: An Illustrated Survival Guide*, an undergraduate textbook in continuous, sequential comic book format, written by Paul Aleixo and illustrated by Murray Baillon, was published by John Wiley and Sons. This was the first academic Psychology textbook to employ such a format and has subsequently received favourable reviews and been translated into both simplified Chinese and Greek. The creators of this book were totally inexperienced in the production of a comic book prior to beginning in this endeavour and were developing a text which needed to be academically rigorous and accurate as well as entertaining and using comic book conventions to their maximum effect. They also worked completely independently from the publisher who also had no experience of comic book production. This paper will describe and examine the process employed by these creators from the initial idea, through production of a proposal, development of a working practice and preparation of the finished manuscript. In the process the many challenges faced by Aleixo and Baillon will be covered which at their heart dealt with issues of the fine line between Educational value and readability amidst many practical limitations and considerations. In addition, the difficulties of persuading academic publishers to take on such an unusual project will also be examined.

**Contributor Notes:** *Paul Aleixo is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Sheffield Hallam University. His research interests include the application of Comic books to educational settings. He is the author of Biological Psychology an Illustrated Survival Guide; a comic book format undergraduate textbook published by Wiley which has been translated into simplified Chinese and Greek. He recently published research in the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics which found that memory for material presented in comic book format was better than that for material in text only format. This was picked up by national and international media including an interview on the 'Today' programme on BBC Radio 4.*

**Jesse Allen**  
*Wichita State University*

### **Representing the Queer Experience in YA GNs**

With this paper, I would like to look at the rise of queer coming-of-age narratives in graphic novels, specifically within the young adult genre. Following in the footsteps of Alison Bechdel's memoirs *Fun Home* and *Are You My Mother?*, authors such as Maggie Thrash and Ariel Schrag have published similar bildungsromans. This collection of authors are shifting the paradigm of heteronormativity and challenging the traditionally straight/cisgendered experiences associated with coming of age. The act of coming out and coming of age are no longer mutually exclusive. As more of these works come forth, I would like to explore specifically what boundaries Bechdel and her contemporaries crossed and how the next generation (specifically young adult authors) wish to shape this new sphere. My research thus far includes Tulia Thompson and Cynthia Barounis. Since there is a seemingly endless supply of scholarship that focuses on Bechdel, my research will be expanded to include newer works. To broaden the understanding of the young adult genre, I will explore the criticism of Julia Bach, a critic of both Young Adult and queer literature. I also wish to show the strength of the coming out experiences when presented in graphic novel form by utilizing the scholarship of Francisca Goldsmith and Santiago Garcia. Finally, this paper will be overseen by Dr Darren DeFraen, a professor at Wichita State University and scholar of new media and graphic novels. Ultimately, my research hopes to widen the canon's scope for more inclusivity. While there is definitely a need for greater representation of the queer experience in graphic novels, there is an even greater need for it in the young adult graphic novel canon.

**Contributor Notes:** *Jesse Allen is an MA candidate in English literature and a graduate teaching assistant at Wichita State University in Wichita, KS (the most middle bit of Middle America). Her work focuses predominantly on feminist and postcolonial art, literature, and new media of the 21st century. Allen is currently working on a book for her master's thesis which explores misogyny, bigotry, and racism at the hands of white women in the name of feminism. In her free time she enjoys reading Young Adult novels and spending time with her partner and their three cats.*

**Robert Aman**  
*University of Glasgow*

### **Phantom, Socialist Ideology, Exoticism and Swedish Foreign Policy**

The Phantom appears in more than 500 newspapers, translated into 40 languages with 60 million readers daily. Although an American literary creation with a protagonist of English heritage set in an exotic jungle, the Phantom has been one of the most popular comic magazines in Sweden with an uninterrupted bi-weekly print run still lasting after more than 60 years. Unrivalled in popularity by any other superhero comic, a recent anthology devoted to the crime fighter has him posing in front of a Swedish flag on the cover referred to in title as a 'blue-yellow hero'. The endured fascination with the Phantom in Sweden becomes less explainable when considering the seemingly unresolvable contradiction between how a series that has been labelled as a 'a Colonialist fantasy about Black tribal peoples who live in peace thanks to the guidance of a line of wise and powerful white men' (Peterson, 2009) continues to enjoy success in a country that, according to academic commentators, from the 1960s and during the 1970s developed into the most progressive, antifascist and antiracial nation in the West (Hübinette & Lundström, 2011). Adding to the confusion, the Phantom series enjoyed in Sweden during the 1970s its peak years in sales. Others have sought to explain Sweden's long lasting love affair with the masked crusader partly as a consequence of how some of the most active contributors to the series in recent decades have been the Scandinavian comics creators known as 'Team Fantomen'. Since 1963 'Team Fantomen' has produced officially licensed episodes and



remains today the major supplier of adventures to Phantom comics around the world. The founding of Team Fantomen coincided with this changed Swedish political landscape, with its increased focus on Third World issues in general and on Africa in particular – the institutionalisation of foreign aid, the founding of various solidarity movements with Africa, the state-funded construction of folk high schools on the African continent, to mention a few of the many salient initiatives. The prime argument to be put forth in this presentation is that the popularity of the Phantom can only be understood in relation to the surrounding ideological landscape. As Costello (2009) stresses, comic books are highly responsive to cultural trends and what I will argue is that the Phantom series constitutes a system of signs that reflect, comment upon and interact with Swedish foreign policy. In more detail, the argument I seek to advance is that the Phantom is, in fact, an avatar of socialist ideology where the plot of the episodes offer a direct commentary on the character of Sweden's perceiving of its own role in the world.

**Contributor Notes:** *Robert Aman is Lecturer in Education at the University of Glasgow. He primarily conducts research on ideology, politics of representation and coloniality in comics. He has written and published a number of articles in journals such as Third Text, Cultural Studies and Journal of Intercultural Studies. He is the co-editor of the essay collection, Education and other modes of thinking in Latin America (London, Routledge), and his book, Decolonising Intercultural Education: Colonial Differences, the Geopolitics of Knowledge, and Inter-Epistemic Dialogue, is forthcoming with Routledge.*

**Tasos Anastasiades**  
*European University Cyprus*

### **Creating Comics beyond the Conventional Drawing Approaches**

For many years, I have been creating comics and this has led me develop a course on how to create comics at the University I teach. Though this has always been a very popular course, one factor that has been difficult for most students to achieve, was the ability to reach a final / finished visual result in the specific time frame of an academic semester. That is why I have sought out new ways to help students complete their comic book stories in a faster pace and for those who did not possess exceptional drawing skills alternative options to achieve their comics without having to resort to cheap plug-ins or generic software. My proposal for this Conference is to present the various techniques I've learnt, explored and developed over the years to go beyond the conventional drawing approaches and into a journey of creative, cultural, technical and philosophical exploration. I will also illustrate how this has helped me improve on my own creative work and discuss on issues such as what could be considered talent and the boundaries between creativity and technical skills.

**Contributor Notes:** *Tasos Anastasiades is an Assistant Professor at the European University Cyprus. In 2004, he started publishing Plastic Comics, the first comic book created in Cyprus. In 2014, he published the graphic novel titled Fascista and the comic book anthology Current. In 2017, he was selected by the Cyprus Embassy in Romania and the Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture to represent Cyprus at the 5th EUROPEAN COMICS FESTIVAL organized by the European Union National Institutes for Culture (EUNIC). Currently he is working on a short comic book series in collaboration with Neil Gibson, owner and publisher of T-Pup comics in London.*



**Hailey Austin**  
*University of Dundee*

**“Tonight I am the Law. Let’s Ride”: Cowboy Masculinity and the Genre Border in Frank Miller’s *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns***

In Frank Miller’s *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* (1986), a quasi-futuristic Batman sheds his modern weaponry for a black steed, roping would-be looters and delivering tough justice “like in a Western” (Miller 175). Miller utilizes familiar imagery from the Western genre to draw upon the Western myth of masculinity while simultaneously critiquing its place in a Reagan-era Gotham. This presentation will consider the ways in which *The Dark Knight Returns* engages with traditional Western depictions of masculinity, especially the binary oppositions established in the genre and how they border those found in the superhero genre, using both Richard Slotkin’s definition of the Myth of the Frontier as well as Lydia R. Cooper’s definition of cowboy masculinity. Using Cooper and Slotkin’s definitions, it can be argued that Frank Miller’s *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* is situated on the narrative border of a hybrid genre between the Western and Superhero genres with particular deviations and complications of the generic convention of them both. Miller utilizes this new border genre by recalling the familiar images from each traditional genre in order to critique various aspects of 1980s Reaganism and the effects of hyper-masculinity.

**Contributor Notes:** *Hailey J. Austin is from Colorado, USA and is currently finishing her Master’s of Literature in Comics and Graphic Novels at the University of Dundee. She will continue studying there in September as she pursues her PhD, which will focus on the ways in which anthropomorphism is used to discuss trauma in comics. Her other research interests include transmedia, female agency, and noir. Her research on intergenerational trauma in Art Spiegelman’s Maus was published earlier this year.*

**Francesca Battaglia**  
*Palacký University*

**Gender Boundaries in Saiyuki: Masculinity and Fatherhood**

In the fantasy world created by Kazuya Minekura for the manga series *Saiyuki* and its sequels and prequels (ongoing since 1997), the Buddhist monk Genjo Sanzo and his three companions are asked to travel from China to India to stop the experiments conducted by a dangerous research team that is combining science and sacred scriptures. Indeed, the experiments are generating negative vibrations that threaten the peaceful coexistence between humans and demons in the lands of Togenkyo. While the series’ motto “Go West” already hints at the existence of geographical, cultural, and racial frontiers, the boundaries between femininity and masculinity are frequently blurred and complicated by homosocial and queer perspectives that de facto question the extents of heteronormativity. By drawing on psychoanalysis and on the notions of homosociality (Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, 1985) and bromance (Michael DeAngelis, 2014), this contribution will provide insight into *Saiyuki*’s male relationships, arguing that the symbolic journey towards the setting sun of the anti-heroic protagonists may stand as a metaphor for the pursuit of a father figure that is continuously lost and recreated. The persistent dichotomy between the sun and the moon will thus epitomize the protagonists’ attempt to internalize and integrate both the feminine and the masculine within the male model, which will invite the main protagonist to explore himself through the reiterated trope of an imposed fatherhood that is nonetheless achieved without a real encounter with the feminine other.

**Contributor Notes:** *Francesca Battaglia is a PhD student at the Department of English and American Studies of Palacký University in Olomouc (Czech Republic). She pursued parallel degrees in Italy, where she simultaneously graduated from the University of Macerata in literary studies and from the “G.B. Pergolesi” Conservatory of Music of Fermo as a pianist. Her doctoral dissertation focuses on the neo-Victorian representations of Sherlock Holmes’*

*violin and issues of masculinity in selected 21st-century adaptations and rewritings of the Holmesian canon. Indeed, her field of expertise includes neo-Victorian criticism, musicology and gender studies.*

**Armelle Blin-Rolland**

*Bangor University*

### **Expressing Identity through Memory, Fantasy and Politics in Contemporary Breton Comics**

This paper focuses on text-image expressions and constructions of Breton identity in Breton comic art or 'BDZH', a term coined by Nicoby and Alain Goutal and that combines BD and BZH (Breizh, Brittany in Breton). Brittany is a bilingual, peripheral stateless nation that offers a fruitful locus to explore issues of identity construction and representation within postcolonial France. I will examine three recent examples of comics that represent three broad, and sometimes overlapping, trends in Breton comic art, namely memory, the fantastic, and the political. Bertrand Galic and Marc Lizano's 2015 adaptation of Pierre-Jakez Hélias' 1975 *Le Cheval d'orgueil* looks back at Brittophone Brittany, and the start of the shift towards a predominantly Francophone region. This comic enables us to explore issues of the graphic adaptation of the literary canon in the context of a minoritised culture, and debates around the folklorisation of Brittany. Laurent Lefeuvre's ongoing series *Fox Boy* (since 2014) tells the story of a young Breton superhero in Rennes, presenting an image of Brittany as a glocal culture in a comic adapting the superhero genre to a minoritised context. The translation of *Fox Boy* into Breton (*Paotr Louarn*) also offers a reflection on the intertwining of the cultural and the political in the process of translating into a minority language. The third case study, Stéphane Heurteau's 2013 *Sant Fieg*, actively engages with the concept of postcolonial Brittany as it redraws the fight for the Breton cause, offering a transnational perspective through the links between Algeria and Brittany. Through these three examples, this paper will explore how the specificities of comic art as a hybrid and popular medium have been used in contemporary comics to articulate the complexities and multiplicities of Breton identity in aesthetic, thematic and/or political terms.

**Contributor Notes:** *Armelle Blin-Rolland is a lecturer in French studies at Bangor University, Wales. Her research interests include adaptation from/into literature, bande dessinée and film, Breton comic art and theories of voice across media. She has published articles on these areas in European Comic Art, Studies in French Cinema and Studies in Comics, and book chapters in Adaptation: Studies in French and Francophone Culture (Peter Lang, 2012) and the forthcoming Adapting the Canon (Legenda). Her monograph Adapted Voices: Transpositions of Céline's 'Voyage au bout de la nuit' and Queneau's 'Zazie dans le métro' was published by Legenda in 2015. She is reviews co-editor for European Comic Art, and is co-organising a conference on 'Comics & Nation' to take place at Bangor University 13th-14th July 2017: <http://comicsandnation.bangor.ac.uk/>*

**Michelle Bumatay**

*Beloit College*

### **Contours and Continents: Stassen's Cartography**

The complex relationship between geography and identity plays a key role in all the work of Belgian cartoonist Jean-Philippe Stassen. In his early works of fiction—*Le bar du vieux français*, *Louis le portugais*, *Thérèse*, *Déogratias*, and *Les enfants*—main characters exhibit multi-layered identities simultaneously informed by local and global networks of belonging and, despite varying attempts to escape their immediate environment, often find themselves trapped in culturally, socially, and politically rough terrain. Starting in 2002 with the publication of *Pawa: Chroniques des monts de la lune*, Stassen turned his attention to non-fiction,

focusing primarily on excavating European colonialist discourse with the intent of shedding new light on how geography has shaped and continues to shape individual lived experience both in Europe and In Africa. Central to this endeavour is a keen interest in maps and the graphic representation of geopolitical space. This paper proposes an analysis of the marked proliferation and variation of maps in Stassen's work from Pawa to the present. Central questions include: how and why do the maps vary? What relationship is there between the visual representation of a geographic space and the associated lived experiences presented in the narrative? How does Stassen's cartography mobilize a critique of the contemporary moment? Indeed, Stassen capitalizes on the elasticity of *bandes dessinées* as an artistic form, employing a vast array of visual and verbal strategies in his maps at times removing all borders and at others overlaying various languages and discourses and, most importantly, demonstrating human traces across landscapes.

**Contributor Notes:** *Michelle Bumatay is an Assistant Professor of French at Beloit College and received her doctoral degree in French and Francophone Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. She is currently working on her first manuscript, Black Bandes Dessinées: Reconfiguring Colonial Iconography and Verbal-Visual Discourses, in which she examines both the form and content of French-language graphic narratives by cartoonists from sub-Saharan Africa and the diaspora. She recently received the 4th Annual Lawrence R. Schehr Memorial Award for her conference paper, "Madame Livingstone and Notre Histoire: Travels in Time."*

**Marcos Casilli**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Breaking down the Barriers between Fact and Fiction in Comics**

P.D. James suggests that "All fiction is largely autobiographical and much autobiography is, of course, fiction". This presentation reflects on James' suggestion by analysing comics that blur the borders between fact and fiction, by focusing on the way that the creator's choose to incorporate a plenitude of autobiographical elements into each of their respective narratives. These works will be analysed under the framework set by Phillipe Lejeune, Timothy Dow Adams, and P.J. Eakin, scholars who have written extensively on the definition and properties of autobiography. I will look at *Shortcomings* by Adrian Tomine, as well as shorter works by the author. *Shortcomings* (2007) is Tomine's attempt to deal with the issue of Asian-American identity, which some critics had accused him of avoiding in his earlier work. Here Tomine draws on many autobiographical elements, which raises questions about the distinctions between fact, fiction, and veracity in literary narratives. To establish parallels between the fictional story and the author's life, I will also consider some of his short autobiographical strips, as well as interviews with him. Then, I will look at what could be considered the opposite of *Shortcomings*, Craig Thompson's *Blankets* (2003), which is presented as autobiography and yet brings many fictional facts and characters, most notably Raina, Craig's love interest. I will refer to interviews with the author to support my discussion, and will also briefly illustrate the dynamic relationship between fact and fiction in other media with works such as the Fellini's *8 ½*, and *All That Jazz* by Bob Fosse, as well as *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath and *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens. In both texts, the facts don't matter as much as the emotional truths revealed by each author. From that perspective, then, there is not much that separates *Shortcomings* from *Blankets*, effectively breaking down the borders that separate fiction from autobiography.

**Contributor Notes:** *Marc Casilli was born and raised in São Paulo, Brazil, where he also attended film school. He made several films and earned an MFA in Digital Cinema from the University of Central Florida. Later he moved to the Netherlands, where he started making and researching comics. He's currently further pursuing those goals at the University of Dundee, studying for an MDes in Comics and Graphic Novels.*

**Philip Cass and Jack Ford**  
*Unitec Institute of Technology*

### **New Guinea Gold: Commando Comics in the Pacific**

Commando comics prides itself on the accuracy of its depictions of conflict and the research that goes into each story. Within the fixed boundaries of the Commando universe this is generally true: Uniforms, equipment and historical events are sketched in with attention to detail. However, much of Commando is Anglo and Euro-Centric, operating with clearly defined tropes familiar to readers and writers, if not always artists. Stories may be improbable, but rarely impossible. But there are times when the stories move beyond the known, when the borders of geography, history, time, narrative, ethnicity and probability become stretched and break. Drawing on depictions of the war in Burma, Papua New Guinea, Australia and the Pacific published in Commando between 1975-1985, this paper looks at the ways in which this loss of boundaries provide a space for narratives that are often far more complex than those presented within the more constrained boundaries of European theatres of conflict. And yet while the blurring of geographical boundaries, the reconstruction of historical reality and over-riding of local perceptions of identity has sometimes led to the creation of stories that verge on the fantastical, they are still bounded by the invisible frameworks of assumptions and expectations about how people must behave, the roles of particular ethnic or national groups and the unspoken assumptions about culture, society and empire of the period 1939-45. Based on archival research and interviews, the paper also draws on the authors' personal knowledge of the places and societies depicted and of military and political history.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Philip Cass is a senior lecturer in the Master of International Communication programme at Unitec in Auckland, New Zealand. Dr Jack Ford is a professional historian with particular expertise in the war in the Pacific and Asia.*

**Antonija Cavcic**  
*Murdoch University*

### **Beyond the Dokodemo Door: Time Travel and Nostalgia in Contemporary Japanese Manga**

While the hopeful yet somewhat dystopian futuristic worlds of Tezuka Osamu and Fujiko F. Fujio's iconic tales of humans co-existing with anything from androids to cyborgs, or robot armies to robotic cats are characteristic of post-WW2 manga in Japan, quite a number of twenty-first century artists have ironically shifted their focus to the past. How can we account for this? Perhaps with the rapid advancement of robotics and AI technology, we have reached a stage in human existence in which not only do we co-exist with smartphones as robotic-like appendages of our bodies, but the presence and expansion of anything from vacuuming bots or robo-pets to hotel clerks or information desk attendants is no longer "science fiction" and has arguably heralded the death of fantasy. Thus, as a result of this dramatic infiltration of hyper-technology in modern Japanese life, I argue that a yearning for the past has surfaced in Japanese popular culture and especially in manga. In this light, this presentation centres on four recently published manga titles in which the central protagonists are uncannily transported either from or to the Edo period. While basing the discussion on nostalgia as a key theoretical concept, by means of textual analysis I will demonstrate how the characters' constant struggles to adapt and their longing for what has become void reflects the significance of nostalgia in Japanese culture.

**Contributor Notes:** *Antonija Cavcic has recently submitted her PhD thesis on Boys' love manga, and is based in Japan.*

**Spencer Chalifour**  
*University of Florida*

### **Swamp Thing, Ninja Turtles, and the Importance of 1984**

The history of American comics has long been divided into different ages, including the Golden (1934-54), Silver (1956-1970), and Bronze (1970-1986) Ages. The most recent era is the Modern, or Dark, Age (1986-present). The title "Dark Age" reflects the grimmer themes that began to embrace in comics, specifically with the 1986 publication of *Watchmen*, *The Dark Knight Returns*, and the first collected edition of *Maus*. While I do not argue against the importance of 1986 as a key date in comics history, I do support re-interpreting the strict historicity that reads 1986 as the clear beginning of the Dark Age. Two defining traits of the Modern Era are the influx of British writers who brought a more mature sensibility to comics and the rise in popularity of independent publishers. In recognizing the importance of these two traits, I interpret 1984 as the focal point in a new reading of the creation of the Dark Age. This year was an important mediator between the comics of the 1970s and early 1980s, and 1984 is notable for the broader literary experimentation that took place with the emergence of postmodernism. For this paper, I focus on two central works from 1984 that are instrumental in understanding the development of the British Invasion and the rise of the independent publishers: Alan Moore's *Swamp Thing* and Peter Laird and Kevin Eastman's *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. Each work represents the changing approach to comics creation occurring in 1984; however, their importance stems from the new types of space these comics define within their respective worlds, and how each work constitutes the emergence of two of the most important spaces of the Dark Age: mature readers comics from mainstream publishers and independent publishers whose output can rival Marvel or DC.

**Contributor Notes:** *Spencer Chalifour is currently in the English PhD program pursuing a concentration in Comics and Visual Rhetoric at the University of Florida. He is a member of the UF Graduate Comics Organization and was the lead organizer for the 14th Annual UF Comics and Graphic Novels Conference, "Comics Remixed: Adaptation and Graphic Narrative." He has also contributed to the interdisciplinary comics journal ImageText as a co-editor for the Monsters in the Margin issue and the upcoming Traumics issue. He recently completed his MA thesis on the influence of Donald Duck artist Carl Barks on indie comics creator Jeff Smith.*

**Barbara Chamberlin**  
*University of Brighton*

### **Borders and monstrosity in *Beautiful Darkness***

This paper will explore the use (and to an extent, lack) of borders in Fabien Vehlmann and Kerascoët's *Beautiful Darkness* using Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's framework of the seven theses of the monster. Core to the construction and understanding of the monster is how it transgresses borders, be they physical, emotional, sexual, social, geographical, cultural or political, and ultimately how the monster is a manifestation of contemporary fears and anxieties, what Cohen refers to as a 'cultural body' (1996: 4). The identification of the monster in *Beautiful Darkness* is by no means obvious or singular, indeed the lack of genre categorisation and narrative completion alongside its hybridity (of genre, of style, even of creation in that Kerascoët comprises of both Marie Pommepuy and partner Sébastien Cosset) has rendered it a story open to numerous readings, yet there can be little doubt over the monstrous nature of both the characters and spaces depicted within the text. In order to explore ways in which monstrosity is conceptualized and depicted in *Beautiful Darkness* and how borders are established, crossed and moved, I apply Cohen's (1996) seven theses of the monster to the text. These theses are: the monster as cultural body, the monster always escapes, the monster as harbinger of category crisis, the monster dwells at the gates of difference, the monster polices the border of the possible, fear of the monster is really a kind



of desire, the monster stands at the threshold of becoming. All, to some degree, can help generate insight into the complex ways in which the borders of the monstrous are played with in the text. The paper is also informed by my interests in female monstrosity and horror, so focus will be given to the central figure of the dead girl in the woods and the (almost entirely female) cast of little people who emerge from her decomposing corpse.

