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Welcome to Comics Forum 2011

2011 has been a year of pleasant stability for comics scholarship in the UK. New issues of the now well-established *European Comic Art*, *Studies in Comics* and the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* have been published with reassuring regularity. Recurring conferences have come and gone, the annual event in Manchester (moving to Bournemouth next year), and the seventh International *Bande-Dessinée* Society conference forming the centrepiece of the comics scholarship year with a joint event spanning four days in July. Superbly organised by David Huxley, Chris Murray, Joan Ormrod, Julia Round and Mat Screech, the conference brought together a huge array of speakers from around the world, and demonstrated the breadth and depth of comics scholarship on an international scale. Transitions 2, organised by Tony Venezia, took place in London earlier this month, providing the capital with its own very engaging event combining 'guerilla qualities with a more active engagement with recent research trends across disciplines' to borrow a few words from Tony himself, and we can look forward to Transitions 3 next year. More thematically specific conferences such as the Comics and Conflicts conference at the International War Museum, which was organised by Ariel Kahn, Paul Gravett and Alex Fitch have also contributed to a sense that the field is not only thriving, but moving forward with purpose.

The twin goals of stability and progress have been key drivers for Comics Forum as it

moves into its third year. The annual conference has been expanded to three days after a very enjoyable two days in 2010 that saw CF feature Women in Comics II as its guest conference. This year, I'm delighted to welcome Sculpture and Comic Art, organised by Kirstie Gregory and Jon Wood of the Henry Moore Institute, and Graphic Medicine: Visualizing the Stigma of Illness, which has been put together by Ian Williams, Maria Vaccarella and Columba Quigley. Both events have wonderful line-ups and it's a real privilege to be able to feature them as part of Comics Forum 2011.

This year also saw the launch of the Comics Forum website at <http://comicsforum.org>. While the conference serves as an annual showcase of comics scholarship, the hope with the website is to establish an "always on" hub for comics scholarship that provides resources and information to help the community to develop further. In addition to information about the Comics Forum conference, the site features columns and articles from a number of writers on a wide array of subjects, and a selection of downloadable resources. Having only been active for just over six months at the time of this writing, the site is still very much in its infancy, but a number of exciting developments are already in the works for further services to be added to it (see the Comics Forum section at the back of this booklet for more on these).

Ultimately though, none of this progress could have been made without the hard work and enthusiasm of the many scholars and creators who have contributed to this growing field. Comics Forum has certainly benefitted from a broad base of support since its inception, and I am extremely grateful for the input that has been offered to me throughout the event's history. Special thanks must go to Hugo Frey, who has been endlessly patient with my somewhat gung-ho approach to conference organisation, to Lisa Wood and Clark Burscough for their enthusiasm and activism in pushing the event forward as part of the Thought Bubble festival each year, to Roger Sabin and Mel Gibson for their sage advice, to Hattie Kennedy and Emily Rabone for agreeing to give their time and effort to

make sure the event runs smoothly, to Ben Gaskell for his wonderful eye for design and his incredible willingness to go beyond the call of duty, to Chris Jannides for his technical assistance, to Ian Williams and Kirstie Gregory and their respective teams for putting up with my high-endless requests for details and documents, and to Hannah Wadle for her constant support and understanding, all of which have made running Comics Forum far easier than it could have been. Finally, a huge thank you to all the speakers who have put together papers for Comics Forum 2011 and to all those who have come along to be in the audience. Your efforts have made this event possible and they are much appreciated by me and all the other conference organisers.

Ian Hague

Director, Comics Forum

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Sculpture and Comic Art

Sculpture and Comic Art: Programme

1000-1015: Registration

1020-1025: Welcome to Comics Forum

Ian Hague

1025-1030: Introduction to the Henry Moore Institute

Lisa Le Feuvre, Head of Sculpture Studies, Henry Moore Institute

1030-1045: Introduction to Sculpture & Comic Art

[Kirstie Gregory](#), Henry Moore Institute

1045-1230: Session 1

Panel 1: Historical Interrelationships

Chair: [Chris Bloor](#)

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The Superhero Genre and Sculptural Form: From Antiquity to Now

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The Visual Power of Sculpted Caricatures and Comic Lithographs

[Ian Kirkpatrick](#) p.8

From Classics to Comics: Hero, Myth and Narrative in Contemporary Sculpture

1230-1330: Lunch

1330-1500: Session 2

Panel 2: Monuments and Multiples

Chair: [Paul Gravett](#)

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Smithson Entropy and the New Comedy

[Stuart Burch](#) p.10

Statue of Judgement: Estonia's Bronze Soldier from a Dreddful perspective

1500-1530: Break

1530-1730: Session 3

Panel 3: Expanded Space

Chair: [Jon Wood](#)

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The Beginnings of Comic Language in Spatial Terms

[Dan Smith](#) p.12

Space and Excavation in the Work of Olivia Plender

[Catherine Labio](#) p.13

Comics' Third Dimension

1730-1900 (Henry Moore Institute): Wine Reception

Artists [Paul McDevitt](#) and [Cornelius Quabeck](#) will be producing comics-themed art throughout this day of the conference in the lecture theatre.

The Superhero Genre and Sculptural Form – From Antiquity to Now

Richard Reynolds

The superhero narrative is essentially an urban art form, and the artists and writers who have worked in this genre have frequently lived within easy distance of some of the world's greatest museums. Sculptural forms from Greece, Italy and elsewhere - seen at first hand in the collections of these great institutions - have been a key influence on the work of such masters of sequential art as CC Beck, Harry G Peter, Jack Kirby, John Buscema, Frank Miller, Dave Gibbons and many others. Their work is clearly informed by the sculpture of Antiquity (including not just the Greek and Roman world but also the art of Egypt, India and elsewhere), as well as the Renaissance, Mannerist and neo-Classical schools.

Sculpture has influenced the superhero narrative in a variety of ways. The costume and physical form of the heroes, heroines and villains (such as Wonder Woman, The Flash, Thor, Hercules, Galactus and Adrian Veidt) can be compared in many cases to specific analogues held in the collections of, for instance, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Many such specific influences in the realization of character and costume can be traced, yet the relationship between sculpture and the superhero is more profound than a simple raiding of the historical locker for a ready supply of costume details, or heroic physical form and movement. Through its appropriation of the heroic tradition in art, the superhero genre has become a key conduit for the reinvention of many themes of heroic sculpture (and painting) that have become disassociated from the discourse of contemporary fine art.

I have worked in publishing for 28 years, and have commissioned academic and professional books in (among other fields) history, art, design, film and film studies, and cultural studies. My own publishing company, Reynolds & Hearn Ltd, was involved in film, media and graphic novel publishing from 1999 to 2010.

I now lecture on the MA Applied Imagination course at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London, and have acted as a tutor/examiner and visiting lecturer for most of the other constituent colleges of the University of the Arts, London. I have lectured about comics and their relationship to other art forms in museums and art galleries in the UK and the USA, and chaired or participated in discussion panels at numerous comics-related events, and also on UK radio and television. I have been reading and collecting comics, including superhero comics, since 1978. I also write (under a pen name) illustrated works about such subjects such as photography, film and rock music.

The present lecture is in some ways a development of my thinking about the semiotic and mythic content of superhero comics that informed my first book, *Superheroes: A Modern Mythology*. It is also a preview of the content of a longer work (in progress), with the working title *Superculture: The Culture of Superheroes*. An edited chapter from *Superculture* is due to be published in *What is a Superhero?*, edited by Peter Coogan and Robin Rosenberg, forthcoming, Oxford University Press, New York.

The Visual Power of Sculpted Caricatures and Comic Lithographs

Florence Quideau

My proposal argues that sculpted caricatures and comic lithographs have an indelible visual power. It also addresses the reversed practice of basing two-dimensional depictions by using three-dimensional caricatural statuettes, an unusual method that emerged in Paris in the 1830s.

By the same token, satirical journals and caricatural albums published single vignettes of politicians, theatrical celebrities, writers, and individual of renown who were subjected to the sharp wit of “low-brow” artists. Lithographs were often based on three-dimensional caricatures made by reputed sculptor Dantan-Jeune: having a sculpted caricature by Dantan-Jeune meant that one had achieved greatness. Honoré Daumier focused on politicians to create his series of caricatural busts. Dantan-Jeune was apolitical, which allowed him the freedom to sell his statuettes to an ever-growing clientele and to publish lithographic albums based on the three-dimensional caricatures.

Today, Honoré de Balzac is remembered by the statue that Auguste Rodin made in 1897. However, Balzac was known for decades by Dantan-Jeune’s two caricatural statuettes that the writer first welcomed as the cornerstone of his celebrity. Within a year, Balzac loathed the statuettes and their lithographic counterparts because they had become visual references of his likeness. He set out to legally control the diffusion of his portraits and caricatures, yet was unable to stop their production. Balzac tried to regain credibility by commissioning a portrait shown at the official Salon. The attempt failed and the caricatures remained the best known “portraits” of Balzac for over twenty years.

Florence Quideau specializes in the social, political, and cultural history of 19th-century non-academic French art. She has earned her B.A. at the City University of New York and, in 2011, completed her doctorate at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Her dissertation, “Origins of Modernism in French Romantic Sculpture”, repositioned the place of four artists within the current discussion of Modern sculpture. She argued that their portrait-busts and caricatures shattered artistic, political, social, and commercial expectations in the 1830s. They showed innovation through their use of physiognomy and phrenology and subverted artistic expectations by making lithographs based on their three-dimensional counterparts, which democratized the elitist nature of sculpture. She is currently reassessing the accepted notion that Honoré Daumier's series of caricatural busts, *The Celebrities of the Juste-Milieu*, was made as drawing aids for lithographers working with Daumier. She is a lecturer at Rutgers University where she received an award for “Distinguished Contribution to Undergraduate Education”, and has been the recipient of multiple fellowships. She is also a guest curator who thrives in involving younger students in all aspects of an exhibition to give them a direct experience working with actual objects, a privilege typically reserved for graduate students.

From Classics to Comics: Hero, Myth and Narrative in Contemporary Sculpture

Ian Kirkpatrick

Contemporary artists, working in both 2D and 3D forms, draw heavily on comic book imagery and themes as subjects of modern-day myth and fantasy. It is argued here that comic art icons, when enacted within contemporary artistic practice, fulfill similar roles to the ancient Greek and Christian heroes of classical painting and sculpture, offering familiar archetypes as touchstones for the examination of present-day concerns — while the structural innovations of comic art offer novel ways to convincingly depict narrative, character, scene and conflict. As such, comic art can be seen as a vehicle for a return to traditional artistic practices. At the same time, however, it provides exciting new mechanisms to engage with social and political issues, while reuniting conceptual and graphic innovations in a post-Cubist era.

My own sculptural work has capitalized upon the connection between comic and ancient and classical artworks. Some of these pieces will be examined as a means to explore the ways in which dialogues between present and past can be merged through comic-inspired figuration, text, and layout. As well, the influence of comic art within digital-based practice will be discussed in order to identify ways in which time, narrative, and character can be embedded natively into contemporary sculpture.

Ian Kirkpatrick is a Canadian contemporary artist currently based in Southampton. His sculptural works have been exhibited across the UK and internationally, including upcoming shows in London, Halifax and Montreal. He recently won a Festival Makers Award, sponsored by The Making in partnership with Central St. Martins College of Art and Design, while a large-scale work commissioned by the Creative Campus Initiative is currently touring the UK in advance of the 2012 Summer Olympic Games.

Ian's art frequently blurs the distinction between 2 and 3 dimensions and is created using a combination of digital tools and manual craft. He is currently interested in the use of decorated containers (based on forms ranging from ancient Greek amphora to contemporary commercial packaging) as mediums through which to explore society's myths, fantasies and narratives.

Smithson Entropy and the New Comedy

Tim Martin

Robert Smithson would seem to be a comic of a negative theology, or so it would seem. According to his essays Minimalist made monuments to erasure, to energy drain, to the base of the statue of liberty rather than to the bronze figure, Minimal sculpture was still monumental with the sublimity of the ages, but there was no more happy idealism. His was the laughter of an extreme materialist, a laughter in the face of inevitable tragedy

This paper will look at the humour of his major essays including his comedy of matter, his shared jokes with other sculptors, and his aggressive jokes aimed at critics. The paper will conclude with an analysis of the anxiety that drove his wit.

Dr Tim Martin is Reader in Architecture and Cultural Theory at De Montfort University. He studied at Dartmouth College, USA, Christ Church College, Oxford and University of London. In 1999 he published *The Essential Surrealists* with Dempsey Parr Press, London and has a forthcoming publication *Robert Smithson: Subject of Entropy*, with University of Chicago Press. He is a regular contributor of articles and reviews for journals such as *Art Monthly*, *Third Text* and the *Architect's Journal*. He also co-wrote and presented the television series *Landmarks in Western Art*.

Statue of Judgement: Estonia's Bronze Soldier from a Dreddful Perspective

Stuart Burch

In the year 2117 a riot erupted in Mega-City One just as the finishing touches were being put to the *Statue of Judgement*. Dwarfing the damaged and neglected Statue of Liberty, this colossal effigy of a Judge houses the Public Surveillance Unit. It monitors the city's 400 million disenfranchised residents, issuing instructions to armour-suited Judges who patrol the streets, delivering justice at the end of their titanium daysticks.

In April 2007 similar disturbances occurred in the Estonian capital, Tallinn. The catalyst was the *Bronze Soldier*, a Soviet-era war memorial erected in 1947 in the city centre. Sixty years later the elected government of an independent Estonia shifted it to the peripheral setting of a military cemetery. This action exposed deep-seated, historically-informed and ethnically based schisms in Estonian society. Two nights of rioting, arrests and one death ensued before baton-wielding, armour-suited police officers brought the situation under control.

