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Welcome to Comics Forum 2012

Hello and welcome to Comics Forum 2012, the fourth event in the Thought Bubble sequential art festival's academic conference series.

This year's theme is multiculturalism and representation, and we've been delighted by the response that the call for papers has generated. We received a huge number of very good abstracts, and whittling them down to the papers presented here was not an easy task. We would like to thank all our speakers for taking the time and effort to put together what look set to be some fascinating papers, and for coming to Leeds to deliver them. We would also like to extend a vote of thanks to our keynote speakers: Simone Lia, Ann Miller, Charlie Adlard and Hugo Frey, who have all kindly agreed to participate in the closing sessions on each day.

One of our key aims this year has been to develop a focused programme that, while retaining the interdisciplinarity that is one of the core strengths of comics scholarship, concentrates attention on a single theme. Although the speakers will be talking on a wide variety of subjects in relation to that theme, the hope is that this year's line-up will enable productive work to be done on a substantial and important area of comics: multiculturalism and the representation of it. As Frederick Luis Aldama has observed: 'All walks of life are on display in today's alternative and mainstream comic book worlds' (1), and the papers presented here confirm this, ranging in subjects from the representations of ethnic identities, to sexuality, justice, the place of artificial intelligence and more. In structuring the panels, we have tried to identify themes that are relevant to the papers and which will enable conversations to develop across papers. We have intentionally avoided trying to cluster panels along the lines of national or regional traditions of production (there is no particular panel on *manga* or *bande dessinée*, for example) because that would seem to limit the possibilities for intercultural discourse.

Of course no event of this nature is possible without the support of a great group of people, and as is the case every year, Comics Forum 2012 has been a team effort. We would like to extend our thanks to our wonderful group of volunteers, whose help both in preparing the conference and in ensuring the two days run smoothly has been invaluable: Harriet Kennedy, Emily Rabone and Hannah Wadle. Harriet has also been running the Comics Forum Twitter feed (@ComicsForum) for the past year (it was launched at Comics Forum 2011) and we would like to extend a special thank you to her for that. We have also been joined on the Comics Forum team this year by Paul Fisher Davies, who is responsible for running our Facebook page (facebook.com/comicsforumpage) and William Grady, who is the editor of our newly-launched News Review service on the Comics Forum website (<http://comicsforum.org>). Will is currently on the lookout for new correspondents from around the world to expand the international reach of the News Review, and he will be in attendance at Comics Forum 2012. If you would be interested in getting involved please do approach him. We have been very lucky to receive good advice from Hugo Frey, Mel Gibson and Roger Sabin, and we thank them for that. Finally, we would like to thank our sponsors this year: Arts Council England, the University of Chichester, Thought Bubble, Dr Mel Gibson and Molakoe Graphic Design.

We hope that you enjoy the conference and find it to be a productive and rewarding experience. If you have any questions or comments, do not hesitate to approach us at the event, or by email at: comicsforum@hotmail.co.uk.

Ian Hague & Carolene Ayaka

Conference Directors, Comics Forum 2012

Reference

Aldama, Frederick Luis (Ed.). *Multicultural comics: from Zap to Blue Beetle*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Programme

15/11/2012

0900-0930: Registration

0930-0945: Opening Remarks

0945-1100: Panel 1

Panel 1A: Negotiation	Panel 1B: Monstrosity
Chair: Ian Hague	Chair: Carolene Ayaka
Jacob Birken Set Pieces. Is eclectic imagery in Manga “Othering” or practised Polyculturalism?	Maaheen Ahmed The mutability of the line and its tendency towards monstrosity: Otherness of and within comics
Alex Link Negotiating Multicultural Transnationalism and Assimilative Globalization in Marjane Satrapi's <i>Persepolis</i> and Taiyo Matsumoto's <i>Tekkonkinkreet</i>	Sarah D. Harris The Monster Within and Without: Spanish Comics, Monstrosity, Religion, and Alterity
Ethan Rubin Robots are People Too: Webcomics and the Social Standing of “Everyday AI”	Ian Horton Colonialist Heroes and Monstrous Others: Stereotype and Narrative Form in British Adventure Comic Books

1100-1115: Break

1115-1215: Panel 2

Panel 2A: Conflict	Panel 2B: Representation
Chair: Will Grady	Chair: Harriet Kennedy
Mel Gibson ‘We don’t need no steenkin’ badgers!’ Talbot’s <i>Grandville</i> , anthropomorphism and multiculturalism	Emma Oki Representations of Asian Americans in Selected Works by Adrian Tomine
Umar Ditta Controversial representations of cultures and relations between cultures	Ana Merino The Impact of the Latino Identities on the Alternative Landscape of Comics: Thirty Years of <i>Love and Rockets</i>

1215-1300: Lunch

1300-1400: Panel 3

Panel 3A: Challenging Assumptions	Panel 3B: Reconfiguration
Chair: Mel Gibson	Chair: Peter Wilkins
Frank Bramlett The role of culture in comics of the quotidian	Cameron Fletcher Spiderman: Manhattan to Mumbai; Crossing more than timelines to make a Global Icon a Glocal Hero
Paul M. Malone <i>Multikulti</i> Manga in Germany; or, Why Frau Merkel Should Read More Comics	Dana Mihăilescu Oy, Gevalt, Meydele! The Lower East Side as Mishmash of Jewish Women's Multicultural Images in Leela Corman's <i>Unterzakhn</i>

1400-1415: Break

1415-1515: Panel 4

Panel 4: Functions of Comics
Chair: Hugo Frey
John G. Swogger Palauan Storyboard: Comics and narrative context in archaeological fieldwork
Mary L. Tabakow Representations of Asian Guest Workers, European/Regional Expatriates, and Male/Female Omani Nationals in Publicly-Funded Omani Comic Strips

1515-1530: Break

1530-1645: [Keynote 1: Simone Lia in conversation with Ann Miller](#)

Evening: Conference Dinner

16/11/2012

0900-0930: Registration

0930-1045: Panel 5

Panel 5A: Justice	Panel 5B: Identity
Chair: Carolene Ayaka	Chair: Ian Hague
Rebecca Scherr Framing Subjects: the politics of representation in Joe Sacco's <i>Footnotes in Gaza</i>	Simon Turner Japan Online: Ethnic Identity, Culture and Race in <i>Yaoi</i> manga fan websites
Keina Yoshida Graphic fiction, visual narratives and international criminal justice	Brenna Clarke Gray & Peter Wilkins An Innocent at Home: <i>Scott Pilgrim</i> and its Canadian Multicultural Context
Asta Vrečko 'No one thinks of winter when the grass is green'	Lily Glasner <i>Have you no manners?</i> A Little Girl's Gift to Her Majesty

1045-1100: Break

1100-1200: Panel 6

Panel 6A: Sexuality	Panel 6B: Situating Experimentation
Chair: Joan Ormrod	Chair: Roger Sabin
Hannah O'Connor Sapphic Supervillains and Dynamic Dykes: Lesbian Heroism and (In)Visibility in Mainstream Graphic Literature Pre- and Post-9/11	Corey K. Creekmur Multiculturalism Meets the Counterculture: Racial Difference in Underground Comix
Anna Madill Caucasian, Japanese, or What? Visual Representation of Race in <i>Boys' Love</i> Manga	Andy Mason The Presidential Penis and Other Scandalous South African Satires: Race, ethnicity and representation in South African comics and political cartooning, from the early 20 th century to the present

1200-1300: Lunch

1300-1415: Panel 7

Panel 7A: Progress	Panel 7B: Nationality
Chair: Hugo Frey	Chair: David Huxley
Maria-Sabina Draga Alexandru Narrative Exploration against Mentality Issues: Indirect Education for Multiculturalism in <i>Tintin</i>	Mihaela Precup The Image of the Foreigner in Communist Romanian Comics
Joseph North Volti nascosti: cultural diversity in the Italian <i>fumetto</i>	Harriet Kennedy The confused nationalisms of Bojoul: le huron-kébécois

<u>William H. Foster III</u> The Changing Image of African American Women in Comics	<u>Paul Harrison</u> Land of Denial – Egypt in Comics
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1415-1430: Break

1430-1500: Panel 8

Panel 8A: Depiction
Chair: <u>Julia Round</u>
<u>Simon Grennan</u> Empowerment requires power: absence, equilibrium and the capacity to influence in comics representations of cultural difference

1500-1515: Break

1515-1630: [Keynote 2: Charlie Adlard in conversation with Hugo Frey](#)

1630-1645: Closing Remarks

Panel 1A: Negotiation

Chair: Ian Hague

Set Pieces. Is eclectic imagery in Manga “Othering” or practised Polyculturalism?

Jacob Birken (University of Heidelberg)

Eclecticism as the practice of mixing and matching imagery and narratives from different epochs and regions is often looked down upon as a dilettante's technique, and as an inferior mode of creativity in regards to concepts of originality, authorship and authenticity. Furthermore, “sampling” from different cultures can be perceived as a transgression, as visual or narrative fragments are taken out of context and employed as markers of the “exotic” or “different”. Yet, this critique relies on a concept of culture as commodity – of cultures belonging unambiguously to a specific ethnic, religious or regional community, and thus of culture being something that has to be protected as a static entity. Using the example of popular Japanese Manga like *D.Gray-man*, *Fullmetal Alchemist* or *Berserk* that apply fragments from European history as an setting, I want to propose a different reading of eclecticism as cultural practice. Although a fictionalized Europe in Manga surely is employed as an “exotic locale” (and possibly makes the narrative even more *fantastic* for its local readership), we can also understand this eclectic practice as a stance against ideas of monocultural authenticity, and identity – an interpretation supported by the often anti-institutional narratives and the hybrid character (i.e., man/machine/spirit) of their protagonists. “Cannibalizing” the Other's culture thus becomes less an act of negligent ignorance, and more an attempt towards a representation of a fragmented world – and towards a possible “polycultural” solidarity between its diverse members.

Jacob Birken is a writer and researcher with a focus on media theory and contemporary art. After studying at the Karlsruhe University for Arts and Design, he worked at the House of World Cultures in Berlin and the ZKM Center for Art and Media. He is currently a research assistant for “Images of Disaster” at the project “Asia and Europe in a Global Context” at Heidelberg University. Jacob is also working on a PhD thesis on media representation of forbidden economies.