**Contributor Notes:** *Barbara Chamberlin is a senior lecturer in the School of Humanities at the University of Brighton. Alongside her role as a teacher-trainer, Barbara teaches a module on graphic novels and contributes to undergraduate and postgraduate courses on media, adaptation, linguistics, narrative and creative writing, allowing aspects of comics studies to be explored in different contexts and disciplines. She is also one of the co-curators of Graphic Brighton, an event currently in its fourth year which invites comics artists, writers, publishers and scholars to discuss different themes. Barbara is also a part-time doctoral student at the University of Sussex where she is exploring female monstrosity in comics.*

**Tien-yi Chao**

*National Taiwan University*

### **Border Crossings in *Yuri!!! on ICE***

*Yuri!!! on ICE* (broadcast in Japan between 5 October and 22 December 2016), a Japanese animation featuring multinational male figure skaters' way to success in the Grand Prix Final, has unquestionably become the most popular work among viewers and fans around the world. Most significantly, it even attracted the world's top figure skaters, such as Evgenia Medvedeva, Johnny Weir, and Stéphane Lambiel—to name just few—who not only recommended the animation on their Twitters but also involved in various promotional events. The animation's huge success, I argue, lies in the production team's intentional effort in crossing the boundaries of nationality, sexuality, and virtual-reality. In this paper I will analyse the ways in which *Yuri!!! on ICE* creates a 'Third Space' (in Homi Bhabha's words) between Boys' Love and gay life, between Japan and the world, as well as between virtuality (2D) and reality (3D), thereby breaking the so-called 'dimensional barrier' (スーパースペース). With the above features, the animation serves as a tribute to both competitive figure skating in real life and an ideal Utopia in which all the competitors and the lovers, no matter gay or straight, are treated equally with respect. By doing this, the animation demonstrates a brave and bold attempt to challenge established cultural and social norms, as its OP (opening song) 'History Maker(s)' suggests, 'We'll make it happen, we'll turn it around//Yes, we were born to make history.'

**Contributor Notes:** *Tien-yi Chao is Associate Professor of the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at National Taiwan University. She has published on early modern alchemy, Chinese Daoism and Japanese ACG/otaku culture, including 'Representations of the "feminine universe" in the Laozi and Jane Lead's visions of Sophia' in ICCC by Springer (2017), and 'Transgression of taboos: eroticising the master-servant relationship in Blue Morning' in Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics by Taylor & Francis (2015). She is the English editor of the journal Humanitas Taiwanica, and is now writing both academically and creatively about the Japanese animation Yuri!!! on ICE.*

**Esther Claudio**

*University of California*

### **Persecution and exclusion in Roca and Oesterheld**

Crossing a geopolitical border might entail the sudden transformation of an individual into an underprivileged second-class citizen. Stories of exile and/or migration describe exclusion and cultural negotiation from the point of view of a minority whose identity must continuously oscillate between consent and dissent. But what happens at the point of origin? What happens when the borders of your own country turn against you? What happens when specific citizens

suddenly become *personas non grata*? In this presentation, I will compare *Los Surcos del Azar* (*Fate's Furrows*) by Paco Roca and *El Eternauta II* by Héctor Germán Oesterheld and Francisco Solano López to investigate how borders are negotiated in political conflicts. *Los Surcos del Azar* is the moving, complex and accurate story of a Spanish refugee in France who later joins the Resistance against the Nazis. Oesterheld's masterpiece is an allegorical tale that deals with the last Argentinian dictatorship and the thousands of missing people, amongst whose numbers included the artist's own daughters. Of these two works, one is the true story of an expatriate and the other uses science fiction to tell the adventures of imaginary characters; one is narrated from a distance, recounting the past from a foreign perspective and the other tells of present events with characters who experience persecution from within. However, in both stories, the country's borders have turned against the protagonists transforming them into pariahs in their own land. In this presentation, I will explore how exclusion and alienation, as portrayed through the stories of these characters, work to shape borders in political conflicts.

**Contributor Notes:** *Esther Claudio is a PhD student at the Spanish and Portuguese department of UCLA. She organized the International Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels in Madrid (November 9-12, 2011) and is co-editor of On the Edge of the Panel: Essays on Comics Criticism (2015). She was founder and editor for the comicsgrid.com and she is now editor of the academic journal Mester. She is interested in experimental graphic novels, specifically in interactive and non-linear reading, fragmentariness, urban narratives and borders. Some of the artists she includes on her research are Chris Ware, David Mazzuchelli, Brecht Evens as well as Spanish artists Paco Roca and Miguelanxo Prado.*

**Neal Curtis**

*The University of Auckland*

### **Time Frames: Co-presence Versus Sequence**

With the advent of the web as a publishing platform and the innovation of new interfaces like the tablet comics are going through a new phase in their amazing evolution. While webcomics often maintain the tradition of the strip or the page they are also introducing elements of animation, while tablets have encouraged the creation of platform specific comics known as "Digital Native" and use "guided reading" to navigate panels. In both instances sequence is being increased or entirely privileged in the case of "Digital Native" comics and the co-presence of panels on a page appear to be of lesser importance. Will Eisner first described comics as "sequential art", but Art Spiegelman offered us a better understanding with his conception of comics as "time as space", thereby registering the sequential is always already the unity of a spatial organization. This paper makes a case for the essential nature of space, and particularly what Thierry Groensteen calls the "arthology" of the multiframe for the medium of comics. Using a range of other theories and numerous examples from a different genres of comics the paper argues that the unique properties of the medium lie precisely in the way this co-presence challenges and disrupts the borders of panels that determine sequence, series, and narrative. The co-presence of panels on a page, combined with the unity of the multiframe and the anarchic, boundary-free practice of looking (that James Elkins argues is quite distinct from reading) enables storytelling techniques unavailable in any other medium.

**Contributor Notes:** *Neal Curtis is Associate Professor in Media and Communication at the University of Auckland. His research interests are in media technologies, Comics Studies and superheroes. His most recent book is Sovereignty and Superheroes published by Manchester University Press in 2016. He runs a comics blog at [multiframe.wordpress.com](http://multiframe.wordpress.com).*

**Paul Fisher Davies**  
*University of Sussex*

### **Goffman's *Frame Analysis*, Modality and Comics**

*An activity framed in a particular way – especially collectively organised social activity – is often marked off from the ongoing flow of surrounding events by special set of boundary markers [...] These markers, like the wooden frame of a picture, are presumably neither part of the content of activity proper nor part of the world outside the activity but rather both [...] One may speak, then, of opening and closing temporal brackets and bounding spatial brackets. The standard example is the set of devices that has come to be employed in Western dramaturgy: at the beginning, the lights dim, the bell rings, and the curtain rises; at the other end, the curtain falls and the lights go on. — Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis* (1974)*

This paper will explore how comics can 'frame' experience by instantiating borders in various ways, temporally, spatially, and socially. It will take 'frame analysis' in two senses: firstly, the 'framing' of comics in the sense of their nesting in bookended narrative structures, drawing attention to the hypotaxis inherent to graphic narrative, and highlighting parallels to the framing of experience in Goffman's sense. Secondly, with a focus on the *frame* itself, the panel border: attending to how this can be used to signal the status of the material enclosed, that is, to *modalise* the narrative in ways parallel to those suggested by Goffman. The paper will bring together Goffman's social pragmatics and M.A.K. Halliday's functional approach to multimodal texts, offering not only an approach to the reading of comics texts, but also a method for comics creators to present imaginary, fictional, remembered and otherwise 'framed' experience. In the course of discussion, the paper will also consider disruptions of framing, and transitions from frame to frame, both in the sense of panel-to-panel and from modality to modality.

**Contributor Notes:** *Paul Fisher Davies has recently gained his Ph.D. with the thesis title Making Meanings with Comics: A Functional Approach to Graphic Narrative in the school of English at University of Sussex, where he is also an associate lecturer and student mentor. He teaches English Language and Literature at Sussex Downs College in Eastbourne, UK. As well as studying and writing about graphic narrative form, he has written a collection of graphic short stories which can be previewed at [www.crosbies.co.uk](http://www.crosbies.co.uk).*

**Pinaki De**  
*Raja Peary Mohan College*

### **(Re) Locating the Borders in *I See the Promised Land***

*I see the Promised Land* by Arthur Flowers, Manu Chitrakar and Guglielmo Rossi (Tara Books) is a graphic biography of Martin Luther King Jr. that draws on a unique cross-cultural collaboration between an English professor at Syracuse University, an Indian scroll painter and an Italian designer. I propose to have a close look at the implications of imposing a stylised Indian folk painting tradition (Kalighat painting or Kalighat Pat art) on events that take place on the other side of the globe. The dissolution of 'borders' takes place through the visual imagery of the patua artist trying to re-present the narrative of Flowers who also happens to be a performance poet. The book seems like an extended jam session between artists across borders trying to capture the same narrative from different 'local' perspectives. I will try to decipher how the effacement of "place" in the narrative doesn't create a visual disconnect as the patua artist essentially transfers the struggle of his own marginality into a tapestry of images. I also wish to delineate how the artist appropriates popular images of violence from Bengal and transfers them seamlessly to the American context within slightly disjointed panels to cathartic effect. The entire paraphernalia of relocating the visual index is also burdened with a cultural baggage of its own that interrogates the very question of marginality.

**Contributor Notes:** *Pinaki De is an Associate Professor of English Literature at Raja Peary Mohan College West Bengal (Affiliated to University of Calcutta, India). He has just submitted his Ph.D. thesis titled "Memory and Mobilities in Comics: A Study of Form." He is one of the founding members of the Longform Collective which is bringing out their first comics annual from Harper Collins India in 2017. Incidentally he is also the Indian Comics advisor to the forthcoming Barbican exhibition, "Mangasia: Wonderlands of Asian Comics", curated by Paul Gravett. Moreover, he is also a well-known graphic designer and illustrator who has done numerous book covers for publishers like Penguin Random House, Harper Collins, Hachette, Oxford University Press, Orient Blackswan, Pan Macmillan, Routledge and others. Recently he won the coveted Oxford Bookstore Cover Prize 2017 at Jaipur Literary Festival.*

**Subir Dey and Prasad Bokil**

*Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati*

### **The Role of Design Elements in Creating Sound Symbolic Words**

Sound effects are a significant part of action comics. However, unlike in movies, sound effects in comics are rather *read* than *heard*. While digital (motion) comics have the advantage of making the sound audible, the printed comics still have to rely on the reader's perception to convey the sound. In a broader term the sound effects are categorized under Sound Symbolic Words (SSW). This paper argues that the invisible sounds employ the design elements: lines, shapes, colour and texture to signify the sound. These design elements are crucial in order to make the sound transcend the border from the aural to the visual world. The corpus of study is selected from Indian comics, and 2400 SSW were studied and analysed. This paper also aims to understand the correlation between sound and the design elements. We propose that there are forms that are able to generate certain effects when used in proper context. Thus, if the character and nature of the sound is understood, then it can be moulded to generate certain intended forms to signify meanings. The paper shows the role of the design elements in signifying different sounds. Along with discussing the significance of the design elements, some examples are created to understand the complexity of designing SSW for Devanagari script. With no digital support available for Devanagari SSW, this paper stands as a foundation work from which future designers can draw inferences and create self-made SSW. The comments and discussions in this paper are presented in a sequential art format by combining images and text.

**Contributor Notes:** *Subir Dey is a PhD Research Scholar in the Department of Design, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. His area of research is Sound Symbolism in Comics Books. His other research interests are in the field of visual arts, design and illustration, art history, visual narratives and semantics. He is a graduate in illustration and applied arts from M.S. University, Baroda. Apart from research, he practices illustration and sequential art and tries to merge theory and practice through his art.*

*Prasad Bokil is a designer and design researcher. After graduation in Engineering, Prasad has received his Masters and Doctoral degree in Visual Communication from Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay. He is working as Assistant Professor at Department of Design, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati. He offers courses in Information design, Graphic design and Design Semantics at undergraduate and post-graduate level. His research is mainly in the area of Visual language and Knowledge Representation of design. Prasad is also exploring the area of gamification for educational purpose.*

**Aidan Diamond**

*Memorial University of New Foundland*

### **Sequence in Serialized Cover Art**

In Brian Michael Bendis/Michael Gaydos' *Alias*, protagonist Jessica Jones repeatedly urges her clients to "start at the beginning" of their stories — an admittedly reasonable request from a private detective. But the statement can be interpreted on a meta narrative level as well, prompting the question of where, exactly, the beginning begins, or what constitutes a comic's first panel. In comics, this is an especially complex inquiry, as any given comic has multiple beginnings: a Golden Age origin story, a first issue, the inciting action of an arc, the start of an individual issue, or a comic's cover art. I argue in this presentation that cover art and interior narrative can be related in comics.

Following Werner Wolf's argument about narrative in single images (2003), I thus propose the following conditions for expanding the boundaries of graphic narrative to consider cover art: Cover art can be, but is not always, a meaningful component ("narrateme," via Wolf 2003) of graphic narratives *if* held in sequence with preceding and succeeding covers (e.g., the covers of #1 and #3 when discussing the cover of #2) *and* contextualized with the interior narrative (i.e., the diegesis of the issue in question). In support of this model, I draw upon two practices: in literary criticism, the practice of taking a poem's title as an integral part of the poem itself; and, in comics, the existing and identifiable trend of comics covers directly relating to interior narratives. Though my argument focuses on David Mack's *Alias* covers, I will build my case with examples from *They're Not Like Us* (2014-present) and *Supreme: Blue Rose* (2012).

**Contributor Notes:** *Aidan Diamond is finishing her Master's in English Literature at Memorial University of Newfoundland. She has presented in Canada, the UK, and the US; with Lauranne Poharec, co-edited a special issue of the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics (Nov. 2017); contributed a chapter to the forthcoming Essays on DC's Harley Quinn; and, with Nancy Pedri and Lauranne Poharec, co-organised the Mixing Visual Media in Comics conference, at which she was the conference moderator. Her research, which examines social order in Batman comics, builds upon body politics, freak and disability studies, gender and queer theory, and surveillance studies.*

**Zuzanna Dominiak**

*University of Dundee*

### **When the Gutter is not just a Void: Panel Borders as an Architectural Structure of Comics**

Catherine Khordoc points out that comics use their own specific icons, the two most important ones being panels and speech balloons. While comics can still be identified without speech balloons, panels are what make comics — they are the "smallest commutable element that have a proper meaning" (as Thierry Groensteen appropriates a quote from Christian Metz to apply it to comics). Traditionally they are rectangular and separated by panel borders and gutters, but this structural element is often played with by creators: they are not only a part of the comic language, but also become an object within the comic itself. An early example of this is *Little Sammy Sneeze* by Winsor McCay: the little boy in the strip sneezes so violently that the panel border smashes. Even though as the panel border is just an abstract concept, in the space of this comic it becomes a physical object. This is only one of the examples of this technique. It is not only used in comics that are self referential. For instance, there is a famous page in *The Spirit* by Will Eisner where the entire page is a cross section drawing of a house, and each room forms a separate panel. They could be read sequentially, but in the space of the comic they also coexist simultaneously. When compared to an architectural drawing of a house plan, there are a lot of visual similarities: depiction of walls echoes the gutters in comics. This paper will look at how the panel borders and gutters form a unique architectural structure of comics.



**Contributor Notes:** *Zuzanna Dominiak is an MDes student in comics at the University of Dundee. She is also a comics creator who has been published in a number of anthologies, has self-published numerous titles, and who co-creates the webcomic Monty and Zuzu's WTF?! with Monty Nero. Her work blends elements of horror, formal experimentation and humour resulting in comics that defy easy genre categorisation. She lists her influences as Sophie Campbell, Daniel Clowes and Junjo Ito. She is currently working on a project on feral children for her MDes dissertation. Her research interests include formalism, autobiographic comics and the interaction between word and image. When she isn't researching for her comics or writing essays she enjoys drawing dogs and eating pickled cucumbers.*

**Fionnuala Doran**  
*Teesside University*

### **Interpreting the Irish Divisions**

In this paper I address the representation of the 1916 Irish Rising and the subsequent partition of Ireland into two separate, opposing states through comics. I will refer to my own graphic novel, *The Trial of Roger Casement*, and the depiction of the protagonist's journey from a respected, knighted human-rights advocate at the outbreak of war in 1914 to his execution for treason in 1916, at the height of British patriotic fervour. His mission—to seek political and military assistance for the Irish independence movement from Germany, the primary rival to Britain for European dominance—was thrown into chaos by the outbreak of hostilities. The paper examines the challenges and opportunities of using the graphic novel form to depict 20th Century Irish history, the interpretation of which has been constantly disputed and reinterpreted on both sides of the border. The combination of word and image and disregard for taxonomical distinctions within the comic-book provides the ability to blur the lines between objective and subjective truths, and offers a multiplicity of meanings and interpretations to the reader. The graphic novel may provide a way for creators to engage with the issues inherent in such a small island's division into two very different states without becoming overwhelmed by the weight of history, offering the potential to deal with socio-political themes in a way that can combine history with poetry. I will also look at the approach of other creators in a new breed of Irish graphic novels. This will include Sean Charleton's 'James Conolly: The Irish Rebel', Garth Ennis and John McCrea's *Troubled Souls* and *For a Few Troubles More*.

**Contributor Notes:** *Fionnuala Doran is an Irish artist, living and working between Scotland and England. She graduated from the Royal College of Art in 2015 and is senior lecturer at Teesside University's newly launched BA in Comics, Graphic Novels and Sequential Art. Her first graphic novel, *The Trial of Roger Casement*, chronicling the contested life of Irish rebel, revolutionary and gay icon, Sir Roger Casement, was released in September 2016 by Self Made Hero. She came down with a bad case of comic-fever in 1990 and has never recovered.*

**Harriet Earle**  
*Sheffield Hallam University*

### **Using Space/Time to Represent Intimacy**

The inclusion of sex in any artistic medium is likely to result in one of a variety of labels, from the relatively benign 'erotica' to the bold and damaging 'pornography'. It seems to escape our artistic notice that sex and intimacy are very much parts of normal adult relationships and yet they are largely absent in most narratives. Oftentimes, sex is included in a narrative to denote domination of male over female or is positioned as rape. Speaking specifically about cinema, cultural philosopher Slavoj Žižek writes that, 'in a "normal", non-pornographic film, a love scene is always built around a certain insurmountable limit; all cannot be shown; at a certain point, the image blurs, the camera moves off, the scene is interrupted, we never see directly "that"' (1989: 33). Thus, representations of healthy adult interactions are rare in many forms

of media. Comics, however, has been challenging this for many years and a great number of comics include nuanced representations of sex and intimacy across gender lines. Examples include *Blue Is the Warmest Color* by Julie Maroh (2010), *Over Easy* by Mimi Pond (2014) and *Building Stories* by Chris Ware (2012); additionally, intimacy between teenagers is a long-running theme in the works of Adrian Tomine and Daniel Clowes. This paper will consider the representation of sexual intimacy in two diverse comics: Brecht Evens' *The Wrong Place* (2009) and Matt Fraction & Chip Zdarsky's *Sex Criminals* (2013-16). I will discuss the ways in which both comics position sexual intimacy within the narratives, arguing that the inclusion of 'graphic' consensual sex scenes is nothing to do with pornography or titillation but instead aims to demonstrate visually how sex works to collapse borders and barriers between individuals, furthermore presenting the act as a normal and healthy mode of adult interaction. I will then conduct a close comparative analysis of two sex scenes, giving special attention to the way in which the physical area of the page is used to create an intimate space and to allow pre-existing borders between bodies to dissolve.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Harriet Earle is a lecturer in English at Sheffield Hallam University. She completed her PhD in American Comics at Keele University and her first monograph – Comics, Trauma and the New Art of War – will be published in 2017 by the University Press of Mississippi. Her publications are spread across the field of comics and popular culture studies; she has recently published articles in The Journal of Popular Culture and Film International. Dr Earle sits on the editorial board of Comics Forum.*

**Chloé Feller**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Ambiguous Representation: Transsexual Characters in Recent Mainstream Comics**

In the Western world, the concept of gender is the focus of numerous debates. Since the 20th century, post-modern feminism, gender and queer studies have challenged the reified male-female binary that construct our societies. Unfortunately, these arguments often stay confined to academia, reaching only a small percentage of the population. The theories coming from the more 'legitimate' domain of science, particularly psychology and biology, are deeply engrained in the popular consciousness, thus slowing the assimilation of modern social approaches to gender, often deemed as 'not serious enough'. Notably, transgender studies suffer from the medical hegemony as well as the stigmas associated with a new field. Transgender studies, derived from, and unsatisfied with, the work of gender and queer studies, aim to change the perception of both the academic and nonacademic public towards transgender people. The multiplication of transgender narratives in the media in recent years, including in comics, is a promising trend, albeit not necessarily carried out positively. This presentation will focus on the representation of transsexual people – that is to say, individuals transitioning from one gender to another, in the binary system – in mainstream comics, published during the 2010s and aimed at different ages. The first part will try to define what 'representation' means, and apply that definition to the comics studied here, among them *Jem and the Holograms* (IDW), *Batgirl* (DC), *Angela: Asgard's Assassin* (Marvel) and *Lumberjanes* (BOOM!Box). This paper will then focus on particular elements of transsexual representation, from the notion of femininity to the idea of 'coming-out'. The final part will offer a close study of the controversial comic *Alters* (AfterShock), written by Paul Jenkins and drawn by Leila Leiz. *Alters* was advertised as groundbreaking, because its main character is a transsexual superhero, but the response of transsexual readers gives a different picture.