Events in Tallinn formed the basis of Kristina Norman's *After-War*, Estonia's contribution to the 2009 Venice Biennale. Through video works, archival footage and installation, Norman recounted the history of the Bronze Soldier. At the centre of the display was the *Gold Soldier*, suspended horizontally between video screens showing the inauguration, desacralization and reinvestiture of the monument. Norman also published an explanatory book. This features sketches, the style of which bears a striking similarity to the cartoon universe of Mega-City One. This, plus the superhero connotations of the Bronze/Gold Soldier, will be used to explore the migration of ideas between sculpture and comic art.

Stuart Burch is a senior lecturer at Nottingham Trent University where he teaches museum studies, heritage management and public history. He is currently conducting research into national art museums in northern Europe as part of "Nordic Spaces," a four-year multinational project supported by Riksbankens Jubileumsfond and a consortium of other funders (<http://www.nordicspaces.com>).

The Beginnings of Comic Language in Spatial Terms

Kim Pace

As originator of the national touring exhibition 'Cult Fiction (art and comics)' [07-08], I was concerned with addressing the tensions between 'high' and what could be described as 'low' culture.

Through careful juxtaposition, comic artists and fine artists were combined without differentiation within both physical exhibition and catalogue. This revealed crossovers that occur naturally between these two worlds, and explored the relationship between all the artists in context of the art gallery.

Sculpture was a vital component of the exhibition.

An artist myself, with a sculptural sensibility, this aspect extended the exhibition into the domain of physical space and suggested that sculpture could be seen within the realm of 'comic art'.

It is within this context I propose to extend the relationship between the language of comics - and its trajectory from Roman inscribed columns through satirical prints, drawings and newspaper comic strips - to include *commedia dell'arte*, the circus and sideshows, carnival and vaudeville, as related to the beginnings of comic language in spatial terms.

Through my researches into early circus in particular, the exaggerated character types also point to the aesthetics of spectacle, exaggeration and distortion. The sequential 'acts' and sideshows together also form an overall narrative, as in comics' construction.

I will investigate the occurrence of these characteristics, exploring the relationship of the anthropomorphised and caricatured figure in comic language to a selection of international contemporary sculpture.

Kim L Pace is an artist and occasional curator. Her strangely familiar yet darkly unsettling works explore social constructions of identity. The recipient of several noteworthy awards, fellowships and artist residencies in the UK, USA and Norway; most recently, she received an Arts Council England Award (2011) and the Berwick Gymnasium Fellowship (08-09). Exhibitions have included solo shows in the UK, USA, Ireland and Australia, and numerous group shows.

Recent shows & screenings include: Arts Council Touring (07-08); McLean County Arts Center, USA ('08); The Drawing Room, London ('09); Transition Gallery, London ('09); Gallery North, Newcastle ('10); Towner, Eastbourne ('10); Salisbury Arts Centre ('11); Collective, Edinburgh ('11); The Horse Hospital, London ('11); CineCity Film Festival ('09, '11), Cornerhouse, Manchester (Forthcoming, 2012).

Kim originated 'Cult Fiction –Art & Comics' for Hayward Gallery touring (2007-08). Other curatorial projects have included: 'Lines of Desire' (toured nationally), 'Rebel Angels' Walsall Art Gallery and 'Doodle to Digit' contemporary drawing conference, Tate Britain. She has lectured extensively: currently in the fields of games art & design, animation & fine art.

www.kimpace.co.uk

Space and excavation in the work of Olivia Plender

Dan Smith

Olivia Plender's *AADIEU ADIEU APA* (*Goodbye Goodbye Father*) shown at Gasworks in 2009, presented a scale model of the 1924 British Empire exhibition at Wembley. This model included a representation of the Celestial City, the manifestation of Heaven on Earth, not only fictionalising the recreation, but introducing another dimension of hope and progress. The promise of this New Jerusalem resonates through much of Plender's work, exemplified by her graphic novel *A Stellar Key to the Summerland* (2007), which offered an account of the origins of the Spiritualist movement. This comic form is part of a practice that deploys historiographic methodologies. Plender mines social and esoteric beliefs that disturb contemporary expectations. The illuminations of alternative formations and beliefs in the past offers a redress to the apparent inevitability of the social and economic topographies of the present. I will suggest that the use of comics is part of a strategy that incorporates the sequential visual narrative as a corollary to the sculptural, object based spatial elements of gallery practice, as part of the same ongoing practice of excavation and reconfiguration. The use of the comic form is an integral part of a mapping process that is spatial and historical, overlaying dream geographies with the possibility of social transformation in a manner that reflects the tension between graphic spatialisation and those based within the actuality of gallery space. The spatial play of comics in relation to the sculptural is an as yet underexplored aspect of this practice.

Dr Dan Smith is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art Theory at Chelsea College of Art and Design. He is the author of *Traces of Modernity*, forthcoming with Zero Books, and is writing a book on Contemporary Art and Utopia. Current writing and research on comics is focused on *2000AD*.

Comic's Third Dimension

Catherine Labio

The formal analysis of comics has tended to revolve around their two-dimensional elements: the panel, the gutter, the strip, the page. In this paper, part of a larger project on comics as a “total art”, I underscore their three-dimensionality instead and argue for the need to study comics in relation to architecture and sculpture (and vice versa).

As a number of recent exhibitions on comics and architecture have shown, many comics reference architecture directly. I would argue that the non-referential architectural features of comics are even more important, in part because the prevailing page layouts of American comics, *bande dessinée* (BD), and *manga* match the traditional façade configurations of North American, European, and Japanese urban dwellings and thus evoke the meme of home.

This architectural palimpsest accounts for the readability and strong emotional charge of comics. It also explains cartoonists' turn to three-dimensional works. Key examples include: Joost Swarte's *Toneelschuur* (2003) and scenography for the *Hergé Museum*, Benoît Schuiten and François Peeters's restoration of Victor Horta's *Maison Autrique*, and Chris Ware's *Curio Cabinet* (1988-2003) and *Potato Man House* (1989), which echo Joseph Cornell's dovecote, compartmented, and façade boxes. Conversely, the latent three-dimensionality of comics, which also hark back to earlier forms of narrative art such as stained glass windows and frescoes, helps to explain the turn to comics of modern architects and sculptors, including Le Corbusier, Archigram, Willem Jan Neutelings, Fernand Léger, Keith Haring, Takashi Murakami, Öyvind Fahlström, and Jeff Koons.

Finally, it is important to note that the three-dimensionality of comic books is also literal,

as evidenced not only in standard hard-cover BD volumes and in works published by independent presses since the 1990s, but also in recent experimentations with sculptural book formats, to the point where it is not always possible to differentiate contemporary comic books from artist's books.

Catherine Labio is Associate Professor of English at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She is the Review Editor of *European Comic Art* and is working on a book on comics in relation to the other arts. She is the author of *Origins and the Enlightenment: Aesthetic Epistemology from Descartes to Kant* (Cornell UP, 2004), the editor of *Belgian Memories* (Yale French Studies, 2002), and the co-editor of *'The Great Mirror of Folly': Finance, Culture, and the Crash of 1720* (Yale UP, 2012). She has published articles on a wide range of topics, including a recent piece on the term 'graphic novel' that has appeared in a special section of *Cinema Journal* devoted to 'Comics Studies: Fifty Years after Film Studies' (ed. Bart Beaty, 2011). Dr. Labio has Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from New York University and has taught in the Departments of Comparative Literature and French at Yale University and the Masters in Intercultural Management (MIME) of the Brussels Business School (ICHEC).

Artists

Paul McDevitt

Paul McDevitt is British artist based in Berlin. He has recently had solo exhibitions at Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2011), Sommer & Kohl Gallery, Berlin / APT - Peter Bergman, Stockholm (2010), Martin Asbaek Gallery, Copenhagen / Artspeak, Vancouver (2009). Recent group shows: *No Government No Cry*, CIAP, Hasselt, Belgium / *Der Menschen Klee*, KIT, Düsseldorf (2011), *Lei da Selva*, Lehmann Maupin, NY / *The Berlin Box*, CCA Kunsthalle Andratx, Majorca (2010). McDevitt regularly works on curated projects with artist Declan Clarke, including *Herbei ein Licht!*, Lismore Castle Arts, Ireland (2011). He also makes collaborative drawings with Cornelius Quabeck.

Cornelius Quabeck

Artist Cornelius Quabeck was born in Wuppertal and lives and works in Düsseldorf. Quabeck studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf before moving to Chelsea College of Art in London, where he graduated with an MA in Fine Art in 2002. He has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally including recent solo shows at James Fuentes LLC in New York, Galerie Christian Nagel, Berlin and Stephen Friedman Gallery, London. Earlier this year he exhibited works on paper at Artothek, Cologne and curated the group exhibition 'Der Menschen Klee' at Kunst Im Tunnel, Düsseldorf.

Chairs

Paul Gravett

Writer, critic, lecturer, broadcaster, exhibition curator and international comics ambassador, Paul Gravett founded London's Comica Festival (www.comicafestival.com) in 2003 and is reviving his publishing company Escape Books with Peter Stanbury. His latest book as editor and co-writer is *1001 Comics You Must Read Before You Die* (Cassell in the UK, Universe in the US). He is currently preparing his next book for Tate Publishing and curating an exhibition of Posy Simmonds' work for the Belgian Comics Centre in Brussels.

www.paulgravett.com

Chris Bloor

Chris Bloor is an artist & Academic Leader of Art at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Jon Wood

Jon Wood is Research Curator at the Henry Moore Institute. An art historian and curator, he specialises in twentieth-century and contemporary sculpture, with particular expertise in British sculpture.

He was co-editor, with Alex Potts and David Hulks, of the *Modern Sculpture Reader* (2007) and of the two-volume *Sculpture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (2003).

Organisers

Kirstie Gregory

Kirstie Gregory is Research Programme Assistant at the Henry Moore Institute. She studied at the Courtauld Institute, London, and the University of Queensland, Australia.

Jon Wood

Jon Wood is Research Curator at the Henry Moore Institute. An art historian and curator, he specialises in twentieth-century and contemporary sculpture, with particular expertise in British sculpture.

He was co-editor, with Alex Potts and David Hulks, of the *Modern Sculpture Reader* (2007) and of the two-volume *Sculpture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (2003).

Graphic Medicine: Visualizing the Stigma of Illness

Graphic Medicine: Visualizing the Stigma of Illness: Programme

1000-1020: Registration

1020-1030: Opening remarks

[Ian Williams](#)

1030-1130: Session 1

Panel 1A: Stigma and Cognition	Panel 1B: Stigma and Disability
Chair: Maria Vaccarella	Chair: MK Czerwec
Sarah Leavitt p.20 Documenting a family's struggle with Alzheimer's Disease: using comics to break through stigma and silence	Jean-Francois Ferraille p.22 The representation of disability in <i>bande dessinées</i>
Lucía Miranda-Morla p.21 Narrating the loss of memory: Élodie Durand's <i>La parenthèse</i>	Shelley Cuthbertson p.23 Superheroes and disability

1130-1200: Break

1200-1300: Session 2

Panel 2A: Stigma and Autobiography I	Panel 2B: Stigma and Community
Chair: Ian Williams	Chair: Fiorenzo Iuliano
Andrew Godfrey p.24 Breaking down the poster-child syndrome: Autobiographical comics about living with Cystic Fibrosis	Simon Moreton p.26 Rethinking the comics 'community': making, participation and the (de)construction of stigma
Katie Green p.25 Lighter Than My Shadow- a graphic memoir of struggles with and recovery from an eating disorder and sexual abuse	Aneurin Wright p.27 Stigma, Medicine and Community: Comics as a medium of addressing and uniting these three disparate themes

1300-1400: Lunch

1400-1500: Session 3

Panel 3A: Stigma and Society	Panel 3B: Stigma and Autobiography II
Chair: James Evans	Chair: Mita Mahato
Karrie Fransman p.28 The Body as a Canvas in Comics: An artist examines the health of the social body in her graphic novel 'The House That Groaned'	Nicola Streeten p.30 The stigma of mourning for too long
Fiorenzo Iuliano p.29 Suburban Monsters. Black Hole and the Stigma of Normality	Brick and Theodore Stickley p.31 'Depresso' or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Embrace Being Bonkers

1500-1515: Break

1515-1645: Session 4

Panel 4A: Stigma and The Reactive Body		Panel 4B: Stigma and Caregiving	
Chair: Ian Williams		Chair: Maria Vaccarella	
<u>Mita Mahato</u>	p.32	<u>Muna Al-Jawad</u>	p.35
Stigmatic Text: Suture and Silence in David Small's <i>Stitches</i>		Using comics to explore the stigma of being a geriatrician	
<u>Sarah McNicol and Simon Weaver</u>	p.33	<u>MK Czerwiec</u>	p.36
"Dude! You mean you've never eaten a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?!?" Nut allergy as stigma in graphic novels		Taking Turns: AIDS, Oral History, and Comics	
<u>Paula Knight</u>	p.34	<u>Linda Raphael</u>	p.37
<i>The Facts of Life</i> : a graphic memoir about miscarriage and childlessness		Resisting Closure: Graphic Texts and the Search for a "Good" Ending	

1645-1730: Keynote session with [Darryl Cunningham](#)

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1730: Closing remarks

[Ian Williams](#)

Evening: Conference Dinner

Documenting a family's struggle with Alzheimer's Disease: using comics to break through stigma and silence

Sarah Leavitt

I propose to deliver a paper, with slides, that uses my graphic memoir *Tangles: A Story About Alzheimer's, My Mother and Me* to explore how comics can act as an ideal format for expressing stigmatized aspects of Alzheimer's Disease in an accessible, straightforward and frank manner.

The paper would first outline the process of creating *Tangles*: gathering notes and drawings during my mother's illness and making the decision to create a graphic narrative instead of a prose work.

I will then examine the response to the book from healthcare/medical professionals, caregivers and the general public, as well as from my family members.

A common thread in the response to *Tangles*, both from critics and from readers, is surprise at, and appreciation for, the book's frankness about the elements of Alzheimer's Disease that are often not discussed publicly due to shame and stigma. These include urinary and fecal incontinence, the patient's inability to keep him or herself clean, anti-social behavior, etc.