Negotiating Multicultural Transnationalism and Assimilative Globalization in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and Taiyo Matsumoto's *Tekkonkinkreet*

Alex Link

This presentation considers the manner in which both Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and Taiyo Matsumoto's *Tekkonkinkreet* de-essentialize cultural identity in different ways, and to differing effect.

While *Persepolis* has a deep investment in cultural identity, the specific content of this identity is often secondary to its place in negotiations of power, often in relation to claims of authenticity. This relationship between cultural authenticity and discursive authority is qualified by other factors, such as class and gender. This fluidity of cultural identity, perhaps necessary in staging a critical encounter of cultures, also creates a sense of malaise, in *Persepolis*, as the price of this construction of cultural identity limits the possibility of stability to nostalgic fantasy.

In Taiyo Matsumoto's *Tekkonkinkreet*, cultural identity is expressed largely as a force that simultaneously comprises a transnationalist world culture and resists the pressures of a potentially homogenizing culture of globalisation. Cultural identities remain largely discrete in the narrative's formal combination of Japanese and Franco-Belgian comics elements, while the narrative's insistent blending of myth and folklore from around the world moves in an opposite, universalizing direction in a manner oddly discordant with the angst typical of considerations of globalization.

Put simply, where *Persepolis*, in its realism, sees a necessary trade-off in its articulation of constructions of cultural identity, the fantastic *Tekkonkinkreet* posits a more heterogeneous model, in which contradictory constructions exist side by side, as a speculative alternative to the impasse.

I am a member of the Liberal Studies Faculty at the Alberta College of Art and Design, in Calgary, Canada, where I teach English literature, including several courses on comics. My main areas of research are American and Contemporary literatures, with a particular focus on popular genres such as the Gothic and Comics, as well as theorizations of spatiality. I am co-author of the serialized graphic novella *Rebel Blood*, and my study of early Supergirl comics in the context of Friedan-era feminism will appear in *The Journal of Popular Culture* in 2012.

Ethan Rubin

Many comics and science fiction works consider the emergence of artificial intelligence as a cataclysmic event, some source of moral dilemma or an insidious corruption of society. Some webcomics, however, tend to approach AI on the assumption that it is benign, which would force society to face the possible personhood of machines. If robots are taken to have genuine personalities, their daily concerns will necessarily be personal ones.

Questionable Content, for instance, features AI in the form of AnthroPCs, sentient computers owned by humans, which are alternately treated like pets, children, or tools. Not enslaved, but not independent, robot culture is perpetually juvenile. In *Diesel Sweeties*, robots appear as independent and equal citizens, but some divergent traits lead to misunderstandings and gaffes that blur the border between culture, biology, and programming. Robot characters, like members of other emerging or transplanted cultures, are given equal treatment *de jure* but encounter judgment or ignorance at the hands of “ordinary” citizens. Lastly, *Warbot in Accounting* considers the emotional toll of being a robot in a human world, ill-suited to human professions and treated unfairly by one’s supposed peers.

If artificial intelligence takes the form of benign personhood, robots and sentient computers would form a new class of social beings, with much the same sociological structure as a race. Marked by physical characteristics and cultural idiosyncrasies, the fledgling robot race would certainly face obstacles in their integration to society; these webcomics consider “everyday AI” in the context of social pressure and cultural divergence.

Ethan Rubin graduated from Boston University in 2010 with highest honors in Philosophy and a number of writing awards. Since then, he has presented at several academic conferences in the U.S. and in Europe, on subjects ranging from Russian literature to the social underpinnings of sainthood. He has worked as a test writer for the U.S. Academic Decathlon and as a construction teacher at an alternative degree school, in addition to touring the continental United States playing fiddle in a folk-punk band. He is currently applying to graduate school and intends to focus on the philosophy of character development.

Panel 1B: Monstrosity

Chair: Carolene Ayaka

The mutability of the line and its tendency towards monstrosity: Otherness of and within comics

Maaheen Ahmed (Jacobs University Bremen)

According to Theodor Adorno, contemporary art, having exhausted its possibilities and experimented to the extreme, “exists only in relation to its other” (*Aesthetic Theory* 1997, 3). For Adorno the being-for-other of art signaled the end of art and the domination of a commodifying culture industry. While one can only speculate about what Adorno would have thought about the current upsurge of comics/ graphic novels, his introduction of the concept of the Other within the very being of cultural products is a powerful image, especially when combined with the fragmentation central to the concept of the modern man, and should be transposed to the mixed medium of sequential art. With sequential art being based on splits and syncopation, it is also worthwhile considering whether comics and graphic novels are the ideal medium for capturing the fractured modern subjectivity, which in turn could explain the rise and success of auto-/biographical and reportage comics.

Another material facet of sequential or graphic narration is the playfulness of the line and its scope in transmuting reality to varying degrees of abstract, evocative dimensions, which combined with the sequential setting, are hinged on difference and repetition, or in other words, mutation, which in turn has the potential to breed monstrosities usually enmeshed in a dialectical relationship with humanity.

My paper will focus on the monstrosities manifested in graphic novels by exploring how far monstrosity as the implicit Other of humanity is thematized and works as metaphor for the medium itself. This will be done through discussing the works of two Finnish artists, Jyrki Heikkinen and Marko Turunen, not only for the sake of bringing up relatively unfamiliar material but also because the dialectic between monstrosity and humanity and its relationship to the traditional notion of the superhero has been intriguingly problematized in Heikkinen’s *Gallery of Wonders* and *Dr. Futuro* as well as Marko Turunen’s *Death Rode By Here*.

I am an AuL-FSR postdoctoral fellow at Jacobs University Bremen. My doctoral thesis analyzed a variety of iconotextual works in order to deduce possible characteristics of the graphic novel on a transcultural level. For this a hybrid methodology combining semiotics - particularly Umberto Eco’s notion of the open work of art - with the traditional tools of visual analysis was also applied. My latest project aims at exploring the intermedial mediation of specific motifs and imaginaries (focusing, once again, on comics). Additional research interests meander into Surrealism and subjectivities. Publications include articles in the *International Journal of Comic Art* as well as several chapters in edited volumes. A monograph on graphic novels will turn up soon.

The Monster Within and Without: Spanish Comics, Monstrosity, Religion, and Alterity

Sarah D. Harris (Bennington College)

Francisco Goya’s most famous proto-comic, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* (1799), forms part of a series of prints called *Caprices*, implying whimsical playfulness. Nonetheless, these prints were far from playful. Meant to reveal, through the interplay of images and ironic captions, the “the common prejudices and deceitful practices which custom, ignorance, or self-interest have made usual,”¹ this series suggests Goya’s Spanish contemporaries are more monstrous than the boogymen they invented.

In contrast, a century later and published under totalitarian fascist rule, early 20th century Spanish adventure comics villainize and make monsters of specific religious elements of Spain’s multicultural past. One of the best-known series, *The Masked Warrior*, (1944-1980) pits a medieval Christian hero against a duplicitous Muslim villain. Working within the confines of totalitarianism, this comic distances itself from the enemy to promote the same values as its dictator: One Spain, One Race, One Religion.

My paper explores the depiction of monstrosity and alterity from two divergent moments in Spain. More specifically, it argues that these two examples represent a swing from extreme identification with, to absolute “othering” of, the monstrous enemy to Spain’s moral wellbeing. Through simplification and caricature, these two examples suggest a range of practice in using stereotype to represent multiculturalism.

¹ Simon, Linda. “The Sleep of Reason.” *World and I*.

Sarah D. Harris is a professor of Spanish in the Isabelle Kaplan Center for Languages and Cultures at Bennington College. She specializes in narratives of trauma, testimony, remembering, and forgetting in contemporary Spanish fiction. Harris's research interests also include twentieth and twenty-first century Peninsular film, sequential art, collective memory and personal history, autobiography and memoir, and gender and identity studies. Harris has published on the works of Juan Marsé, Miguel Delibes, Carmen Martín Gaité, Miguel de Cervantes, and Juan Goytisolo. She received a BA in Spanish and International Studies from Yale University, an MA in Spanish from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a PhD in Hispanic Languages and Literatures also from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Colonialist Heroes and Monstrous Others: Stereotype and Narrative Form in British Adventure Comic Books

Ian Horton (University of the Arts, London)

'My basic point [is] that stories are at the heart of what explorers and novelists say about strange regions of the world...' (Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, 1993).

This paper explores the representation of colonialist stereotypes and the colonised 'Other' in British comic book adventure stories. It is argued that from the 1950s to the 1980s traditional comic books, such as the *Eagle*, *Hotspur* and *Victor*, contained adventure stories that used 'exotic' locations and caricatured representations to both maintain mythological stereotypes and shape narrative structure. Essentially these comic books continued the traditions, and imperialist outlook, of the adventure stories contained in boy's illustrated magazines of the early 20th century such as the *Gem*, *Magnet* and *Champion*.

It is remarkable that these colonialist values were still evident in British comic books until the late 1980's, long after the collapse of empire. Even more notable is the idea that similar stereotypes and mythologies are also central in driving the narrative in more innovative contemporary British comic books. Focusing on *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* by Alan Moore and Kevin O'Neill, and using Edward Said's concept of the 'Other', this study will examine the ways in which outmoded representations of racial stereotype and colonialist mythologies still govern narrative structure. Following Said's notion that these narratives tell us more about the coloniser than the colonised, it is suggested that the survival of these stereotypes and mythologies is indicative of Britain's difficult relationship with its colonial past. In the period covered by this study Britain had withdrawn from many of its colonial 'possessions' but these comic books, both traditional and innovative, still used representations of the 'Other' to communicate concepts of 'Britishness' and national identity.

Ian Horton co-ordinates Contextual and Theoretical Studies across the School of Design at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. His Ph.D. focused on the codification of British architectural education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In addition to research on architectural education he has published papers on national identity and architectural aesthetics, William Morris and the Artworkers Guild, oral history and text-based public art and colonialist stereotypes in European comic books.

His present research focuses on notions of experimental typography in both historical and contemporary contexts. He was co-organiser of the Beyond the Margins International Experimental Typography Symposium held in Cambridge in September 2009.