**Contributor Notes:** *Chloé Feller is currently a MLitt student in Comics and Graphic Novels at the University of Dundee. Their main interest is queer representation in comics. They are writing a dissertation about non-conforming gender in comics, covering both mainstream comics and webcomics.*

**Judit Ferencz**

*University College London*

### **Graphic Novels as Conservation in Architectural Heritage**

The housing crisis in London calls for re-thinking the role architectural heritage listing plays in the debate of demolition vs refurbishment of social housing. My research aims to develop a new critical methodology for conservation and architectural heritage practices, through the medium of the graphic novel. My architectural case study is the East London housing estate Robin Hood Gardens (1972), which was refused heritage listing in 2009 and 2015 and has been scheduled for demolition as part of a wider local regeneration scheme. The proposed methodology draws on my own practice as an illustrator in publishing, in addition to the Hungarian conservation practice of *falkutatás* ('wall research') (Dávid, 1978) and the theoretical influence of Jane Rendell's 'site-writing' (2010). *Falkutatás*, a practice that applies archaeological stratigraphy to walls of historical buildings, was developed in the 1960's in Hungary and used during the Cold War as a means to reveal historical continuity. It is particularly significant to this project as the Smithsons, the British architects of Robin Hood Gardens, were involved in numerous conservation projects in Hungary during this period. My proposed methodology will reevaluate *falkutatás* as a method for tracing historical layers, by reading it through what Rendell defines through site-writing as the 'material, emotional, political and conceptual' sites of research. My graphic novel will critically re-work the historic, material and temporal literary form of the Book of Hours, late medieval illuminated manuscripts, by drawing on the concept of narratology in the works of Ricoeur (1984) and Genette (1980) where the time of the telling is combined with the time of the told. This reworking allows the medium itself to become a starting point for rethinking, through images and words, the processes and temporality of conservation, and heritage, through new processes of engaging with and communicating to my audience - government bodies, architects and residents - processes often disregarded in conventional practices.

**Contributor Notes:** *Judit Ferencz is an illustrator, originally from Hungary. She has published with Vintage Classics, Random House, L'Harmattan and Granta. She is currently a PhD student in architectural design at The Bartlett, UCL where she is conducting a RIBA funded research on the conservation of architectural heritage through the graphic novel.*

[www.juditferencz.co.uk](http://www.juditferencz.co.uk)

**Laura Findlay**

*University of Dundee*

### **Aural and Graphic Narrative in Jessica Abel's *Out on the Wire***

This paper will explore the different methods of storytelling in Jessica Abel's *Out on the Wire*. Not only does the comic act as a guide to storytelling on the radio but the fact that it is in comic form opens up a dialogue regarding "unwritten" narrative forms. These different levels and forms of representation will be analysed with a focus on the unwritten, the unheard, and the unseen – a crucial and effective aspect of narrative that comics and podcasts share.

**Contributor Notes:** *Laura Findlay is a Lecturer in Film Studies at Dundee University. She is currently working on her monograph The Anxiety of Expression: Word, Sound, and Image in Representations of 9/11 as well as a chapter on Bret Easton Ellis for a Horror Handbook by Palgrave Macmillan. She has recently finished co-writing a short comic essay, Closure, that deals with how comics, particularly the works of Art Spiegelman, are an ideal medium for representing trauma. She is a transmedia scholar whose research interests include storytelling and representations of true crime, law, and health in podcasts, music, comics, literature, television and film.*

**Alex Fitch**

*University of Brighton*

### **Transgressing Social Norms and Spaces in Fransman**

Karrie Fransman's graphic novel *The House That Groaned* is a narrative concerned with movement between discreet spaces and traversing one's comfort zones. The book recounts overlapping stories of various characters whose lives are bordered by rooms within the titular location. These characters have lives contained by psychological and physiological conditions such as a desire to hide manifested by disappearing into the scenery, a desire to indulge in hedonism within the safety of one's environment, and a desire to sublimate the horror of one's humanity into becoming doll-like, a fantasy that might encourage the anti-social activity of another. Fransman's *House* groans through not only the physical weight of certain characters but also their larger than life stories which a single graphic novel might usually struggle to contain. The author generates narrative by the ability of these characters to cross the thresholds of their apartments, to interact with each other and create a greater narrative. Schloesser and Gerlach note in *Crossing Borders - Integrating Differences* that a group: "solve... anxieties by delusion, especially as delusion binds a group together" (Karnac, London 2010, p. 17) and characters like Matt and Barbara encourage their delusion through shared interaction, but the book suggests their overlapping lives may lead to destruction. This movement across borders is shown to be a defiance of order, and this reading has been applied to the language of comics as well, such as Julia Round's investigation into "transgression as panel borders are broken" (McFarland, North Carolina 2014, p. 123) in titles such as *Sandman*. In this paper I will explore how *The House That Groaned* is an intriguing depiction of both the transgression of social norms and the spaces within a tenement, and how these are ideal subjects for a graphic novel which sees such characters constrained within panel borders.

**Contributor Notes:** *Alex Fitch is the presenter of the UK's only monthly broadcast radio show about comics, on the Arts Council Radio Station - Resonance FM - in London. He has given talks on graphic novels at the Universities of Stockholm, Sussex and London, and commissions comic strip reviews of recent DVD releases for the cult film website Electric Sheep. He will be starting a PhD on "What does sequential art tell us about architectural interactions that other media do not?" at the University of Brighton as a Design Star student in October 2017.*

**Bernhard Frena**

*University of Vienna*

### **Across Borders and on Thresholds: the Rupture as a Queer Aesthetic in the Webcomic YU+ME: dream**

The typical comic page is fundamentally fragmented. Borders striate the page, they carve out territories for different panels, they divide the page into a multitude of singular images. On the other hand, the same borders give rise to the gutter, to the liminal thresholds between those images, filled with sheer limitless possibilities of relating. Both borders and thresholds can be understood as forms of rupture, as moments that do not fit, that stand out, that disrupt what and how we perceive. Ruptures have often been understood as carrying a kind of critical potential. They have been theorized as places, where passive perception halts, where it is interrupted. In these places recipients are forced to get active, to use their imagination and establish their own connections, their own relationships between all the different parts. The webcomic YU+ME: dream by Megan Rose Gedris is filled with various kinds of ruptures. From abrupt stylistic changes, to huge narrative breaks it offers a rich environment to look at and examine different forms of ruptures. As a webcomic by a queer artist that deals with queer topics and characters it also offers the potential to ask how these ruptures might make the comic's aesthetic queer as well. Building upon Walter Benjamin, Nick Sousanis, Gilles

Deleuze, Jack Halberstam, Judith Butler and Karen Barad I will show under what conditions we can think of ruptures as a form of queer aesthetic. How and when are ruptures in YU+ME: dream resistant to a reader's perception? What exactly is the difference between borders and thresholds in regards to their queer potential? And what opportunities might comic as a medium offer in regards to ruptures or queer aesthetics?

**Contributor Notes:** *Bernhard Frena is currently teaching at the Institute of Theatre, Film and Media Studies at the University of Vienna and preparing his PhD project on the queerness of digital comics. His research revolves around aesthetic experiences in digital spaces. He is especially interested in the dynamics between production and reception, the mediality of sex and gender, and the political potential of aesthetics. In his work, he tries to combine comic studies with new materialism, Walter Benjamin with Karen Barad and fan studies with queer theory.*

**Ana-Maria Gavrilă**

*University of Bucharest*

### ***American Splendor: Blending Life, Comic Art and Film***

While the franchise characters of Marvel and DC Comics are crossing from the small screen to big-budget blockbusters, comic-to-film adaptations are not a recent phenomenon. For over twenty-five years, away from the fantastic heroes' high drama, Harvey Pekar's brutally frank autobiographical comic books "American Splendor," "Our Cancer Year," and later "Our Movie Year," challenged readers, comic critics, and documentary filmmakers with insightful vignettes featuring a pessimistic, depressed, working-class Everyman. Robert Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman's 2003 hybrid film *American Splendor*, awarded the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival, offers viewers an unlikely superhero of the everyday experience, battling against a boring job, family crisis and divorce, money worries and health problems. In creating this drama-documentary, Pulcini and Berman borrow from Pekar's writing style, translating the episodic nature of "American Splendor" into narrative sequences with a deep lyrical undertone: the action takes second place, while the internal monologue on the comic book pages turn into on-screen meditations and philosophical discourses on comic art, life, names and identity. The voice-over and the repeated apparition of Pekar himself erase the boundaries between the actors and their real-life equivalents, between film and commentary on the film itself. This paper studies the multiple layers of the visual adaptation and the modes of narration in turning Pekar's autobiographical vignettes and internal monologues into a cohesive and coherent plot, with a particular focus on the shift between *auto* - the real Harvey Pekar - and *biographical* - "the guy who is playing me" - cinematic remediation, between documentary sequences, fictional reconstructions and the comic medium, between authorship and purpose.

**Contributor Notes:** *Ana-Maria Gavrilă is PhD candidate at Centre of Excellence in Image Studies (University of Bucharest, Romania), studying textual and visual narratives in Autobiographical Snapshots: Rethinking Identity through Image and Text, and a member of the research project "Intergenerational Dynamics of Vulnerability in American Trauma Narratives". Her main areas of investigation are: Theory, Philosophy and Aesthetics; Literature and Film; Image Studies. She published articles focusing predominantly on the relationship between history, memory, and fiction in contemporary literature and visual arts.*



**Andrew Godfrey**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Diagnostic Performatives: Comics and Illness as Ritual Criticism**

When a person becomes ill they cross a threshold into a distinctly different realm of reality, that of the hospital space, where for a period of time the rules that govern them are different from those in their everyday existence. The sociologist Talcot Parsons famously wrote about this in his work *The Social System* when he discussed the sick role, the set of expectations both for the patient, society, and the medical institution when a person becomes sick. In this work Parsons discusses the functional role sickness play for society whilst also recognising the potential for the allowances made for sickness to be exploited. Therefore the sick role involves a passive subservience to the will of the medical professional and to the treatment regime, with a view to returning to work as a fully functioning member of society. Becoming a patient, or a 'person-with-a diagnosis' is a performative act of hailing, of Althusserian interpellation, and even the stories we come to tell about our illness replicate this model. However Parson's model does not account for its limitations, and the very real personal, political, and social dimensions that are both caught up in and exceed this act of hailing. He also fails to recognize that there are things caught up in the very disciplinary structures that confine the patient that allow for transformation, critique, and subversion. In this paper I will critically examine comics that both conform to, critique, and subvert the sick role. I will draw comparisons to Franks work on illness narrative and Turner's work on ritual structure, in particular focusing on Turner's concept of liminality as applied both to chronic illness and disability, but also to the unique formal qualities of the comic medium. I will demonstrate how these qualities make comics the perfect medium to explore these experiences, serving transformative, critical, and empathetic functions. However I will also consider the ways in which these alternative stories of illness can be equally performative and damaging and ask whether these comics are aware of this danger and what they do about it.

**Contributor Notes:** *Andrew Godfrey is a PhD student in English/Comic Studies at the University of Dundee whose thesis focuses on the links between comics, performance, ritual, illness, and disability. In 2016 he organised the Graphic Medicine conference Stages & Pages in Dundee, and in 2013 he was on the organising committee for the Dundee Humanities Post Graduate conference The Lost Subject. He is a recipient of the 2013 Grant Morrison award for Comic Studies and he self-publishes comics about his experiences with the chronic illness Cystic Fibrosis under the name Sicker Than Thou. Twitter: @performillness*

**Ian Gordon**  
*National University of Singapore*

### **Genre Busting: Reading Autobiographical Graphic Novels as Bildungsromans**

Michael A. Chaney has argued that "the pact negotiated between the generic clues of a text and a reader trained by convention to recognize them determines whether a text will be read as fiction or as autobiography" and that "the question of whether any given narrative belongs to fiction or autobiography is ultimately one that readers must negotiate." In her *Autobiographical Comics* Elisabeth El Refaie takes up this point arguing that genres are now more porous and that writers and readers' conventions and expectations have shifted. She ties autobiographical work to identity construction through stories, whether real or imagined. With regard to autobiographical comics this again comes back to how readers situate the author; how loosely or tightly they connect the life being written about with the person doing the writing. The maturity gained in a bildungsroman comes not just through the experience, but the reflection on that experience, through writing or reading, something that is always an engaged act. Furthermore with at least some autobiographical comics the writer and the artist are a separate entity, which complicates the notion of autobiography if the construction of that genre is taken to be an act of writing or creation of the text. Much of what separates

autobiography from bildungsroman is the notion that the former has a closer relationship to the truth or a verisimilitude that the latter lacks. But should this determine the way a work is analysed? Truth, or the reasonable approximation of what happened in the past, is the business of historians. Memoirs and autobiographies fall elsewhere on a scale of exactitude about the past. My paper unpacks these issues through an examination and comparison of several graphic novels.

**Contributor Notes:** *Ian Gordon's most recent book is Superman: The Persistence of an American Icon. His edited volume The Comics of Charles Schultz will be published in August 2017. His other works include Kid Comic Strips: A Genre Across Four Countries and Comic Strips and Consumer Culture. He teaches cultural history and American Studies at the National University of Singapore where he is the Head of the Department of History. He is a member of the editorial boards of the Australasian Journal of American Studies, ImageText, Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics, Popular Communication, and Studies in Comics.*

**Joshua Gowdy**  
*Griffith University*

### **Meaning from Movement: Blurring Borders between Animation and Comics**

Meaning from movement: Blurring borders between animation and comics is informed by my research into the communicative potential of animated elements in digital comics. Adopting Thierry Groensteen (2010, 2013) and Barbara Postema's (2013) theories that comics are a complex system of interdependent signs and codes, I propose that animated movement can add additional layers of signification, contributing connotative meaning to mostly denotational images. Within the paper I recognise that attempts to incorporate animated elements into digital comics have often inadvertently illustrated the difficult relationship and a potential incompatibility between cinematic animation and the comics form. This discord can be attributed to competing temporal qualities; cinematic animation is a linear, time-based art form while time in comics is illusory and implied largely through space. Eschewing a cinematic approach to animation, my research builds on an observation by Daniel Goodbrey (2013) that animated elements are most successfully employed within panels as short animated loops. Unlike linear animated sequences, the indefinite timing of loops does not challenge comics' temporal code. I will present Jen Lee's Thunderpaw: In the Ashes of Fire Mountain (2012) and the webtoons of Charlyn Duy (2015) as exemplars of this more harmonious application of animation to the comic form. In presenting this paper, I also intend to show pages from my current studio work, TEPID WATERS, a digital comic in which the use of illusionistic movement is secondary to animated elements that communicate on symbolic or connotative levels. This work draws inspiration from examples of animation that are informed by what Norman Klein (1996) describes as 'graphic narrative' as opposed to the more cinematic approach to animation popularised by the Disney studios in the classic era of theatrical cartoons. These examples include the pre-sound cartoons of the 1920s, modern anime and the animated films produced by the Zagreb studio in the latter half of the 20th Century.

**Contributor Notes:** *Joshua Gowdy is the co-creator of SKINNED, a digital comic initially released through Monkeybrain Comics and scheduled for release in a hardcover format in late 2017 through Insight Editions. Joshua is a doctoral candidate at the Griffith Film School (Griffith University) where he is undertaking practice-based research in the application of animation within digital comics. He anticipates completion of his current project, TEPID WATERS, in 2018.*

**Dominick Grace**  
*Western University*

### **Bordering on Crazy: Rick's Story**

*Rick's Story*, volume 12 in Dave Sim and Gerhard's epic comics series *Cerebus*, centres on two characters, Cerebus and Rick Nash, who becomes Cerebus's disciple and the author of the *Booke of Ricke*, the quasi-scriptural text that ultimately allows Cerebus to assume messianic status. However, within *Rick's Story* itself, Rick is far from a figure one would expect to be a source of spiritual or any other wisdom. In his introduction, Sim says Rick is, "let's be charitable here . . . mentally unbalanced" ([5]), and the text itself repeatedly goes further, asserting that Rick is crazy. In his comments on *Rick's Story* in response to questions from the Cerebus Yahoo group in 2005, however, Sim acknowledged that Rick's perspective appears not to be "aligned with conventional viewpoints of reality" and points out that many another radical reformer—including Jesus—has been seen as crazy: a very different perspective on Rick than Sim's introduction to *Rick's Story*, let alone the novel, seems to invite. In *Rick's Story*, the borderline between sanity and insanity—between reality as it is and reality as it is perceived—is porous and contestable. Rick is the primary figure to test those borders, but Cerebus himself has a contingent relationship with the noumenal—indeed, what the noumenal even *is* in Cerebus's world is in doubt. Especially instructive is how the book manipulates comics conventions to underscore the contingency of sanity, even in how it blurs and violates the boundaries and borders of the comics page and panels. This paper will explore the various ways Sim and Gerhard employ the grammar of comics to obscure the border between sanity and insanity.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dominick Grace is the author of The Science Fiction of Phyllis Gotlieb: A Critical Reading (McFarland), and coeditor with Eric Hoffman of three volumes in the University Press of Mississippi Conversations series, Dave Sim: Conversations, Chester Brown: Conversations, and Seth: Conversations, as well as of forthcoming volumes (coedited with Hoffman and Jason Sacks) on Jim Shooter and Steve Gerber. He and Hoffman have also coedited the forthcoming refereed collection The Canadian Alternative: Cartoonists and Comics from the North (University Press of Mississippi), and he and Lisa Macklem are collaborating on a refereed collection on the TV show Supernatural, for McFarland.*

**Maggie Gray**  
*Kingston University*

### **Alan Moore, Comics, and Music**

This paper explores the border between comics and music by looking at the strips produced by Alan Moore for music magazines *Dark Star* and *Sounds* between 1979 and 1983, many of which were created in collaboration with Steve Moore (no relation). Alan Moore is well known for being a musician and performer as well as a comics creator, and for including musical references and citations, songs and performances in his comics work. It is unsurprising then that much existing scholarship on comics and music has looked to works written by Moore, such as *Watchmen*, *V for Vendetta* and *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. This paper aims to build on this research by focusing on Moore's earlier work as a cartoonist, as a means to explore not only the narrative and thematic role of music in these strips, but also the overlapping borders between comics and music fandoms at that time, particularly the response of underground cartoonists to punk and new wave, and the relationship between fanzines, comix and mainstream music weeklies. Moreover, in looking at Moore's work as a graphic artist, this paper will examine the aesthetic borders between comics and music as art forms. This will include addressing the potential analogy of visual and musical styles, with reference to the concept of graphiation. But in particular this paper will look to scholarship on comics and abstraction to consider the non-figurative and extra-semantic aspects of these strips in musical terms of rhythm, tone and cadence.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Maggie Gray is a lecturer in Critical and Historical Studies in the School of Critical Studies and Creative Industries at Kingston School of Art, Kingston University. Her research is focused on the history, aesthetics and politics of British comics, and particularly the work of Alan Moore. Her work has been published in Studies in Comics, the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics, Kunst und Politik, and Alan Moore and the Gothic Tradition edited by Matt Green (Manchester University Press, 2013). Her book Alan Moore, Out from the Underground: Cartooning, Performance and Dissent, is forthcoming from Palgrave.*

**Simon Grennan**  
*University of Chester*

### **Contradicting Cohn's Visual Language Theory**

This paper discusses Neil Cohn's application of the role of structures of cognitive language systems to types of visual representations other than writing. He writes that he has "introduced a new notion of 'permeability'" or a new conception of the influence of one modality upon another (2013). The term permeability also describes his general project—the theoretical application of a structure of lexicogrammar to experiences of images.

Cohn explains the structures of lexicogrammar relative to the structures of writing and attempts to utilise this theorisation to analyse other types of visual representation. It is important to bear in mind that Cohn's underlying theorization is not a theory of the comic strip register, but an encompassing claim about the similarity of the structures that are realized in writing and visual representation, including drawing. Cohn doesn't analyse the structural relationship between cognitive lexicogrammar and the visual arrays of writing. However, an explanation of this relationship forms the basis for his theorisation of both constitutive items and proximity in his visual system. Arguing for the realisation of the structure of a modality-independent cognitive system (in this case, a language system) in the structure of graphiotactic arrays of drawn and written sequences is the point of his project. On this basis, Cohn glosses the structural problems that depiction poses for the application of this model, including both the syntactic functions of resemblance and style, or their lack of syntactic significance, within the system of realisation. He only defines an image according to its referential function within his system, according to the root explanation of the significance of topological proximity relationships in the realisation of lexicogrammar. According to this theorisation, the icon realises part of a word, a word or a sentence, because it appears in a relative proximity relationship that is similar to the proximity relationship in a lexicogrammar.

This paper will argue that the structure of depiction constitutes a type of iconic image that resists both the realisation of a system of lexicogrammar by visual topology and hence requires another systematic explanation of ways in which it achieves semiosis, by referring to its objects through resemblance. Taking this approach, the status and systematic function of the panel in the comic strip register converges with the problem that "seeing-in" generates for Cohn's theory (Wollheim 1980, Thomas 1999): in "seeing-in," we look at the object of the depiction and at the depiction at the same time. This phenomenon is incompatible with the system of proximal correspondences that is the basis for theorising 'visual language.' The paper will seek to explain why this type of system does not structure depictions and the relationships between them. On the basis of this explanation, changes in the relative location of depictions in a sequence that contradict the system are completely without systematic significance, because they cannot constitute errors in a system of correspondences to which they do not belong.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Simon Grennan is the graphic author of one of the Guardian Best Books of 2015 and a scholar in the field of visual narratology. He is author of the forthcoming A Theory of Narrative Drawing (Palgrave Macmillan 2017) and co-editor, with Laurence Grove, of Transforming Anthony Trollope: 'Dispossession', Victorianism and 19th century word and image (Leuven University Press 2015). 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](http://www.kartoonkings.com)). Dr Grennan is Research Fellow in Fine Art at the University of Chester and was 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).

**Laurence (Billy) Grove**  
University of Glasgow

### **Asterix Comes to Scotland**

The release in 2013 of *Astérix chez les Pictes*, and its corresponding versions in English, Scots and Gaelic, crossed several borders. Authored by Didier Conrad and Jean-Yves Ferri, it was the first *Astérix* album not of Albert Uderzo's direct creation. It saw the Gallic heroes embark on foreign travels for the first time since 1996. And coming at the time of the Scottish Independence Referendum it crossed the implicit rule that *Astérix* does not engage in politics. This paper will present such background before turning to an alternative form of border crossing: that of language learning for children. In close collaboration with Education Scotland, a national second level learning journey focusing on the cultural aspect of comic books in France and the French speaking world has recently been completed. The resource went live in April 2016 and includes a pupil activity pack and associated prior learning material that use *Astérix* and in particular *Astérix chez les Pictes*. Copyright was obtained free of charge from Les Éditions Albert-René, and Jean-Yves Ferri participated with enthusiasm. The resource has since been trending on the new national improvement hub, providing support for the 1+2 approach to language learning. In academic terms, the resource is a key outreach element likely to feature as part of a 2020 REF case study. This paper will give an overview of the project, before asking how other activities might similarly raise public awareness of the important cultural role of comics.