Stigma and silence extend beyond the Alzheimer's patient to those around them. In verbal or written narratives about Alzheimer's, there is often reluctance to acknowledge that family members and caregivers can become angry, impatient or frustrated with Alzheimer's patients, even when their intention is to respond with compassion. Readers of *Tangles* have noted that the book shows both positive and negative responses of family members and caregivers, including those of the narrator (me).

My paper will look at how the medium of comics lends itself to this type of

unsentimental, honest storytelling, which can break some of the silence and stigma surrounding this devastating disease. The presentation could also include a very brief reading from *Tangles*.

Sarah Leavitt is a Vancouver writer and cartoonist. In September 2010 she published her first book, a graphic memoir — *Tangles: A Story About Alzheimer's, My Mother, and Me* (Canada: Freehand Books; UK: Jonathan Cape; US: Skyhorse).

***Tangles* was a finalist for the 2010 Writers' Trust of Canada Non-fiction Prize (first graphic narrative to be a finalist in this category); the 2011 BC Book Prizes; the 2011 Alberta Book Publishing Awards; and the 2011 Alberta Readers' Choice Award. *Tangles* was included in the *Globe and Mail's* top 100 books of 2010.**

Sarah is working on her next book, also a graphic narrative — historical fiction this time. She will begin teaching in the Creative Writing Department at UBC in January 2012. More at sarahleavitt.com.

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Narrating the loss of memory: Élodie Durand's *La parenthèse*

Lucía Miranda-Morla, Université de Clermont-Ferrand and Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

La parenthèse (Delcourt, 2011), a pathography of epilepsy, is Élodie Durand's award-winning graphic novel (« Prix Révélation at 2011 Angoulême Festival and « Prix des lecteurs Libération 2011 »). This autobiographical narrative is a clear example that comics can be useful to explain and rethink the notion of stigma. This is the sincere story of a struggle to continue living without having memories. Durand's lack of memory and expressive drawings are put together to create an ode that communicates a recovering from "the emptiness" left by epilepsy. The reference to David B.'s graphic novel *Epileptic* is obvious; however, Durand's narrative greatly differs from David B in the way she stylistically treats the subject, but mainly because *Epileptic* is the testimony of the author's brother illness, while Durand's work witnesses her own disease.

Drawings from 1995 to 1998 are interspersed in the narrative. These unique and meaningful drawings from the period where she was suffering with the illness gave the reader a complex reading, though extremely fluid, and demonstrate the cathartic power of the creative act. Throughout the whole book, the author denies her illness but shares every detail about the healing process and her view of the healthcare professionals. An aspect worth analyzing in this narrative is the view regarding the healthcare providers, in which the author-patient expresses her fears and her doubts about doctors and the different diagnosis.

La parenthèse addresses the question of identity and self-representation in the face of illness; yet, instead of the reader being left feeling sad, the structure of the

narrative is devoid of the sentimental and makes observations on how to represent a period of life that one does not remember except for some flashes; and those flashes one is not even sure that they are actual memories or just images one wants to remember. Thanks to this approach, Élodie Durand offers sensitive and critical perspectives on the roles played by disease in redefining individual existences, as well as interpersonal relations (paying special attention to family relations). Sickness is transformed into a site of active aesthetic and philosophical inquiry. I believe this narrative deserves to be deeply explored both because it gives voice and face to the illness experience, and because it is a thoughtful graphic novel.

Lucia Miranda-Morla is a researcher at the BnF (Bibliothèque National de France) and a translator. She is a PhD student on graphic fiction elaborating a co-supervised thesis at the Université de Clermont-Ferrand and UAM (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid). She has obtained a DEA in Linguistics and Literature Theory at the UAM and a MA in Intercultural Studies at Dublin City University, after a four-year degree in Translation and Interpreting. She has presented papers on comic art at Université de Toulouse-Le Mirail, London University, Universidad de Valencia, Université de Clermont-Ferrand, Manchester Metropolitan University, UAM and CCIC (Centre Culturel International de Cerisy-la-Salle). An article on graphic narrative is on printing at the University of Geneva.

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The representation of disability in *bandes dessinées*

Jean-Francois Ferraille

This paper is a presentation of ideas concerning the theme of disability in comics. Is the disability actually represented in comics? What disabilities are represented in comics? What are the categories of disability comics (titles dealing with disability in general, those covering a specific disability, testimonial albums etc). What publishers are involved (traditional publishers, local governments, associations, laboratories pharmaceutical etc.). How is disability represented in children's literature? To whom are these books addressed? How are disabled comic book heroes represented? A particular focus will be made on the stigma.

Some specific *bandes dessinées* with themes of disability will be discussed: "Capucine", which features a child with Down syndrome and life of his family. The testimony of a father : "The Heart-Anvil" a series whose hero, Ed, is a quadriplegic.

Jean-François Ferraille is the secretary of the association STNT (Sans tambour ni Trompette). He leads the organization *Idetic training*. It is also a lecturer at the Ecole Nationale des Chartes (Paris Sorbonne University) and is author of several books including "Conduct a cultural project in the direction of persons with disabilities.". in January 2012 the association STNT will provide a prize that rewards a comic book that references disability at the festival of comics of Angouleme for the second consecutive year.

Superly Disabled: A Discussion on the disabled Superhero in the Marvel and DC Universes

Shelley Culbertson, University of Ulster

The prevalent image of the female superhero is that of a sexily clad nymph, saving the day by leaping tall buildings. But that is not always the case.

One of the most powerful female heroes from the DC Universe is Barbara Gordon, the master mind behind the Birds of Prey. So powerful in fact, she's called the Oracle. However, unlike the other heroines, she isn't scantily dressed, and she can't leap tall buildings. This is because Barbara, the most powerful woman in Batman's life, is in a wheelchair.

But as I've stated, her disability hasn't hindered her ; it is what makes her so great.

The victim of The Joker, Barbara was once the Batgirl, retired from the life of heroism. She is shot by The Joker, and is left paralysed. But like a phoenix rising from the ashes, she was reborn as The Oracle.

Inspirational stories like this have become more and more familiar in recent times, with many disabled people taking up the mask of mystery to become a hero. Examples can be seen with Daredevil, overcoming his blindness to reach great heights, and Echo from the Marvel pantheon, who overcomes her deafness to fight the good fight.

I will explore this phenomena and try and plot a clear line of analysis, between changes in society to the disabled , and their appearances within the comic. It is my hope that I will be able to show that, as in the comics, the disabled are now seen as an integral and accepted part of our society and that they enforce, explain, eradicate and highlight the stigmas attached to its occurrence.

Shelley Culbertson is a PhD researcher in the Centre for Media Research at the University of Ulster, Coleraine, Northern Ireland. She holds a BA in Media Studies and a Masters of Research in Genders and Sexuality within Sequential Art. Her current research topic is *"A Psychoanalytical Analysis of Pre-Oedipal and Oedipal Archetypal Representations and Themes from Selected Comic Book Heroine narratives"*. One of the Key themes here is the idea of physical trauma and disability, which will be addressed within her paper.

Breaking down the poster-child syndrome: Autobiographical comics about living with Cystic Fibrosis

Andrew Godfrey

In this paper I will discuss the potential of graphic medicine as a genre to offer a more fully formed representation of a person suffering from a terminal illness. Referring mainly to my own autobiographical work about living with the chronic lung disease Cystic Fibrosis I will be discussing 'the poster-child' phenomenon as a potentially limiting stigma in media representations of illness. By this I mean the tendency for charity organisations and media to focus mainly on representations of *children* with these illnesses. While I understand the need for charities to rope in potential donations by using images of cute but vulnerable looking children, this can help cement the view of these children (and indeed of any sufferers of illness) as weak, submissive, passive victims (as well as being empty shells with no personality). It also potentially damaging as it links these illnesses with early death. Despite the massive improvement in treatment for a lot of these diseases, the charities involved still tend to be less interested in you the older and uglier you are. So how can we combat this through comics? Here I will be mainly talking about techniques that I've employed in my own work. I have used a mix of self-referential gallows humour and confessional aspects as well as making the more ugly aspects of my illness overtly cartoon-like in an attempt to close the distance between myself and the reader to normalise a lot of the processes of my disease (after all, we all have to go to the toilet). The more confessional and personal aspects of my work will hopefully highlight thoughts about my illness and experiences that may not be known and may in fact be unique to me, but with a hopeful air that someone who might read about them, could relate.

Andrew Godfrey is a Bristol based comic artist, blogger, and Cultural Studies graduate who was born with Cystic Fibrosis, the most common genetically inherited disease in the UK. Whilst at university in Bath he discovered comics in their more adult form when he watched the film *American Splendour*, and he hasn't looked back since. His biggest influence, perhaps surprisingly, is not a comic artist at all, but Bob Flanagan, an unconventional performance artist and S+M practitioner, who was also the longest living survivor of CF. His outlook, and especially his humour had a big impact on the way he decided to talk about his own experiences. As well as his autobiographical comics about CF he is currently working on a series of short semi-autobiographical newspaper style gag strips about gender entitled *Confessions Of A Self-Hating Male* and has collaborated with close friend and writer Emma Mould on *A Life Of Noise*, a comic about her experiences with *Borderline Personality Disorder*.

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Emma Mould's blog:

<http://parallelograma.blogspot.com/>

Lighter Than My Shadow

Katie Green

Katie Green will talk about some of the common misconceptions surrounding eating disorders and sexual abuse, drawing on examples from her graphic-memoir-in-progress.

Katie Green is a freelance illustrator based in Bristol. She self-publishes a regular zine, the Green Bean, and is currently working on her first graphic novel. *Lighter Than My Shadow*, a graphic memoir of eating disorders, sexual abuse and recovery, will be published by Jonathan Cape in Autumn 2013.

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Rethinking the comics 'community': making, participation and the (de)construction of stigma

Simon Moreton

The aim of this exploratory paper is to unpack a) how the collective constitution of stigma around physical and mental illness unfolds and b) how comics communities can be mobilised to challenge that process. This paper is situated in a field of work where comics are increasingly being understood as a valuable medium through which to represent themes of physical/mental illness and well-being. These debates, however, tend to focus on subjective and interpersonal relations between work and reader, and not the communities that support the creation and constitution of the ideas and discourses that shape the work itself. This has led to conversations focused on two broadly interrelated themes; firstly, how sequential art can be used as a resource to educate policy makers, health practitioners and the public, and secondly, how the process of making comics offers a means for producers to explore, and potentially come to terms with, their illnesses. These themes are reconciled often via a discussions about the inherent capacity for comics, as a medium comprised of words and images, to represent this subject matter in a way that prose or illustration, for example, sometimes cannot.

Rather than addressing the merits of sequential art as a *medium*, this paper instead considers how comics *communities* – understood as networks of makers, readers, experts, amateurs and professionals – can be seen as responsible for the collective constitution of the new forms of artistic expression that are already challenging stigma. This involves seeing a comics community not as a collective of adherents to a specific genre or subculture, but instead as a forum of participation and making,

comprising complex personal relationships between online and offline communities, a technology for both individual and collective identities, and through which individuals can assume multiple, simultaneous positions as consumer, producer and critic. I argue that seeing comics in this way – as a community *process* and not only as a material *product* – might provide a useful way to better understand how stigma is formed and how it can be challenged.

Simon Moreton is a cartoonist, writer and academic geographer based in Bristol. His regular zine, *Smoo*, deals with the vagaries of everyday life. The *Escapologist*, his new serial, began in May 2011, and deals with the heaviness and lightness of things. His work increasingly explores aspects of abstract art, autobiography, poetry and theories of everyday life.

In addition to his cartooning, Simon also runs *Better, Drawn*, a blog where people can share stories about their experience of long-term mental or physical illnesses in the form of comics. He is also currently a Research Collaborator at the University of Bristol and Assistant Research Fellow at the University of Exeter, working on projects exploring entrepreneurship and enterprise programmes in Higher Education, grassroots activism, spaces of creative work and the relationship between practices of crafting and community well-being.

Stigma, Medicine and Community: Comics as a medium of addressing and uniting these three disparate themes

Aneurin Wright

Aneurin Wright, the author of *Things to do in a Retirement Home Trailer Park...When You're 29 and Unemployed*, a forthcoming graphic novel from Myriad Editions proposes to discuss how comics is the perfect medium for addressing three common themes of modern palliative care. Wright's book is a graphic memoir about caring for his emphysematic father in the last months of the older man's life. By depicting father and son as Rhinoceros and Minotaur, the book is shot through with humour, pathos and candour that would otherwise be very different in another medium. Through the distancing effect of graphic interpretation, Wright argues that he can address otherwise taboo issues in society, like the loss of bodily control of a patient in Hospice care. Through a conscious choice of streamlined graphic language, Wright also argues that he can make otherwise complex medical issues and ideas immediate and relevant. And through the unique fusion of words and pictures, magic and realism, Wright argues that he is able to explore the temporary "Community" that palliative care often constructs around those who are being cared for.

Aneurin (Nye) Wright was born in rural Idaho, USA, the son of a West Texan architect and a London writer. He earned a BA in English Literature from Yale and a BFA in Illustration and Communication Design from the Pratt Institute. He was hailed as 'an amazing talent' for his first book *Lex Talionis: A Jungle Tale* (Image, 2004). He was the animation director for the Short History of the United States cartoon sequence in Michael Moore's Academy Award-winning documentary *Bowling for Columbine*. Though he ordinarily lives in Brighton with his wife, graphic designer Lyndsay Lucero, they recently got lost in Paris and have spent the last few months there.

The Body as a Canvas in Comics: An artist examines the health of the social body in her graphic novel *The House That Groaned*

Karrie Fransman

'The individual body can be studied as a canvas on which the anxieties and discourses of the larger, social body are reproduced'(R W Connell, 2002).