In the past two years he has presented papers on oral history and text-based public art, information design and comic books, experimental typography and curatorial practices at international conferences by organisations such as the Oral History Society, the Association of Art Historians and the International Association Word and Image Studies.

Panel 2A: Conflict

Chair: William Grady

'We don't need no steenkin' badgers!' Talbot's *Grandville*, anthropomorphism and multiculturalism.

Mel Gibson (University of Northumbria)

This paper will investigate how multiculturalism is represented visually and linguistically in the *Grandville* graphic novels by Bryan Talbot. *Grandville* and *Grandville Mon Amour*, in addition to being steampunk thrillers, depict a world in which animals are dominant. Talbot uses his characters to debate issues of power, language, cultural clashes, multiculturalism and xenophobia through a vehicle which uses alternative history and anthropomorphism as lenses to discuss recent world events.

The paper will explore the ways in which Talbot uses an alternative version of Anglo-French relations to discuss notions of cultural identity, self and other. The world Talbot depicts is one in which France won the Napoleonic War, so English is a minor language and Britain has been begrudgingly given independence after a campaign of civil disobedience. Tensions between the two countries are used to shine a light on the ways in which those in power may try to 'create' a notion of an 'alien' or 'foreign' enemy to control, unify, or divide, their population.

The paper will also explore other ways in which multiculturalism is depicted in the series, for instance, the use of human characters. Drawn in a different style to the animals and usually based on famous BD characters (thus further emphasising difference), in the France of *Grandville*, humans are relegated to being second-class citizens described as 'doughfaces', are only allowed menial working roles, not allowed passports and do not have citizens rights. Many are in fear of their replacement in their jobs by automatons.

Dr Mel Gibson is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Northumbria. Her teaching and research focuses on comics, manga, graphic novels, young people, literature and media and she has published extensively. In addition, she has run training and promotional events about comics and graphic novels for libraries, schools and other organizations since 1993. As a consultant she also runs events on manga and anime, working with young adults, picture books as art, visual literacies and, also, the links between children's books and other media.

Controversial representations of cultures and relations between cultures - What is the 'culture' of comics?

Umar Ditta

Discourse analysed via the medium of comics is a hotbed for controversy. A particular subject within the types of controversies, is the depiction of individuals with a different culture to the creator and/or reader. Although this is not a controversy, in itself, but it can become one when there is a theme of xenophobia present within the comic.

In the early history of comics, people of cultures that were deemed alien or different to the creator were usually caricatured. This was founded typically, on the physical difference and the reinforcement of negative stereotypes. One prominent example of the reinforcement of negative stereotypes in comics is Tintin in The Congo. The local inhabitants of Congo are dubbed as 'savages' and are portrayed as infantile and stupid. It can be argued that this comic is a product of the time it was created. During the time it was completely acceptable to show an Anglo-Saxon comic book character disguise himself as a 'Chinese' and stop the 'chinks' being smuggled into the US borders (Detective Comics, 1937).

In the contemporary, or the 'modern age', of comics' controversy in the blatant sense as the titles previously discussed have apparently ceased to occur. This is due to the acknowledgement of the implications of negative stereotypes or misrepresenting a certain culture. The term culture has multi definitions. Does it refer to the traditions, the physical aspects, the religion or personal beliefs of the individual? It appears to be a combination of these factors. This paper looks to explore how cultures are portrayed in comics by comparing the controversy in comics with the controversy in other creative mediums, especially in contemporary examples. Furthermore this paper will investigate the primary culture of comics and how it is affected in a multicultural contemporary world.

Umar Ditta is a Criminology graduate from UCLAN. His passion for comics has been with him since an early age. He is a currently freelance comic book writer. He has had a short story published in Ashcan Oddities. He also has self-published his short stories in an anthology titled 'Print of No Return'. He is currently working on his first two creator-owned graphic novels.

Panel 2B: Representation

Chair: Harriet Kennedy

Representations of Asian Americans in Selected Works by Adrian Tomine

Emma Oki (SWPS)

In this paper, I would like to focus on cartoonist and illustrator Adrian Tomine, a fourth-generation Japanese American, and how Asian Americans are presented in his oeuvre. Although racial issues do not occupy much of his early output, a clear shift of interest can be observed in his recent work. Tomine's *Shortcomings* (2007), a critically acclaimed graphic novel, and *Scenes from an Impending Marriage* (2011), a prenuptial comics memoir, provide honest and outright portrayals of the Asian American experience and, at the same time, touch upon the issues of identity and representation of contemporary Asian Americans. Tomine's characters serve not only as tools for the author to put his message across but also as representatives of different types of Asian Americans, which both challenges and reinforces certain stereotypes associated with this particular racial group. His protagonists, like magnifying glasses, allow readers to better see and understand the layers of multicultural America. As both the characters' and readers' perspectives and experiences meet, a fuller picture emerges of multiculturalism in the United States and its social consequences. Owing to such artists as Adrian Tomine, the comics medium can no longer be criticized for not being able to deal with the issues of multiculturalism and its representation.

Emma Oki is a graduate of SWPS. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in cultural studies at the same university. Her research interests include contemporary and multicultural literature. She works at the English Institute of SWPS and several Warsaw-based language schools as an English language instructor.

The Impact of the Latino Identities on the Alternative Landscape of Comics: Thirty Years of *Love and Rockets*

Ana Merino

In the 1980s Gilbert and Jaime Hernandez transformed the way most comics characters were developed by adding a crucial landscape of alternative identities and cultures to the white mainstream American. Both brothers projected aspects of their own experience growing up as Latinos in the USA. With "Love and Rockets" they consolidated a rich and inspiring way to develop graphic fiction. In their work, strong women, especially US Latina and Latin American characters, became the cornerstone of a new vision for comics. Diversity in every sense was added to the space of comics, bringing a much needed multiethnic vision. This presentation will reflect on different moments of impact that the work of the brothers has had since it began 30 years ago. It will show how the Latino flavor of their work with female characters broke and challenged stereotypes and provided the American mainstream with a true multicultural alternative. Jaime and Gilbert work poses a Latin multiculturalism that crosses border geographies and over decades is always able to reach innovative points. Their comics are stories that question race, gender, and ideology, and looks for ends within these discourses to address readers and force them to acknowledge spaces with contradictory realities, which, in many cases, have previously stood ignored. Their comics redefine the locus of creative expression, committing it ideologically to Latino and Latin American identity, and try to break the stereotypes that assume that comics are mere objects for mass entertainment.

Ana Merino, Associate Professor of Creative Writing and Cultural Studies at The University of Iowa. She is the Director of the MFA in Spanish Creative Writing, has 7 books of poetry, a youth novel, a play, a scholarly book on comics (*El comic hispánico*) and a critical monograph on Chris Ware. She has published numerous articles and edited several books on comics and graphic novels criticism. Merino is part of the Board of Director for the Center for Cartoon Studies (CCS) at White River Junction, and she has served as curator for four comics exhibitions.

Panel 3A: Challenging Assumptions

Chair: Mel Gibson

The role of culture in comics of the quotidian

Frank Bramlett (University of Nebraska)

Studies of the quotidian often start from a social sciences perspective that daily life is made up of routine practices and ingrained assumptions (Sutton 2007). This is also found in studies of literature, art, and economics, among others. In discussing Pekar's comics, Hatfield (2005) finds a special autobiographical quotidian in *American Splendor*. The premise of the quotidian, however, must be examined through a lens of culture: of difference, of similarity, of the textures of everyday life. The quotidian may be categorized through an examination of both macropractices and micropractices: for example, we accomplish the task of getting coffee through a "nexus of practices" at the micro-level that combine into what we recognize as the social practice of "getting coffee" at the macro-level (Scollon 2001). Additionally, how do comics characters get coffee? How do they survive bombings? How do they bring a spirit back from the dead for a birthday party? This presentation examines the quotidian in *Exit Wounds* by Rutu Modan, *Questionable Content* by Jeph Jacques, and occasional comics by Gabriel Bá and Fábio Moon. Comics artists create a sense of the quotidian in a variety of ways, often through a manipulation of everyday practices inflected to a degree by what many people may think of as weird, rare, exotic, and fatal. The analysis points to the conclusion that cultural variance must be accounted for in most any attempt to understand the quotidian.

Frank Bramlett is an associate professor at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He teaches linguistics courses, ranging from discourse analysis to English grammar to "Language and Comics." He is the editor of *Linguistics and the Study of Comics* (Palgrave 2012), and has presented on a variety of linguistic aspects of comics, focusing mostly on the intersections of language and identity. Currently, he is writing about the impact that conversation has on the passage of time in comics.

Multikulti Manga in Germany; or, Why Frau Merkel Should Read More Comics

Paul M. Malone (Dept. of Germanic and Slavic Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario)

In October of 2010, German chancellor Angela Merkel famously—or infamously—remarked in a speech to the Young Union, the youth wing of her ruling Christian Democratic Union party, "The attempt at *Multikulti* [multiculturalism in Germany] has failed, utterly failed." Leaving aside criticisms that the attempt had never properly been made on the official level, the truth is that non-official multiculturalism is alive and well on Germany's menus, in its video stores—and in the pages of its comic books, particularly its homegrown manga.

Germany's locally produced manga since the turn of the century was originally conceived as a lifeline for the recession-plagued major comics publishers, who hoped to capitalize on the manga boom in order to encourage the production of material by German artists after decades of dependence on foreign imports. But after a slow and awkward start, the indigenous production of German manga developed into a small-scale tradition of its own, which continues despite the fact that the manga boom has subsided—and moreover, one that has given voice and pen to young people of different ethnic backgrounds living in Germany, regardless of their legal citizenship status, and permitted them to produce German culture on an even footing with other Germans. Often this work has integrated elements of the artists' own cultural backgrounds—Korean, Chinese, Turkish, etc.—and allowed them to display their own cultural identities, in German, by means of originally Japanese generic conventions. These culturally hybrid forms thus embody a certain form of multiculturalism that is extremely successful within its narrow field.

Paul M. Malone is Associate Professor of German in the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario. He teaches and researches in the areas of German-language theatre, film, and popular culture, and is the author of *Franz Kafka's The Trial: Four Stage Adaptations* (2003). He has also published several book chapters and articles on aspects of German-language manga, and manga publishing in Germany and Europe.