**Contributor Notes:** Laurence Grove is Professor of French and Text/Image Studies and Director of the Stirling Maxwell Centre for the Study of Text/Image Cultures at the University of Glasgow. His research focuses on historical aspects of text/image forms, and in particular *bande dessinée*. He is President of the International Bande Dessinée Society ('[www.arts.gla.ac.uk/ibds](http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/ibds)'). As well as serving on the consultative committees of a number of journals, he is co-editor of *European Comic Art*, and makes frequent media appearances. Laurence (also known as Billy) has authored (in full, jointly or as editor) eleven books, including *Comics in French* (Berghahn, 2010 and 2013) and approximately fifty chapters or articles. He co-curated the *Comic Invention* exhibition (The Hunterian, Glasgow, 2016; Clydebank Museum, 2017), and has long terms hopes of seeing a National Comics Centre.

**John Harnett**  
University of Limerick

### **The Transcendent Gull: Documenting the Instability of Temporal Borders in Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell***

The psychological scope and structural complexity of Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell* makes it an ideal submission to a discussion on borders. It is as adaptable to a psychoanalytic analysis of the border between sanity and madness as it is to a historiographical/sociological survey of class distinction in late nineteenth-century Victorian London. However, this paper will address the manner in which *From Hell*'s narratological resonance deconstructs temporal borders in order to disseminate William Gull's domineering stream of consciousness. In order to accomplish this, a foundation based on the structural premise of Roland Barthes and Gerard Genette's omnitemporal narrative will be married with Mark Currie's analysis of temporal disjunctions and Thierry Groensteen's identification of a dechronologized and hyper-topical network. The resulting interdisciplinary cohesion created

by this foundation will then be used to untangle the temporal weave of *From Hell*'s dominant theme, the perpetuation of legacy. To satisfy this exposure of temporal discordance, specific panels, sequences, phrases, and conversations will be closely read, and then re-read, to better probe the objectives of a narrative so capable of manipulating temporal anachronies. In so doing, it is hoped that this paper may provide a blueprint with which one can navigate the complexity of nexus points located within *From Hell*'s overarching design that — when connected on a semantic and retroactive level — imbue the story world with a ubiquitous psychology and a permeating resonance that completely destabilises any attempt to apply something as arbitrary as a border to the illusory concept of narrative time.

**Contributor Notes:** *I am a post-doctoral student from Mary Immaculate College in Ireland having successfully defended my PhD thesis on the multimodal representation of stream of consciousness techniques in Batman: The Dark Knight Returns, Watchmen, and From Hell earlier this year. I have delivered conference papers and have a number of publications on a wide variety of comics and graphic novels. My current research draws from the field of applied linguistics, specifically multimodality, and addresses the navigational techniques used to portray the comic/graphic novel as a psychoanalytic and temporal artefact.*

**Kristian Hellesund**

*Stribefeber Comics Festival*

### Migration in Early American Comics

The early American comic strips and Sunday pages can in some ways mirror the American society in the first decades of the 1900s. Through gender roles, clothes and attitudes, characters and situations in these comics are often time capsules giving us information about the past. The newspapers in New York were important for the upstart of American comics. New York had around 1900 a large percentage of immigrants, and the readership of the New York newspapers was multilingual and multiethnic. Artists like for instance Richard Outcault and Frederick Opper used immigrants as minor characters in their comics, and the immigrant experience was often part of gags and jokes. *The Katzenjammer Kids* by Rudolph Dirks showed originally a German immigrant family in a big American city. Their way of life was described mostly through slapstick humour, but English language with a German accent was important to show the characters' heritage. There are also various links to Germany and German culture in Dirks's comics. *Yens Yensen, Yanitor* by Ron W. Taylor is an example of the immigrant experience with a Scandinavian main character. The handyman wants to rise from the working class, but he is marked by his problems by integrating into a new society. Taylor also uses typical prejudice towards Scandinavians for humouristic purposes. Much deeper into the Scandinavian experience, there is *Han Ola og han Per* by Peter J. Rosendahl. Originally published as 599 comic strips in the Decorah-Posten newspaper from 1918 to 1935 (with reruns until 1972), the life of two Norwegian-Americans is shown. Their language is a combination of English and Norwegian, and they live in a society mostly consisting of other Norwegian-Americans. In my paper, I will discuss the immigrant experience as presented by Dirks, Taylor and Rosendahl. I will look at likenesses and differences in how the immigrants are presented and how the characters act as subjects in their society.

**Contributor Notes:** *Kristian Hellesund (b. 1970) is a deputy headmaster at a Norwegian primary school. He has a weekly column about comics in the Sydvesten newspaper, and has been writing about comics since 2006 for the serienett.no website. He is also one of the organizers of the Stribefeber comics festival in Kristiansand, Norway. Kristian Hellesund has translated Marvel superhero comics into Norwegian for the Seriehuset publishers. He has also edited eight issues of the FLEIP comics anthology and various Norwegian comics oneshots. At the moment Hellesund is working on a master thesis in paedagogical science and a book on Norwegian comics history. In addition to his teacher's degree, Hellesund has a bachelor degree in history.*

**Damon Herd**  
*University of Dundee*

### **A Ludic Model of Autobiographical Comics**

In 1973 Philippe Lejeune introduced the 'Autobiographical Pact', in which he stated that the autobiographical author writes the truth and the reader believes it. There is also an agreement where the reader believes that 'the author, the narrator and the protagonist must be identical.' Where Lejeune sees the Autobiographical Pact as a contract, I propose that it is often more appropriate to see the pact as a game of truth played between the author and reader. Authors such as Eddie Campbell often play with the paratextual elements in their books in order to complicate the Autobiographical Pact. In naming his autobiographical avatar Alec MacGarry, Campbell opens up an element of doubt as to the veracity of his stories. More recently Campbell has dropped the pseudonym but uses other methods that complicate Lejeune's Pact. In *Autobiographical Comics: Life Writing In Pictures* (2012) Elisabeth El Refaie discusses what she calls Campbell's 'mock autobiographical comic', *The Fate of the Artist* (2006). She notes how Campbell 'subverts authenticity' by using 'a mind-boggling kaleidoscope of different genres, including photo-stories, longer sections of illustrated narrative text, different comics genres, and daily strips' (2012, p.174), and that this bewildering array of media and storytelling techniques – Campbell's games of truth – make it impossible to tell fact from fiction. If readers position themselves to accept autobiography as truth then they become open to whatever an author presents as autobiography, and the games that the authors play with truth. This paper uses the comics of creators such as Campbell, Joe Decie, and Glen Baxter, to propose a ludic model of Philippe Lejeune's autobiographical pact that is not a contract but a game. As a game, the rules are still more or less the same as in the original pact, but they now allow authors to use the rules to challenge the reader's preconception of autobiographical works.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Damon Herd is the Coordinator of Dundee Comics Creative Space, a social enterprise and studio project developed by the University of Dundee in collaboration with The Rank Foundation. The aim is to provide educational workshops and creative opportunities for young people and to encourage creative learning through comics. He has a PhD in autobiographical comics from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design at the University of Dundee. His main research area is life narratives told in the comics medium, with a particular interest in British comics, performance, and the games authors play with truth. He is a comics practitioner as well as the organiser of DeeCAP, a comics performance event based in Dundee.*

**Mark Hibbett**  
*Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London*

### **Latverian Incursions: Doctor Doom and Cold War Politics in Marvel Comics**

Since it first appeared in *Fantastic Four Annual #2* (1964), Doctor Doom's homeland Latveria has gone through many changes, having experienced various invasions, revolutions, obliterations and magical reconstruction. The way it has been portrayed within the Marvel comics universe has also changed, from initially appearing as a medieval land under the yoke of an evil King to its current complex status as an emergent Eastern European superpower. This paper will examine these changes as reflections of Western attitudes to Eastern European nations during the Cold War and beyond through a series of examples including Doom's revolutionary seizure of power, the *Fantastic Four's* recurring interventions, and Nick Fury's disastrous attempt at regime change in 'Secret War' (2005). Drawing on the work of Jason Dittmer around national superheroes and 'popular geopolitics', the paper will conclude that Doctor Doom's rule over Latveria represents a potent symbol of the nationalist 'other' in American popular culture - and perhaps offers a glimpse of future possibilities in the new world order of Trump and Putin.

**Contributor Notes:** *Mark Hibbett is a first year PhD student at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. He holds an MA in Creative Writing, and has spent the past*



*twenty years recording and performing with his band The Validators. By day he is a mild-mannered Research Student at Central St Martins, studying Doctor Doom and Transmedia during 'The Marvel Age'. By night he is a writer and musician whose main claim to fame is having a character in Judge Dredd named after him.*

### **Olivia Hicks**

*University of Dundee*

### **No Place for Trespassers: Supercats and the British Superheroine**

If the superhero is a 'uniquely American concept', what does it mean, then, to be a British superheroine? By her very nature as a super powered woman in action narratives, the superheroine has always been threatening to patriarchal assumptions of femininity. Thus the British superheroine is constructed as a trespasser; not only is she blending the borders between British and American comics cultures, but she is trespassing onto ground which has traditionally been gendered male. American superheroines have traditionally been excessively fetishized and sexualised, both to appeal to young men, the assumed consumers of superhero narratives, and to resolve their subversive nature. But how do British girls' comics, publications which catered specifically for girls, resolve the British superheroine into an unthreatening figure? The idea of the superheroine as trespasser is brought to the fore in the *Supercats* story 'No Place for Trespassers' (*Spellbound* #28 and #29, DC Thomson, 1977). Using close analysis, this paper will examine how the story constructs the Supercats, a space superheroine team, as intruders in a male domain, and will explore, in the wider context of their various appearances in the comics *Spellbound* and *Diana*, how the creators and editors naturalise, feminise and resolve the Supercats' threatening characteristics.

**Contributor Notes:** *Olivia Hicks is a first year Ph.D. student at the University of Dundee. Her research interests are British and American girls' comics, superheroines, feminism, and issues of female readership and genre.*

### **Ian Horton**

*London College of Communication, University of the Arts London*

### **Toxic Boundaries**

In 1991 Pat Mills, along with Alan Grant, Mike McMahon, Kevin O'Neil and John Wagner, created the anthology based British comic book *Toxic*. Published by Apocalypse Ltd this was an attempt to develop the first creator-owned, full-colour weekly comic book in the UK and looked directly to the readership of comic books such as *2000AD*, *Crisis*, *Deadline* and *Revolver* for its audience. Although sales were initially strong it suffered from a lack of consistency and a very uneven tone in terms of audience appeal, factors which saw its demise after only 31 issues. Although initially aimed at a traditional teenage audience from Issue 10 onwards it carried the warning 'Not suitable for young children' on the cover. Strips such as *Marshall Law*, *Accident Man* and *Brats Bizarre* became increasingly violent and brutal in tone both visually and in terms of content. As the stories touched on more adult subjects such as sado-masochism, sex and drugs the identity that emerged had dark and subversive undertones. *Toxic* can be seen as the culmination of the trajectory Mills had set in place in the mid-1970s by transgressing boundaries of taste and violence as editor and writer on comic books such as *Action* and *2000AD*. Focusing on the reader's letter pages of *Toxic* and drawing on reception theory and audience studies this paper gives an insight into the demographic uncertainties surrounding the British comic book industry in the early 1990s and the problems of weekly publication as a business model for such adult-themed material.

**Contributor Notes:** *Ian Horton is Reader in Graphic Communication at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. His Ph.D. focused on the codification of British architectural education and issues of national identity in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*

*In addition to architectural education he has published work on: oral history and text-based public art; colonialist stereotypes in European and British comic books; the relationship between art history and comics studies. 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 Summer 2017. He has recently presented conference 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 International Association of Word and Image Studies; International Conference of Comics and Graphic Novels and Comics Forum. He has recently been appointed as Associate Editor of the Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics.*

**Lucia Jackson**

*University of Glasgow*

### **Connecting Superhero and Romance Genres in Harley Quinn**

DC's Harley Quinn has frequently been associated with romance, gender and sexuality, the character notorious amongst fans for her tumultuous relationship with the Joker. Though the character can be linked to the harlequin figure and comedy, this paper will propose that a number of connections can also be made between Harley Quinn and the serial romance novel, and argue that the character can be read as a distorted, superhero reflection of the stereotypical romance heroine. Indeed, it will assert that early narratives concerning the character present her as a sexualised object for the reader's consumption, Harley's achievements- and by extension, that of the female reader-are seen as entirely based around her ability to be sexually desirable, and secure the Joker's affections, thus reinforcing and perpetuating the patriarchal values associated with both the superhero and romance genres. Attention will then be turned to writers Jimmy Palmiotti and Amanda Conner's *New 52 Harley Quinn*. Although Palmiotti and Conner continue to blend the superhero and romance genres within their narratives, their use of both genres' tropes in their portrayal of Harley serves as a means with which they are able to subvert the patriarchal and outmoded ideology regarding gender and sexuality associated with superheroes, and romance. Furthermore, this paper will assert that, in challenging these values, they are able to destabilise perceptions of female sexuality and success, empowering and restoring agency to Harley, and female reader.

**Contributor Notes:** *Lucia Jackson is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Glasgow where she is writing her thesis on fandom and power in DC's Harley Quinn and Batgirl. Her research interests include superhero comics, fandom, feminism and post-humanism.*

**Jesus Jimenez-Varea**

*Universidad de Sevilla*

### **Time in Alan Moore's Works**

Amongst Alan Moore's many achievements in the field of comics is his toying with time within his narratives, either in early short pieces such as "The Reversible Man" and "Chronocops!" or in lengthy works like *Watchmen*. This paper proposes a model to describe - and visualize - how non-chronological time is organized, building on the conceptualization of the temporal aspects of narrative as established by narratologist Gerard Genette in his book *Narrative Discourse* (1980). Instrumental to the model introduced through this paper is the notion of *narrative speed*,  $V_N = \frac{\Delta TS}{\Delta TD}$ , being  $\Delta TS$  the interval of *story time* narrated in the corresponding interval  $\Delta TD$  of *discourse time*. The correct application of this concept enables us to formalize Genette's classification of narrative tempo, and graphically represent the configuration of time

within a comics story. A second part of the paper tackles a question that appears as lacking in Genette's work: the serious consideration of time travel as an actual happening within the constraints of the physics and the technology of a possible *storyworld* (Genette's *diegesis*), thus provoking disruptions in the chronological order of events whose causes are not on the discourse level. Therefore, this chapter proposes the distinction between diegetic and non-diegetic anachronies, as well as the addition of a third axis that corresponds to time order from the point of view of the time traveler. The concepts and methodological tools exposed throughout the paper are illustrated with their applications to the abovementioned works by Moore.

**Contributor Notes:** *Jesus Jimenez-Varea is an associate professor at the Department of Media & Advertising in the Universidad de Sevilla (Spain). His area of expertise is the intersection of popular culture, narratives, and image theory, particularly comics, along with genres like horror and superheroes across media. His texts have appeared in a number of international publications, like The International Journal of Comic Art and The Journal of Popular Culture. In recent times he has contributed to volumes published by Intellect, McFarland, Praeger, and Routledge.*

**Graham Johnstone**  
*University of Dundee*

### **City of Signs - Visualising the Conceptual, Karasik and Mazzucchelli's comics adaptation of Paul Auster's *City of Glass***

Paul Auster's 1985 novella *City of Glass* has been described as 'surprisingly non-visual'. This paper explores the strategies and techniques used by Karasik and Mazzucchelli to adapt it into their 1994 graphic novel. The paper begins with an analysis of Karasik and Mazzucchelli's cover, which is shown to capture key aspects of the source text, including the detective genre, and metafictional critique of same. Quinn, a pseudonymous writer of detective fiction is drawn into a real case, that turns into a more literary mystery, as he struggles with a multitude of apparent signifiers. The intertextual aspect of metafiction, here extends beyond the genre to earlier antecedents such as Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, which explore issues of shifting language, meaning, and authorship. The narrative voice 'playfully shifts' from Quinn, through the different characters in the case, then to fictional writer 'Paul Auster', and finally, mirroring *Don Quixote*, to an unnamed narrator. Through close analysis of Karasik and Mazzucchelli's adaptation, the paper identifies how they have visualised three key aspects of Auster's text. Firstly the tangible elements - the characters, actions and settings of the book are portrayed convincingly: characters are visually distinct and in different rendering styles; they are set in a realistically portrayed New York City, and thoughtful compositions clearly convey significant actions. Secondly, the detective genre, in the classic era of Hammett and Chandler, is evoked through period styling and film noir lighting. Thirdly, and finally, the 'nonvisual' elements are shown to be conveyed through a variety of techniques: representation of Auster's visual imagery; the written word as image; new symbols and metaphors; visual signifiers of narrative viewpoints; intertextual visual 'quotes'; and motifs, repetition and foreshadowing. The paper concludes that through this rich set of techniques Karasik and Mazzucchelli vividly bring to life Auster's 'nonvisual' novella.

**Contributor Notes:** *Graham Johnstone studied Fine Art at Glasgow School of Art. He went on to co-edit art comic Dead Trees, and created Tangled Tales, a pioneering interactive comic readable in 6 multiple permutations, now recreated as an ebook. More recently, his 'graphic anti-novel' The Curse of the Yellow Book was long-listed for the Myriad First Graphic Novel Competition 2014. Following a successful career in another field, he has refocused on comics, and is currently working on comics biographies of artists, as his final project for the Master of Design in Comics and Graphic Novels at Dundee University. Some work can be viewed at [www.gjohnstone.net](http://www.gjohnstone.net)*

**Harriet Kennedy**

*University of Edinburgh*

### **Text/Image Representations of Trudeau and Levesque**

Québécois Bande Dessinée (BDQ) sit on the border between three of the world's major comic traditions. Sitting in a liminal space between the classic Franco-Belgian Bande Dessinée, the North American Superhero comic and the Underground Comix scene of Anglophone America, BDQ draws on each of these traditions to create an incarnation of the form that is both instantly familiar but also pushes the reader to question their perception of what a comic is and might be. Created in a province that perceives itself to exist in a fragile state, bordered by Anglophone North America, and overshadowed from afar by its colonial forefathers, BDQ show themselves to be preoccupied with questions of identity, belonging, and voice. Just as René Lévesque and Pierre Elliott Trudeau were positioned against one another in the minds and polls of Quebec in the run up to the 1980 Referendum so too have the creators Aislin and Serge Chapleau been compared, contrasted and pitted against one another in the chronicle of BDQ. This paper will explore the borders that have been instrumental in the creation of a distinctly Québécois form of BD whilst also addressing the ways in which Aislin and Chapleau played with the borders of the page in their depictions of Trudeau and Levesque. I will look at the ways in which Aislin and Chapleau's depictions of Trudeau and Levesque can be compared and the way in which these depictions might offer us insights into contemporary events and offer perspectives that are not necessarily found in modern historical or political accounts of the time. I will address not only the form and content of the cartoons but also the way in which the relationship and dynamic between Aislin and Chapleau reflects that between Trudeau and Levesque and the impact this relationship has on the cartoons themselves and the history of BDQ.

**Contributor Notes:** *Harriet Kennedy is an early career researcher who completed her PhD in Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh in 2016. Her research interests include comics, politics, Quebec, Canada, nationalisms and questions of voice, form and identity. She currently teaches in the department of Sociology at the University of Edinburgh. Harriet writes about comics for Graphixia and Book Riot, is on the Editorial Board of the Comics Grid and is on the organising committee for Comics Forum.*

**Jessie Kerspe**

*Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society*

### **Crossing Borders in Kiriko Nananan's *Blue***

Nananan's works can be seen as border-crossing in many aspects. In the first literal sense of frame, Nananan is excellent at using panel frames to create both formal aesthetics and emotional suspense. The adoption of film narration comes across the realm of literature and visual arts, as many panels in *Blue* resemble the format of film frames. The second sense of frame lies in the framing of the genre. At the exhibition "Hokusai x Manga" at Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg (2016), for example, the original drawing of a page from *Blue* is framed like all other painting collections in the museum. Here the picture frame is not merely the object that marks the margin of the work, but an in-between medium that introduces the page panels into the realm of fine arts. The fact that Nananan's innovative work is displayed in a way as a single sheet of artwork points out the further sense of framing which Mieke Bal related to: the context of publication and display is framing the work itself and its reception.

In a further sense, Nananan's works are breaking through the gender division in Japan. While artists like Adachi Mitsuru has already blurred the border of *shojo* or *shonen* manga, Nananan's *Blue* more closely approaches the French graphic novel with its serious content, its minimalist style, and even the length of the book itself. Nananan identifies herself with "*La nouvelle manga*" movement, addressed by French artist Frédéric Boilet based in Japan. *La nouvelle manga* brings in the form of alternative manga where the aesthetics of *bande*

*dessinée* and *manga* meet each other. On the other hand, Ninanan's beautiful arrangement of negative space within the panels unmistakably reminds readers of traditional ink paintings, hinting at its oriental root.

**Contributor Notes:** *Jessie Kerspe (née Shu Hsuan Kuo) was born in Taipei, Taiwan. In 2012, she received her doctoral degree at Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society, NL. Since then, Jessie had worked as a postdoctoral researcher at National Science Council, TW, and as an adjunct assistant professor at the Department of Art and Design, National Hsinchu University of Education, TW. Jessie published two monographs on art studies, The Secrets of Illustration (Taipei: 2007; Wuhan: 2016) and Art in Diagrams (Taipei: 2005; Seoul: 2006), as well as a professional work Green Life in the Netherlands (Taipei: 2013). Jessie is now based in Berlin, DE.*

## **Edward King**

*University of Bristol*

### **Borders in Brazilian Comics**

The transgression of the borders of the human has been a dominant theme in the recent upsurge of conceptually complex comic books in Brazil. The focus of this paper will be the connection between transmedial experimentations at the borders of comic book form and the exploration of the limits of the human in two recent comic book projects: the multi-media science fiction storyworld 'Aurora pós-humana' ['Posthuman Dawn'], which centres on the 2010 graphic novel *CyberBioDrama Saga* by artist and performance artist Edgar Franco, and the comic book series *O beijo adolescente* (2012-15) by Rafael Coutinho. Franco and Coutinho's work is exemplary of how the comic book form has become a privileged platform for the exploration of emerging posthuman modes of subjectivity enabled by the digital technologies of the network age. Drawing on recent theoretical debates about new materialism and object theory as well as the work of comics studies scholars such as Jason Dittmer (2014) on the 'topological' nature of the medium, my discussion will focus on how the comics form lends itself to textual performances of the distribution of cognitive and affective processes through the technologies of communication and information storage.