Comics are the ideal medium through which to explore the 'body' as social rather than purely biological. In this paper I examine the rise of both anorexia and obesity in Western society (Orbach, 2009) on the bodies of two characters in my graphic novel *The House That Groaned* (2012). Expanding on Connell's quote above I will argue that the body within comics is even more so a 'canvas'. Judith Butler (1990) explored how we construct and perform gender, but in a comic every element from hair colour to clothes choice is constructed either consciously or unconsciously. This feature has resulted in some fascinating comic characters that embody a social, rather than individual, conscious. From Robert Crumb's (1997) caricatures reflecting the misogynistic and racist minds of American society to Charles Burn's *Black Hole* (2005) where a society's AIDS anxiety is played out on the bodies of mutant teenagers. My graphic novel *The House That Groaned* uses comics to examine the Western body as a social entity. It is set in a Victorian building housing six individuals. Throughout the book the house, like a body, is slowly decaying with pipes bursting and electricity failing. This paper will focus on two characters living in separate apartments, Janet and Marion. Janet is a controlled dietician who believes in 'mind over matter'. Each night at 12pm she receives an anonymous phone call from Marion, who heads the hedonistic 'Midnight Feast Front', and who torments Janet by whispering Nigella Lawson-styled recipes

down the phone. These characters embody the Western dichotomies of the mind vs the body (Descartes, 1641) control vs indulgence (Bordo, 1993) and Madonna vs the whore (Hepworth, 1999) . This paper will argue for an increased awareness of the bodies in comics as representative of the issues of a wider society.

Karrie Fransman is a comic creator who lives in London. Her autobiographical comic strips have been published in *The Guardian* and her comic serial 'The Night I Lost My Love' ran in *The Times* and was praised by director Nicolas Roeg on *BBC Radio 4*. Her graphic novel, 'The House That Groaned' is published in January 2012 by *Random House's Square Peg*. She has talked about her work at *Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, London college of Communications, the Institute of Contemporary Arts* and for *The British Council* in Brussels. Her comics have been exhibited at *The Cartoon Museum, London Print Studio* and were toured to Russia in October and are due to be exhibited in Belgium in December at *Strip Turnhout*. She is currently running an 18-month comic project at *London Print Studio* and another comic project with homeless and vulnerable young people with *House of Illustration*. You can see more of her work at www.karriefransman.com.

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Suburban Monsters. *Black Hole* and the Stigma of Normality

Fiorenzo Iuliano

Charles Burns' *Black Hole* (1995-2005), set in the suburbs of Seattle during the 1970s, revolves around a group of young men and women, in their high school years, who catch a venereal disease labeled "the teen plague". After having sex with an infected partner, their bodies undergo bizarre and monstrous mutations, perceived as gruesome stigmata by the white, suburban middle class they belong to. Those who are unable to hide the horrible marks of their disease are symbolically banished and condemned to live in the woods, leading a misrecognized existence outside human and social visibility. They eventually succeed in their effort of carving out a place for deformed and disable bodies in society; nonetheless, their looming presence completely upsets the ordinary existence of the apparently normal people left back in the city suburbs.

Discontinuous and sometimes obscure as it may be, *Black Hole* is primarily concerned with the subversive potential of its characters' monstrous bodies. The 'hole' in the title of the novel invites multiple interpretations: it could be understood as something equivalent to what deformity is to the regular bodily aspect, a gap that renders a structure less stable and regular, an unforeseen and inexplicable alteration that interrupts and questions the regularity of natural order. Physical and structural abnormality, as I will try to show, epitomizes how structured and organic bodily and semiotic systems are made consistent and self-sufficient thanks to a hidden, and necessary, dependence on an inner lack (namely, a void, or a 'black hole'), which needs to be constantly camouflaged through narrative and rhetorical devices. The stigma attached to monstrous bodies could be ultimately meant as the result of an epistemic process that ends up

in monstrosity as the last instance or the hidden core of normality.

Fiorenzo Iuliano holds in a PhD in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures from the University of Naples, L'Orientale, Italy, where he is currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in American Literature. His main research interests are American Studies, Cultural Studies and graphic novels. He is currently working on a book on tropes of corporeality in US novels and starting a research project on Seattle in the 1990s.

The stigma of mourning for too long

Nicola Streeten

In popular psychology, mourning is often equated with the idea of getting over a loss. But do we ever get over our losses? Don't we, rather, make them a part of our lives in different ways, sometimes fruitfully, sometimes catastrophically, but never painlessly?

Although loss can be experienced following a number of situations, such as divorce, or loss of work, this paper looks specifically at bereavement following death. I will show how and why the *form* of the graphic novel can successfully show the subjective experience of mourning whilst simultaneously highlighting the surrounding stigmas in a modern Western context. I will refer to the graphic novel, *Billy, Me & You*, which is a memoir of a couple's grief and recovery following the death of their child.

Leader's premise is that often what is labelled depression in society now, would previously have been understood as mourning. This psychological response to a loss or separation would have been publically displayed and recognised. Now, with improved living conditions and life expectancy in the West, death lingers, as an aberration, rather than an inevitable. The associated mourning is seen as something to fix quickly and privately. If it persists, it becomes viewed as an ignominy, a stigma.

In his introduction to *The New Black*, Darian Leader describes his surprise during his research at the lack of academic writing on the psychology of mourning. Yet within literature, he observed a multitude of works around the subject of loss. He questions whether the arts are perhaps an essential device in allowing us to make sense of the losses that all of us experience in our lives. As I will demonstrate, the graphic novel is the perfect art form to provide the validity

of a textbook, and the accessibility of a tool for use in patient care for the bereaved.

Nicola Streeten has been working as an illustrator for 15 years. Her first graphic novel, *Billy, Me & You*, has just been published in the UK by Myriad Editions. It first appeared in serialised form in *Liquorice Magazine*. She is in the final stage of a Master of Research in Art, Architecture and Design degree at The University of Lincoln, her research area is gender and the graphic novel. Nicola is co-director of *Laydeez do Comics*, a unique graphic novel forum, with a focus on autobiographical works.

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‘Depresso’ or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Embrace Being Bonkers

Brick and Theodore Stickley

The stigma surrounding mental health problems continues to be debilitating and destructive. This presentation (performance) aims to challenge negative and stereotypical attitudes through the narrative of the two presenters: one the cartoonist who authored *Depresso* and the other a mental health academic.

There are few books about mental health written in the cartoon genre; *Depresso* is one of them. The protagonist, Tom Freeman has what might be described as “a breakdown” and the book is his recovery journey, at times bleak and painful but also funny. On one level, the story can be read as a hilarious true-life graphic novel, on another the book normalises what it means to experience mental distress. It is here that the work challenges the stigma associated with mental health problems. The story not only recounts Tom’s journey and its impact on friends and family, but it is also a critique of the psychiatric system; a commentary on the side-effects of medication, the impact of stigma, and what it means to wrestle psychologically. Whilst the audience may be creatively taken to the pits of despair and shown the funny side, the ultimate message of the story is one of hope.

This presentation brings Tom’s story to life as panels from the book are projected on a screen whilst the presenters act out the illustrated scenes, sometimes switching roles and identities. The scenes will be chosen according to their significance and poignancy to the central theme that mental, emotional or spiritual distress can affect any one of us and that negative constructions of mental health problems should always be confronted.

The presentation will be challenging and thought provoking with both a personal and an academic commentary throughout, sometimes reflecting on the role of some of the subsidiary characters in the book - therapists, GPs, nurses etc.

Brick (aka John Stuart Clark) has been a political cartoonist since the mid-1970s. His earliest work appeared in publications like *International Times*, *Big Flame*, *Peace News* and *Time Out*. He turned professional when Margaret Thatcher ascended the throne, but his views never sat easily with the mainstream British press. Success came from abroad, with regular slots in European, Australian and African papers, and he was the first British cartoonist to be published by Al Jazeera. Specialising in Third World issues, much of his work was for development agencies and educational publishing. He has had five books published, two of them adventure travelogues, and a radio play broadcast. In 2005-06 he experienced a couple of breakdowns that informed his graphic novel ‘*Depresso*’, and now works with other service users teaching mental health student nurses. His current project is a graphic investigation into the fraud known as ‘*Leonardo’s Bicycle*’.

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Theo Stickley is Associate Professor of Mental Health at the University of Nottingham. Having firstly trained as a nurse and therapist, over the last ten years he has concentrated on developing and researching arts and mental health practice. He is also a non-executive director for City Arts (Nottingham) Ltd and leads on the innovative Art in Mind programme of work, promoting mental health through community arts. Theo is a member of the Nottingham Society of Artists and attends evening workshops every week. He is an international speaker and is known widely for his work on narrative research in the arts and mental health. He is a keen gardener and takes pride in the quality of the compost he produces!

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Stigmatic Text: Suture and Silence in David Small's *Stitches*

Mita Mahato

David Small's *Stitches*, which tells the story of Small's upbringing and early cancer experience, is a boldly quiet book. Its outspoken silence is owing in part to its reflection on Small's dysfunctional home space, where instances of expression communicate only deep-seated repression. The opening panels of the book tell of this foundational situation, moving silently from industrial Detroit, to suburban streets, and into the home of a six-year old David, drawing on the floor with his back to the reader. The first words to interrupt the silence draw attention to the book's troubled reflection on communication: "Mama had her little cough. . . . That was her language"; "Dad . . . thumped a punching bag. That was his language"; "my brother, Ted, beat his drum" (15-17). These instances of expressive repression crystallize, but also dissolve in Small's description of his own, more central form of communication: "I, too, had learned a way of expressing myself wordlessly. . . . Getting sick, that was my language" (18,19).

The tense and interrogative relationship between word and image that characterizes the comics genre makes possible Small's ironic articulation of sickness as a wordless language. Indeed, the growing catalog of illness autographies attests to the effectiveness of comics in giving individuals the means to express openly and candidly the otherwise silencing and stigmatizing experience of illness. What makes *Stitches* notable among illness autographies, however, is that it stews in its silence, making the quiet of illness itself a language—a form of communication requiring recognition, translation, and response. In examining how Small "stitches" together the conflicting but overlapping

forms of communication he both uses and implies—word, image, sound, silence—I hope to explore how *Stitches* manipulates the comics format to communicate the silence that often accompanies illness, teaching readers how silence, too, can speak and must be heard.

Mita Mahato is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Puget Sound, where she teaches courses in contemporary Visual and Cultural Studies, as well as nineteenth-century British Literature. Her current research explores the articulation and reception of illness stories in non-traditional narrative forms, including comics, film, and online media. Her essay on the fraught world of illness blogging, "Virtuous Community: Online Storytelling in Leroy Sievers's *My Cancer*," was recently published in *Storytelling, Self, Society*. She has begun work on a graphic novel/memoir (she is not sure which just yet) that, she is guessing, will take years to complete. But she is determined!

“Dude! You mean you’ve never eaten a peanut butter and jelly sandwich?!?” Nut allergy as stigma in graphic novels

Sarah McNicol and Simon Weaver

In this paper we compare notions of stigma in graphic novels that feature a child or young person with a nut allergy as the central character. Graphic novels offer a valuable opportunity to explore the signification of nut allergy and we examine the different connotations, imagery and stereotypes that this medical condition carries with it. Three texts are examined in this paper. First, *What’s Up with Paulina?* from the Medikidz series of comic books is designed to help a pre-teenage audience learn about medical conditions; Second, *Allergic* is a semi-autobiographical story by Adrian Tomine, suitable for young adults; Finally, *Peanut* is a forthcoming graphic novel by Ayun Halliday aimed at those in their early- to mid-teenage years. Using textual analysis, we focus on three principal themes in the texts. Firstly, we will consider the way in which the central character in each is represented. This highlights examples of felt stigma, typified by feelings of shame and rejection, and compares this representation to common stereotypes of disability. Secondly, we look at the representation of other characters, drawing attention to the way in which stigma is enacted, highlighting acts of overt discrimination. Finally, we will examine the way in which the event of an allergic reaction is portrayed, and consider how this depiction might be used to help children and young people better understand nut allergy and to help combat the stigma attached to the condition. Throughout the paper we examine the representation of stigma in graphic novels with that depicted in empirical research on children living with nut allergies.

Simon Weaver is a Research Associate in the SAPHIRE Group of the Department of Health Sciences, University of Leicester. His research interests include social, cultural and communication theory, and rhetoric in discourses of health and healthcare.

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Sarah McNicol is also currently working as a Research Associate in the SAPHIRE Group of the Department of Health Sciences at the University of Leicester. Prior to this, she worked as an Information Studies researcher and developed an interest in literature, media and information for young people. Her research and publications have covered a variety of topics, including censorship of information for young people; careers and Connexions information; and gaming activities.

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***The Facts of Life*: a graphic memoir about miscarriage and childlessness**

Paula Knight

I will use my graphic memoir-in-progress to demonstrate visual exploration of the following stigma-inducing health issues: miscarriage; resulting 'childlessness'; and ME/CFS.

To begin, I introduce my work-in-progress. I elaborate using illustrations regarding stigma and some of the language surrounding the above issues, such as: 'you've left it too late', 'lost the baby', 'unexplained miscarriage' and 'but you don't look ill'. These can cause and reinforce notions of stigma by leaving room for apportioning blame and/or shame.

To discuss stigma related to childlessness in a pro-natal society, I show some panels exploring an exchange between a parent and a non-parent in a social situation. Here, I hope to demonstrate how a comic format is the ideal medium for conveying their private individual discomforts in that scenario and the rift that occurs between them.

Finally, I discuss why I've chosen comics as my preferred medium for this work i.e. because images can express easily and immediately recognisable sentiments, hopefully engendering feelings of solidarity and affirmation in readers who can't vocalise their predicaments for many reasons, including stigma.

Paula works from her home studio in Bristol as a freelance illustrator, writer and proofreader. She divides her time between anthropomorphising animals, bemoaning the absence of Plain English in corporate literature and working on her graphic-memoir-in-progress, *The Facts of Life*. She's fairly new to the world of comics, and, having worked extensively within children's publishing, she's now enjoying creating work which is very much for adults.