Panel 3B: Reconfiguration

Chair: Peter Wilkins

Spiderman: Manhattan to Mumbai; Crossing more than timelines to make a Global Icon a Glocal Hero

Cameron Fletcher

Comic book hero Spiderman was chosen for a glocalising makeover in India, and went from being a science based hero to a mystical one. The proposed talk seeks to explore why he was the ideal candidate for such a venture and the factors that went into his re-genesis.

Talk will look at history, in terms of the character himself, but also the history of American comics in the region, and will look at the religious aspects with regard to the mysticism of the “new” hero’s genesis but also in terms of a surge of religious input in the comics in terms of the global stage including conflict

It will look at brand identification, Superman and Batman? Too globally identified with Capitalist America in the global consciousness whereas Peter Parker is an everyman character and the full face mask provides the anonymity and freedom to fight crime while protecting nearest and dearest from harm.

Was this rebranding a cynical manipulation of the character to generate more revenue and create brand loyalty to a “Glocal hero” or a continuation of time honoured tradition of incorporating gods and heroes into a different culture by giving them a local identity.

The talk does not seek to provide answers but in looking at the construction of Spiderman Mumbai seeks to promote discussion in terms of multiculturalism and globalisation and the use of comics as an influencing agency. Is it a medium of culture or commerce or a synthesis of both?

Cameron Fletcher 51 year old male, married to Anne, a driving instructor, for 25 years, father of Craig age 22 a BA (Hons) Social Sciences graduate. I have had a chequered history including a 17 year stint as a police officer and after being retired through an injury on duty went to university at Glasgow Caledonian University, graduating in 2008 with a BA (Hons) in Social Sciences having written a joint discipline dissertation called "Morals : Masked men, Myths and Making Money ". I have been reading comic books since I was 5 but only critically since university.

Oy, Gevalt, Meydele! The Lower East Side as Mishmash of Jewish Women’s Multicultural Images in Leela Corman’s *Untersakhn*

Dana Mihăilescu (University of Bucharest)

The history of New York’s Lower East Side has been widely documented in the literature of specialty as a place of diversity rather than a homogenous, local, limited Jewish phenomenon in the works of Hasia R. Diner, Jeffrey Shandler and Beth S. Wenger (2000) or Delia Caparoso-Konzett (2002). These historians’ image of the Lower East Side as a heterogeneous location has almost exclusively emerged from their exploring the complicated process of assimilation in the United States and the relations between mainstream and minority groups. Leela Corman’s 2012 comic novel, *Untersakhn*, proposes an alternative, unexplored representation of the early 20th century multicultural Lower East Side, one primarily filtered through women’s sexual lives. Starting from here, my paper explores ways in which multiculturalism is represented, visually and linguistically, in Corman’s comic novel by foregrounding issues of women’s sexuality and the use of a mangled Yiddish-English syntax.

My paper will trace the graphic novel’s controversial and varied representations of womanhood and marriage in relation to traditional Judaic Eastern European lore and American mass media views of the early 20th century. In this sense, I will especially consider the tensions between the traditional, pious and domestic woman of the 1890s (portrayed as a Gibson girl by mainstream America and as a “Jewish wife” by Jewish Americans, Joyce Antler 2007) and the emergent independent 1910s-1920s woman (portrayed via Christy girls and flappers in mainstream American media and as “the ghetto girl” by Jewish Americans, Prell 1999). In that endeavor, I will follow the trajectories of the protagonist Feinberg family representing two generations of Jewish migration to the U.S. but struggling with similar sexual and marriage-related goals.

Dana Mihăilescu is a Lecturer of English/American Studies at the University of Bucharest. She earned her Ph.D. in Philology at the University of Bucharest in January 2010, with a dissertation entitled *Ethical Dilemmas and Reconfigurations of Identity in Early Twentieth Century Eastern European Jewish American Narratives*. Her main research interests include Jewish American Studies, trauma and witnessing, ethics and memory. She is particularly interested in how memory and the ethics of remembrance function for the immigrant generations of Eastern European Jews coming to the U.S. at the turn of the twentieth century, as well as for Holocaust child-survivors and second and third (plus) generations, and how their complex paths influence fiction writing and history-making. More info: <http://unibuc.academia.edu/DanaMihailescu>

Panel 4: Functions of Comics

Chair: Hugo Frey

Palauan Storyboard: Comics and narrative context in archaeological fieldwork

John G. Swogger

Archaeological fieldwork is a narrative science, dependent upon a forensic process to create meaning from disparate data. Archaeology has always used a wide range of narrative media to aid in the recording of this forensic process: the written journal, single-context sheets, photography, film and video and - increasingly - shared online archives and social media.

While on excavations on the island of Palau in Micronesia during the summer of 2012, I created a graphically-illustrated field journal of my work as site illustrator. The comic format allowed me to record for the first time the multi-layered visual and narrative context informing my work in the field. This has been of particular significance on Palau, which has rich traditions of indigenous narrative and storytelling art - traditions which have not only influenced the structure and appearance of my field journal, but which have enabled the visual exploration of critical tensions between the archaeological past and cultural present.

Comics can offer archaeology a potentially powerful, new communications toolset. Using comics to record the process of archaeological fieldwork has suggested further ways in which sequential visualisations might capture otherwise hidden archaeological narratives.

John Swogger is an archaeological illustrator. He worked for ten years on the international excavations at the site of Çatalhöyük in Turkey, and now works for archaeology projects in Eastern Europe, the Caribbean and on the island of Palau in Micronesia. In 2010 he wrote a 12-part educational comic entitled “Archaeology in the Caribbean”, and since then he has written on the subject of archaeology and comics for the Visualisation in Archaeology project, Comics Forum and the Society for American Archaeology. He is currently working on graphic novels about working on excavations in Turkey and the Pacific islands.

Representations of Asian Guest Workers, European/Regional Expatriates, and Male/Female Omani Nationals in Publicly-Funded Omani Comic Strips

Mary Tabakow (American University in Dubai, UAE)

Using comics-illustrated campaigns to promote education, social responsibility, and public safety goals is somewhat new to the Arabian Gulf countries though it draws on a regional history of interest in comic strips/ books, notably more than forty years of the Egyptian *Mickey Mouse* (MIKI) and more than three decades' popularity of the comics-illustrated children's magazine *Majid*. Given their effectiveness in message delivery for all ages, locally produced comics were chosen to catch Omani children's interest in a publicly funded awareness campaign via glossy booklets—*Asshuri Assagheer* (Little Police)—to promote literacy, citizen awareness/involvement, and Omani culture. In one serial strip, “Investigate with the Little Police,” two Little Police, a male and female in diminutive uniforms, explain safety issues or ask child-readers' help in observing details and making deductions in hypothetical comic strip crime situations. Presented with a variety of graphic and textual clues, child-readers might deduce that an East Asian restaurant worker, a European expatriate conference attendee, an Arabic-speaking construction foreman, or an unemployed Omani man could be among the possible suspects of a crime. Such comic strips present and interrogate messages about education and social norms, as well as degrees of “foreignness” and cultural difference, providing an opportunity to explore multiculturalism and its representation in an Omani (Gulf) context.

Mary Tabakow, Ph.D., is an Asst. Professor at the American University in Dubai with interests in children's literature and popular culture. She has lived and taught in the Arabian Gulf for the past seven years.

Panel 5A: Justice

Chair: Carolene Ayaka

Framing Subjects: the politics of representation in Joe Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza*.

Rebecca Scherr (University of Oslo)

While multiculturalism is a many-faceted concept, absolutely central to all debates and studies about multiculturalism is a concern with *the politics of representation*, in particular, the way that the workings of power structure representational practices for both producers and consumers. In recent years, human rights scholars have drawn on such analytical approaches in discussing the various verbal and imagistic representations that make up human rights discourse in the West. In particular, human rights scholars seek to understand the representational mechanisms by which the human is recognized within the contexts of war, torture, political oppression, and disasters (both natural and man-made.) But this relationship of recognition is already marked by uneven global power distributions and the legacy of colonialism (Chouliaraki, Mutua, Sontag).

This paper draws such parallels between multicultural and human rights discourses as they appear in Joe Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza* (2009). In particular, I examine Sacco's use of framing as an aesthetic device that also has political implications. Judith Butler discusses the power of framing when it comes to image-based representational practices; she postulates that frames (both literal and imaginative) are the spaces in which artists have the power to produce identification or dis-identification, humanization or de-humanization (*Precarious Life*). I use Butler's theories to discuss Sacco's framing strategies, how he aims to wake readers up the very politics of representation that are crucial in understanding the workings of multiculturalism and human rights discourses. This paper examines where his work both succeeds and fails in such an effort, and in tracing some of these framing strategies, I also argue for the importance of graphic storytelling within multicultural and human rights scholarship.

Rebecca Scherr is Associate Professor of American literature at the University of Oslo. Her recent publications include an article on Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*, and she has an article forthcoming in the journal *Mosaic* on Joe Sacco's *Palestine*.

Graphic fiction, visual narratives and international criminal justice

Keina Yoshida (London School of Economics)

This paper addresses the representation of 'victims', survivors and perpetrators of conflict in graphic fiction. In 2011, the International Criminal Tribunal of Rwanda (ICTR) created its own 'cartoon book' as part of its UN mandate to foster national reconciliation and prevent genocide. The book '*100 days – In the Land of a Thousand Hills*' aims to teach children aged eight and over about the genocide in 1994. Funded by the German government and created by the UN body, the comic is a creation of the 'global' justice effort. The ICTR is one of a pair of *ad hoc* Tribunals established by Security Council resolutions to prosecute those most responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

The International Criminal Tribunal of the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), its sister Tribunal, has similarly been depicted in graphic fiction, most famously in the work of Joe Sacco. Sacco's work 'The War Crimes Trial' published in *Details* magazine in 1998, provides an account of the crimes committed by Dusko Tadic, including a graphic description of sexual violence and mutilation.

This paper aims to do two things, first explore the representation of the Tribunals by the artists, comparing and contrasting the commissioned work of the ICTR with Sacco's observations about the ICTY. Secondly, the paper highlights how the artists have represented those involved in the conflict, comparing and contrasting these visual narratives with those provided by the case law of the Tribunals. The paper will focus particularly on the representation of sexual violence and women by the artists.