I will argue that, due to the tensions that Charles Hatfield (2005) argues characterise the form (tensions between word and image and between linear and non-linear modes of reading), the graphic novel functions as an ideal space of reflection on the flows of information and the congealing and dislocation of affective communities in the digital age. I will then argue that the exploration of posthuman modes of subjectivity and community in these works functions as an intervention into the current political crisis affecting Brazil – a crisis that has played itself out through a violent renegotiation of urban spaces and the socio-political borders these encode and reproduce.

**Contributor Notes:** *Edward King is a Lecturer in the School of Modern Languages, University of Bristol. His research focuses on interconnections between culture, technology and power in Latin America. His recent research has explored how the form of the graphic novel has been used as a platform for the exploration of posthuman subjectivity. He is the author of two monographs, Science Fiction and Digital Technologies in Argentine and Brazilian Culture (Palgrave, 2013) and Virtual Orientalism in Brazilian Culture (Palgrave, 2015). His latest book, Posthumanism and the Graphic Novel in Latin America (co-authored with Joanna Page), is forthcoming from UCL Press in 2017.*

**Kenan Koçak**  
*Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University*

### **Reading War in Syria in Comics**

It was in 2011 when the civil war started in Syria. Since then, more than 500,000 people have died, and more than eight million people have internally been displaced which has led to more than 5 million refugees' immigration to several countries.

The war in Syria has come to such a point that the map of Syria needs to be updated daily as cities and towns constantly change hands between belligerents. And day by day getting true news—not fabricated—from the conflict zones are becoming harder as it is impossible to enter into some places. The only way to receive accurate news from those zones are via social media, not through mainstream channels. However, sometimes it becomes very hard to believe what is seen on social media since it is very open to manipulation. The line between illusion and reality has started to disappear. Even some ISIS execution videos are found very professional to be true. So it would not be wrong to argue that today in Syria amateurish images or videos are more believable than professional ones. Comics are good for learning about the war in Syria. During this ongoing war, many comics have been produced. Many problems of the war have been discussed in these comics: Sarah Glidden's recent book *Rolling Blackouts: Dispatches from Turkey, Syria, and Iraq* tells personal stories from the region; ABC News & Marvel joint comics *Madaya Mom* is about a mother and her family trapped in the besieged city of Madaya. *Refugee Republic* is a fantastic hybrid piece on the daily life in Domiz Camp in Northern Iraq populated by 60 thousand Syrian refugees, and Andy Warner's *Syria's First Family* introduces us the family of Bashar al-Assad. This paper will cross the borders of the narratives of the conflict in Syria with examples from comics both mentioned and not-mentioned above. How the consequences of the war in Syria are discussed in comics will also be analysed.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Kenan Koçak completed his PhD in Comparative Literature at the University of Glasgow in 2015. He is currently working at Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University in Turkey. His main research interests are comics journalism, nationalism studies, Turkish history and literature.*

**Guy Lawley**  
*University of the Arts London*

### **Colour, Process and American Comics**

American comics are routinely bounded within collector categories based on historical epochs such as the Platinum Age, circa 1897-1938, the Golden Age, approximately 1938-1956, and the Silver Age, ending around 1970. These dates are contested and remain endlessly debatable, usually involving the publication of key texts; e.g. the Golden Age *perhaps* start with Superman's first appearance in 1938, or in 1935, with *New Fun* no. 1. This paper historicises another factor which has previously gone unremarked, and has three distinct periods coinciding remarkably closely with the above three "Ages". The changes I will discuss were economically driven, but created marked differences in the appearance of the comics. As a direct result, Platinum, Golden and Silver Age comics necessarily acquired three fundamentally different colour aesthetics. It is often noted that the printing of American comics changed very little from the 1890s to the 1970s, using metal letterpress plates, simple colours, visible dot screens and cheap newsprint paper. What has escaped analysis is their changing process of colour separation. All these comics' pages started as black-and-white drawings. It was the technology used to make separate images for their red, blue and yellow printing plates which changed over time. From the late 1890s the original Ben Day process was used for newspaper strips and, from 1933, the earliest comic books. From 1934, the new – much faster – Craftint method quickly displaced Ben Day, whilst limiting the available colour palette. It also involved lined tints, not just dots – something comics history has inexplicably not noticed.

Between 1954 and 1956, the major publishers switched again, to a cheaper technique involving painting on clear acetate sheets – maintaining the limited palette. DC, home of Batman and Superman, made major changes in colour separations with their comics cover-dated October 1969. This arguably provides the most precise date yet proposed – defined by a technological and aesthetic watershed – for the otherwise particularly hotly contested ending of the Silver Age.

**Contributor Notes:** *Guy Lawley edited a magazine called Comics Forum back when such things were printed on paper - no relation to the current comicsforum.org. It probably peaked in 1994 with no.6, featuring Richard Reynolds, Roger Sabin and Kent Worcester. After a long mission in a far-off galaxy, Lawley has returned to research the cultural history of the Ben Day dot, the historic fundamental particle of comics colour, for a PhD at Central Saint Martins.*

**Caryn Louise Leschen**  
*University of San Francisco*

### **Drawing Comics on the iPad**

Caryn Louise Leschen knows that drawing comics on your iPad is not only fun, but brings out your intuitive, most creative ideas. That's why today she will talk about being a cartoonist who has been tech-savvy for over 20 years, and about how to tackle making comics on the intimidating iPad—essentially, an art supply store in your pocket. Schools all over America (and probably where you are as well) are investing in iPads for their students' textbooks and test-taking and educational software—but seem unaware of the iPad's boundless ability to unleash the power of creating! We need to be preparing post-millennial web designers, game designers, industrial designers, filmmakers, model makers, architects, drafts-people, and, oh yes, cartoonists—for the real world. Bring your iPad, if you brought one, and get ready to join Aunt Violet's Creative Revolution.

**Contributor Notes:** *Caryn Louise Leschen is a cartoonist, writer and illustrator from San Francisco, California. She is the creator of the syndicated advice comic and podcast, Ask Aunt Violet, and Aunt Violet's Travel Tips. She was the editor of several issues of Wimmin's Comix, most notably #17: The Kvetch Issue, and her memoir-style graphic narratives appear in Wimmin's Comix #8–17. She has also been featured in the Twisted Sisters anthologies, Mind Riot, Have Milk: Will Travel, and other collections, as well as museum exhibitions in Europe, Asia and America. Recently, she drew a comic recipe in An Minyan Yidn (A Bunch of Jews) by Trina Robbins's father. Her graphic stories and many of her illustrations are usually about traveling, and sometimes about eating. At the University of San Francisco, she teaches Animation, and Drawing on the iPad—a class she designed for USF which is also taught out of her own studio, Aunt Violet Productions. As a final project each semester, she helps students fashion memoir-style comic stories on the iPad. For more information about her classes, go to [www.drawingontheipad.com](http://www.drawingontheipad.com). Currently, she is working on The Cool, Calm and Collected Ask Aunt Violet, and enjoying teaching people how be more creative with their iPads. You can view her artwork here: [www.auntviolet.com](http://www.auntviolet.com) and here <https://spark.adobe.com/page/BxVZy/>.*

**Lisa Macklem**  
*Western University*

### **Borders of Memory: Lucy Knisley**

Lucy Knisley describes her work as moving back and forth between journal comic or travelogue, like *French Milk*, and memoir or autobiography, like *Something New* (Clemente). Where does the border lie between these somewhat arbitrary genre labels? *French Milk* and *Something New* present a very porous boundary between these genres, and both depict borders of many kinds. The two works form a border of Knisley's career to date, being her first



(*French Milk*) and most recent (*Something New*) books. Both books centre on life transitions or borders: Knisley's "struggle toward adulthood" (*French Milk* iii) and Knisley's transition from single to married. Despite the differences between the books, including length, panel size and arrangement, and colour, there are a number of significant similarities. A family member figures prominently in both books: her mother in *French Milk* and her boyfriend/fiancé/husband in *Something New*. This represents yet another border as Knisley traverses the story imbuing it with enough truth to resonate with the audience while still retaining some privacy for the other "characters." One technique that Knisley uses repeatedly is photographs interspersed with drawings, creating a bridge over a border: Knisley relates that in *French Milk* "My inclusion of the photos from my trip were an attempt to strengthen my bond with the reader" (Spurgeon). While Susan Sontag is reflecting on the relationship between memory, photography, and the horror of war, major life changes can also be traumatic. Sontag states that "[t]he photographer's intentions do not determine the meaning of the photograph, which will have its own career, blown by the whims and loyalties of the diverse communities that have use for it" (39). This paper will argue that Knisley's discussions of crossing significant life borders resonates more deeply with her audience than she may realize whether she is working in the shorter travelogue form or the longer memoir.

**Contributor Notes:** *Lisa Macklem is a PhD Candidate in law with an MA in Media Studies and an LLM in Entertainment and Media Law. While working to finish her dissertation on the intersection of technology, copyright, and the entertainment industry, Lisa regularly presents on graphic novels, popular culture, media, and copyright. She is a regular contributor on SpoilerTv.com and has reported on SDCC for them. She is also on the editorial board of The Journal of Fandom Studies. This is her third year presenting at IGNCC.*

**Anne Magnussen**

*University of Southern Denmark*

### **On the Border in Mexican Comics**

One of the first borders that come to mind when speaking about Mexico is the one between this country and the US. According to a vast body of especially American academic literature about this border, it is a socio-economically and culturally complex, transnational and "in-between" space in which the idea of the border in itself is continuously reproduced and questioned. This paper uses the idea of the border as an in-between space in the study of how Mexican comics represent Mexican cities as intersections of ethnic (and social) difference. The relationship to the United States will be part of the study on a series of levels, although as a relationship that is continuously questioned and undermined. This is apparent in the representation of ethnicity as well as through the comics medium itself and its history. As mentioned in the introduction to the panel, the comics medium is especially apt at moving beyond borders, which is present for example in the interaction between word and image; between panel sequence and page, and between genres and traditions. Recently there has been a new wave of Mexican graphic novels that are inspired by developments within this genre in Europe, the US and Japan, but at the same time they draw on Mexican popular culture and comics history. With regards to the latter the new comics cut across the boundary between the intellectual density of (some) of the new millennium's graphic novels and the popular Mexican comic strips and booklets from the 1940s and onwards.

The paper will show how the comics and their representation of urban space is an ideal prism for the study of the kind of in-betweenness at work across ethnic and social difference.

**Contributor Notes:** *Anne Magnussen is Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Southern Denmark. She has edited books and written articles about comics, place and history, and of specific relevance for comics research, e.g. "Comics as historical source material: Race, ethnicity and power according to Texas History Movies." *Studies in Comics*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (July 2016), pp. 99-125; "The New Spanish Memory Comics. The Example of Cuerda de presas." *European Comic Art*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Spring 2014), pp. 56-84, and "Spanish Comics and Politics." In Stephan Packard (ed.) *Comics & Politik*. Berlin:*

Christian A. Bachmann Verlag 2014, pp. 157-178. Anne Magnussen is a founding member of the Nordic comics research network, NNCORE, and since January 2017 she is co-editor of the journal *European Comic Art*.

**Alison Mandaville**

*California State University*

### **Fluid Borders and Leaky Identities: Oil, Empire, and Cartoons in the Caucasus**

Today, in the face of hardening ideas of ethnicity, citizenship, and nation, cartoons from the satirical journal *Molla Nasraddin* (1906-1930) offer a graphic reminder that borders of both nation and identity are, à la Benedict Anderson, a grand and mobile imaginary. During its publication, this journal saw the fall of two empires (Russia and Persia), the establishment and fall of multiple local modern nation states, and the consolidation of ethnic nation-spaces within the new Soviet empire. Published in what are now three different states — the journal is claimed today, without irony, by (primarily) just one (Azerbaijan). This cartooning was done at a time when ideas of the modern nation as a fixed geographical space were taking shape; but a very fluid human landscape was the norm. The explicitly constructed form of comics mirrors and offers visual record of this early cultural work, constructing and maintaining nations and national identities. Issue after issue, year after year, these cartoons obsessively re-construct, depict, and *juxtapose* “Eastern” and “Western” nation spaces and “Christian” and “Muslim” identities. Placed side by side, these categories serve to define each other. But they are also meant to develop one another – to revision and reform. These are oppositions that continually borrow from and undo each other’s’ edges, undermining rigid formulations of nation and identity. Funded with global money from some of the first commercial oil wells in the world and read by a diverse audience in the Caucasus and across Asia, the journal was nevertheless intended to foster and consolidate a local “national” identity. The record left by this comic artwork suggests that the mining of global cultural (and economic) capital to define local nation and identity is perhaps inextricable from – if seemingly contradictory to – globalized natural and human resource exploitation. From which example, we might take heed. Or hope.

**Contributor Notes:** *An Associate Professor at California State University, Fresno, Alison Mandaville's scholarship on comics pedagogy and American and World comics literature has appeared in The Comics Journal, The International Journal of Comic Art, ImageText, and Philology and in the book collections Comics and the U.S. South, Ages of Wonder Woman, and Comics and American Cultural History. Also a creative writer, she was a Fulbright Scholar to Azerbaijan in 2007-8. She returns regularly to the Caucasus to research and work with women writers. Her translations of contemporary poetry by Azerbaijani women appeared in World Literature Today (2016). She will be on sabbatical 2017-18 (hallelujah!) trying to finish a dozen research and writing projects.*

**Dragoş Manea and Mihaela Precup**

*University of Bucharest*

### **Conflict, Human Rights, and Personal Narratives in Benjamin Dix's Positive Negatives**

British visual anthropologist Benjamin Dix's non-profit project *Positive Negatives* (2012- ) is an important expanding collection of personal narratives in comic book form (and some photography) whose focus is the representation of how individuals survive conflict and human rights violations. The stories featured in its free archive are not only disseminated through the project's website ([www.positivenegatives.com](http://www.positivenegatives.com)), but also through wide-reaching publications such as *The Guardian* and *The Huffington Post*, through charitable and media organizations that often commission the work, and through educational institutions (according to the *Positive Negatives* website, the comics have now been distributed in over 500 schools in 26 countries).

The comics included in the *Positive Negatives* project are all based on personal testimonies and rely on photographic support, thus following in the footsteps of an already established tradition of the graphic representation of war, conflict, disaster, and related human rights violations in the international comics community—most famously in books such as Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, Keiji Nakazawa's *Barefoot Gen*, Joe Sacco's *Palestine* and *Safe Area Gorazde*, and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*. So far, the collected stories cover a family's experience of the 2009 war in Sri Lanka, drug addiction in Guinea-Bissau, disappearance in Columbia, the hardships of the Roma community in Eastern Europe, and individual stories of displacement and human trafficking from Somalia, Eritrea, Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Syria. All of the individuals who tell these stories are civilians, and often considered either usable or dispensable by the armed forces; bonds of love and family are tested and the international community is often invisible or ineffectual. Our paper aims to interrogate the potential of personal narratives to tell individual stories during episodes of collective suffering, the ability of comics and photography to memorialize and represent atrocities and their aftermath, as well as the narrative patterns that emerge from these stories of survival and ongoing struggle. We are in conversation with critics who work on the potential of life narratives to tell significant stories about human rights violations (such as Kay Schaffer and Sidonie Smith), as well as theoreticians who interrogate the ethics and aesthetics of the visual representation of human suffering, with a focus on photography and graphic narrative (such as Ariella Azoulay, Geoffrey Batchen, and Hillary Chute).

**Contributor Notes:** *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. Relevant 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 "Leonardo's Paradoxical Queerness: Da Vinci's Demons (Starz, 2013—) and the Politics of Straightwashing" (in Queer TV in the 21st Century, ed. Kylo-Patrick Hart, McFarland, 2016).*

*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 "That Medieval Eastern-European Shtetl Family of Yours": Negotiating Jewishness in Aline Kominsky Crumb's Need More Love (2007), Studies in Comics (December 2015) and "Bad Girls from Outer Space: Brian K. Vaughan and Fiona Staples's Saga and the Graphic Representation of Subversive Femininity" (with Dragoş Manea) in Bad Girls and Transgressive Women in Contemporary Television, Fiction, and Film. ed. Julie A. Chappell and Mallory Young. New York: Palgrave Macmillan (forthcoming, 2017). She is co-editing (with Rebecca Scherr) two special issues on Sexual Violence in Comics of The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics (Taylor and Francis, June 2017 & June 2018). She is currently working on a monograph titled Picturing the Father: Memory, Representation, and Fatherhood in Autobiographical Comics (under contract with Palgrave Macmillan).*

**Carolina Martins**

*University of Coimbra*

### **There's more where that came from: Unfolding and Crossing Discursive Levels in the "Augmented Space" of the Gallery**

Based on the notion of interactional metalepsis as described by Karin Kukkonen (2011), Astrid Ensslin (2011) and Alice Bell (2016), this paper intends to contribute to the study of metalepsis regarding the specificity of installations. Particularly, installations of graphic narratives/comics, which, I argue, propose metaleptic effects implied and generated by specific navigational devices and characteristics that suggest an ongoing co-influence between spatial

(re)configurations and levels of discourse. In their turn, these (re)configurations occur as a consequence of the conjunction of the actual space with the composition of the installation, which are, at the same time, influenced by, and an influence for, the narrative focalisation through the textual, virtual and tridimensional spaces. In this sense, the analysis of Daniel Goodbrey's *The Archivist* and Dave McKean's *The Rut* will take into account the ways in which the expository and narrative routes inscribe themselves in the physical space of the gallery. So, by relating the notion of interactional metalepsis with spatial and discursive dynamics, the resulting paper will also question the architectural and compositional characteristics not only as constraints but also as promoters of a dynamic context that might function as an interference in the overall narrative. This way, I argue that it is this simultaneous intertwining and interference between space and narrative which, in the end, comply with the specificity of the media and calls for some kind of "augmented reading", hence contributing for a blurring of narrative, aesthetic and conceptual borders.

**Contributor Notes:** *Carolina Martins holds a degree in Art Studies and a post-graduate degree in Literary and Cultural Studies, both from the University of Coimbra. She currently holds a doctoral scholarship from FCT and is currently a doctoral student in the FCT PhD Programme in Advanced Studies in Materialities of Literature at the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Coimbra. Her research interests include comics, cinema, art installations, interart studies and game studies. She is currently writing a thesis on the perspectives of spatiality in graphic narrative installations.*

**Gert Meesters**

*Université de Lille*

### **Comics in Newspapers in Belgium**

Belgium is generally considered an important country for the development of the comics medium in Europe, especially between the first Tintin story by Hergé in the newspaper supplement *Le Petit Vingtième* in 1929 and the creation of the French journal *Pilote* in 1959. Whether one can speak of one Belgian comics culture is still up for debate, though. Although monographs about Belgian comics as a whole have been written (e.g. De Weyer 2015), most scholars agree that nowadays, Francophone Belgian comics can be considered closer to French and other Francophone comics from Switzerland and Canada than to Flemish comics, while the latter constitute a small but relatively vivid field on their own. The studies of Francophone comics and of Flemish comics separately clearly outnumber the studies with a national perspective. Often, one can read that the interaction between the language communities in Belgium, in comics as elsewhere, has diminished in the course of the twentieth century. This has been linked with separate media for each language community (e.g. Vogl & Hüning 2010). In this paper, I will present the first results of a qualitative and quantitative diachronic research project concerning the reception of comics in Belgian newspapers, with special emphasis on likenesses and differences on both sides of the linguistic boundary. Most Belgian newspapers until 1950 have recently become available for full text search in the Royal Belgian Library. The focus of this paper lies on the period from 1929 (the first appearance of Tintin) until 1950. What cartoonists were written about in the papers? Were they the same ones on both sides of the linguistic boundary? In what terms were comics discussed? Did the 1949 French law about publications for a young readership (Crépin & Groensteen 1999) resonate in Belgian newspapers? Can we see an evolution in the discourse about comics over time? What changed after 1945, when the Flemish cartoonist Willy Vandersteen started publishing his seminal series *Suske en Wiske / Bob et Bobette*?

**Contributor Notes:** *Gert Meesters is associate professor of Dutch language and culture at the University of Lille, France. He holds a PhD in Dutch linguistics from the University of Leuven and is a founding member of the Liège-based comics research group Acme. He co-edited *L'Association, une utopie éditoriale et esthétique* (2011) and *Comics in Dissent: Independence, Alternative, Self-publishing* (2014). Most of his recent articles are based on*

case studies of comics by Brecht Evens and Olivier Schrauwen. He has also done much research on the development of the comics form in Belgium after 1929.

**Ammar Merza**  
Bangor University

### **Arabic Adaptations of Tintin**

Modifying proper names and place names is actually a challenging task due to the socio-cultural differences among cultures. Proper names are used to clarify characters' personalities, their religion, traits, and other cultural aspects. Therefore, adapting names from various cultures is subjected to various kinds of methods which depend on the kind of rapport between a source text and a target text. In some cultures, there is a belief that to have a knowledge of the names gives an understanding of the essence of an individual. Thus a name established identity and connected with self-definition and self-determination. Rationally, this explained why editors and translators have to be careful in adapting names from diverse cultures. Accordingly, this study deals with how did Arab editors take different approaches in modifying various names in the original text of Hergé's *The Adventures of Tintin*. In doing so, five Arabic magazines, *AlKatkot* (1946-1948) or (Nestling); *Samir* (1956- until now); *The Adventures of Tantan* (1946-1993); *Sa'ad* (1969) and *Tantan* (1971-1991), will be studied to identify the changes to names in the texts of origin.

**Contributor Notes:** *I studied for my BA in the English Language (2004), before completing an MA in English Literature in modern novel (2006) both at the University of Mosul / Iraq. I have previously worked as a full-time lecturer at the University of Mosul / English Department where I taught Introduction to Literature, Short Story, Romantic Novel, and Modern Novel. I worked as a part-time lecturer at Bangor University where I taught the Arabic Language for the Non-Native Speakers. Also, I am currently a PhD candidate in English Literature / Arabic and English comic magazines and graphic novels. So far, my research focuses have centred primarily on the Arabic prints of The Adventures of Tintin in the Arab world, but I also have further research interests in the socio-cultural history of comics and graphic novels in general.*

**John Miers**  
Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London

### **The Borders are all (not) in Your Mind**

The widespread use of cognitive science by humanities scholars to describe both the affective and semiotic affordances of artworks has been labeled as the 'cognitive turn'. Comic scholarship within this paradigm has gravitated around the discipline of cognitive linguistics, with the best-known example being Neil Cohn's proposal of 'visual languages' that underwrite graphic storytelling. A substantial corpus of work has focused on applying George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's theory of Conceptual Metaphor to graphic narrative, with particularly significant contributions by Charles Forceville and Elisabeth El-Refaie.