Earlier this year, Paula contributed a comic page about ME/CFS to the blog 'Better, Drawn' and she also presented her work at Laydeez do Comics. She recently attended the Arvon Foundation's Graphic Novel writing course, taught by Bryan Talbot and Hannah Berry.

The Facts of Life is about coming-of-age, sex, pregnancy, miscarriage, non-parenthood and notions of 'family' in a child-centric society.

In 2010, Guardian Comment is free (Cif) published her article about ME/CFS which attracted over 500 comments. She also contributed a comic page to the blog 'Better, Drawn' on the same subject. She presented her work at Laydeez do Comics earlier this year, and has recently attended the Arvon Foundation's Graphic Novel writing course, taught by Bryan Talbot and Hannah Berry.

Using comics to explore the stigma of being a geriatrician

Muna Al-Jawad

I hesitate to introduce myself as a geriatrician. It upsets me to admit this, but it's true. Although I feel proud of my work and my choice of specialty, I'm slightly embarrassed about announcing it, maybe people won't respect me as much as say, a cardiologist.

I am researching hidden areas of geriatric medicine as part of a Masters in medical education. An issue that seems to affect the specialty is ageism. There is a stigma attached to the word "geriatric". There is no doubt our patients suffer discrimination because of their age. Perhaps healthcare workers, by association, also feel the stigma. Norredam and Album (2007) reviewed literature surrounding the prestige of different medical specialties and diseases. They demonstrated that high levels of prestige were accorded to active, specialised, biomedical and high-tech types of medicine. They also noted that prestige was lower when elderly people were the patients.

I used comics as part of my research methodology. I drew graphic narratives as a way of processing and exploring data collected through interviews and ethnographic field notes, and relating it to theory (such as Bourdieu's sociological framework). One of the recurring themes from my comics was how to deal with the low status of geriatricians in the general hospital. This is considered explicitly in the strip below.

I feel that other healthcare workers and researchers, particularly those in stigmatised specialties, might be interested in using comics as a qualitative research tool. Comics combine images, words and symbolic representations in a narrative structure. This makes them a unique means of reflection

and investigation of the complex connections between theory and practice.

Norredam, M & Album, D, 2007. 'Prestige and its significance for medical specialties and diseases'. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 35, 655

Dr Muna Al-Jawad works as a Consultant Geriatrician at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in Brighton. She started drawing comics about 2 years ago. She sees comics as a qualitative research method, a way to explore difficult areas of practice. She recently completed her MA dissertation in medical education (it has comics in it).

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Taking Turns: AIDS, Oral History, and Comics

MK Czerwiec

"TAKING TURNS: AIDS, Oral History & Comics" will describe the motivation, process, and challenges of creating a graphic memoir on the subject of AIDS care that incorporates oral and lived history.

MK Czerwiec (pronounced sir-wick) is a registered nurse who has been making comics under the pseudonym Comic Nurse since 2000. She has an MA in Medical Humanities & Bioethics and assisted in organizing the June 2011 Comics & Medicine conference in Chicago. She is currently the Artist in Residence for Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine.

Resisting Closure: Graphic Texts and the Search for a “Good” Ending

Linda Raphael

The historian Saul Friedlander’s writing about holocaust trauma, memory, and transference is suggestive for writing and discussing medical narratives. He warns against a redemptive recovery of the past, one that would put closure to the matter of the suffering of individuals, groups, and societies and preclude the addition of new memories as testimony. A main aspect of working through, he claims, is to keep some measure of balance between the emotion recurrently breaking through the protective shield and a numbness that protects this very shield. “Working through” entails being aware of both tendencies and allowing for a measure of balance between the two whenever possible. But neither the protective numbing nor the disruptive emotion is entirely accessible to consciousness. Even more significant, however, is rendering as truthful an account as documents and testimonials will allow, without giving into the temptation of closure. Closure would represent an obvious avoidance of what remains indeterminate, elusive and opaque. “Working through” may ultimately signify, in Maurice Blanchot’s words, “to keep watch over absent meaning.”

For many medical students, the absence of existential meaning in illness poses a threat against which they attempt to defend themselves, even in their reading of graphic texts. Some students write that David B does not resolve the issues that he raises in *Epileptic*. Other texts elicit responses that similarly express a desire for closure; for example, Miriam Engelberg’s *Cancer Made Me a Shallower Person* leaves some students disillusioned about the sort of closure that they believe may come from “dealing with” cancer, the obvious opposite of the title, “cancer made me a deeper person.” Paul Hornschemeier’s *Mother, Come Home* confuses some readers who look for the sort of organization that gives explanatory power to all the events represented. In all these cases, students have

used the (currently common) term “closure” to express what they desire but find lacking in the text. While they do not always demand a “happy” ending, they at least want to feel that the text is “complete.” The graphic text, I will argue, has several advantages over traditional prose texts in resisting closure and demanding that the reader “work through” the events. One edge results from the need for the reader to fill in the spaces of the “gutter” (a sort of working through how the characters have moved from one frame to the next); another is that narrative text and illustrations may convey different or contradictory meanings; finally, a graphic text may end with an illustrated frame that asks the reader to work through the meaning of the representation in the absence of narrative. These sorts of engagement with a text can be particularly salient for medical students as they work toward accepting the inevitable ambiguities and lack of closure in patient care.

In my presentation, I will use examples from the aforementioned texts to argue that the texts are indeterminate, and that the “working through” they demand can be a rich experience.

Saul Friedlander, *Probing the Limits of Representation: Nazism and the “final solution”*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992.

Linda Raphael is the author of *Narrative Scepticism: Moral Agency and Representations of Consciousness in Fiction* (Associated University Presses, 2001); *When Night Fell, Anthology of Holocaust Short Fiction* (Rutgers University Press, 1999); articles in books and journals on Medicine and literature, Henry James, Charles Dickens, and Jewish American literature.

Keynote Session with Darryl Cunningham

British Artist Darryl Cunningham, who studied at Leeds College of Art, is a prolific cartoonist. His book *Psychiatric Tales*, published by Blank Slate in the UK and Bloomsbury in the US has met with wide critical acclaim. He has also worked for long stints as a health care assistant on an acute psychiatric ward which informed and inspired the thoughts and experiences which went into *Psychiatric Tales*. He is also the

creator of the webcomics *Super-Sam* and *John-of-the-Night* and *The Streets of San Diablo*.

He's currently working on his children's book *Uncle Sam* (due from BSB in 2011), a second *Psychiatric Tales* book and his book debunking scientific naysayers and conspiracy theorists *Science Tales* for Myriad Editions

Chairs

MK Czerwiec

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Fiorenzo Iuliano

Fiorenzo Iuliano holds in a PhD in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures from the University of Naples, L'Orientale, Italy, where he is currently a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in American Literature. His main research interests are American Studies, Cultural Studies and graphic novels. He is currently working on a book on tropes of corporeality in US novels and starting a research project on Seattle in the 1990s.

Mita Mahato

Mita Mahato is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Puget Sound, where she teaches courses in contemporary Visual and Cultural Studies, as well as nineteenth-century British Literature. Her current research explores the articulation and reception of illness stories in non-traditional narrative forms, including comics, film, and online media. Her essay on the fraught world of illness blogging, "Virtuous Community: Online Storytelling in Leroy Sievers's *My Cancer*," was recently

published in *Storytelling, Self, Society*. She has begun work on a graphic novel/memoir (she is not sure which just yet) that, she is guessing, will take years to complete. But she is determined!

Maria Vaccarella

Dr Maria Vaccarella is a Research Fellow at the Centre for the Humanities and Health, King's College London. Her main research field is narrative medicine and she has worked on medical-themed graphic novels, particularly on epilepsy and breast cancer. She is particularly interested in graphic depictions of illness embodiment and in how graphic illness narratives are being used in medical and patient education.

Ian Williams

Dr Ian Williams is the initiator of the website GraphicMedicine.org and also draws comics under the pseudonym Thom Ferrier, publishing strips online and in print. He has trained in both medicine and fine art and writes articles for both medical and comics journals. His Medical Humanities MA dissertation was written on medical narrative in comics and graphic novels and he has co-organized three international conferences on comics and medicine. He is joint Lead Editor for a forthcoming series of books on Graphic Medicine from Penn State University Press and is currently working on a graphic novel under his nom de plume. His comics work can be seen on www.thomferrier.com.

Organisers

Columba Quigley

Originally qualified in medicine, Columba Quigley completed an MA in Literature and Medicine in 2009. She is currently working on a PhD at the London Consortium on 'Representations of Suffering', which focuses on the visibility of mental illness in art and drawn literature.

Maria Vaccarella

Dr Maria Vaccarella is a Research Fellow at the Centre for the Humanities and Health, King's College London. Her main research field is narrative medicine and she has worked on medical-themed graphic novels, particularly on epilepsy and breast cancer. She is particularly interested in graphic depictions of illness embodiment and in how graphic illness narratives are being used in medical and patient education.

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Guest Blogger

MK Czerwiec

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Humanities & Bioethics and assisted in organizing the June 2011 Comics & Medicine conference in Chicago. She is currently the Artist in Residence for Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine.

Materiality and Virtuality: A Conference on Comics

Materiality and Virtuality: A Conference on Comics: Programme

1000-1020: Registration

1020-1030: Opening remarks

[Ian Hague](#)

1030-1130: Session 1

Panel 1A: Printing and Publication	Panel 1B: Readerships and Communities
Chair: Ernesto Priego	Chair: David Huxley
<p>Mel Gibson p.44</p> <p>"I do have the annuals but somehow they are just not the same as the weeklies printed on that dreadfully poor quality paper": British girls' comics, publication formats and perceptions of class</p>	<p>Anna Madill p.46</p> <p>"STOP This is the back of the book!": The materiality and virtuality of manga in translation</p>
<p>Matt Green p.45</p> <p>"[T]his I shall do, by printing in the infernal method": Visionary Materialism from William Blake's Illuminated Books to Alan Moore's Magical Metaphors</p>	<p>Sina Shamsavari p.47</p> <p>Gay Ghetto Comics: Constructing a Dominant Gay Habitus</p>

1130-1145: Break

1145-1300: Session 2

Panel 2A: Digital Comics	Panel 2B: Transmediality and Intermediality
Chair: Ian Hague	Chair: Mel Gibson
<p>Ernesto Priego p.48</p> <p>Back to the Source: The Importance of Guidelines for Citation of Comic Art in the Digital Age</p>	<p>Nicolas Pillai p.51</p> <p>"What am I looking at, Mulder?": Truth and Transmediality in <i>The X-Files</i> comics</p>
<p>Daniel Merlin Goodbrey p.49</p> <p>Digital Comics: New Forms & Innovations</p>	<p>William Grady p.52</p> <p>Comic Books and Dime Novels: Materiality and Mythic Artifices</p>
<p>Dan Berry p.50</p> <p>Did video kill the radio star? Transitions from analogue to Digital media</p>	<p>James Peacock p.53</p> <p>"Human Scribble, Human Cipher, Human Dream": Concrete Metaphors and Remediation in Jonathan Lethem's <i>Omega the Unknown</i></p>

1300-1345: Lunch

1345-1445: Session 3

Panel 3A: Comics and Philosophy	Panel 3B: Storytellers and Storytelling
Chair: Simon Grennan	Chair: Julia Round
John Holbo p.54 Accretion and the Crisis of the Easel Painting	Alberto Cipriani and Mauro Marchesi p.56 Hollywood Bau at The Factory. Comics and architecture, a project for Hong Kong
Aaron Meskin p.55 The Possibility of Site-Specific Comics	Christine Kuhn p.57 Interactive Graphic Storytelling: Experiments in virtual and material PsychoComix

1445-1500: Break

1500-1600: Keynote session with [Posy Simmonds](#) p.58

1600-1640: Directed strategy meeting for the development of comics scholarship

1640-1645: Closing remarks

Ian Hague, Ian Williams & Kirstie Gregory

1900-2100 (Carriageworks Theatre): Keynote session with [Tim Dant](#), [Matthew Sheret](#) and [Tom Humberstone](#) p.59

“I do have the annuals but somehow they are just not the same as the weeklies printed on that dreadfully poor quality paper”: British girls’ comics, publication formats and perceptions of class

Mel Gibson

This paper will look at some of the varied publication formats related to the British girls’ comic between the 1950s and 1980s. In doing so it will also engage with the ways in which readers responded to aspects of these texts beyond reading the narratives and articles they contained.

I draw on interviews with adults who read girl’s comics as children, exploring the ways that the shape and size of the weekly comic, along with issues like colour printing and paper quality, formed a significant part of a reader’s relationship with a title. In addition, these aspects of the comics formed part of a construction of titles other than their ‘own’ as problematic. The physical nature of these texts is often bound up in interview with notions of class.

Further, the relationship readers had with annuals, rather than the weeklies, is often couched in interview in terms of the physical object, something I will discuss and extend by looking at recent reprint volumes from Prion. The Prion website frequently refers to the authenticity of the shape and size of their reprints, suggesting a continued significance for the potential reader.

Dr Mel Gibson is a Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University. She is also the creator of Dr Mel Comics, a website which supports librarians and teachers in developing graphic novel and manga collections and offers resources and links for those researching comics.

“[T]his I shall do, by printing in the infernal method”:

Visionary Materialism from William Blake’s Illuminated Books to Alan Moore’s Magical Metaphors

Matt Green

Though Blake’s influence on Moore is the subject of increasing investigation, researchers have tended to overlook the formal similarities of their work, which is surprising as Blake’s method of illuminated printing directly anticipates works such as *Promethea*. This paper brings the study of comics into dialogue with studies of Blake’s “Composite Art”. The theorisation of comics contributes to new ways of reading and regarding Blake, while Blake Studies sheds insight onto an alternative history of comics that develops out of – but departs significantly from – eighteenth-century print culture.