Keina Yoshida is currently a PhD candidate in the law department at the London School of Economics. Her interdisciplinary research project: *Spectacles of Justice: gender crimes in law and film* focuses on the interplay of popular culture and international criminal justice in the context of the ICTY. She graduated with an LL.B. (ling. Franc.) from Trinity College, Dublin and an LL.M. in public international law, both with distinction. She worked as a staff attorney for Women's Link Worldwide, Madrid, where she used sequential art in legal training workshops.

Asta Vrečko

A comic book by a renowned Italian author of graphic novels Davide Toffolo (1965) entitled *L'inverno d'Italia (Italian winter)* first published in 2010 and translated in Slovene in 2011 is taking place in Italian concentration camp Gonars (North Italy, near Slovenian border), where after the occupation of Slovenian territories during the Second World War in 1942 a couple of thousand people of Slovenian nationality among them young children were imprisoned and many of them never came back. In the comic book we experience the camp through the eyes of two 10 years old protagonists Drago and Giudita. We could place this in the line of non-fiction comic books and compare it with Art Spiegelmans comic book *Maus* which raised - and dismissed - the question about the triviality of comic books and their appropriateness for such themes. Because of Toffolos deep understanding and reflection of the situation we could easily place *Italian winter* in line with numerous other attempts to memorize the atrocities of Second World War.

The structure of presentation will be threefold. Firstly the formal artistic view and its correspondence to the content (e.g. unframed page in contrast with the physical limitation of the camp). Secondly I shall address the comic book from more theoretical perspective that will be grounded in the works of authors like Giorgio Agamben, Dominick LaCapra, James E. Young and others and lastly I will discuss the cultural impact and its importance for Slovenian and Italian public, as the crimes inflicted on Slovenian people during this period is still not widely acknowledged and its placement in the collective memory is still not concluded.

Asta Vrečko (13.8.1984, Celje, Slovenia) is a PhD student of Art History, at the Faculty of Arts at University of Ljubljana and a junior researcher at the Department of Art Pedagogy, Faculty of Pedagogy, University of Ljubljana. In her research she has been primarily focusing on the (foremost Slovenian) social critical art in the time between the wars and art during the Second World War. She contributes art critiques to several Slovenian magazines and is actively involved in various non-governmental initiatives in Ljubljana. She is a member of advisory board of the Workers' and Punks' University; editorial board of online art history publication published by Slovene Art History Society and of editorial board of *Borec, Journal for History, Anthropology and Literature*.

Panel 5B: Identity

Chair: Ian Hague

Japan Online: Ethnic Identity, Culture and Race in *Yaoi* manga fan websites

Simon Turner (Birkbeck)

The purpose of my research is to investigate how Japaneseness is created in online *yaoi* manga fan communities. I demonstrate that Japanese ethnicity and community can be discursively created through the actions of their members. In the course of my research I hope to problematize Japaneseness in an attempt to uncover what we actually mean by concepts such as Japanese race, Japanese ethnicity and 'being' Japanese.

Previous research on *yaoi* has given priority to issues of gender and sexuality, and why heterosexual women create and consume texts depicting male homosexual themes. However, the *yaoi* fans are further unified by a common interest in Japan as a country and its culture. I believe that *yaoi* manga acts as an available cultural model representing Japaneseness. In my research I investigate the users of *yaoi* fan websites and show that they are able to perform Japanese ethnicity using the manga as the base for their information as well as participating and debating Japaneseness as a defined group. I will show that neither do the manga simply provide a hard fast blueprint for the users to follow and in chase of authenticity, but nor does their Japaneseness spring from the ground as something radically new. By showing how race and ethnicity can be articulated my on-going research will be beneficial in providing an alternative to the binaries of particularism and universalism when considering broader issues that I hope to tackle such as community, affinity spaces and immaterial and affective labour. I aim to show that there can be a theoretical model situated between the real Japan and the virtual, the real Japanese race and ethnicity and the virtual thus successfully transgress essentialism. The distinction between the virtual and the real that is often supported in terms of race and ethnicity may be purely semantic.

Simon Turner is a PhD candidate at Birkbeck College, University of London. His principle research interest lies in the field of Japanese Cultural Studies and New Media Studies. He is currently researching cross-cultural reception of Japanese *yaoi* manga amongst users of *yaoi* fan websites using a multidisciplinary approach.

An Innocent at Home: *Scott Pilgrim* and its Canadian Multicultural Context

Brenna Clarke Gray and Peter Wilkins (Douglas College & Graphixia)

This paper will examine the coding of Canada and its relationship to multiculturalism in Bryan Lee O'Malley's *Scott Pilgrim*.

At first read, *Scott Pilgrim* is a typical story of American youth. The name "Pilgrim" identifies Scott with both the origin story of the United States and atemporal myth. That he must fight a series of epic battles against increasingly threatening foes gives the story a Jungian feel, as though it were a graphic variant of Joseph Campbell's *A Hero's Journey*. Because the American origin story depends on just such a universal, mythical quality, *Scott Pilgrim* appears to fit into the tradition of redemptive American narratives.

We argue that O'Malley in fact undercuts this apparent universality with "Canadian" signifiers that transform the comic into a mediation of Canada's relationship to the grand American narrative and more particular cultural micronarratives. Many of these signifiers are visual cues embedded in t-shirts and signs that create a "secret" Canadian language for readers in the know. But the central relationship between Scott and Ramona Flowers is itself such a signifier; it invokes the relationship between Canada and the United States generally, with Ramona the worldly American and Scott the parochial Canadian. This cultural antagonism structures other antagonisms, such as those between Scott and his Chinese Canadian girlfriend, Knives Chau and his gay roommate Wallace Wells. In spite of his occupying the structural position of hero in the narrative, Scott is incapable of mastering either the grand narrative or micro-narratives.

Thus, we will present the series as a critique of Canadian helplessness in relation to both American hegemony and multiculturalism. This comic really is *Scott Pilgrim vs. The World*, a battle in which the Canadian hero is a hapless and oblivious slacker who finds himself embroiled in conflict almost by accident, his apparent innocence absolving him of responsibility and engagement.

Brenna Clarke Gray holds a PhD in Canadian Literature from the University of New Brunswick, where she was a Canada Graduate Scholar. She is a member of the English department at Douglas College and is at work on her first book, a comprehensive study of Douglas Coupland.

Peter Wilkins is the Faculty Research Liaison for The Training Group at Douglas College. He is a founding editor of Graphixia, a blog about comics, and a contributor to *the Comics Grid*. He has presented on comics at the First International Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels (Alcalá de Henares, Spain) and the Third International Conference on Comics: Comics Rock (Bournemouth, UK). His current research explores the relationship between comics and document use literacy and Seth's *Dominion City* as "Heritage District".

Have you no manners? A Little Girl's Gift to Her Majesty

Lily Glasner (Bar-Ilan University)

The term *Multiculturalism* chiefly "respond[s] to cultural and religious diversity" and is applied to immigrants, but also to other disadvantaged groups in society, e.g. women or the disabled (*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*). Addressing another cultural division which is primarily determined by an age criterion (though not exclusively by it), I would like to propose in my paper the application of the concept of *Multiculturalism* to the examination of the relationship between Adults and Children as it is represented in contemporary Comics.

As a case study I will suggest a reading of an Israeli comic book for children: *A Royal Banquet with the Queen* (2010), by Rutu Modan, a renowned illustrator and comic book artist, winner of the 2008 Eisner Award for her (adult) graphic novel *Exit Wounds*.

In *A Royal Banquet with the Queen*, Nina, a little Israeli girl, is surprisingly being invited to dine with the Queen of England and her guests. At the royal banquet Nina's mode of eating causes quite a shock and it is upon the Queen to determine what should be done.

Modan, I will argue, uses the cultural differences between the traditional British decorum and the Israeli non formal attitude in order to illustrate the opposition and inequality between the dominant group culture, Adults, and the subordinated group being enculturated, the Children. Although not a minority, children, like women, can be defined as an oppressed group within the majority culture. Modan's art not only illuminates this oppression but also suggests a colorful narrative which enables and leads towards the achievement of mutual respect and mutual transference of values between the two groups.

Dr Lily Glasner is a lecturer at Bar-Ilan University (Israel). Her MA thesis examined the *Chronicles of Narnia* (C.S. Lewis) in light of Platonic and Medieval thought. Her PhD thesis was dedicated to a new exploration of the work of the Medieval French poet Chrétien de Troyes. She is currently teaching courses in Children's Literature and Medieval Literature in the Department of Comparative Literature (BIU). Her recent article, published last month: "Taking a Zebra to Vegas: Allegorical Reality in the Percy Jackson & the Olympians Series" (*Collision of Realities: Establishing Research on the Fantastic in Europe*. Eds. Lars Schmeink and Astrid Böger. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

Panel 6A: Sexuality

Chair: Joan Ormrod

Sapphic Supervillains and Dynamic Dykes: Lesbian Heroism and (In)Visibility in Mainstream Graphic Literature Pre- and Post-9/11

Hannah O'Connor (Cardiff University)

Cultural diversity, particularly in terms of race and sexual orientation, is arguably a relatively new concern in graphic literature. In comics, homosexuality was traditionally considered taboo, either relegated to the margins in independent publications, heavily censored or overlooked altogether. Following the atrocities of 9/11, however, the need for LGBT visibility in graphic literature arose from issues, such as the considerable inequality faced by same-sex surviving partners, the US military's 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' policy and the gay marriage debate. This paper will focus on Chris Claremont's coded depiction of lesbianism in *The Uncanny X-Men* during the late 1980s, particularly its reliance on typically Colonial visual markers of difference and hybrid mutant identity. It will also explore J.H. Williams' depiction of sapphic desire and lesbian heroism in *Batwoman*. The paper will provide a lesbian reading of these graphic texts via a close analysis of the form, particularly the importance of omissions, gaps and gutter spaces in the fragmented narrative. It will also engage with Homi Bhabha's theories of hybridity and mimicry, as well as Sally Munt's notion of lesbian heroism. Finally, the paper will consider the impact of 9/11 on the depiction of LGBT characters, notably in terms of increased visibility, diversity and heroism. Lesbian graphic literature remains a particularly underdeveloped research area, with few publications dedicated to the subject. With this in mind, it will delve into the gutter to explore whether issues of misrepresentation and stereotype pose the danger of constructing new closets.

