



**Annual
Conference of
the Canadian
Society for the
Study of Comics**

**Conférence
annuelle de la
Société
canadienne pour
l'étude de la
bande dessinée**

May 19 - 20, 2022

Conference Program

Day 1 - Session 1 - Thursday, 11 am - 12:00 pm Eastern

Panel 1A: Manga's Influence in North America

[Zachary Winchcombe](#) - Alternative to... Tatsumi East and West

[Chris Reynolds-Chikuma](#) - Manga & Canga in Anglo-Canada and in Québec

[Matt Poulter](#) - Chiba City Dreams: Cyberpunk and the Japanese Aesthetic

Panel 1B: Representing Black Identity in Comics and Illustration

[Elisabeth Pfeiffer](#) - Basic bitches and curiosity with Blackness: comics and Blackface

[Youeal Abera](#) - The Intersectionality of Prince T'Challa - Analysis of Coates' Black Panther

[Mohit Abroland and Anu Sugathan](#) - Exploring questions of racial capital in Black Lives Matters (BLM) protests and Blair Imani's Making Our Way Home: The Great Migration and the Black American Dream

Session 2 - Thursday, 12:30 - 1:30 pm Eastern

Roundtable 1: Social Justice Through Comics

Featuring: Melanie Proulx, Amanda White, and Diana Day

Roundtable 2: Richesse et problèmes de la recherche en français sur les BD-comics canadiens / The Richness and Problems of Scholarship in French Canadian BD-Comics

Featuring: Chris Reynolds-Chikuma, Thara Charland, and Sylvain Rheault

Session 3 - Thursday, 2:00 - 3:00 pm Eastern

Panel 2A: Comics Across Print Media

[Kalervo Sinervo, Anna F. Peppard, and Benjamin Woo](#) - Wizard: The Acafanzine (*asynchronous materials*: [link to zine](#))

[Neale Barnholden](#) - Comics and Cartoons of Nintendo Power Magazine 1988 - 1996: A (Marketing) Strategy Guide

[Michael Hancock](#) - "You Are Judge Dredd": The Affordances of the Gamebook, Comic, and Gamebook Comic

Panel 2B: Intercultural Lines of Influence

[Shailee Rajak](#) - 'Bhimayana': Why is it still relevant?

[Sylvain Rheault](#) - Analyse de l'énonciation dans les traductions canadiennes

[Safa Alshammari](#) - Past, Present, Future Habibi

Session 4 - Thursday, 3:30 - 4:30 pm Eastern

Panel 3A: Bodily Realities and Posthumanism

[Reginald Wiebe and Dorothy Woodman](#) - "Ain't no choice at all": drafting Marvel's cancer plot in Thor Vol. 2 #26 and 27

[Timothy Golub and Jeff Swim](#) - Familiar Violence: Evan Dorkin & Jill Thompson and the Burden of Anthropocene Beasts

[Kira Smith](#) - Representing Disability in Josei Manga: What Perfect World Tells Us About the State and Future of Disability

Panel 3B: Utopian Visions and Hypercapitalist Nightmares

[Ishaan Selby](#) - Planet-Size X-Men and the Politics of Utopia

[Kate Fedchun](#) - "Finally, I can put my lady boner to use": Edelman's reproductive futurism and Muñoz's queer utopia in Dhaliwal's *Woman World*

[Christopher J. Galdieri](#) - Art Imitates Life Imitates Art: The Parallel Presidencies of Lex Luthor and Donald Trump

Session 5 - Thursday, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Eastern

Keynote Speaker - Creative

Gord Hill - The Anti-Colonial Comic Book

Day 2 - Session 6 - Friday, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm Eastern

Keynote Speaker - Academic

Bounthavy Suvilay

Session 7 - Friday, 12:30 - 1:30 pm Eastern

Panel 4A: (Re)Imagining Ethnic and National Identities

[Paul M. Malone](#) - Social Democracy in Form and Content: The Bobby Bär Comic Strip and Its Readership in Interwar Vienna

[Pierre Dairon](#) - Le génocide arménien dans les récits graphiques francophones

[Shoshana Rosa Cohen](#) - Jews Can Be Heroines, Too: When "Never Again" Means Now