In addition to contributing to current theorisations of text and image, this paper will argue that both creators emphasise the materiality of their art with a view to achieving similar ends. Moore’s *Promethea* regularly engages its readers in various activities that require reader participation (such as rotating the book or disassembling/reassembling it); similarly, Blake’s works demand a high-level of engagement and encode a set of redemptive practices that it seeks to impose on its readership. By encouraging a “hands-on” approach to reading, Moore and Blake not only emphasise the status of the work as a material artefact, but they also seek to transform our understanding of materiality itself. Specifically, their works attempt to renovate the way in which we see the world, reconfiguring our senses in a manner that is tied directly to a visionary materialism that eschews transcendentalism and encodes magic within everyday experience.

Matt Green is Associate Professor of English at the University of Nottingham. He is currently completing a monograph on William Blake and Alan Moore and has edited and contributed a chapter to the forthcoming edited collection, *Alan Moore and the Gothic Tradition* (Manchester UP, 2012). Other relevant publications include “Form and Function from Blake to Moore” in *Blake 2.0* (Palgrave 2011), “‘She Brings Apocalypse’: Sex, Imagination and Redemptive Transgression in William Blake and the Graphic Novels of Alan Moore”, *Literature Compass* 8 (2011); and, *Visionary Materialism in the Early Works of William Blake* (Palgrave 2005).

“STOP This is the back of the book!”: The materiality and virtuality of manga in translation

Anna Madill

Original Japanese manga is available in translation to a worldwide audience. One important route is through publishers who own copyright to sell translated work. Since Japanese reads from right to left (and sometimes downwards), the first commercial translations into languages such as English were ‘flipped’ (mirror-imaged) to read in the direction usual for the new audience. This practice could, however, create anomalous images and has stopped. Consumers have not been put off by the ‘non-flipped’ format. In fact, arguably, it has become part of the exotic, material experience of reading manga in translation to start at the ‘back’, as well as preservation of features such as onomatopoeic (usually katakana) Japanese script incorporated in the art work. Only a tiny minority of original language manga is available in commercial translation and on-line fan communities have developed who (illegally) scan and translate editions into a variety of languages. This process is called ‘scanlation’. In general, copyright holders’ ‘cease and desist’ notices appear to be complied with to the extent that specific scanlations are removed from sites, however, the threat of legal sanctions appears to have little effect on the practice as a whole. This presentation will offer examples of, and discuss issues stemming from, the materiality and virtuality of manga in translation using the example of *Boys’ Love* and *Shotacon* manga. Scanlation, in general, raises issues about the availability of copyrighted products: and scanlation of *Boys’ Love* and *Shotacon*, in particular, raises issues about the availability of sexualised images of children which often breach cultural and legal boundaries.

Anna Madill specializes in qualitative methods and research broadly in the field of ‘well-being’. Her current projects include research funded by the British Academy on *Boys’ Love* manga. She is a Reader in the Institute of Psychological Sciences and a member of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, University of Leeds, UK. Anna Madill is a Chartered Psychologist, a Chartered Scientist, and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society. She co-founded and is Chair of the British Psychological Society Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section, is Associate Editor of the British Journal of Clinical Psychology, and on the editorial boards of the British Journal of Social Psychology and Qualitative Research in Psychology.

Gay Ghetto Comics: Constructing a Dominant Gay Habitus

Sina Shamsavari

Comics set in the “gay community” or “ghetto” began to be published in gay and lesbian magazines in the 1960s, and with the emergence of established and commercialized urban communities throughout the 1970s and 80s, the “gay ghetto” type of comic strip began to appear more often in local and national publications throughout the United States (and to a lesser extent in the UK.) The “Gay ghetto” comics are often set in a recognizably “gay” location such as the Castro, San Francisco. The action tends to take place in and around “gay community” institutions such as gay bars, bookshops and clubs. This talk will discuss the ways in which the gay ghetto comics work to construct a visible and “typical” gayness and a dominant gay habitus, through references to fashions, music, locations, etc. This typification however also serves to reify certain culturally and historically specific gay scenes and identities as exemplary of “what the gay community is *really* like”, presenting an image of the gay community as relatively unified and stable and erasing internal difference and alterity. In contrast, the queer independent comics that emerged in the 1990s critique this notion of a unified gay community in various ways. In some of these comics the action takes place away from any recognizable “gay community”; in others the gay community is critiqued through parody and caricature in a decidedly unsympathetic way; in yet others a non-mainstream gay habitus and social scene is constructed through references to “alternative” music, fashion and sensibilities.

Sina Shamsavari is a cartoonist and academic. He is the creator of the autobiographical comic *BoyCrazyBoy*, a lecturer in Cultural and Historical Studies at London College of Fashion, and is researching the history of queer alternative comics at Goldsmiths College.

Back to the Source: The Importance of Guidelines for Citation of Comic Art in the Digital Age

Ernesto Priego

This presentation will explore a dual phenomenon: the lack of standards in the referencing of primary sources in comics scholarship and the complications this has on the comics scholarship of the digital age.

In comics scholarship, proper attribution of sources (as Martin Barker noticed back in 1989) is troubled by a lack of standards, notwithstanding the existence of resources like Allen Ellis' "Comic Art in Scholarly Writing. A Citation Guide" (1998). Moreover, the humanities have a long tradition of employing visual material to illustrate research and teaching, but have traditionally failed to see these sources as worthy of citation, as it keeps happening today (Dombrowski 2011).

The problem is a complex one that is deeply rooted in the subjugation of visual material within a academic practice, which has traditionally over-relied on the written word, but also on the intricacies of copyright law. The undeniable predominance of digital media in the production of both comic books and academic discourse has also had an effect in the perceived and actual obstacles of locating, obtaining and referencing both primary sources and secondary research on comic art.

This paper will present specific examples that demonstrate the urgency with which the need for citation guidelines for comics scholarship need to be discussed. Since the dominance of 'the digital' has troubled the ontology of comics texts as printed publications and therefore as material objects and bibliographic records, I will attempt to show how an awareness of the importance of citation can reward comics scholarship in perhaps unexpected ways.

Dr Ernesto Priego wrote his PhD dissertation, "The Comic Book in the Age of Digital Reproduction", at the Department of Information Studies at UCL. His MA thesis was about Art Spiegelman and traumatic narrative structure, and he was awarded his BA with a thesis on Watchmen and narratology. He is an editor and co-founder of The Comics Grid.

Digital Comics: New Forms & Innovations

Daniel Merlin Goodbrey

The medium of comics sits on the cusp of the digital future promised to comic creators at the turn of the century. Explorations of the infinite canvas and the many strange mutations of the hypercomic have been given a new relevance and audience by the recent advances in portable display and mobile media. Now, with a decade of experimental digital work behind us, the wider world is at last beginning to catch up to these odd outliers of the form.

As the comics industry moves to catch up with the frontier, newer and stranger ideas must be entertained. The hunt for weirder, more wonderful mutations must be renewed with new vigour and new purpose. This talk considers the different directions potential explorers of the medium might next pursue. It examines the possibilities of new forms such as locative, sonic, game, spatial and AR comics. In doing so it aims to map some of the many trails leading out into the new decade of experimental comics that lies before us.

Daniel Merlin Goodbrey is a senior lecturer in Interaction Design at The University of Hertfordshire in England. A prolific and innovative comic creator, Goodbrey has gained international recognition as a leading expert in the field of experimental digital comics. His hypercomic work received the International Clickburg Webcomic Award in Holland in 2006 while his work in print was awarded with the Isotope Award for Excellence In Comics in San Francisco in 2005. An archive of his work can be found at <http://emerl.com/consulting>.

Did video kill the radio star? Transitions from analogue to Digital media

Dan Berry

As technology develops, the way that readers interact with comics is expected to change to match this development. In a technological climate in which wireless connectivity has become nearly ubiquitous, what expectations do we have about the way that technology can assist or enhance the experience of the reader? What benefits or disadvantages may there be from approaching the audience as a user rather than a reader?

Similar questions can be asked of the creation of comics. Does artwork that is produced digitally lack any tactile qualities of a traditionally produced counterpart and does this have an impact on the reader's perceptions of the narrative? Can the use of technology such as the Wacom Cintiq effectively bridge the perceived gap between the analogue and digital approaches to the creation of comics?

Dan Berry is a Senior Lecturer in Visual Communication at Glyndwr University. There he runs the art school's specialism in graphic novels. He is a cartoonist and designer, and alongside publishing his own work, he has recently contributed to Blank Slate Books' Nelson and the anthologies *Solipsistic Pop*, *Paper Science* and *Ink + Paper*. He is currently working towards his Phd, looking at the ways in which technology can support innovation in the creative industries.

“What am I looking at, Mulder?”: Truth and Transmediality in *The X-Files* comics

Nicolas Pillai

Using interviews I have conducted with executive producer and writer Frank Spotnitz, Topps Comics writer Stefan Petrucha and artists Charlie Adlard and Brian Denham, my paper charts *The X-Files*' parallel existence, and continuation, in comic book format from 1995 to the present day. Licensed first to Topps Comics (1995-1998) and then DC/Wildstorm (2008-), *The X-Files* has endured not only on the DVD shelf, but also in the comic box.

While previous writing on the programme's fandom has focused upon online interaction (e.g., Clerc, 1996), my work suggests that a comic's tangibility (and its promise of additional visual adventures for Mulder and Scully) offers a particular kind of authenticity and comfort, lending itself to the continuation of the franchise.

Increasingly, comic tie-ins broaden the worlds of science fiction film and television (e.g. Orci and Kurtzman's *Star Trek* prequel comics for IDW), extending their cultural impact and asking us to view their source material in new ways. Given this industry shift, my article interrogates Kerry Gough's notion of 'translation creativity' (2007, p. 38), in the hope of moving the discussion of licensed comics away from mimetics. Following Ernesto Priego's account of comic books as a 'technology of mediation... [and] transmediality' (paper at University of Bristol, January 2011), I argue that licensed comics are the link between current debates over materiality in both Television Studies and the emerging field of Comics Studies.

My paper illuminates the creative methods of tie-in writers and aims to refute the stigma attached to licensed comics.

Nicolas Pillai is completing his doctoral thesis on Hollywood narratives of marriage in the Department of Film and Television at the University of Warwick. He is particularly interested in transmedia adaptation and has given papers on Tijuana bibles (University of Winchester) and screwball mysteries (MPCA/ACA, Detroit) and this year is presenting on politics and *Doctor Who* (University of Northumbria) and drinking in the Thin Man films (University of Warwick). Other research interests include jazz performance, crime narratives and the comic book. This paper uses research I have undertaken for a journal article to be published in a special *The X-Files* issue of *Science Fiction Film and Television* (Liverpool University Press), edited by Stacey Abbott and Simon Brown.

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Comic Books and Dime Novels: Materiality and Mythic Artifices

William Grady

Gabilliet postulates, in *Of Comics and Men*, that the dime novel laid the foundation for the comic book¹. Informed by this, the talk will firstly examine the materiality of the dime novel and then transpose this to the comic book; considering aspects of physical aesthetics, audience, and marketability in both mediums.

When considering the content, the talk will maintain focus on dime novels that narrated the Frontier Myth, more commonly known as the Western. It will consider the commonalities of mythic themes in the narrative of these texts, and then see if these themes have been transplanted over into the comic book.

To achieve this, the talk will use a case study of the dime novels that narrated the life of Buffalo Bill Cody, and the contemporary Western comic book *Preacher*. Cody had a seemingly unremarkable life in 1800s America. However when his life would be narrated in the dime novels, it would become a thing of legends, elevating Cody into a mythic pantheon of frontier heroes alongside Hawkeye, and Davy Crockett. Likewise, Ennis attempts to conjure the mythic credence of dime novel narration as he creates his own legend in *Preacher: Saint of Killers*. Subsequently, the Saint becomes a character that a number of characters fear throughout the series purely on the precedent of this mythic tale.

With a look at aspects of storytelling, and narrative functions, the talk will argue that

both mediums are mythic artifices, and consider the implications that this form of myth making has had on American cultural history. Furthermore, the talk will be useful at alerting us to more general questions about the historical changes of the comic book, and materiality between that and dime novels.

[1] Jean Paul Gabilliet, *Of Comics and Men: A Cultural History of American Comic Books*. Trans. Bart Beaty and Nick Nguyen. (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010), 13.

William Grady is currently studying his MA (by research) in the Department of Film and Media at Manchester Metropolitan University; supervised by David Huxley and Joan Ormrod. His current research is looking at the Western genres adaptation into comics, considering classic and contemporary generic elements.

He has spoken about cinematic aesthetic in comics, and psychogeography in the work of Alan Moore. An article of his that considers American cultural history in comic books (which this talk is drawn from) is to be published shortly. In conjunction with this, he has helped at the international comics conference that has taken place in Manchester for the past two years, and has worked for the Kronos Quartet in San Francisco.

“Human Scribble, Human Cipher, Human Dream”: Concrete Metaphors and Remediation in Jonathan Lethem’s *Omega the Unknown*

James Peacock

Jonathan Lethem’s 2003 novel *The Fortress of Solitude* alludes to Steve Gerber and Mary Skrene’s short-lived Marvel strip from the 1970s, *Omega the Unknown*, and uses it as an allegory of protagonist Dylan Ebdus’ loneliness, confusion and feelings of displacement. Lethem’s 2008 reinvention of *Omega*, in collaboration with Karl Rusnak, Farel Dalrymple and Paul Hornschemer, in turn draws on *Fortress* in its depiction of an alienated teenage protagonist who loses his parents but acquires a black buddy, and who, as part of his coming-of-age, has a lot to learn about popular culture. Additionally, both texts include superheroes decidedly on the wane.