Hannah O'Connor is a postgraduate student at Cardiff University, where she also completed her BA German and English Literature (First Class Hons). She has recently delivered papers on queer literature and visual cultures at conferences held in Cardiff, Bristol and Leeds. She also presented on lesbian literature at the 50th National Postgraduate Colloquium in German Studies, held at Oxford University last year. Her primary research interests are LGBT literary and visual cultures, particularly the Gothic, Modernism and Graphic Literature.

Caucasian, Japanese, or What? Visual Representation of Race in Boys' Love Manga

Anna Madill (University of Leeds)

One of the most striking and puzzling aspects of manga to the non-Japanese reader is the way in which stories appear to be populated by visually Caucasian characters. Features producing this effect include eye shape (full and round), eye colour (blue and green), hair colour (light brown, blonde, and red) and nose shape (long, thin, and pointed). Where relevant to the story, some protagonists are identified as Westerners or of mixed-race. However, in the vast majority the context makes it evident that characters are to be understood to be indigenous Japanese. Comments in the literature, and in my own conversations with Japanese readers, suggest that this 'puzzle of race' is relevant only outside Japan. Researching *Boys' Love* manga from a UK perspective, I have found the issue of race has challenged my own ethnocentric blind-spots. Caucasians don't actually look like manga characters and reading race – an already contentious category – in any realistic sense from manga images is to misunderstand stylistic conventions and codifications inherent in the art form. For example, Shōjo (girls') manga – of which *Boys' Love* is a sub-genre – utilises an exaggeratedly cute style, which includes drawing characters with large eyes. In manga, large eyes also codify female gender, youth, and innocence which cannot be conflated with race. On the other hand, research identifies a trend for Japanese women to idealise Western men, possibly assuming that they are socialised in gender egalitarianism. And research on *Boys' Love* suggests that the genre is also an expression by Japanese woman for more equal relationships with men, doing so through co-opting narratives of 'homosexual' love. Hence, in the context of *Boys' Love*, perhaps stylistic conventions in which Japanese men do not look like Japanese men – and maybe even as fantasy 'Caucasians' – amplifies this meaning while remaining also what they are – manga characters.

Anna Madill is a Reader in Qualitative Inquiry in the Institute of Psychological Sciences and member of the Centre for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, University of Leeds, UK. She is a former Chair of the British Psychological Society Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section and holds a British Academy grant to study Boys' Love manga.

Panel 6B: Situating Experimentation

Chair: Roger Sabin

Multiculturalism Meets the Counterculture: Racial Difference in Underground Comix

Corey K. Creekmur (University of Iowa)

Was the counterculture multicultural? This presentation will consider the largely unexplored status of *multicultural* representation within what is viewed as the effective representation of the radical *counterculture* in late 1960s and early 1970s underground comix. With a few exceptions, the major figures associated with the underground were white, but the unrestricted nature of underground comix allowed them to explore their ambivalent fascination with African American culture, increasingly visible in the wake of the Civil Rights movement and with the simultaneous rise of Black Power. This presentation will explore the limits and possibilities of multicultural representation in underground comix by analyzing the depiction of African Americans by key figures such as Robert Crumb, as well as in neglected examples like Guy Colwell's comic book *Inner City Romance*, or African American underground cartoonist Richard Eugene "Grass" Green's *Super Soul Comix*. As Crumb's notorious character Angelfood McSpade (among others) forcefully demonstrates, underground cartoonists often relied upon historically familiar and increasingly offensive stereotypes. This essay argues that the use of such stereotypes raises key questions about the *reception* of underground comix, since such images may allow readers to uncritically indulge in racist stereotypes (ironically forbidden in mainstream comics), or to view them as parodic and self-conscious critical commentary. On the whole, this essay will argue that the freedom of expression enjoyed by the underground opened the door to more diverse racial and ethnic representation in later comics, but found its own countercultural aims at odds with the goals of early forms of multiculturalism.

Corey K. Creekmur teaches comics and film studies at the University of Iowa, where he also directs the Institute for Cinema and Culture. He has edited books and published essays on American cinema, Asian cinema, and comics, and is the General Editor of the Comics Culture series for Rutgers University Press.

The Presidential Penis and Other Scandalous South African Satires: Race, ethnicity and representation in South African comics and political cartooning, from the early 20th century to the present

Andy Mason

The reproduction of racial and ethnic stereotypes in comics and cartoons has long played an ideological or political role in the South African press. Examples include the 'monsterisation' of colonial figures like Chamberlain and Kitchener in the pro-Boer pamphlets of the Anglo-Boer war; the ridiculing of black life and mores by white cartoonists, as in Monty Wilson's *Humorous Native Studies* (1940s); the demonisation of the white capitalist "Hoggenheimer" figure and the valorisation of heroic black liberation figures in anti-apartheid comics produced by emerging black trade unions and anti-apartheid alternative press publications in the 1980s and 1990s; the creation of the first authentic black comic characters in Mogorosi Motshumi's *Sloppy*, SA's first authentically 'black' township comic strip, and the revision of apartheid history in Andy Mason's *Vusi Goes Back* and other history comics in the early 1980s; the representation of *faux* Tintins and Black Sambo figures referencing Herge's *Tintin in the Congo* in the radical Afrikaner *Bitterkomix* of the 1990s and 2000s; the controversial 2012 depictions of SA president Jacob Zuma's penis (and Zuma as a penis) in the satirical art of Brett Murray and the political cartooning of Zapiro; and the representation of a Black Jesus in the animated cartoons of Mdu Ntuli (2012). Throughout all of these examples run the common threads of racial caricature, representation of the other as demonic and threatening, and mythmaking around archetypal hero figures.

The presentation argues that particular contextual factors surrounding the production of comics and cartoons in South Africa, from the highly repressive apartheid period to the post-apartheid cultural renaissance, have allowed unusual levels of experimentation in the articulation of racial caricature. These representations and public responses to them have many valuable insights to offer the discussion of multiculturalism and representation in comics.

Andy Mason (N.D. Mazin): Andy Mason has been involved in South African comics since the 1970s. His student comix, *Vittoke in Azania*, and his radical history comic, *Vusi Goes Back* (1981), were amongst the first South African alternative comix. His comix 'zines, *PAX: Pre-Azanian Comix* (1980s) and *Mamba Comix* (2000s) featured the work of successive new generations of South African comic artists. His 2010 study *What's So Funny? Under the Skin of South African Cartooning* (Double Storey Books, Cape Town, 2010), covers the history of SA cartooning from the colonial period to the present. His new graphic novel, *The Legend of Blue Mamba*, will be published in September 2012. He has an MA degree in Media and Cultural Studies, works as a publisher at a climate change consultancy and holds an honorary position as Head of the Comic Art Unit at the Centre for Comic, Illustrative and Book Arts (CCIBA) at Stellenbosch University.

Panel 7A: Progress

Chair: Hugo Frey

Narrative Exploration against Mentality Issues: Indirect Education for Multiculturalism in *Tintin*

Maria-Sabina Draga Alexandru (University of Bucharest)

In his 2007 article “Coloring America: Multi-Ethnic Engagements with Graphic Narrative”, published in *MELUS*, Derek Parker Royal points out that comic strips are a highly unambiguous and efficient way to manipulate the reader, hence the more they try to show an awareness that the world is plural and multiple, the easier they can be accused of stereotypical attitudes. This paper, however, will aim to show that Hergé’s classic *The Adventures of Tintin*, which spans several decades of spectacularly changing attitudes in the world, indirectly (and all the more subtly) transmits a far more pluralism-friendly message. This is done not only through Tintin’s being a characterless protagonist who can easily adapt to different perspectives, as Benoît Peeters claims, but also through a progressive increase in the complexity of the narrative exploration of the world, which, as the series advances, gradually accommodates changing attitudes with respect to the world’s plural nature. Indeed, as the summer 2007 *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* points out, the temporary ban of *Tintin in the Congo* in the UK on accounts of racism spectacularly increased sales of the book. Recontextualisation led to a rereading of the racist hints associated with the stereotypical graphic representation of black people, emphasising the changes in understanding race rather than promoting racism. As regards views on the Soviet Union as depicted in *Tintin in the Land of the Soviets*, Hergé’s first Tintin book was one of the most visible pointers at the atrocities of the communist regime throughout the twentieth century.

Maria-Sabina Draga Alexandru is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Bucharest. She holds a PhD from the University of East Anglia and has published articles on ethnic American and East-European fiction, narrative theory, postcolonialism, women’s studies and global writing in English. Some of her books are: *Women’s Voices in Post-Communist Eastern Europe, vols. I and II* (co-edited with Mădălina Nicolaescu and Helen Smith, Bucharest: University of Bucharest Press, 2005 and 2006); *Identity Performance in Contemporary Non-WASP American Fiction* (Bucharest: University of Bucharest Press, 2008); *Performance and Performativity in Contemporary Indian Fiction in English* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, forthcoming 2012).

Volti nascosti: cultural diversity in the Italian *fumetto*

Joseph North (University of Durham)

This paper aims to look at three Italian *fumetto* series of the seventies, nineties and noughties, and to consider how the representation of characters of different ethnicities and sexual identities has changed over time. In the introduction, the cultural importance and the business model of the Italian *fumetto* is briefly considered.

The first series considered is the Ken Parker series (1977-1984). Ken Parker’s adventures revise the traditional mythology of the Old West. The depiction of the American Indians and people of different sexual identities is examined, and contextualised within the other attributes that makes Parker an unusual ‘cowboy’ hero, such as his ageing through the series and environmental politics.

The second series considered is the Kerry Kross series (1994, 1998-1999), the first mainstream *fumetto* series with an overtly homosexual central character. It is argued that the exploration of Kerry Kross’ lesbian identity and the difficulties this causes her in modern ‘American’ society is balanced by more conventional adventure plotlines and the series’ predominantly heterosexual readership.