Panel 4B: Gender Power Dynamics

[Natalie Garceau](#) - Listen to the Monster: Frankenstein's Creature and Female Characters

[Dominick Grace](#) - Aardvarkian Emancipation

[Faiz Elahi](#) - The Conflicting Conceptions of Heroes Guiding Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*

Panel 4C: The Semiotics of Self-Expression

[Lisa Macklem](#) - Bridging Past and Present: Mimi Pond Brings Meaning to Memoir

[Daniel Marrone](#) - Haejin Park: Impressions of Rhythm and Density in "Poetic" Comics

Session 8 - Friday, 2:00 - 3:00 pm Eastern

Mentorship Sessions

A series of breakout sessions for students to meet with academics.

Session 9 - Friday, 3:30 - 4:30 pm Eastern

Panel 5A: Comics in/of the Classroom

[Julian Lawrence](#) - Serious Funny Pages: A Contextual Examination into the Making of an Academic

[David Lewkowich](#) - On the vast spillage of teachers' emotions in comics

[Shannon McAlorum](#) - (Re)conciliation Through Storytelling: Teaching an Indigenous Graphic Novel to Indigenous Students

Panel 5B: Comics and Kink

[Daniel Yezbick](#) - Walt Disney's Bluesies and Beasties: Animal Kink and Interspecies Encounters in the FURRY-ous Frolics of the Tijuana Bibles

[J. Andrew Deman](#) - Naked Days of Future Past: Re-Visiting the X-Men in the Context of Exhibitionist Erotic Humiliation

[Christopher Maverick](#) - Polyamory Fixes Everything... and Breaks It: The Difficulty of Non-Mononormativity in Modern Superhero Comics

Session 10 - Friday, 5:00 - 6:00 pm Eastern

Annual General Meeting

[Link to Agenda](#)

Presenter Abstracts

Youeal Abera - McGill University

The Intersectionality of Prince T'Challa - Analysis of Coates' Black Panther

Comic books grant glimpses of a possible world. Ultimately, comic books possess the potential to authenticate our visions of a better tomorrow, each page a bridge used to travel from our current society to the ameliorated world we (should) yearn for our children to inherit. By administering an incredible narrative of a Black superhero (particularly one created in the absence of the white gaze), Ta-Nehisi Coates' *Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet- Book One* (illustrated by Brian Stelfreeze) provides us with a comic book that brilliantly encapsulates the beauty of Afrocentric people and culture. By focusing on Coates' narrative, my paper utilizes Prince T'Challa's character to analyze how the intersectionality of Black identities impacts their experiences in spatiality (i.e., the ways in which they take up physical and personal spaces). My paper articulates that Prince T'Challa's royal position, superhuman abilities, and superhero persona empowers and enables him to supersede the systemic agents that typically restrict the spatiality of Black men. Thus, I argue that *Black Panther: A Nation Under Our Feet- Book One* gifts comic book readers with a powerfully positive narrative, one that depicts a Black man attaining and maintaining significantly heightened agency and autonomy. Beyond my analysis of Coates' celebrated comic book, my paper argues that fully comprehending how marginalized identities occupy space enables us to better recognize how they see themselves in our real world and, more importantly, the exhaustion they endure as they conform to these spaces in order to peacefully and successfully exist.

Mohit Abrol and Anu Sugathan - Indian Institute of Technology Delhi

Exploring questions of racial capital in Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests and Blair Imani's Making Our Way Home: The Great Migration and the Black American Dream

This paper will analyze the visual aspects of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement by employing critical discourse analysis of the media debates in the aftermath of George Floyd's death. The paper will further explore the aesthetic dimension of protest against institutionalized racism. The paper will offer a comparative framework between BLM movement and Blair Imani's graphic novel, *Making Our Way Home: The Great Migration and the Black American Dream* (2020) to demonstrate the linkages between racial attitudes and racial capital.