Throughout his career, Lethem has been fond of concretized metaphors in his novels and short stories and this, one might speculate, is partly due to his passion for comics. This paper argues that this complex process of remediation draws particular attention to the different forms of the novel and the comic. In remediating *Fortress* as comic, Lethem is striving for a way, as Marc Singer puts it, ‘to bypass the master tropes of figurative language’ which define the novel as a form and which are at the root of Dylan’s, and many other Lethem characters’ difficulties in deciphering and representing the world. Language, as Singer says, has come to be seen in structuralist and post-structuralist discourse as a series of substitutions of symbols resulting in an endless deferral of meaning. Comics, on the other hand, exploit their unique figurative strategies to construct literalized metaphors which have the potential, at least, to circumvent that deferral and engage in a more direct mimesis.

James Peacock is Lecturer in English and American Literatures at Keele University. He is the author of *Understanding Paul Auster* and the forthcoming book on Jonathan Lethem from Manchester University Press. His articles have appeared in *Journal of American Studies*, *English*, *Critique* and *Symbiosis*. He is currently working on a monograph about representations of community in contemporary novels set in Brooklyn.

Accretion and the Crisis of the Easel Painting

John Holbo

'Popular, commercial art and literature with their chromeotypes, magazine covers, illustrations, ads, slick and pulp fiction, comics, Tin Pan Alley music, tap dancing, Hollywood movies, etc., etc.' That's Clement Greenberg, on "Avant-Garde and Kitsch". More specifically: on kitsch. Greenberg's sweep the leg style of pan-anti-pop high-brow dismissal doesn't get much play these days—not unless someone writing yet another of those 'comics are all grown up!' pieces needs a suitably supercilious 'center does not hold!' central casting straight man. But Greenbergian high modernism's low stock, due to highhanded low blows, may result in neglect of aspects of his thoughts on the avant-garde and 'the crisis of the easel painting'. In "Abstract, Representational, and so forth", Greenberg follows up a question about the materiality of Rembrandt—why did he pile the 'juiciest paint' on noses and foreheads, not ears?—with a riddling retraction of his signature anti-illustrationism: "Actually, my own hope is that a less qualified acceptance of the importance of sheerly abstract or formal factors in pictorial art will open the way to a clearer understanding of the value of illustration as such—a value which I, too, am convinced is indisputable. Only it is not a value that is realized by, or as, accretion." It's not clear what that means, but I like the idea that Greenberg was waiting for comics, formally and materially—if only there weren't so many damn comics cluttering up the place. After the easel: the panel and page ... and the post-page. Through the looking glass of unqualified abstractionism: unapologetic illustrationism. Graphic novel as Greenbergism accidentally ascendant. A view worth trying on for size. Other Works To Be Discussed (more realistically: touched upon – still more realistically, these titles

hint at where I'm coming from, in making this proposal): Marcos Mateu-Mestre, *Framed Ink: Drawing and Composition for Visual Storytellers* (2010) Donald Graham, *Composing Pictures* (1970; reprinted, 2010). Panel Discussions: *Design in Sequential Art Storytelling*, various authors (2007), *The Art of Tangled*, various authors (2010) Kurt Varnedde and Adam Gopnik, *High & Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture* (1991) Amid Amidi, *Cartoon Modern: Style and Design in 1950s Animation* (2006) James Trilling, *Ornament: A Modern Perspective* (2003) Flint Schier, *Deeper Into Pictures: An Essay on Pictorial Representation* (1986; reprinted, 2009) David Bland, *The Illustration of Books* (1962) Edward Tufte, *Envisioning Information* (1990).

John Holbo is an academic philosopher writing a book about 'reading pictures', i.e. interpretive theory and the theory of pictorial depiction. (A version of one chapter is forthcoming, "Redefining Comics". Copy available on request.) I'm also an amateur illustrator, comics artist and book designer. My book, *Reason and Persuasion* (Pearson, 2009) is a heavily-cartooned intro to Plato. Also, I have self-published one book that is, for lack of a better term, comics: *Squid and Owl*. You can read both online and/or download a pdf here:

<http://issuu.com/jholbo/docs/reasonandpersuasion>

<http://issuu.com/jholbo/docs/squidowlissu>
[corrected](#)

So my interest in comics and book art is both theoretic and practical.

Site-specific comics?

Aaron Meskin

The hybrid art of comics is typically an art of multiples. That is, comics and graphic novels are typically fine art prints and cast sculptures—they are repeatable and admit of instances or occurrences rather than mere copies. Are comics essentially like this? That is, must all comics be multiples? Some definitions of comics entail that they are; for example, David Kunzle holds that “the medium in which the strip appears and for which it was originally intended must be reproductive, that is, in printed form, a mass medium.” Similarly, Anne Elizabeth Moore claims that “comics are a published medium—created to be mechanically reproduced, either in print or on the Web.” If Kunzle and Moore are right, then there cannot be singular or site-specific comics. But I shall argue that there *can* be both singular and site-specific comics and, in fact, that there are extant examples of both categories; hence, the definitions proposed by Kunzle and Moore are wrong and comics are not essentially reproductive or multiple. Like sculpture (which is often a multiple art but also includes carved works which are not multiples), the art form of comics allows for multiple and non-multiple examples.

Aaron Meskin is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Leeds. He is the author of numerous journal articles and book chapters on aesthetics and other philosophical subjects. His work on comics has been published in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, the *British Journal of Aesthetics* and two anthologies. He is co-editor of *The Art of Comics: A Philosophical Approach* which is forthcoming from Wiley-Blackwell in 2011. He was the first aesthetics editor for the online journal *Philosophy Compass*, and he co-edited *Aesthetics: A Comprehensive Anthology* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007). He is a former Trustee of the American Society for Aesthetics and is Treasurer of the British Society of Aesthetics.

Hollywood Bau at The Factory. Comics and architecture, a project for Hong Kong

Alberto Cipriani and Mauro Marchesi

The Factory, a comic building was designed by Alberto Cipriani senior architect at RAD former OMA_ASIA. Keeping the structural intervention at minimum cost, yet still providing a nicely designed space, our proposal was to transform the building into a gigantic and interactive comic book. The space was designed so that users' everyday lives can blend into unusual spatial conditions; the size of the traditional paperback was blown-out-of-proportion providing a whole new reading experience. We chose Mauro Marchesi, an Italian comic artist to create the comic strip. He adapted a storyline of his 'Hollywood Bau' to weave into The Factory's spaces. Allowing a series of playful moments, the comic interacts with both the architecture and the users of the building.

How do you read it? Arrive at either the car-park or the main entrance and be greeted by 'Hollywood Bau' in a pistol shoot-out. Go into the lift and the story continues. Users will make up their own story traveling around the building. Every floor has another element of the story line. Staircases, lifts, toilets, vending machines hide twists and surprises to the story. We provide the users with excitement and interaction with the architecture. Finally reaching the roof via the staircases or the lifts each telling its own story line reveals the roof-top bar. The panoramic view of the South China Sea serves as a perfect location for functions blending guests with silhouettes from Marchesi's comic strip.

The story continues on the way back down to the ground...

Alberto Cipriani works as an architect and industrial designer closely with several international firms.

Showcased in: UK, China, La Sorbonne of Paris and in several editions at La Biennale of Venice, his work testifies a multidisciplinary approach to design. Today he lives and works in Hong Kong as a senior design architect at RADltd (www.rad.hk). As a team leader, he has completed many outstanding projects including "The Factory" in Hong Kong.

Mauro Marchesi is a multimedial artist spanning from music to illustration. As an illustrator and comic book artist he collaborates with several international leading publishing companies. He worked with japanese author Monkey Punch drawing the first issue of "The New Adventures of Lupin III" a japanese character starring in many Anime movies. He created the comic book "Hollywood Bau" for Edizioni BD, published in USA, France and Spain by Phoenix Enterprise Publishing Co.

"Hollywood Bau" was the chosen character to be represented in "The Factory".

Interactive Graphic Storytelling: Experiments in virtual and material PsychoComix

Christine Kuhn

My interests lie in the boundaries of extreme psychic experiences and their imaginary pictures. How do these invisible pictures- once made visible and being perceived by others- interact with our real and inner worlds? I am interested in the friction between subjective experiences and objective knowledge, intuition and preciseness, strange personal pictures and their communication. My preferred medium are comics.

As a child psychiatrist in everyday work I am confronted with the resistance of young persons against the specific language of psychiatry which aims to describe deviating feelings, thoughts and behaviour. In psychological language humans hardly recognize their personal meanings and fates- how can the ability to perceive alien, incongruent parts of ourselves develop without being termed in psychopathology? The medium of graphic story telling has a great potential in exploring the space between the rational perception of ourselves and the narration of the irrational, as fantastic and everyday perception can be visualised in the same panel with a minimum of techniques.

I have been experimenting with drawing comics myself as in Babyfish Blues, the story of a young woman in various states of consciousness during birth and the experience of not being able to cope with her baby¹. Another field of work are Workshops in BioGraphix where individually and in groups personal pathways are being drawn and combined to make diaries of visionary journeys². I am currently working on new concepts with a team of media specialists to bring together these interactive graphic stories on the web. In

this talk I would like to share our teams search for transdisciplinary methods and experiments of virtual and material forms of interactive graphic storytelling.

[1]

http://trans.zhdk.ch/fileadmin/data/trans/diplomarbeiten_publication2010/MTR_diplomzeitung10_christinekuhn.pdf

[2]

http://www.cortona.ethz.ch/services/program/2011_Teacher/11_kuhn

Dr Christine Kuhn studied medicine and worked in diverse medical contexts from tropical medicine to Accident and Emergency. She specialized in Child- and Adolescent Psychiatry and took a Psychoanalytical Psychotherapy degree in 1998. Her main scientific interest is the Web for Social Learning and Online Diagnostic Systems. In teaching she focuses on visual strategies in communication. In 2011 she took an M. A. degree in Transdisciplinarity at the Department of Cultural Studies at the Zürich School of Arts. She is interested in graphic novels and draws comics to explore the concepts of identity and biographies between scientific visualization and intuitive perception as integrative works of art.

Her recent research project is interactive story telling in a transdisciplinary setting with the Department Cast of the ZHDK responsible for the media part and herself for the medical site and of course the graphics.

Keynote Session with Posy Simmonds

P.S. was born in 1945 and brought up in Berkshire. She was educated at Queen Anne's School, Caversham, studied French at the Sorbonne and graphic design at The Central School of Art & Design. In 1968, following art school, she babysat, cleaned people's houses, walked their dogs and began drawing small cartoons and illustrations for a variety of newspapers and magazines, including *The Times*, *Black Dwarf*, *Woman's Own*, *Sun*, *Observer* and *Cosmopolitan*.

P.S. is best known for the weekly strips and serials which were published in *The Guardian* and the books which derive from them. The Weber series ran weekly from

1977-1987; *Gemma Boverly* appeared in daily episodes in 1999 and *Tamara Drewe* ran weekly from 2005 -2006. In book form, both serials have been translated into several languages, *Tamara Drewe* becoming an *Essentiel* at Angoulême in 2009 and winning the Prix de la Critique Bande Dessinée the same year. The book was also short-listed for an Eisner Award and in 2010, was adapted as a feature film, directed by Stephen Frears.

P.S. has also written a number of children's books, among them *Fred*, whose film version was nominated for an Oscar in 1998. She is married, lives in London and is currently working on another serial.

Keynote session with Tim Dant, Tom Humberstone and Matthew Sheret

Tim Dant

Tim Dant is a sociologist who has always had an interest in culture and media. He's written books on knowledge, critical theory, material culture and is just finishing one on television – it's about how the audiovisual communication of the small screen contributes to the moral culture of late modern societies. Tim has taught sociological theory, research methods, sociology of culture and media and currently teaches a module on television, morality and society while he is Head of the Department of Sociology at Lancaster University.

Tim can't draw for toffee and would be a useless cartoonist. But he is interested in the way different types of material stuff are media for the culture of a society; whether it is windsurfers, kitchen knives, flatpack furniture, the innards of a motor-car, photographs or television programmes. He's looking forward to learning about how comics become material objects that merge the written word and the hand-drawn image to communicate all sorts of ideas with a very direct aesthetic appeal.

Tom Humberstone

Tom Humberstone is the award winning creator behind *Art School Scum*, *How to Date a Girl in 10 Days* and *Everything You Never Wanted to Know About Crohn's Disease*.

In 2009, Tom launched the UK alternative comic anthology *Solipsistic Pop* which he continues to edit and publish.

His comics and illustrations have appeared in *Paper Science*, *Nelson*, *The Guardian*, *Dazed & Confused* and *The Independent* among others. He currently lives in London and is working on his next book, *Ellipsis*.

Matthew Sheret

Matthew Sheret is Last.fm's Data Griot (a role which basically means he tells stories about numbers).

As a writer and editor Matthew has worked for Newspaper Club, 4iP, Thomson Reuters and Dentsu London, and has contributed to *Plan B*, *Wired* and *Electric Sheep* among others. As a comics writer he has contributed strips to the anthology *Solipsistic Pop* as well as the *Thought Bubble Annual 2011*.

In 2008 Matthew co-founded We Are Words + Pictures, a team who promote the work of comics book writers and illustrators in the UK at fairs, festivals and club nights throughout the country. He also edits and publishes the comics anthology *Paper Science*, a quarterly collection on tabloid-format newsprint.

Chairs

Mel Gibson

Dr Mel Gibson is a Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University. She is also the creator of Dr Mel Comics, a website which supports librarians and teachers in developing graphic novel and manga collections and offers resources and links for those researching comics.

Simon Grennan

Simon Grennan has been practicing internationally as an artist since 1990. As part of collaborative artists team Grennan & Sperandio, he is well known as a pioneer of interventionist, New Genre and post-relational practice, through publishing, television and social action projects. Simon has also been Director of Viewpoint Photography Gallery, Salford and Director of Public Art Forum (now IXIA). He received his doctorate from University of the Arts London in 2011. Grennan & Sperandio are at www.kartoonkings.com

Ian Hague

Ian Hague is a PhD student and associate lecturer in the History department at the University of Chichester. His research focuses on how comics engage all of the reader's senses to communicate information and meaning. He did his BA in English at the University of Hull, and his MA in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. His research interests include materiality, technology, and theoretical approaches to comics.