Much – by no means all - of this work is concerned with employing developing understandings of cognition as a set of hermeneutic methodologies, and is not always accompanied by a detailed engagement with the model of cognition being used. This paper takes as its starting point Lawrence Barsalou's theory of 'Perceptual Symbol Systems', which proposes that our internal representations of concepts are not abstract, amodal symbols, as computational models of cognition attest, but are better described as multimodal simulators. In Barsalou's model, we understand concepts not by attaching labels to referents, but by running mental simulations of the bodily and perceptual experiences invoked by concepts. Our understanding of the term "Batman", for example, might be achieved by reliving our memories of canonical representations of the character, and the sensory experiences they evoke – the vertigo of standing on a high rooftop, the buckle and flutter of a curtain in the wind.

On this account, cognition itself is essentially borderless with regard to sensory modalities: it is through the activation of multiple, distributed synaptic connections, rather than discrete and dedicated neuronal groups, that representations can evoke the richness of lived experience. Rather than a linguistic characterisation of narrative drawing, then, this paper will argue, with reference to onomatopoeia and emanata, that the inherent multimodality of comics provides a rich analogy and illustration of Barsalou's model.

**Contributor Notes:** *John Miers is a cartoonist, and is currently completing his PhD on the use of visual metaphor in comics at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London. His research interests emerge from questions raised by practice: his PhD proposal was developed after presenting his pictographic comic Babel at the International Comic Arts Forum, and refined in response to his collaborative anthology Score and Script, named as one of the best independent comics of 2014 by Broken Frontier. He works in academic support at CSM, and is a lecturer in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture at Kingston University.*

**Chris Murray**

*University of Dundee*

### **Superheroes and Science Fiction**

Science Fiction is one of the key influences on the superhero genre, and the border between the concerns of the science fiction genre and the superhero genre are highly permeable. Moreover, British and American science fiction and superhero comics often have quite different imperatives that conflict with and comment on each other. This talk will briefly examine some of the British and American science fiction texts that played a part in the development of the notion of the superhuman as seen in comics. These include novels such as Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race* (1871), Wylie's *Gladiator* (1930), and Stapledon's *Odd John* (1935). It will also examine adaptations of these books into comics, and references to them, and the themes of science fiction, in various superhero comics. Finally, it will trace the influence of science fiction on writers such as Gardner Fox, Alan Moore, Grant Morrison, Mark Millar, and Warren Ellis, among others.

**Contributor Notes:** *Professor Christopher Murray is Chair of Comics Studies at the School of Humanities, University of Dundee. He is Associate Dean for Knowledge Exchange and Partnerships, leads the MLitt in Comics and Graphic Novels course, and is Director of the Scottish Centre for Comics Studies and Dundee Comics Creative Space. He has published on the British Superhero, Alan Moore and Grant Morrison, horror comics, comics and literature, and comics and propaganda. He is co-editor of Studies in Comics (Intellect) and UniVerse Comics, and co-organizer of the International Comics and Graphic Novel conference. He has written several comics based on research projects, including Alpha: The British Superhero (with various artists), Mary Shelley's Dundee (with art by Norrie Millar), and War of the Worlds: Battle of the Planets (with art by Helen Robinson).*

**Bruce Mutard**

*Edith Cowan University*

### **Comics in Space: At the Border between Comics and Art**

As Dr Bart Beaty showed in his book *Art Vs Comics*, there is a very wide border between comics and the world of the fine or 'high' arts, as represented by the gallery and museum infrastructure. In short, they don't like each other and sneer at one another in a manner not unlike the immigration debates taking place the world over. Thanks to the rise of museum showcases of Chris Ware, Robert Crumb, Dan Clowes and similar 'auteurs', comics creators and fans celebrate this as some kind of victory for their long cherished belief that comics are 'worthy', as if they ever really required the imprimatur of the Art world; it took long enough to get it from the Literary world (and even there, it's tenuous). This continued disjuncture will

forever remain a border, as comics are neither Literature or Art, but its own medium. Via the presentation of an exhibition of my work, *An Anzac Myth*—a comic created specifically to be encountered in space, not print—I would like to argue that comics have much more in common with visual art than literature. It appears very little research has been done to locate the images comics artists create, and the pictures they form, within the context of visual art history and theory, especially representational and narrative art. It is the subject of my PhD research starting this year, wherein I hope to a deeper and superior understanding of comics.

**Contributor Notes:** *Bruce Mutard is a comics writer, artist and researcher, whose books include: The Sacrifice, The Silence, A Mind of Love and The Bunker. He publishes other creators' comics under his own imprint, Fabliaux. He has presented papers, workshops and artist talks at writers festivals, University of Melbourne, Oxford University, Loughborough University, University of Arts London, TCAF, LICAF, ICAF, Comics Forum and Transitions among others. He is a PhD candidate at Edith Cowan University researching comics from a visual arts perspective. He is also working on his latest graphic novels, Bully Me and The Dust of Life.*

**Golnar Nabizadeh**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Visualising Difference in *Blue* by Pat Grant: Xenophobia and Graphic Narrative**

Published in 2012, Pat Grant's debut graphic novel, *Blue*, depicts life in Bolton, a fictional Australian town that receives migrants who look noticeably different from the established community. The story is narrated through the eyes of Christian who remembers the discovery of a body on the local train track, and a journey to witness it first-hand. While the central arc of the story is set during his teenage years, it includes other difficult encounters within the town. Specifically, Christian remembers the arrival of the foreigners (who Grant paints a dusky shade of blue), the racism that their arrival provokes, and questions that remain unanswered about what it means to belong—for Christian as much as for the foreigners. Christian's uneasy nostalgia depicts a community vulnerable to the ravages of time; and the work itself was self-published by Grant as a graphic novel. The genesis of the work arose from Grant's accidental presence at the 2005 Cronulla riots in Sydney, a clash between Anglo and Middle Eastern Australians that brought to the fore questions about racism and community in Australian society. Grant has suggested that "this country has a bad record when it comes to any kind of history", and this paper argues that the graphic novel form usefully recasts local history through a visual record that engages explicitly with notions of difference, national identity, and immigration. The comics form has had long-standing engagements with precarity, and I argue that comics are highly suited to exploring physical and political borders because of the medium's history as well as its formal properties. As such, the paper will locate the production of *Blue* against contemporary debates about immigration in an Australian context.

**Contributor Notes:** *Golnar Nabizadeh is Lecturer in Comics Studies at the University of Dundee where she teaches on the Comics & Graphic Novels MLitt, as well as undergraduate modules on film and literature. Her research interests are graphic justice, critical theory, trauma and memory studies. She has published on the work of Alison Bechdel, Marjane Satrapi, Shaun Tan, and the Australian online comic "At Work in Our Detention Centres: A Guard's Story", among others. She has a forthcoming monograph entitled Representation and Memory in Graphic Novels with Routledge.*



**Aura Nikkilä**  
*University of Turku*

### **Transnationalism in Tietäväinen**

Intertextuality can be seen as a process in which texts travel from a context to another carrying with them earlier meanings while acquiring also new ones. This paper focuses on the intertextual references found on the pages of *Näkymättömät kädet* (in English *Invisible Hands*), a graphic novel from 2011 by the Finnish comics artist Ville Tietäväinen. The graphic novel tells the story of Rashid, a poor Moroccan man, who illegally crosses the Mediterranean to Spain in search of work and a better life for him and his family. Tietäväinen's work deals with global inequality, irregular immigration, questions of ethnicity and racism, religion, honour and insanity. The intertextual references in this graphic novel originate from history, literature and popular culture, and are represented both in visual as well as in verbal forms. These references cross national and cultural borders, but also the borders of different media. Many of the references in *Näkymättömät kädet* stem from Spanish history and culture and highlight the entangled history of Europe and Africa, for example by referring to the historical Muslim domain of al-Andalus. Other ones refer to Finnish culture, and advance the possibility of a Finnish reader's identification with the immigrant characters of the fictional story. These allusions also draw parallels between the current immigration from African and Middle Eastern countries to Europe and the streams of Finnish migrants to Sweden after the Second World War. In this paper I analyse how these references cross different kinds of borders, and also propose that these crossings enhance the transnational thematics of Tietäväinen's graphic novel.

**Contributor Notes:** *Aura Nikkilä (MA) graduated in Art History from the University of Turku (Finland) in 2016. In her master's thesis she analysed the transnational elements in the graphic novel Näkymättömät kädet (2011) by Ville Tietäväinen. Nikkilä recently began working on her doctoral thesis that focuses on representations of migration in comics, main focus being on the role of photography in these narratives.*

**Chris O'Neill**  
*Aston University*

### **Sennep and the Ambiguities of Press Control under Vichy**

In the wake of the French defeat in the "*débâcle*" of 1940, the *zone libre* witnessed the birth of the new *État français*, after the armistice with Germany. The Vichy regime immediately set to creating a system of propaganda and censorship with the aim of harnessing support for the Vichy regime and Marshall Pétain. The area where the Vichy control of information was most closely felt was in newspapers. (Bellanger, 1975) This control of the press was intended to popularise both the Vichy regime and the National Revolution which had been designed to rebuild France to a position of strength. (Shields, 1980) This focus on control led to a press which was seen by the public as homogenous and strictly controlled, promoting the glories of the regime and providing no criticism. (Jackson, 2000). However, this historiography of the press under Vichy has focused almost solely on the written output of newspapers. Gervereau & Delporte (1990) highlight the work of political cartoonist Sennep as critical of the regime and the National Revolution, yet suffering no sanctions from the Vichy censor. This inconsistency within the censorship regulations has thus far been unexplained. This paper aims to demonstrate and explain the inconsistencies within press control under Vichy through the political cartoons of Sennep. This work will explore the ideological borders within Vichy between support of the state and dissent. This paper will also explore the aesthetic borders on the page, that imposed by the censor between the text and the *dessin de presse*.

**Contributor Notes:** *Chris is a final year PhD student at Aston University in Birmingham. His research currently focuses on political cartooning and censorship under Vichy. He also teaches French at Aston University. Other research interests include the French political*

system, *Bande Dessinée*, caricature, war in comics, representations of political figures in comics and France in the inter-war period. He is also interested in far-right politics in Europe, and the growth and the dédiabolisation of the Front National in France.

**James O'Ready**

*University of Dundee*

### **Kamala Khan and Gender**

G. Willow Wilson's *Ms Marvel* is a comic that explores the complexities of identity for a teenage Pakistani-American girl, Kamala Khan, in a post 9/11 world. This paper analyses how *Ms Marvel* deals with issues of identity, difference and representation as expressed through superheroics, education, pop culture, rebellion, religion, friends and family. It discusses the significance of a pluralistic approach, switching between the demands of American society and Islamic religion, in dealing with issues of integration and racism. In doing so it argues that the wider sociopolitical response to this character as an icon of Muslim-American inclusivity reflects profound changes in America itself, and ponders what this means in light of the rise of the alt-right and election of President Trump.

**Contributor Notes:** *James has written or drawn comics for Delcourt, Titan, Marvel, DC, & Rebellion and is represented by James Wills at Watson Little Ltd. He is studying for a Masters in Comics Studies, and working on an original graphic novel The Year We Buried Ourselves due out in 2018.*

**Stella Oh**

*Loyola Marymount University*

### **Living Dolls: Policing Borders in *Ghost in the Shell***

Looking at Masamune Shirow's manga *Ghost in the Shell* and Mamoru Oshii's 1995 animated feature of Shirow's manga and its 2004 sequel *Innocence*, this essay engages in visual and textual critiques of a global economy that traffics female bodies. *Ghost in the Shell* recount stories of young women who are commodified and turned into objects through a cyberization process that weaponizes them as instruments of capital. Through its multiple lenses of spectatorship, the manga and film adaptations of *Ghost in the Shell* reveal the blurring of national borders as well as borders between the human and alien. Female bodies are traded in a highly patriarchal economy that literally and figuratively commodifies the female body as alien; she is stateless and non-human, a cyborg other. Textual-visual arrangements are used to interrogate identity and question how we come to see ourselves as subjects in relation to other subjects, ourselves, and the tools by which we measure and/or articulate such relations and identities. Shirow's manga *Ghost in the Shell* and Oshii's film adaptations illustrate how female bodies are transformed into and trafficked across various boundaries as living dolls. The formal and stylistic crossings found within the comic architecture of *Ghost in the Shell* interrogate the ways in which textual and visual narratives can represent the landscape of subject constitution. In what ways do bodies that are rendered nonhuman under neocolonial and military occupations serve to police both domestic and global spaces?

**Contributor Notes:** *Stella Oh is Professor and Chair of the Department of Women and Gender Studies at Loyola Marymount University. Her research on gender, race, and graphic narratives has also appeared in numerous peer-reviewed journals such as MOSAIC, Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics, LIT: Literature Interpretation Theory, AJWS: Asian Journal of Women's Studies, and Concentric: Literary and Cultural Studies to name a few. She has also contributed chapters to scholarly collections including Mine Okubo: Following Her Own Road, Gendering the TransPacific, and Transnational Crossroads: Remapping the Americas and the Pacific. She is currently working on a monograph, Ghost Worlds: Intimate Shadows of War.*

**Joan Ormrod**

*Manchester Metropolitan University*

### **Bodies without Borders: Wonder Woman Does Emma Peel**

In the late 1960s many of the DC characters were reinvented to make them more relevant to countercultural and Civil Rights issues in America and to respond to changes in the superhero genre instigated by their rival, Marvel. In 1968 *Wonder Woman* renounced her powers, her lover, and turned her back on the Amazons to become Diana Prince, boutique owner, action chick and style icon. In doing so, she also discarded her patriotic costume based on the Stars and Stripes. In this new incarnation, as Diana Prince, she was mentored by I Ching, a wise Chinese mystic who taught her martial arts. Wonder Woman and her nemesis, Dr Cyber, travelled the world fighting each other through karate, wit and a stylish mod wardrobe. This paper examines influences of this incarnation in a growing group of stylish and powerful women such as Honey West, Emma Peel, Lady Penelope (*Thunderbirds*) and Modesty Blaise. These action women's bodies are stylish, signifiers of modernity, the *avant-garde*, consumerism and Helen Gurley Brown's new woman. Through the new woman's body of the mid 1960s, emerging second wave feminism and fashion, the paper examines how Diana Prince's body is able to negotiate the limitations of national boundaries that would have been closed to her in her super-powered body and also challenge the borders of the comics panel.

**Contributor Notes:** *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-). 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.*

**Luis Arturo Palacios**

**The Independent Comic in Cuba**

The our republic, the history of independent comic is more than dark, practically nonexistent, material and access to specialized literature limitations, not to mention publishers generally have prevented an approach to the production of our archipelago, so, if we add to this, the characteristics of domestic production constraints, we find that the comic is practically nil today. But, however, many young authors have opted for an alternative form of production, fanzines, have circulated, often hand in hand with different cartoons, aesthetic and content, reflecting an impressive underground world of those who love cartoon in Cuba. I would like to present some of the proposals that exist in the creative universe of the Cuban Cartoon, some authors and their works to show the creative diversity that exists on the island, this includes, publications, works, both in paper format as cartoons digital, animated comics and other proposals of the graphic work of the island.

**Contributor Notes:** *Luis Arturo Palacios is a painter and graduate of the National Academy of Fine Arts, San Alejandro. He is the winner of various awards in national caricature and cartoon competitions, and in digital art certificates in Cuba and abroad.*

**Nancy Pedri**

*Memorial University of Newfoundland*

### **Formal Expressions of Subjectivity in Graphic Memoir**

The comics panel, many comics critics will agree, is the medium's basic formal, structuring element (Groensteen, 2011; Kukkonen, 2013; Postema, 2013). But, as Randy Duncan, Matthew J. Smith, and Paul Levitz observe, "[t]he panel can be an elastic and even elusive concept" (2015). I set out to examine how the choice of borders of an image in graphic memoir confronts readers with the subjectively felt quality of experiences, perceptions, and events. I

propose to study not so much the placement of panels on a page, but rather their shape to ask how the use of panels in graphic memoir can serve to represent, but also multiply and fracture the outward manifestation of the protagonist's inward, subjective vision of self. I will engage my theory of focalization in comics to examine how the use of panels in graphic memoir can serve to impact subjectivity and inform the intersection of subjectivity and embodiment. I will draw examples from Al Davison's *The Spiral Cage*, Ellen Forney's *Marbles: Mania, Depression, Michelangelo, and Me*, and Una's *Becoming Unbecoming*.

**Contributor Notes:** Nancy Pedri is Professor of English at Memorial University of Newfoundland. Her major fields of research include word and image studies, photography in contemporary literature, and comics studies. She has edited 4 volumes devoted to the relationship of words and images in fiction and 1 on photography in comics, and 1 on mixed visual media in comics that will appear shortly in the peer-reviewed e-journal, *ImagText*. Her co-authored book, *Focalization in Action*, that examines the focalization concept in a broad range of comics is under review with Ohio State University Press. Her co-authored article, "Focalization in Graphic Narrative," won the 2012 Award for the best essay in *Narrative*.

**Lauranne Poharec**

*Memorial University of Newfoundland*

### **Split Panels**

"Polyptych" (McCloud, 1994), also known as "metapanel" (Eisner, 2008), or more simply as split panels are created when a "series of panels [. . .] also acts as a single unit" (Hatfield, 2005). Most scholarship published on the topic focuses on the generative tensions between time and space in this type of layout to emphasize either the passing of time in a specific context or, paradoxically, the (near) simultaneity of the scene depicted. Be that as it may, the locus of the discussion remains that of situational temporal ambiguity. My presentation will ask why some comic artists choose to add 'unnecessary' gutters to a single image that has already been temporally marked through speech bubbles. Moving away from considerations of time and space, I will use theories of focalization and intersubjectivity to consider what function the addition of seemingly superficial 'splitting borders' have within the narrative as a whole. More specifically, I intend to demonstrate that split panels can be used to represent the subjectivity of the self and others as being both divided and yet co-dependent on each other. My paper will use examples from comics by Glyn Dillon's *The Nao of Brown*, Mawil's *We Can Still Be Friends*, Alex Robinson's *Tricked*, and Craig Thompson's *Good-Bye, Chunky Rice*.

**Contributor Notes:** Lauranne Poharec is a Ph.D. student in English at Memorial University of Newfoundland, working under the supervision of Dr. Nancy Pedri. While her research deals primarily with strategies of visual storytelling, she is also interested in questions of representation in comics. She is currently editing a special issue of *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* on "Freaked and Othered Bodies" with Aidan Diamond. She can be reached at [lp0828@mun.ca](mailto:lp0828@mun.ca).

**Jesse Prevoo**

*Leiden University*

### **Temporality in Superhero Comics**

In *The Myth of Superman*, Umberto Eco argued that Superhero-comics have to make use of a cyclical temporality, since they are rooted in the mythical tradition of storytelling, while being told within the Romantic tradition; fully known stories that are able to surprise. But with the introduction of Batman (1939) linear time was introduced into superhero-comics. Superheroes started to evolve, grow and change throughout their stories. While the cyclical nature of Superhero-comics has long been held on to, but the growing worlds and continuing storylines inevitably created convoluted worlds that can be hard to understand and are likely to scare

readers away, or at least decrease the attraction of new readers. But, to overcome such problems, devices have been developed throughout the years. *Elsewords*, *What if...* and other series outside of continuity can be employed to overcome the problem presented by static heroes that can't help but grow. Other ways are Events, Reboots and Retcons. Events usually establish a new Status Quo for superheroes by creating a situation that makes past stories moot, or changes the world the heroes inhabit to a point where everything can start fresh, without losing any of the history of the characters. Reboots are more drastic: a hero, or even a whole universe is reset, started fresh without any baggage left over from the past. Retcons only remove some elements that hinder the progression of a character. I will argue that the development and use of these devices, while there is a general dislike amongst long-term readers, are necessary in this genre, to establish a form of storytelling in which growth is possible, while characters stay recognizable, through a specific temporality used in Superhero-comics.

**Contributor Notes:** *Jesse Prevoo is currently researching a methodology for the analysis and understanding of graphic narrative (and other forms of visual communication) at Leiden University, when not working as an Archivist for Research-institute TNO or writing book- and music-reviews for 8Weekly.nl. Trying to juggle research into comics with making a living and having a life – most of the time with little success. Several articles published (@Comicsgrid). Mostly focused on a narratological approach to comics.*

**Christian Quesnel**

*Université du Québec en Outaouais*

### **Visual Anacolutha: Temporal Pathways in Comics**

Temporal sequencing in comics' narrative structure is most often deployed through juxtaposition. Since the 1940s, the singular architecture of comics has allowed an exploration of the telescoping effect in the sequence of events, transporting the reader from one time to another and multiplies narrative possibilities. Documentary research examining approximately 50 comic books reveals the strategies that have been used in temporal play. The work of Thierry Groensteen (*Système de la bande dessinée 2*, 2011) and Nhu-Hoa Nguyen (*Narration graphique: l'ellipse comme figure et signe peircéen dans la bande dessinée*, 2009) shed some light on the concepts and limits of temporality in comics, enabling a consideration of using overlapping times through graphic methods. Creating a comic that experiments with this temporal layering through the use of visual anacolutha may allow a broadening of the limits established by temporal juxtaposition. A rhetorical figure borrowed from literature, the anacoluthon may help enrich the range of tools available to comic artists when used as a set of visual referents built around other forms such as metamorphosis, apparition and transposition.

**Contributor Notes:** *Christian Quesnel is a comic artist. Winner of the 2008 CALQ\* Prix à la création artistique, he also inaugurated CALQ's London studio in 2009. He has since been recipient of several awards for his comic books Cœurs d'Argile and Ludwig. He is an MA candidate at Université du Québec en Outaouais.*

**Katie Quinn**

*University of Dundee*

### **From Page to Stage: The Relationship Between Comics and The Theatre**

In 2017, the comics industry has a well-developed relationship with digital media. This conjunction is exemplified by the colonisation of comic conventions by Hollywood, television and games industries, personified by celebrity appearances at some of the larger events, such as the San Diego Comic Con. On-screen performances of comics and graphic novels now form part of mainstream culture, with even stereotypically indie work such as Daniel Clowes'

Ghost World being adapted to film. Despite the increasing popularity of comics and graphic novels and their representation within digital media, there are few adaptations of sequential art within another form of performance storytelling: the theatre. The topic of this paper addresses the as of yet under developed relationship between these forms of visual culture. The two art forms share a *mise-en-scène*; in that setting, characterisation and staging are key aspects of both. Planning and production of comics and theatrical productions share similarities. Each respective setting requires a script to provide structure and narrative flow; consideration must be given to appropriate scene design for the stage, as it must to the layout of panels and pages within comics.