The third series analysed is the Volto Nascosto series (2007-2008), set during the First Italo-Abyssinian war (1895-1896). The Italian army’s crushing defeat by the people it had sought to colonise has been subject of little cultural production in Italy. This series’ presentation of this unusual historical period and its representation of colonialism and ethnic stereotypes are examined. Does the lack of a central Abyssinian character make it a colonialist story, or does it offer precious insight into Italy’s dark past?

I am a Phd candidate in Italian studies at the University of Durham. My primary research interest is Italian silent cinema. I have long been a big fan of the *fumetto* and learnt much of my Italian through reading them. I am interested in the links between the *fumetto* and Italian cinema, and am writing a journal article on the subject.

William H. Foster III

My presentation tracks the image of Black women from the turn of the last century and continues right up to the present day. It begins with images of racist stereotypical portrayals of Africans, mammies, and maids, continues to the highly sexual images of the underground comix of the 60's and 70s and concludes with the rise of Black Super Heroines and realistic images and stories of present day graphic novels.

I examine the historical changes in close detail and contrast them with the wide range of positive images today, many created by a rising number of talented Black women comic artists and writers. My commentary will be enhanced with both historical and contemporary visuals.

Professor William Foster is a long-time comic book collector and researcher and has appeared as an expert commentator for both CNN News and National Public Radio. He is the author of two collections of essays on Black comics; *Looking for a Face like Mine* (2005) and *Dreaming of a Face like Ours* (2010). He was an invited speaker to the 2007 International Symposium on Langston Hughes at Central China Normal University in Wuhan, China, and was appointed to the editorial Board of the *International Journal of Comic Art* in 2008.

Panel 7B: Nationality

Chair: David Huxley

The Image of the Foreigner in Communist Romanian Comics

Mihaela Precup (University of Bucharest)

The communist dictatorship from Romania took its comics seriously, and even held official party meetings in order to establish what children's magazines – the only place for comics at the time – should publish. The main purpose was for comics – specifically historical comics – to teach a version of the Romanian past that would boost nationalist sentiment and justify a negative perception of the outside, while Romania was painted as a country of pure-hearted valiant and hard-working men and women, permanently assailed by evil forces. This paper will examine the image of "the foreigner" in several comics published in long-standing communist children's magazines, where foreign nationals were extremely frequent, and generally evil. However, the representational code used by cartoonists in these didactic cartoons was, interestingly enough, quite realistic. The most frequent representations of foreigners in communist cartoons showed three main groups: the Romans (morally inferior conquerors of the proud Dacians, the Romanian ancestors), the Germans (always depicted as uniformed Nazis, even decades after the end of World War II) and the Turks (always sly "Ottomans" trying to conquer one of the Romanian provinces). I would like to examine the representational strategies at work here, as well as the manner in which comics contributed to the perception of foreigners in Romania during a time when the borders were closed, and when images from the outside were so rare that – for instance – it took a long time for people who were listening to The Beatles to finally find out what they looked like.

Mihaela Precup is an Assistant Professor in the American Studies Program at the University of Bucharest, Romania. Her main research interests include autobiographical and post-traumatic narratives, comics and family photography. She is the recipient of a Fulbright fellowship with the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies Program at Yale University (2006-2007). She edited a volume of essays entitled *American Visual Memoirs after the 1970s. Studies on Gender, Sexuality, and Visibility in the Post-Civil Rights Age* (Bucharest: Bucharest University Press, 2010). She wrote her PhD thesis on *Sites of Memory and Trauma in the American Graphic Memoir*.

The confused nationalisms of Bojoul: le huron-kébékois

Harriet Kennedy (Centre of Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh)

The fact that Québécois bande dessinée stands at the meeting point of three major comic book traditions is rarely demonstrated to greater effect than in the work of Guilemay; author of the *Bojoul* series of albums. A series of three albums, with the first published in 1973, the Bojoul series failed to make much of an impact at the time, however it can now be seen as a fascinating example of the way in which Québécois bande dessinée can provide crucial insights into contemporary socio-political realities.

Bojoul, le huron-kébékois is a hapless Huron of "Louiscyrienne" strength, who stands in opposition to the Anglophone invaders. So far, so Asterix... Replete with flimsy plotlines and politically incorrect caricatures, these albums can easily be seen as deeply problematic in their representations of Canada and the nations that make her. However, despite this *Bojoul* is of use in a quest to better understand the complexities of Québécois nationalism; as it exposes the contemporary tensions surrounding issues of Québécois nationalism, identity and domestic policy in the wake of the Quiet Revolution. Through language, parody, pastiche and slapstick Guilemay uses *Bojoul* to give insight into the complex realities of nationalism and the collective cultural and political psyche of contemporary Québec. He keenly demonstrates the deep running tensions and issues that surround the question of self-rule in Quebec and thereby offers an unexpectedly cogent exploration of the key concerns of the residents of the province when it comes to questions of independence and self-government.

Harriet Kennedy is a PhD student in the Centre of Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Her thesis is entitled *Québécois Bande Dessinée: A Quiet Revolution?* Her research is focused on the representations of nationalism and the Québécois struggle for independence in the bande dessinée produced in the province. It is primarily concerned with questions of voice and the potentials of form.

Paul Harrison

A range of culturally embedded interpretations and appropriations have left pharaonic Egypt at the centre of 'contending visions of the past' (Scham 2003). An analysis of the manner in which Egyptian culture is portrayed in comic books, 'Land of Denial' interrogates the stereotypes and common signifiers employed in the depiction of 'Egypt', distilling these into a set of commonly employed themes, including, but not limited to;

Royalty

Tyranny/Slavery and the Bible

Religion

Romantic Love/Destiny

Loss, Dismemberment and Death

Preservation, Immortality and the Museum

Objects, Artifacts and the Talisman

Identity, Ethnicity and Nationalism

Paul examines the manner in which the character of Dr Fate operates as an embodiment of the cultural 'othering' of the native Egyptian, and subsequent appropriation of Egyptian power and heritage. When Western archaeologist Kent Nelson dons the *Helm of Fate* his identity is subsumed by that of the cultural 'other', but in harnessing that power for his own ends, he transcends nationalist boundaries and co-opts the 'power' of Egypt in his pursuit of Western justice. Similarly, Hawkman misappropriates ancient Egyptian artifacts, employing weapons from his museum in the fight against evil. He and Hawkgirl embody two other pharaonic literary stereotypes, reincarnation and romantic love. The work highlights these and other examples of a literary tradition which deals not with a tangible Egypt, but a set of stereotypes and symbols floating free from concerns of historical or political accuracy.

I am a recent PhD graduate from UCL's Institute of Archaeology, where I additionally worked as a teaching assistant and guest lecturer on the undergraduate courses in Egyptian archaeology. I made it a task to build bridges between my starting point in Egyptology, often criticised as an insular and reactionary field, and the fields of anthropology, cultural heritage and social/cultural science. This, I felt, was a necessity in the face of increasingly global/political approaches to the study of archaeology, not to mention a rise in contact between parties which share common sets of resources in the construction of identity and history.

I possess over ten years of mixed teaching, tutoring and lecturing experience, despite my recent qualification, and have partaken in conferences and public lectures, in order to raise awareness of my research. I recently held two lectures at the Petrie Museum of Egyptology, both of which appeared in *BBC History* magazine's recommended activities, as well as numerous websites. My research was additionally recently mentioned in *Archaeology International* (<http://www.ai-journal.com/article/view/ai.1310/59>), and other mentions include *The Fortean Times* and *SFX* magazine (for consultancy). I was recently interviewed for the Resonance FM show 'Panel Borders' regarding my talk on Egypt in Comics (now titled 'Land of Denial'), which may be found here: <http://archive.org/details/PanelBordersBuyingAndCelebratingComics>

Panel 8A: Depiction

Chair: Julia Round

Empowerment requires power: absence, equilibrium and the capacity to influence in comics representations of cultural difference.

Simon Grennan

Michael Podro titles the function of depictive drawing the 'synoptic view' (Podro 1998), in which recognition of content relies on adjudicating the particular properties of graphic marks in relation to the world they depict. This function provides "...our sense of the subject emerging..." (ibid, 13), taking place "...within a framework of other recognitions." That is, other experiences of viewing and being within the world (ibid, 15).

According to this summary, depictions are not understood because they are either more or less similar to the situations that they depict. They are categorically dissimilar. Given this dissimilarity, in what types of marks do we recognise one thing as another, the depiction as the depicted? In the 'synoptic view' depictions embody subjectivity. They do not provide information about the situation they depict. Rather, they are themselves situations iterated by an active subject: the producers of the depiction. This iteration is structured by the precise relationship between subjects and the situation depicted, relative to the rest of the world.

Following Podro's 'synoptic view', this paper will utilise the idea that depictions materialise their producers, in order to examine depiction in the context of comics representations of cultural differences.

It will identify confusions that occur between iteration as an expressive means of the subject and the idea of culture as an object, outlining the key relationship in the function of depiction between influence (or the subject self-produced) and constraint (or the situation depicted).

To do this, the paper will introduce examples from the work of Kerry James Marshall, Zhang Leping and Jason Aaron, in which the manner of depictive drawing articulates power relationships between types of producers and types of people depicted, and in which the absence of iteration is also a type of iteration itself.

Podro's 'synoptic view' then provides a model for analysing depictive drawing not as ideology, but as an embodiment of social systems materialising, as well as representing, the push and pull of phenomenological relationships between subjects.

Generalising this model according to the 'double hermeneutic' proposed by Anthony Giddens (Giddens 1976), the paper will present ways in which levels of equilibrium between the capacity to influence, on one hand, and the effect of constraint on the other hand, articulate mutually antithetical affects and sustain dynamic contradictions. The paper will provide examples from the work of Alphonso Wong, from the South African comic 'Mighty Man', from Indrajal Comics and Hindi language comics and in the work in translation of Hergé.

Depictions are not the situations they depict. Rather, they are situations themselves. This paper will argue that representations of cultural difference are meaningful according to this condition, in which the graphic mark embodies not ideology, but influence and constraint within a social system or system of power.