David Huxley

David Huxley is Senior Lecturer on the BA (Hons) Film and Media Studies course at Manchester Metropolitan University. His subject specialisms are the Graphic Novel, Comic Book & Comic Strip, Censorship, Hollywood Film and Animation. His PhD thesis was *The Growth and Development of British Alternative Graphic Magazines 1966-1986*. Current research interests include the graphic novel and the comic strip, animation and the horror film and early twentieth century British Music Hall performers. He has drawn and written a wide range of adult and children's comics, and designed posters for conferences held at the university.

He has supervised a wide range of PhDs in the fields of the graphic novel and the comic strip, horror, genre and national film and examined a wide range of PhDs in film and cultural studies.

He is joint editor of Routledge's *The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*.

Ernesto Priego

Dr Ernesto Priego wrote his PhD dissertation, "The Comic Book in the Age of Digital Reproduction", at the Department of Information Studies at UCL. His MA thesis was about Art Spiegelman and traumatic narrative structure, and he was awarded his BA with a thesis on Watchmen and narratology. He is an editor and co-founder of The Comics Grid.

Julia Round

Julia Round (MA, PhD) is senior lecturer in the Media School at Bournemouth University, UK, and co-edits the academic journal *Studies in Comics* (Intellect Books). She has published and presented work internationally on cross-media adaptation, television and discourse analysis, the application of literary terminology to comics, the 'graphic novel' redefinition, and the presence of gothic and fantastic motifs and themes in this medium. She is currently working on a monograph on gothic graphic novels (*Ghosts in the Gutter*, McFarland, 2013) which analyses the impact of the English Gothic tradition on contemporary British and American comics. Further details at www.juliaround.com.

Organiser

Ian Hague

Ian Hague is a PhD student and associate lecturer in the History department at the University of Chichester. His research focuses on how comics engage all of the reader's senses to communicate information and meaning. He did his BA in English at the University of Hull, and his MA in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. His research interests include materiality, technology, and theoretical approaches to comics.

Comics Forum

Comics Forum 2011-2012

At present, Comics Forum is organised around two major outputs: the annual conference, which takes place in Leeds in November as part of the Thought Bubble sequential art festival, and the website, which is available internationally all year round. Up to this point, the development of Comics Forum has largely been oriented around the organisation of the conference. The website as it was conceived was intended primarily as an information site for the annual event with additional value and interest being provided by the blog/article aspect.

As time has gone on, however, it has become increasingly clear that both the conference and the website have a high degree of support in the scholarly community (in the UK and internationally), and that there is potential to expand on the existing infrastructure of the organisation to provide additional services to that community. Accordingly, we have now added a 'scholarly resources' section which currently has two facilities: an affiliated conferences section, which makes conference papers and other information

available for download in PDF format, and a digital texts archive, which offers scholarly texts for free download.

Over the course of 2011-2012 we will be seeking to continue the annual conference, build further resources into the website and to establish other arms of the organisation. We will be increasing our presence in the social networking sphere (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) in order to raise the profile of comics scholarship in public awareness and the media. We will also be looking into the possibility of establishing a professional body to help generate further cohesion in the comics scholarship community. Finally, we will seek to have a greater presence in the UK comics community through attendance at conventions and festivals. In order to do all this though, we need some additional help!

If you would be interested in getting involved with the running of Comics Forum, there are a number of ways in which you can help. Please contact Ian Hague at I.Hague@chi.ac.uk to get a copy of the full 2011-2012 development plan and find out more.

The Comics Forum Team

Director

Ian Hague

Ian Hague is a PhD student and associate lecturer in the History department at the University of Chichester. His research focuses on how comics engage all of the reader's senses to communicate information and meaning. He did his BA in English at the University of Hull, and his MA in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds. His research interests include materiality, technology, and theoretical approaches to comics.

Organising Committee

Hattie Kennedy

Harriet Kennedy is currently studying for an MPhil at the University of Glasgow with a project about Nationalism in Quebecois Comics.

Emily Rabone

Emily Rabone is currently studying English Language at the University of Leeds. She was brought up in Tokyo, and has always been a fan of *Manga* and from there has expanded her interest to graphic narratives. The works of Osamu Tezuka has been a strong inspiration.

Hannah Wadle

Hannah started off as the conference camerawoman for Comics Forum 2010, enjoyed the event a lot and is now committed to Comics Forum 2011. In real life she is a social anthropologist, journalist and philanthropic taking regular baths in human everyday and tourism culture in different parts of Europe. She graduated with a Masters in History and European Ethnology from Freiburg University (Germany), started her PhD at the Centre for Tourism and Cultural Change (Leeds Met.) about the socio-cultural impacts of post-socialist tourism on a small village in Northeast Poland and is continuing it now at Manchester University. Her interests in the medium of comics are comics as a new language for ethnography and comics and Socialism.

Consultants

Hugo Frey

Dr Hugo Frey is Head of History at the University of Chichester, UK. He has worked extensively on French collective memory of the Vichy period and the wars of decolonization. Publications include a monograph on Louis Malle (Manchester UP: 2004) as well as contributions to *Yale French Studies*, *Journal of European Studies* and *Modern and Contemporary France*. He is currently writing a history of French national identity and the cinema, to be published by Reaktion books, London.

Mel Gibson

Dr Mel Gibson is a Senior Lecturer at Northumbria University. She is also the creator of Dr Mel Comics, a website which supports librarians and teachers in developing graphic novel and manga collections and offers resources and links for those researching comics.

Roger Sabin

Roger Sabin is Reader in Popular Culture at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts London. He is the author of *Adult Comics: An Introduction* (Routledge), *Comics, Comix and Graphic Novels* (Phaidon), and (as co-author) *The Lasting of the Mohicans* (University Press of Mississippi). He is Editor of *Punk Rock: So What?* (Routledge) and Co-editor of *Below Critical Radar: Fanzines and Alternative Comics, from 1976 to Now* (Codex) and *The Movie Book* (Phaidon). He serves on the Editorial Boards of *The Journal of Comics and Graphic Novels* (as Consulting Ed), *Studies in Comics* (as Consulting Ed), *European Comic Art*, *Image and Narrative*, *ImageText*, and *Studies in Graphic Narratives*. He reviews graphic novels for the press and radio.

Supporting Organisations

Comics Forum is lucky enough to be supported by a number of organisations and individuals. Thought Bubble, The University of Chichester, the Henry Moore Institute, Arts Council England, Routledge, Intellect, Dr Mel Gibson and Ben Gaskell of Molakoe Graphic Design have all been kind enough to

provide funding and other types of support to enable Comics Forum 2011 to come together, and we are enormously grateful to them. Further information on some of these organisations is presented on the following pages.



Thought Bubble

This year's Thought Bubble festival is special for many reasons - in 2011 we're celebrating our 5th anniversary, the culmination of a journey that began in 2007, when the first ever Thought Bubble took place over the space of one day in the basement of Leeds Town Hall and attracted an audience of just over 500 people. As attendance and interest has grown, Thought Bubble's status as a major international comic book and graphic novel festival has become assured, with over 5000 people expected to attend a week-long series of workshops, masterclasses, panel discussions, screenings, and other special events in 2011, all taking place across the city of Leeds, and satellite venues throughout Yorkshire.

Our festival's centrepiece is the Thought Bubble comic book convention, which this year will take place for the first time over two days on Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th November in two of Leeds' largest exhibition halls – Saviles Hall and Royal Armouries Hall. We've put together a fantastic line-up of

international artists and writers whose amazing work reflects the true diversity of comic book and graphic novel storytelling. The convention halls will also be filled with hundreds of exhibitors from all over the UK, from self-published artists and writers to the best retailers in the country and with two days you can browse and wander around the convention at your leisure.

As a major celebration of comic books and graphic novels Thought Bubble has become the premier destination for the comic book community, as well as a place of discovery for both young people and adults who haven't read a comic book before. Ultimately, the success of Thought Bubble is down to our audiences who have helped make each event very special and unique. Whether you're a cosplay enthusiast or curious first time visitor we look forward to welcoming you to our biggest and best festival to date.

<http://thoughtbubblefestival.com>

University of Chichester

The University of Chichester aims to be a socially responsible university that is recognised internationally, significant nationally, important regionally and vital locally – not only in teaching and student experience, but also in research and in its diverse communities and the public, private and voluntary sectors. We aspire to be excellent in everything we do and in the services we offer.

The Henry Moore Institute

The Henry Moore Institute is a world-recognised centre for the study of sculpture in the heart of Leeds. An award-winning exhibitions venue, research centre, library and sculpture archive, the Institute hosts a year-round programme of exhibitions, conferences and lectures, as well as developing research and publications, to expand the understanding and scholarship of historical and contemporary sculpture.

Routledge

Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics is a peer reviewed journal covering all aspects of the graphic novel, comic strip and comic book, with the emphasis on comics in their cultural, institutional and creative contexts. Its scope is international, covering not only English language comics but also worldwide comic culture. The journal reflects interdisciplinary research in comics and aims to establish a dialogue between academics, historians, theoreticians and practitioners of comics. It therefore examines the production and consumption of comics

Intellect

Intellect is an independent academic publisher in the fields of creative practice and popular culture, publishing scholarly books and journals that exemplify our mission as publishers of original thinking. We aim to provide a vital space for widening critical debate in new and emerging

The University has a proud record for promoting diversity and encouraging participation in Higher Education and many students come from non-traditional backgrounds and without the advantages of a family network of university experience. A wide range of support is available to enable all students to seize the opportunities to maximise their experience and reach their potential.

The Institute is a part of The Henry Moore Foundation, which was set up by Moore in 1977 to encourage appreciation of the visual arts, especially sculpture.

We are open seven days a week from 10am-5.30pm, with the galleries and library open until 9pm on Wednesdays. The library opens at 1pm on Sundays.

www.henry-moore.org

within the contexts of culture: art, cinema, television and new media technologies. The journal includes all forms of 'sequential imagery' including precursors of the comic but the main emphasis is on twentieth and twenty-first century examples, reflecting the increasing interest in the modern forms of the comic, its production and cultural consumption.

Read a free sample copy, and find out more, at www.tandfonline.com/rcom.

subjects, and in this way we differ from other publishers by campaigning for the author rather than producing a book or journal to fill a gap in the market.

We publish in four distinct subject areas: visual arts, film studies, cultural and media

studies, and performing arts. These categories host Intellect's ever-expanding topics of enquiry, which include photography, drawing, curation, community music, gaming and scenography. Intellect titles are often multidisciplinary, presenting scholarly work at the cross section of arts, media and creative practice. Our journals

include *Studies in Comics*, which aims to describe the nature of comics, to identify the medium as a distinct art form and to address the medium's formal properties, with the specific goal of expanding the relationship between comics and theory to articulate a "theory of comics".

Molakoe Graphic Design

Molakoe offer a range of design services from logo or packaging artwork to CSS and web design. Professional standards and close links with clients set Molakoe apart from other London based designers and help to create an environment that not only means I can design to your needs but also beyond so that you can stand above others in your field. Whilst I am based in London I also take on national and international work using all of the latest technologies to create

clean and dynamic designs that will wow your target audience.

Molakoe builds bespoke web solutions based on web standards in XHTML, CSS as well as a working understanding of PHP, Javascript (Jquery) and Wordpress (as a CMS). Using industry standard Adobe CS5 suite (Photoshop, Dreamweaver, Illustrator and Indesign) to create Iphone web / App Store applications as well as posters, postcards, booklets.

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The Complete University Guide, 2011

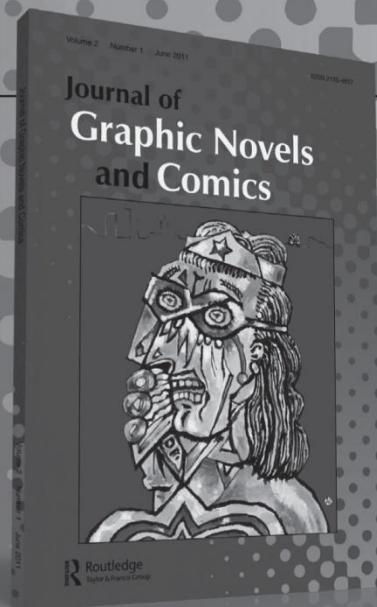
Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics covers all aspects of the graphic novel, comic strip and comic book, with emphasis on comics in their cultural, institutional and creative contexts.

The journal reflects interdisciplinary research in comics and aims to establish a dialogue between academics, historians, theoreticians and practitioners of comics. It therefore examines the production and consumption of comics within the contexts of culture: art, cinema, television and new media technologies.

The journal includes all forms of 'sequential imagery', including precursors of the comic, but the main emphasis is on twentieth and twenty-first century examples, reflecting the increasing interest in the modern forms of the comic, its production and cultural consumption.



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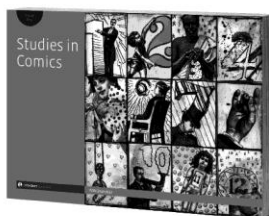
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Studies in Comics

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Aims and Scope

Studies in Comics aims to describe the nature of comics, to identify the medium as a distinct art form, and to address the medium's formal properties. The emerging field of comics studies is a model for interdisciplinary research and this journal welcomes all approaches and methodologies. Its specific goal, however, is to expand the relationship between comics and theory, and to seek to articulate a 'theory of comics'.

Call for Papers

The journal includes a selection of world-class academic articles that explore the formal properties of comics, advance their own theory of comics or respond to an established theoretical model. We also welcome reviews of new comics, scholarship, criticism and exhibitions, as well as unpublished creative work.

For submission guidelines please contact:
studiesincomics@googlemail.com



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Intellect is an independent academic publisher of books and journals with a focus on creative practice and popular culture. Established over twenty years ago, Intellect remains committed to providing a vital space for widening critical debate in new and emerging areas. To view our catalogue or order our books and journals visit or to send us your new book or journal proposal, please download a questionnaire from www.intellectbooks.com.