To substantiate these claims, this paper examines existing theatrical adaptations of comics and graphic novels, and vice versa, establishing the reasons for adaptation, audience responses and critical review of the resulting performance. The study examines interviews with comics producers and theatre professionals to ascertain reasons for and against the adaptation of comics for the stage. Application of Walker and Chaplin's work on visual culture, and its analysis of high, middle and low brow culture to the comics and theatre mediums, contributes to analysis of the differences between these methods of storytelling.

**Contributor Notes:** *Katie Quinn is a freelance illustrator and comic book artist, with a background in community engagement. She has a BA (Hons) in Illustration, an MSc in Urban and Regional Planning, and is currently completing an MDes in Comics and Graphic Novels at the University of Dundee. She has a particular interest in creative community-based projects, decorative and editorial illustration; and autobiographical comics.*

**Candida Rifkind**

*University of Winnipeg*

### **Spectral Lines, Luminous Lives in Redniss's Bio of M. Curie**

Lauren Redniss's *Radioactive* (2010) reconstructs the life and legacy of Marie Curie in a graphic biography that falls somewhere between comic book, artist's book, and scrapbook. The polyvocal verbal track combines third-person narration with first-person reflections by Curie, quotations by other scientists, and testimonies by radiation poisoning survivors. The visual track is equally textured, crossing the borders between hand-drawn line sketches, painting, and illustrations on the one hand and reproductions of diagrams, maps, archival documents, and photographs on the other. These tracks intersect in a complex visual-verbal representation of Curie's life that extends beyond the usual parameters of biography to show the posthumous effects of her discovery of radium on subsequent generations and in various locations. This paper studies Redniss's use of illustrative and conceptual spectral lines to reconstruct Curie's life in an innovative graphic scientific biography that dwells on the borders of the private and public, magical and scientific, and autonomous and relational self. It argues that Redniss produces a metabiography of Curie that views her scientific work as a social process and draws her as a figure who is at once spectral and luminous: Redniss's version of Curie is a ghostly figure who haunts the atomic age she helped to launch and she is also a shining example of the early female scientist whose life narrative is instructive and edifying. I look briefly to the long tradition of educational comics about Marie Curie and then draw on recent theories of visual semiotics, female biography, and popular science writing to argue that the genre of graphic biography offers Redniss a visual polysemy appropriate to conveying the always unstable genre of biography (how can one truly know the life of an other?) and the uncertain field of atomic research (to what ends will the discovery of this volatile element be put?). My analysis of Redniss's eerie cyanotype images, disorienting page layouts, and collage techniques that echo the modernist avant-garde concludes that *Radioactive* reveals how the border between the seen and the unseen cuts across atomic science, biographical narrative, and visual storytelling.

**Contributor Notes:** *Candida Rifkind, Associate Professor in the Department of English at the University of Winnipeg, specializes in alternative and auto/bio comics and Canadian literature and culture. Her articles on comics appear in Canadian Review of American Studies, IJOCA,*

Biography, Canadian Literature and Cultural Memory, and Material Cultures in Canada, and she has published reflections on teaching and the future of graphic life narratives in a/b: Auto/biography Studies. Her co-edited scholarly collection, Canadian Graphic: Picturing Life Narratives, won the 2016 Gabrielle Roy Prize for the best book in English Canadian literary criticism. She serves on the Executive of the Comics Studies Society and the Advisory Board of the Canadian Society for the Study of Comics. She is currently writing a book about contemporary graphic biographies, researching refugee comics, and coordinating a bibliography of Indigenous comics in Canada.

**Rebecca Rosenberg**  
*Université de Nantes*

### **Limitless Suffering: Representing Depression in comics**

Catherine Lepage and Mademoiselle Caroline attempt to represent and conceptualise depression by creating relatable and recognisable scenes. Both texts are in diary format, charting each artist's personal experiences with depression. Lepage's *12 mois sans intérêt: Journal d'une depression* (2007) is a graphic novel comprised of a series of vignettes with different visual metaphors representing her psychological suffering. Mademoiselle Caroline's *Chute Libre: Carnets du Gouffre* (2013), is also a graphic novel depicting three instances of depression in the writer's life. She also attempts to represent her interior suffering through various pictorial and narrative methods. Both writers face the challenge of representing depression through images and text. Depression invades every part of their life and their body; it is a form of limitless suffering. Yet how do they allow psychological suffering to cross their bodily borders to become exteriorised and expressed in the texts? What metaphorical, imagistic and textual methods do the writers employ to attempt to convey depression?

The space of the graphic text becomes a site for Lepage and Mademoiselle Caroline to represent depression. Lepage uses collages of drawings, photographs and paintings combined with typed and handwritten text. Mademoiselle Caroline employs her typical cartoon style but also uses conceptual drawing in order to represent aspects of depression. This paper will explore how Lepage and Mademoiselle Caroline cross narrative and generic borders in order to represent suffering that knows no limits. It will discuss the potential of the space of the graphic text to represent seemingly unknowable and intangible suffering. Finally, it will explore how the writers cross their psychological and bodily borders in order to exteriorise the limitless suffering of depression.

**Contributor Notes:** *Rebecca Rosenberg is a lectrice d'anglais at the Université de Nantes, France. She completed her MA in French Literature and Culture at KCL in 2015, and is currently applying for doctoral study in the fields of Francophone contemporary women's writing, and trauma theory.*

**Julia Round**  
*Bournemouth University*

### **Buildings, Borders and Breakdowns in *Arkham Asylum***

This paper examines the ways in which Grant Morrison and Dave McKean's *Arkham Asylum* (DC Comics, 1989) deconstructs borders and inverts binaries. Using Gothic critical theory and this case study as a lens it will firstly argue that this comic exposes the way in which the superhero genre relies on constructed binaries. It further demonstrates the abject and psychoanalytic qualities of the superhero archetype. Finally, it shows how the comic's gothic narrative strategies (e.g. reader involvement, page architecture, and visual and conceptual excess via stylised collage art and a near-overwhelming use of symbolism and metaphor) subverts the superhero tradition and creates an abject, uncanny experience for the reader.



It begins by establishing Batman's gothic pedigree and using this character to demonstrate the divided state and fragmented identity of the superhero archetype, drawing on work from Carver, Monnet and Round. It moves swiftly to identify the surface gothic elements of *Arkham Asylum*: exploring psychological readings (Van Lieshout, Wurtz, Singer), arcane symbolism (moon, shadow, mirror, tower, and mother's son), and the house itself as an abject, liminal space (Van Lieshout, Wurtz). The main body of the paper then considers the formalist aspects of the comic more closely, firstly with reference to the reader. It shows how the overlapping tales require the reader to create a linear pathway through the diegetic space using interpretation. The book breaks down the border between reader and text, just as the borders between Batman and criminal are deconstructed. This message is reinforced by both the form and content of the comic: as the Mad Hatter explains 'PerHAPS IT'S **YOUR** HEAD, BATMAN. ARKHAM IS A **LOOKING GLASS**. AND **WE** ARE **YOU**.' In this quote, Gaspar Saladino's lettering draws attention to the cryptomimetic potential of comics: hiding 'our' within 'your' and thus merging – and inverting – self and other. The use of depth and bleeds on the page are also considered, alongside the excess of visual and verbal meaning that dominate the reader's experience. The paper argues that comics' narratology allows for the deconstruction of borders like this, and emphasises the Gothic content of this text.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Julia Round is a Principal Lecturer in the Faculty of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University, UK, and editor of Studies in Comics journal (Intellect). Her research and teaching interests include gothic, comics, and children's literature. She has recently published the book Gothic in Comics and Graphic Novels: A Critical Approach (McFarland, 2014) and the co-edited collection Real Lives Celebrity Stories (Bloomsbury, 2014). In 2015 she was awarded the Inge Award for Comics Scholarship (Popular Culture Association). She is currently working on a critical book and searchable database of the British girls' horror comic Misty. Further details at [www.juliaround.com](http://www.juliaround.com).*

**James Scorer**

*The University of Manchester*

### **Borders of Belonging in the Work of Power Paola**

In this paper I look at the borders of urban belonging in the work of Power Paola. Fusing travel with a nomadic sense of self, her graphic novel *Virus Tropical* (2011) relates the experiences of a peripatetic upbringing in Latin America. Here I focus on in particular at how Power Paola uses urban space to express the transition from childhood through adolescence, moving from the confines of domestic spaces and apartment blocks to the streets beyond, the latter heady with sexual awakening and the encounters that circulate around street art. In turn, I look at how her collection *qp* (2015) depicts the ups and downs of a relationship via an episodic assemblage of urban travel stories. Her work – and her comments on women within the world of comics – has synergies with a number of other works published in the US, particularly Julie Doucet's *My New York Diary* (1999). But Power Paola's is notably more transnational than these works, making her expression of the urban closer to Saskia Sassen's vision of the way that the world's major cities have formed a post-national urban network (1991). By taking in Quito, Cali and Bogotá alongside Paris, London and New York, however, Power Paola reminds us that we also need to think about how cities that do not have the same symbolic impact on a global scale nevertheless form part of the global urban landscape. She re-draws visions like those of Sassen by reinserting the peripheral – what is located at the extreme of or simply beyond the frame – into the blank spaces that sit at the borders of hegemonic global urban imaginaries.

**Contributor Notes:** *James Scorer is Senior Lecturer in Latin American Cultural Studies at the University of Manchester, where he is also co-director of the Centre for Latin American & Caribbean Studies. He is the author of City in Common: Culture and Community in Buenos Aires (SUNY, 2016) and the co-editor (with Jorge Catalá Carrasco and Paulo Drinot) of Comics and Memory in Latin America (Pittsburgh, 2017). He has also published articles on the graphic biographies of Che Guevara and Tintin's adventures in Latin America. He is*

currently the principal investigator for the Leverhulme-funded international network entitled 'Comics and the Latin American City'.

**Randy Scott**

*Michigan State University*

This paper will look at comic art in the Michigan State University Libraries collection.

**Contributor Notes:** *Randy Scott is original catalogue librarian, comic art bibliographer, and assistant head of special collections division at the Michigan State University Libraries.*

**Matthew Screech**

*Manchester Metropolitan University*

**May 1968 in *Bandes Dessinées***

The events of May 1968 have entered French popular mythology: May is widely perceived as an exemplary and transformative watershed; during May, in line with slogans such as “soyez réalistes, demandez l'impossible”, the normal rules ceased to apply, and anything became achievable. Much has been written about May. However, hardly anything has yet been said about the way the uprising is evoked in *bandes dessinées*. This article considers representations of May from the 1960s to the present, drawing on a range of BDs which have hitherto received little critical attention: political cartoons, historical reconstructions, graphic novels, satirical gags, counter-factual dystopias and more. My purpose is to examine how BDs creatively exploit the mythology that has grown up around May. Several artists build myths about May, others contest May's attendant mythology. However, they all demonstrate that May has come to be remembered via a collective deformation of reality, which no longer corresponds to historical fact. Time allowing we shall consider the following albums: Bodard and Yann, *Célestin Speculoos. Mai 68* (Glénat, 1993); Franc and Bureau, *Mai 68. Histoire d'un printemps* (Berg International, 2008); Grange and Tardi. *1968-2008. N'effacez pas nos traces !* (Casterman, 2008); *Pilote. 60 auteurs réinventent Mai 68* (Dargaud, 2008) ; Winz. *Le pavé originel* (Paris: Delcourt, 2009).

**Contributor Notes:** *Matthew Screech is senior lecturer in French at the Manchester Metropolitan University. He has written and published extensively about bandes dessinées including the book Masters of the Ninth Art (Liverpool University Press, 2005) as well as articles about Edmond Baudoin, adaptations of Voltaire and the use of Tintin in political cartoons. His most recent publication is a chapter titled 'Continuing Clear Line 1983-2013'. This is a study of how later artists have used Hergé's graphic style, published in The Comics of Hergé: When the Lines are not so Clear (University Press of Mississippi, 2016). Matthew is a founder member of the IBDS and he sits on the editorial board of European Comic Art.*

**Tom Sewel**

*University of Calgary*

**Liminal Matter: Comics as Objects**

This paper will explore the borders of the category of printed objects called comics by looking at a range of published literary objects which can be considered edge-cases in the conceptualization of comics as “sequential graphic art”. Drawing on theories of media materiality constructed by Bruno Latour, N. Katherine Hayles, and Marshall McLuhan, I will argue that the defining importance of the material substrate of comics is often overlooked as comics are reconfigured as infinitely reproducible digital art. Even within the category of comics, the boundary that separates those publications called “comics” from those called “graphic novels” is one that relies primarily on considerations of materiality. I will look at the

comic *Under* (2017), by Ola Olsen Lysgaard, a comic printed entirely without ink, which instead uses finely laser-cut pages to create layers of images that play off each other in unexpected juxtaposition as the reader proceeds through the book. I will argue that this kind of physical cutting and shaping of the matter of the page still produces a publication that is recognizably a comic, but which explicitly constructs meaning through its materiality in a similar way to *Tree of Codes* (2010) by Jonathan Safran Foer. I will look at other like publications to show how the category of comics increasingly includes these objects that defy any kind of easy digitization. I will connect that material defiance through books such as *House of Leaves* (2000) by Mark Z Danielewski, where meaning-making properties are fundamentally bound up with its physical printed form, to the experimental UV-sensitive comic *SVK* (2011) produced by BERG and Warren Ellis. Finally, I will turn to Thierry Groensteen's "Spatio-Topical System" (2007) and Nick Sousanis's *Unflattening* (2016) to explore how comics theorists might better account for issues of materiality in comics studies.

**Contributor Notes:** *Tom Sewel is a PhD candidate at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada, working at the intersection of comics and critical theory under the supervision of Dr Bart Beaty. A two-time Teaching Excellence Award recipient, he works as a research and administrative assistant to Dr Larissa Lai at The Insurgent Architects House for Creative Writing, is currently president of the University of Calgary English Department's Departmental Graduate Association, and was chair of the Free Exchange Graduate Conference for the last two years. His PhD research focuses on Derridean Hauntology and the comics of Warren Ellis.*

**Megan Sinclair**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Educating through Comics: Superheroes as Parables of Hope and Recovery**

My presentation aims to analyse the role of comics in education by addressing the genres of graphic medicine and the superhero. The talk will primarily focus on a comic specifically created to challenge and discuss the themes of my thesis, based upon a friend's experience of battling cancer and the positive aspects of using the superhero in medicine. I shall be using the comic in an educational environment, hosting workshops centred at children and medical academics and professionals on their responses and engagement with the source, in addition to similar texts that blend both genres. The initial findings gathered from these events will be used as part of my research. Other texts that shall feature within the presentation shall be Paul Dini's *Dark Knight: A True Batman Story*, which blends the borders of autobiography with fantasy, as Dini works through personal trauma using the superhero as a symbol and motif throughout his road to recovery. Similarly, I shall also reference the work of Susie Gander, who created the superhero *Perry Winkle* as a stand in for herself during her battle with cancer, using the character to physically fight the disease. These texts will further demonstrate the positive and educational value of using the superhero in a medical setting and will provide a greater insight into the decisions made in the creational process of my own comic. The aim of the talk shall be to discuss my ongoing work and show key examples of the benefits of merging two seemingly contrasting genres in order to aid the healing process, showing not only how these sources provide a potential entry point of understanding to younger readers but how they are universally approachable and powerful.

**Contributor Notes:** *Megan Sinclair is a PhD student at the University of Dundee where she studies Comics and Education. As part of her thesis she is examining how the superhero can be used as an educational tool to discuss healthcare and illness.*

**George P. Stremplis**  
*Aristotle University of Thessaloniki*

### **Cyberman: Identity, Reality and Science Fiction**

Human existence was always confined within the borders of its organic corporal state of being. Transhumanists have long been promising to cross these borders, while they foresee a future based on speculative advances in technology, one of them being the brain reconstruction (or mind uploading) in an artificial/robotic body. Despite, though, Transhumanism's in favor position of transitioning from an organic body to an artificial one, there is still an essential problem that derives from the implementation of this method.

What I propose is to question whether it is possible for personal identity to survive after abolishing the organic human body for a non-organic one. The boundaries set by the organic body are important factors towards formulating our identity, since the biological aspect of our existence tends to inform the way we perceive ourselves, the world, and reality itself. I wish to underline that by eradicating the biological condition of being for an enhanced mind in a robotic body we face the disfigurement of personal identity. What Homo sapiens will really have in common with Homo cyberneticus? The very core of their existence is going to be completely foreign to each other. So is it really beneficial for humanity to cross the borders of Homo sapiens and turn itself into Homo cyberneticus? Finally, I wish to address this question under a different scope. The fear of a lost identity as a result of a biotechnological outbreak can be explored by crossing the borders of reality towards the realm of science fiction. Specifically, in the episodes "Rise of the Cybermen" and "Age of Steel" of BBC's Doctor Who series, Tom McRae is portraying the genesis of this Homo cyberneticus as a result of the literal transfer of the mind in a cyber-body, with personal identity traded for a hive-like mind that abolishes what is conceived as physical and emotional weakness. I believe that by examining this interpretation of Homo cyberneticus within the borders of television we are able to better understand the importance of safeguarding our personal identity against the false prophets of Transhumanism.

**Contributor Notes:** *My name is George Stremplis. I recently finished my Master's Degree in Ethical Philosophy and Bioethics in Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. During my Master's, I focused on Aristotle, Bioethics and the Transhumanist movement. My dissertation was on an Aristotelian critique of the Transhumanist movement. I have been a Scientific Collaborator of the "Interdisciplinary Centre for Aristotle Studies," A.U.Th., since 2015. I am currently interested in pursuing a PhD in Bioethics and its connection with popular culture. Since January 2017, I started my own blog on the relation between science fiction and philosophy named "The ComicBook Imperative". You can contact me at: [georgestremplis@gmail.com](mailto:georgestremplis@gmail.com)*

**Camilia Storskog**  
*University of Milan*

### **Border breaking in Kverneland's *Munch***

Steffen Kverneland's award-winning graphic novel *Munch* (Oslo, No Comprendo Press, 2013), dedicated to the life of the painter Edvard Munch (1863-1944), is a singular contribution to the genre of the artist's biography. Here, the life of the artist is presented through episodes that shun linear chronology and the presumed objectivity of the biographer. Instead, Kverneland makes a point of telling a subjective story in which his own autobiographical discourse – also visualized in panel sequences - plays an important part within the bio. As biography and autobiography overlap, the reader is invited on a journey crossing temporal and spatial borders: while Kverneland, the comics persona, enters the *fin de siècle* milieu of Edvard Munch, the centennial paintings of the artist are, likewise, transported into the 21st century. Kverneland's work is also an interesting example of how photographs and photographic realism, cartoonish caricatures and the fine arts co-exist in the comic book-format. My paper

will explore borders and border crossing in relation to literary genres, time and space, and the aesthetics of the comics page.

**Contributor Notes:** *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.*

**Andreas Stuhlmann and Sebastian Bartosch**  
*University of Alberta and Universität Hamburg*

### **Memory and Migration in Bulling and Weyhe**

As Jared Gardner has argued, the panels, drawings, balloons and texts of comics always remain visible as lines, thus reminding us of the medium's very own 'boundaries, frames, and limitations', the ways in which these borders are enacted and how they can be contested (2006). In recent years, the aesthetic properties of comics, their use of iconographies and symbols, have been connected to a true potential to transgress national and/or cultural borders and to appeal to culturally diverse audiences (Royal 2010; Denson, Meyer and Stein 2013). This, however, raises the more complex question exactly how different cultures and their boundaries can become visible (or remain invisible) on the comics page, and how this, in turn, relates to the cultural processes and power relations that shape our notion of different cultures, borders and their possible transgression (Ayaka/Hague 2015). In our paper, we want to explore how these visible and invisible borders are represented in two recent German comics dealing with migration: Paul Bulling's *Im Land der Frühaufsteher* (2012) describes the desolate situation of a group of African refugees in a camp in the federal state of Sachsen-Anhalt and the difficulties locals encounter who want to step up to the challenge and help them to integrate into the community. Birgit Weyhe's *Madgermanes* (2016) tells the story of a group of Mozambiquians who came to the GDR in the early 1980s as foreign workers to face systemic discrimination and exploitation, fell into depression and experienced abuse abroad and back at home. Eventually, they saw their plans for the future crushed and their lives derailed and were each forced to rebuild their lives from shattered dreams. While both books received critical acclaim and were highly decorated, they also speak to the experience of the many invisible boundaries female comic artists still have to overcome.

**Contributor Notes:** *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 and 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 is a PhD student of the 'Humanities' doctoral programme at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Hamburg, where he is also a member of the Research Center for Graphic Literature (ArGL). His PhD thesis focuses on the medium-specificity of comics and its ongoing rearticulation within intermedial relations and remediation processes.*

**Lise Tannahill**  
*University of Glasgow*

### **Plogoff: Resistance and Community in Brittany**

Brittany has been a popular setting for creators of *bandes dessinées* (BD) from the early stereotypical representations of *Les Aventures de Bécassine* (Caumery & J.P. Pinchon, 1905-1939) to the recent works of Weber and Nicoby (*Ouessantines*, *Belle-Île en père* (Vents d'Ouest, 2014/2015), via the work of Bruno le Floc'h and others. Many *bande dessinée*

depictions of Brittany use folkloric representations of regional culture which are based on pre-existing historical tropes and stereotypes dating from the time of the revolution. However, recent years have seen the publication of an increasing number of *bandes dessinées* set in Brittany which challenge these folkloric representations. One of the most notable examples of this trend is *Plogoff* (Delcourt, 2013) by Delphine Le Lay and Alexis Horellou, a graphic retelling of mass protests against plans to build a nuclear power plant in the Finistère in the late 1970s. This paper will discuss *Plogoff* as an alternative to more common stereotypical visions of Brittany. *Plogoff* is notable firstly as it depicts a contemporary, modern Brittany instead of a historical narrative. This modernity of the representation means that common Breton *bande dessinée* tropes (traditional dress, poverty, rurality, piety) are largely absent, and the authors must depict other markers of 'Bretonness'. Additionally, *Plogoff* is unusual in representing a Breton *community* and how that community works together to defend against perceived imposition by external forces (in this case, the French government and national electricity supplier). Realistic representations of life in Brittany are rare in *bandes dessinées* and as such, *Plogoff* is a valuable resource when considering new versions of Breton communities in the medium.