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

Keynote 1: Simone Lia in conversation with Ann Miller

Simone Lia

Simone Lia is the creator of the graphic novels *Fluffy* (Jonathan Cape 2007) and *Please God, Find Me a Husband!* (Jonathan Cape 2012). Rachel Cooke of *The Observer* described the latter as “a brave and beautiful book.”

Simone works as a freelance illustrator and comic artist in London. When she is not drawing, her hobbies include fly-fishing and break dancing*. Simone Lia draws rabbit cartoons regularly for *The Phoenix* comic.

*: This is sadly not true.

Ann Miller

Ann Miller was formerly Senior Lecturer in French at the University of Leicester, where, since retiring, she teaches part-time. She is joint editor of *European Comic Art* and the author of *Reading Bande Dessinée* (Bristol: Intellect, 2007). She has just translated Thierry Groensteen's *Comics and Narration*, the second volume of *System of Comics* (to be published by University of Mississippi Press in 2013), and is working with Bart Beaty on a volume of translations of key theoretical texts that have hitherto only appeared in French, for the University of Leuven Press. She is also working on a book on Comics and Autobiography.

Keynote 2: Charlie Adlard in conversation with Hugo Frey

Charlie Adlard

Charlie Adlard is a British comic book artist and penciller from Shrewsbury.

Charlie began his comic work in the UK on *White Death* with Robbie Morrison for *2000AD*, and then the series *Judge Dredd* and *Armitage*. During this time Charlie also became known for his work on *The X-Files* (for Topps), and *Astronauts in Trouble* (AiT/Planet Lar).

Charlie is perhaps best known for his artwork on the smash-hit zombie series *The Walking Dead* for Image, and his other notable works include: *Hellblazer* for Vertigo; *Savage* for *2000AD*; *The Hellfire Club* for Marvel Comics; and *Batman: Gotham Knights* and *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* for DC Comics.

Charlie's style has evolved from what was originally fully painted artwork on *Armitage*, through to stark monochrome for *The Walking Dead*.

Hugo Frey

Hugo Frey is Reader and Head of History at University of Chichester, UK. He has published widely on Francophone comics and graphic novels in *Modern and Contemporary France*, *Yale French Studies*, etc. He has edited special issues of *Rethinking History* and *European Comic Art* and he is currently co-authoring, with Professor Jan Baetens, *The Cambridge Introduction to the Graphic Novel* (forthcoming 2014).

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When not researching on comics he has also worked extensively on French history, literature, politics and cinema, including the books, *Louis Malle* (Manchester UP, 2004) and *Cinema and Nationalism in France* (Berghahn, forthcoming, 2014).

Chairs

Carolene Ayaka

Dr Carolene Ayaka has a doctorate in social policy from the University of Chichester. She did her MA in Gender studies and diversity at the University of Bradford. Her main area of interest is identity; how it is theorised and presented as well as its negotiations and diverseness (thus far having mainly focused on African female identity). Her interest in comics stems from her enjoyment of exploring how they are used to represent and translate people's everyday lives and imagined lives. As well as a keen interest in Comic Forum 2012's theme, multiculturalism and representation, which identifies with her sociological background and interests, she hopes to write a comic strip one day!

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Mel Gibson

Dr Mel Gibson is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Northumbria. Her teaching and research focuses on comics, manga, graphic novels, young people, literature and media and she has published extensively. In addition, she has run training and promotional events about comics and graphic novels for libraries, schools and other organizations since 1993. As a consultant she also runs events on manga and anime, working with young adults, picture books as art, visual literacies and, also, the links between children's books and other media.

William Grady

William Grady is about to begin his PhD in the faculty of Humanities at the University of Dundee, focusing on women in American West comic books of the Cold War era. He has articles on American West comic books both printed and forthcoming in the anthologies *Comic Books and American Cultural History*, and *Undead in the West II*, alongside forthcoming pieces in the journals *Studies in Comics*, and the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*. He is currently a teaching assistant in the department of Film and Media at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Ian Hague

Ian Hague is an associate lecturer in the History department at the University of Chichester. He recently completed a PhD focusing 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. He is editor of the Routledge publication '*The Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*' (2010 -). His subject specialisms are the Graphic Novel, Comic Book & Comic Strip, Censorship, Hollywood Film and Animation. He has drawn and written a wide range of adult and children's comics, and has organised *The International Conference of Graphic Novels and Comics* (2010, 2011). He is the author of *Nasty Tales : British Underground Comics*, (Critical Vision), and has written widely on the comic and graphic novel.

Harriet Kennedy

Harriet Kennedy is a PhD student in the Centre of Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Her thesis is entitled *Québécois Bande Dessinée: A Quiet Revolution?* Her research is focused on the representations of nationalism and the Québécois struggle for independence in the bande dessinée produced in the province. It is primarily concerned with questions of voice and the potentials of form.

Joan Ormrod

I am researching women in comics and subcultural identities. Research into subcultures develops my PhD, 'Expressions of Nation and Place in British Surfing Identities' which focused on analysing representations of surfing and national identity through film and popular culture. I have extensive publications in surfing, surfing cultures and their representations.

I am currently writing a book on Wonder Woman which examines cultural, political and social influences upon the representation of the human body from the 1940s. I co-edit Routledge's Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics (www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rcom) with David Huxley .

Julia Round

Julia Round (MA, PhD) is Senior Lecturer in the Media School at Bournemouth University, UK, and 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 completing a monograph on comics and the Gothic (McFarland, 2013). For further details see www.juliaround.com.

Roger Sabin

Roger Sabin is Reader in Popular Culture at Central Saint Martins College of Arts and Design, University of the Arts London. His books include *Adult Comics: An Introduction* (Routledge), and *Comics, Comix and Graphic Novels* (Phaidon). He reviews graphic novels for the press and radio. *The Daily Telegraph* once called him 'The F.R. Leavis of the graphic novel', and he's still not sure if that's a compliment or an insult.

Peter Wilkins

Peter Wilkins is the Faculty Research Liaison for The Training Group at Douglas College. He is a founding editor of Graphixia, a blog about comics, and a contributor to *the Comics Grid*. He has presented on comics at the First International Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels (Alcalá de Henares, Spain) and the Third International Conference on Comics: Comics Rock (Bournemouth, UK). His current research explores the relationship between comics and document use literacy and Seth's *Dominion City* as "Heritage District".

Comics Forum

Director, Conference Co-Director, Comics Forum 2012, Website Administrator: Ian Hague

Ian Hague is an associate lecturer in the History department at the University of Chichester. He recently completed a PhD focusing 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.

Conference Co-Director, Comics Forum 2012: Carolene Ayaka

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For full list of news correspondents, see <http://comicsforum.org>.

Facebook Administrator: Paul Fisher Davies

Paul is a PhD student researching visual narrative theory at the University of Sussex, where he also gained his BA in English and MA in Literature and Visual Culture. He teaches English Language and Literature at Sussex Downs College on the South Coast, and dabbles in comics creation amongst other creative endeavours. You can find samples of his work at www.crosbies.co.uk.

Organising Committee, Twitter Administrator: Hattie Kennedy

Harriet Kennedy is a PhD student in the Centre of Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh. Her thesis is entitled *Québécois Bande Dessinée: A Quiet Revolution?* Her research is focused on the representations of nationalism and the Québécois struggle for independence in the bande dessinée produced in the province. It is primarily concerned with questions of voice and the potentials of form.

Organising Committee: Emily Rabone

Emily Rabone studied 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.

Organising Committee: Hannah Wadle

Hannah 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.

Consultant: Hugo Frey

Hugo Frey is Reader and Head of History at University of Chichester, UK. He has published widely on Francophone comics and graphic novels in *Modern and Contemporary France*, *Yale French Studies*, etc. He has edited special issues of *Rethinking History*

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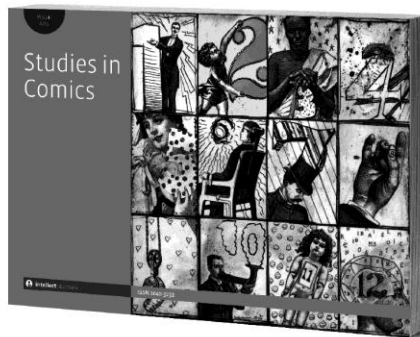
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Studies in Comics

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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



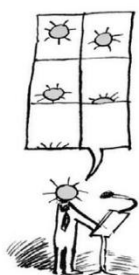
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and the International Bande Dessinée Society*

European Comic Art is the first English-language scholarly publication devoted to the study of European-language graphic novels, comic strips, comic books and caricature. The editorial board and consultative committee bring expertise on a wide European area of comic art production and the journal emphasises coverage of work from across Europe, including Eastern Europe.

The journal builds on existing scholarship in French-language comic art and is able to draw on the scholarly activities undertaken by its parent organisations. The IBDS, founded in 2001, and the ABDS, founded in 2004, are both dedicated to the scholarly study of French-language comics and aim to raise the profile of *bande dessinée* in the field of French Studies and related disciplines. Each society holds a biannual conference. Membership to one, or other of the societies is included in the individual subscription rate of the journal.

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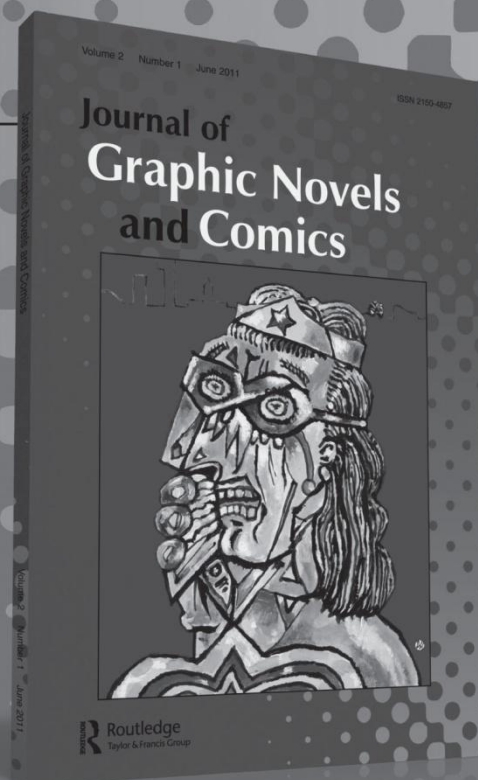
Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics

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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