**Contributor Notes:** *Lise Tannahill is an early career researcher who recently graduated with a PhD in French Studies from the University of Glasgow. Research interests include regional identities, minority language communities and comics studies. She is a member of the Editorial Board of The Comics Grid and maintains the web presence and social media of the International Bande Dessinée Society.*

**Phillip Vaughan**  
*University of Dundee*

### **Warriors of the Wasteland: The Origins and Influence of *Warrior***

Dez Skinn's company, Quality Communications published *Warrior* between 1982 and 1985. The black and white monthly was an anthology featuring early work from creators such as Alan Moore, Alan Davis, Steve Dillon, David Lloyd and Steve Parkhouse. The comic is probably best known as the home of *V for Vendetta* (in its original black and white version) and the Alan Moore's update and Meta reinvention of *Marvelman* (subsequently known as *Miracleman*). This comic, although not without controversy, was a creator owned enterprise, which appealed to the writers and artists who contributed to it over its 26 monthly issues. This paper, drawing on a lengthy interview with Dez Skinn, will look at *Warrior*'s inception, its unique line up of stories, its often outspoken creators, the early forum of its 'Dispatches' letters page and the problems the creator owned model created for the editor Dez Skinn.

**Contributor Notes:** *Phillip Vaughan is the Course Director for the MDes in Comics & Graphic Novels and the MSc Animation & VFX programmes and the creator and coordinator of the Level 3 Comic Art & Graphic Novels module at the University of Dundee. He is also the art Director for the Dundee Comics Creative Space.*

**Francisco Veloso**  
*The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

### **Page Layouts from 1940 to 2010**

One of the challenges in the development of Comics Studies as a legitimate area of research is the establishment of a more systematic approach to the description, annotation and analysis of comic books – used here as an umbrella-term to refer to different traditions of sequential art. The possibility of replication of a given study provided certain conditions are met is a basic requirement in science, which raises the challenge of achieving reliable characterisations of selected properties of the 'data' – in this case, comic books. Comic books are valuable not only in their potential to tell so many different stories, that is, at a content level. They are also

important as providing a historical mapping of the development of visual semiotic artefacts that require some level of systematic organization, which can then be used to set out a historical mapping of the development of visual communication since early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In pursuit of this goal, this presentation reports on recent developments in the elaboration of a systematic description of the page composition of visual narratives such as comics and graphic novels (Bateman et al, 2016). The second stage of this research has involved the fine-graining of categories, and their application to the annotation of a corpus of super-hero comic books published in the USA, between 1940 and 2010, with a total of 1260 comic book pages. Preliminary results suggest an increasing expansion of the semiotic potential in comics, moving from grid-based layout into different possibilities of geometric transformation.

**Contributor Notes:** *Dr Francisco O. Dourado Veloso is currently Assistant Professor at the Department of English at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He holds a PhD in Applied Linguistics from the Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina - UFSC, Brazil. His research interests include popular culture, comic books, media and semiotics, from a Systemic-Functional Linguistic perspective. Currently, his main research project aims to develop a system network and an annotation scheme for the description of comic book page layout and identification of semiotic properties inherent to comic book narratives.*

**Anna Vuorinne**

*University of Turku*

### **Immigration in Bulling**

Immigration has been one of the most debated topics in Europe for the past few years. The public discourse has been dominated by two opposites: nationalists have stated that immigration endangers European culture, economy and safety while human rights activists have declared: "Refugees welcome". German comic artist Paula Bulling takes part in this conversation through her documentary comic *Im Land der Frühaufsteher* (2012) which critically comments the conditions of the asylum seekers in Germany but also reflects the problematics of telling this story as a non-immigrant. Is it possible to understand and represent everyday racism and alienation experienced by others through the medium of comics? Or rather, are graphic narratives doomed to "produce white pictures of black people" as Paula's friend puts it in the comic? This paper focuses on the relationship of immigration and narrative ethics in Bulling's documentary comic. I will analyse how the comic engages with the ethical questions linked to immigration, human rights and Otherness both on the level of the content and the form. What is told of the lives and identities of the asylum seekers and which issues of the German immigration politics are raised? How are the narrative and aesthetic strategies of comics deployed to explore the ethical complexities? Hillary Chute has proposed that the multimodal form of comics may have some unique possibilities to deal ethically with complex and traumatic events. This paper also traces the ethical potential of the medium by suggesting that comics can both highlight the problematics of immigration narratives and create strategies to ethically tell stories of others.

**Contributor Notes:** *Anna Vuorinne is a PhD student in the department of Comparative Literature in the University of Turku, Finland. In her dissertation she focuses on the ethical dimensions of storytelling in contemporary German comics about migration. She is interested in the multimodal narrative strategies that graphic storytelling provides for encountering and understanding migration. Her research interests include documentary comics, narrative ethics, and memory studies.*



**Yao Zhao**

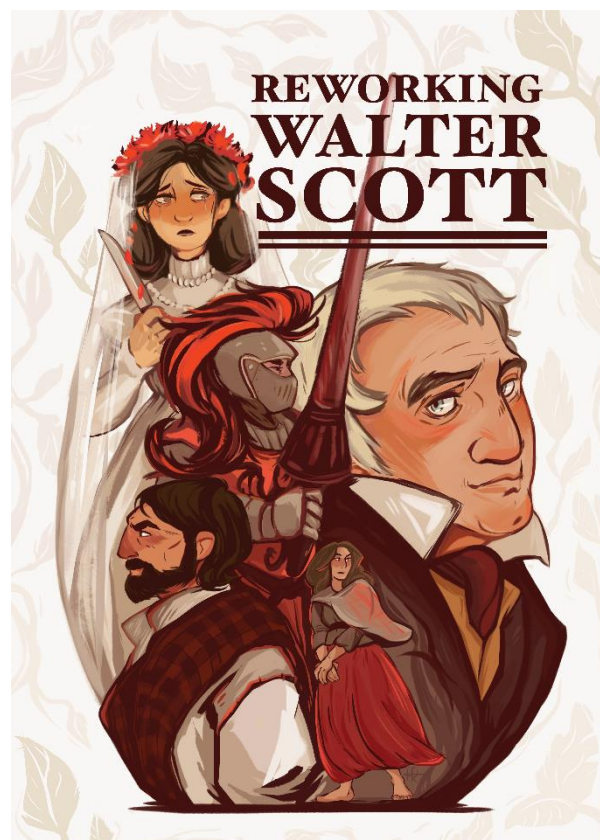
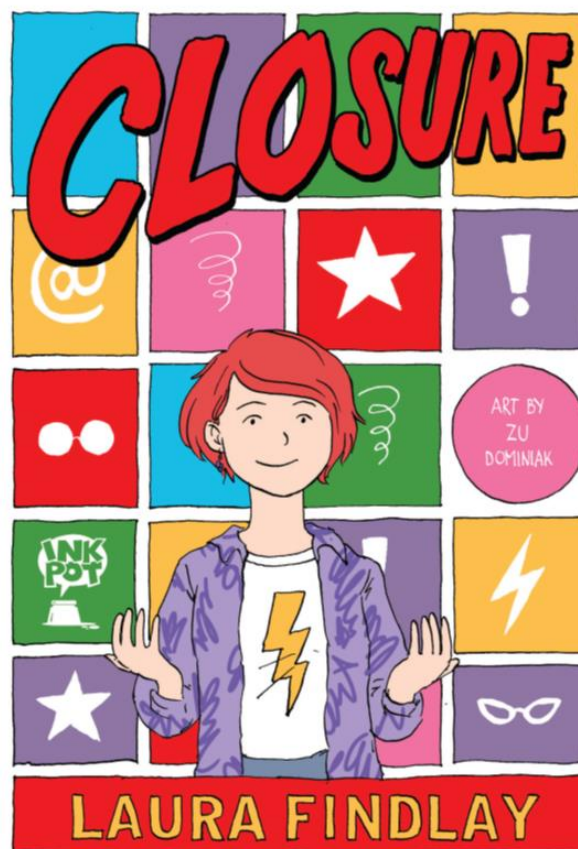
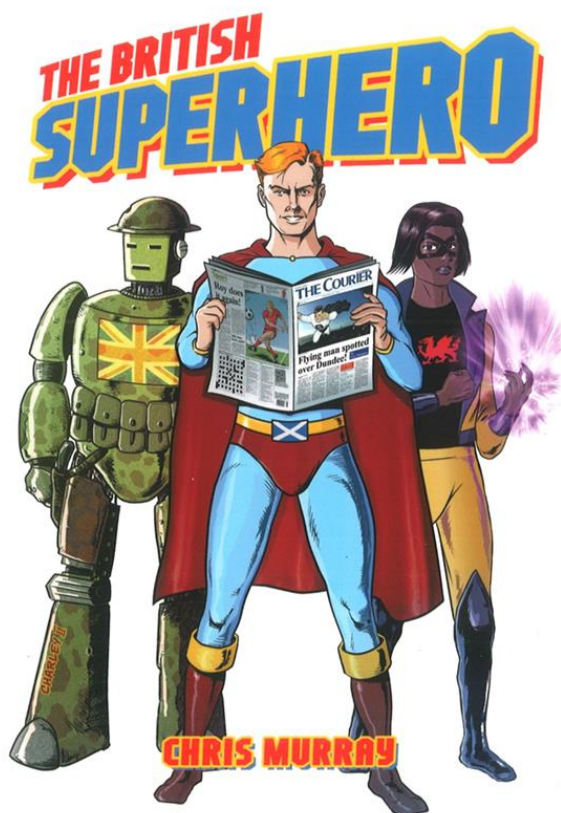
*University of Leeds*

### **Animal Theme Preferences in Chinese and Anglophone Yaoi Fandom**

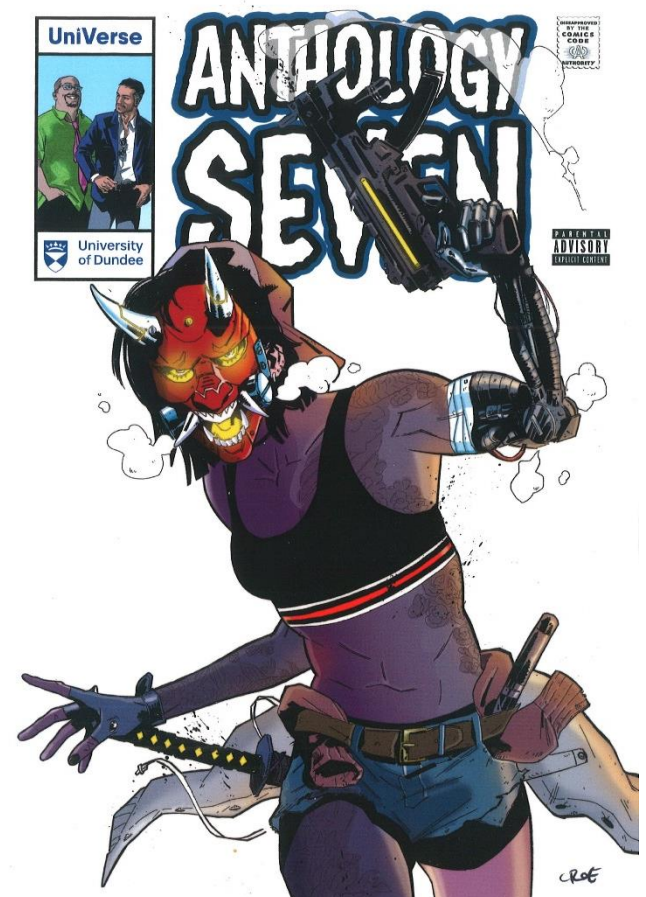
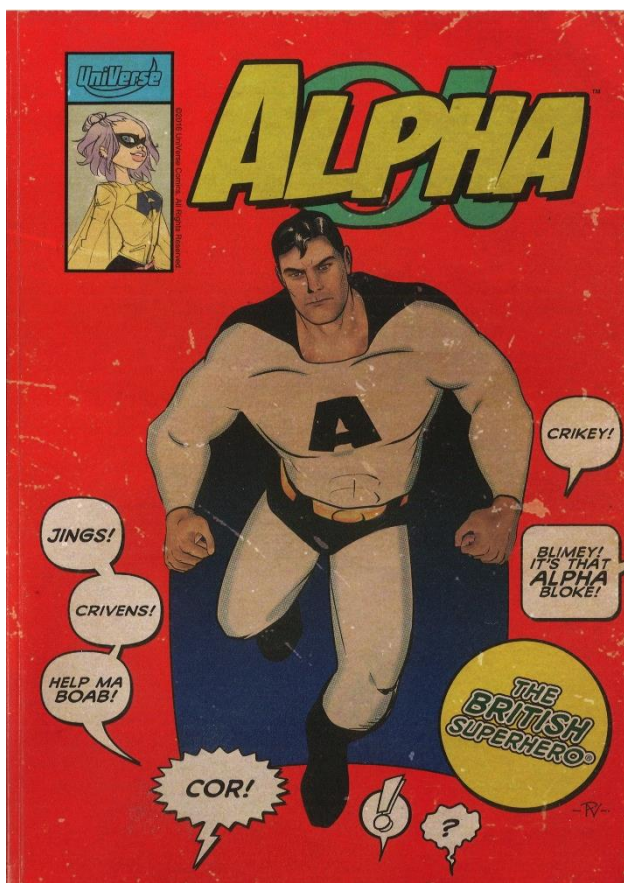
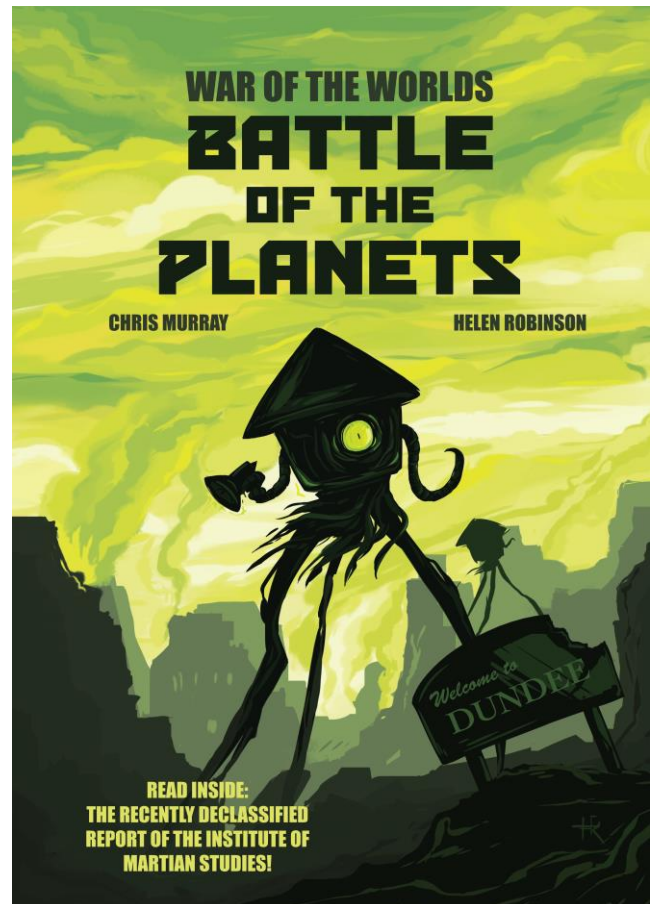
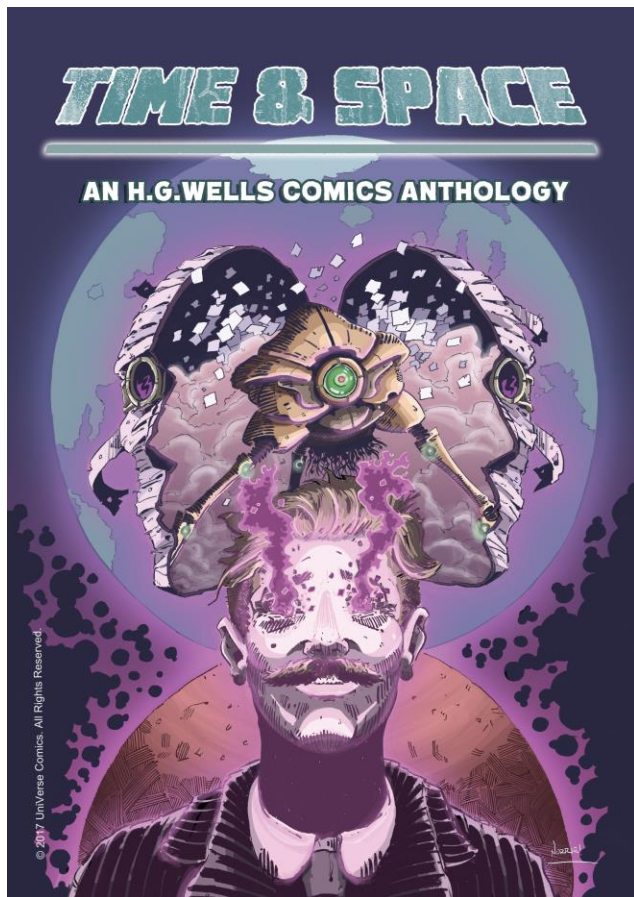
Yaoi or BL (Boys' Love) is a genre of Japanese subculture presenting in comics, videogames, novels and fan art which describe the fantasy erotic and romantic relationships between men. Yaoi is a female-oriented subculture which, since its origins in the early 1970s, has spread globally, especially during the 1990s. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, yaoi has become extremely popular in China. This presentation will explore the different preference for animal-related themes between Anglophone and Chinese fandoms comparing the results of a survey with an English version (n=2417) and Chinese version (n=1129). The survey includes 43 questions. Those relevant to animal themes appear in the options provided on 'risqué sexual content' and the options provided on 'specific elements' in yaoi. The survey results demonstrate that animal themes are popular for Chinese fans, whether or not associated with sexual content. On the other hand, the Anglophone survey results showed animal themes to be generally less popular, while demonstrating differences between simple animal elements (ears or tails) and animals as whole creations who can have sex with humans or who transform into human shape. Chinese yaoi - both original and fan work - has developed a particular style based on Chinese mythology, history, folktale. Animal themes are common in traditional Chinese mythology and folktale in which animals are presented as showing emotion, having sensations, and demonstrable intellect much like humanity. Although imported Japanese manga, anime, and video game brings many animal themed contents to an Anglophone audience, animal themes involving sexual contents may present an interesting cultural boundary.

**Contributor Notes:** *Yao Zhao is a doctoral student in the School of Psychology, University of Leeds, UK. Her research focused on 'Understanding Yaoi/Boys' Love Chinese Fandom' and she is supervised by Professor Anna Madill. Yao was born in Kunming in Yunnan Province, South West China, and obtained her Bachelor of Science in Psychology at the Australia National University.*

Look out for these at the launch event!





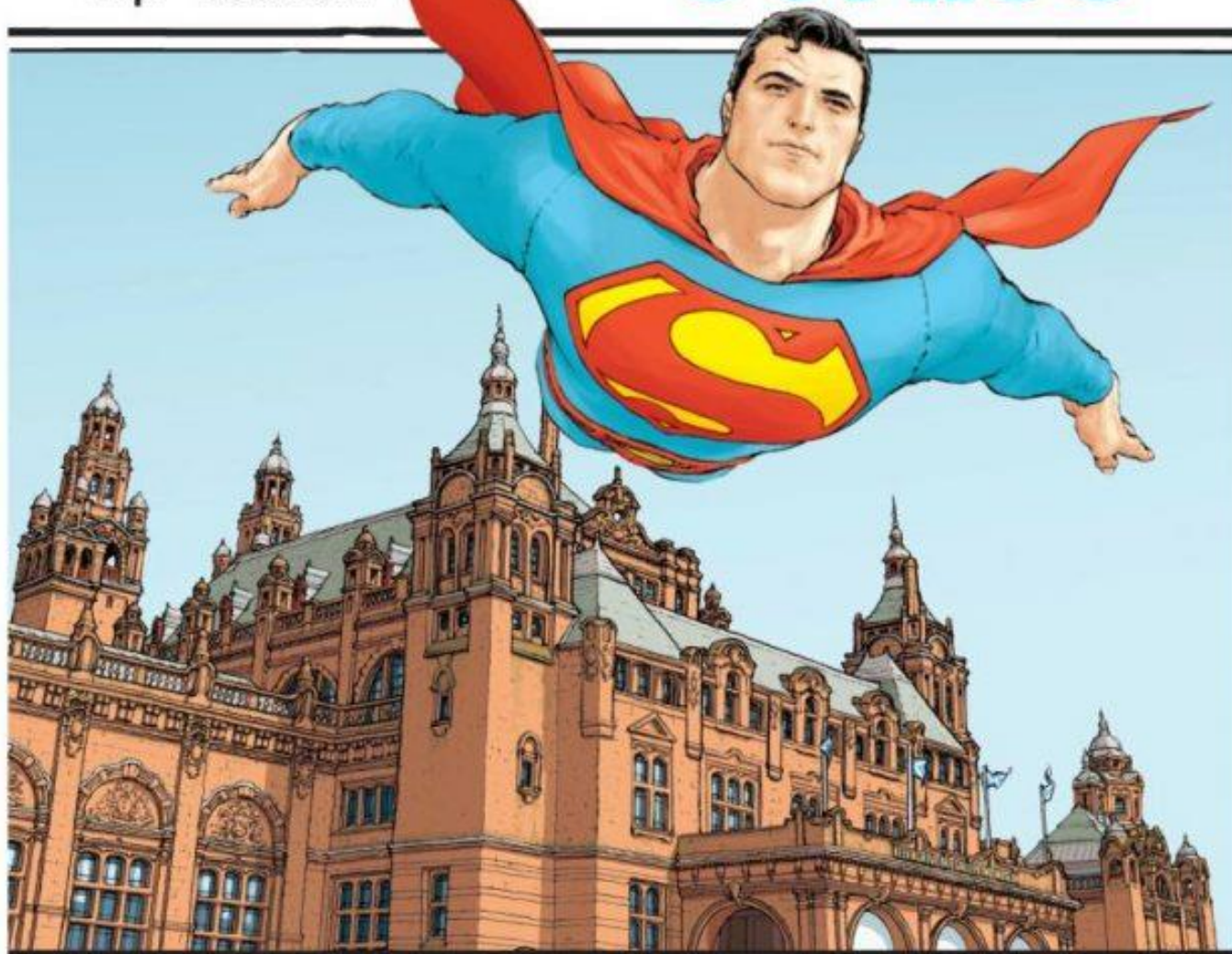






# FRANK QUITELY THE ART OF COMICS

1 Apr–1 Oct 2017



## FROM KRYPTON TO KELVINGROVE

Family £15 - Child £3 - Adult £7/£5 - Tickets with gift aid donation available

Join our Supporters Club for free vouchers and discounts



Book tickets online at  
[www.glasgowmuseums.com](http://www.glasgowmuseums.com)  
or call 0141 353 8000

Superman™ & © DC Comics / Artwork © Frank Quitely

**forbiddenplanet**  
international

PARTNER