Safa Al-Shammary - University of Granada

Past, Present, Future Habibi

In cultures that continue to oppose each other, the effort to imitate the West in clothing, speech, behavior, and lifestyle is acceptable. Such acts are linked with cultural appropriation or cultural misappropriation, which occurs when writers copy details from one culture while asserting authenticity and epistemology, causing controversy. Habibi contains many instances of cultural appropriation, including several that reflect Orientalism-specific concepts. Regardless of form, the graphic novel is rife with thematic (e.g., power and politics, religion, philosophy, etc.) and aesthetic (i.e., artistically interwoven) frameworks that simplify and appropriate West Asian cultures.

Neale Barnholden - University of Alberta

Comics and Cartoons of Nintendo Power Magazine 1988 - 1996: A (Marketing) Strategy Guide

What does Mario look like? In the 1980s and 90s, the Nintendo video game character was portrayed in adaptations as a cartoon with a sometimes-tenuous resemblance to the collection of pixels onscreen. As the period went on, the “actual” Mario came to resemble his own marketing paratext, in a convergence of comic-style art and video games. Nintendo’s corporate mascot is only the most prominent example of how a multinational corporation deployed comics and cartoons, first to shape their image for consumers, and secondly to inspire a distinct style of video game. In this paper, I catalogue the appearance of adaptational cartoons and comics in Nintendo of America’s in-house magazine Nintendo Power. Over the course of the 1990s, the magazine shifted from using cartoons and comics to illustrate what 8- and 16-bit video games “looked like”, thus enhancing their image as family friendly, to presenting CGI images significantly closer to actual gameplay, promoting their image as technologically adept. Comic adaptations were marketing for video games, but became the source for adaptations in the form of video games. The relationship between video games and comics is iterative.

Shoshana Rosa Cohen - Carleton University

Jews Can Be Heroines, Too: When “Never Again” Means Now

Superhero narratives often problematically borrow from Jewish history without acknowledging or representing Jewish identity. Holocaust appropriation in particular is common in superhero narratives. Villains are frequently modeled after Nazis, yet the anti-Semitism that is central to Nazi ideology is rarely acknowledged and is thus left unchallenged. Superhero narratives that include Jewish representation in retellings of Jewish history, such as the stories told in DC Bombshells, can help to promote education and correct common anti-Semitic misrepresentations and misperceptions. Superhero stories that centre Jews as protagonists and heroines put to rest the myth that assumes Jews are passive victims reliant on the intervention of “real” heroes. By casting Jewish actresses as the eponymous characters, Wonder Woman

and Black Widow allow for interpretations that weave Jewish history and experience into the stories unfolding on screen. In their fictional roles, both Gal Gadot and Scarlett Johansson challenge institutions that can be read as representations or proxies of historical institutions responsible for the perpetration of anti-Jewish violence. By triumphing, Gadot and Johansson - both granddaughters of survivors of the Sho'ah - participate in crafting alternative narratives of Jewish history and future possibilities, in which Jews who stand up against anti-Semitism are successful in protecting the lives of their families and communities. The concept of Jews-as-heroines tells more accurate histories of Jewish resistance and resilience, while imagining a past and future that fulfill the vision of Yitzhak Lamdan's words: "never again."

Pierre Dairon - Kenyon College

Le génocide arménien dans les récits graphiques francophones

1915. Arménie. Medz Yeghern, le Grand Crime, le génocide des populations arméniennes de l'Empire Ottoman perpétré par les autorités turques ottomanes. Plusieurs vagues d'exilés ont suivi les massacres, et une diaspora conséquente s'est installée en France. Certaines de ses membres devenus célèbres, tel le chanteur Charles Aznavour, ont œuvré sans relâche pour que le génocide soit connu et reconnu par les gouvernements européens et les nouvelles générations.

Durant des décennies, les massacres n'ont pas été reconnus comme crimes de guerre ou génocide, et la République de Turquie fait toujours référence à un "soi-disant génocide arménien". Toutefois, en 1987, quand l'Union européenne a officiellement reconnu le génocide, celle-ci a utilisé ce déni historique comme un argument central pour ne pas accepter la candidature de la Turquie comme futur membre de l'UE.

En France, où la diaspora arménienne est très active, des auteurs de bandes dessinées, de roman graphique et des chercheurs de diverses disciplines, se sont intéressés à explorer ce passé traumatique dès le début des années 2000 et en particulier en 2015 lors des célébrations du centenaire du génocide. Non seulement il s'agit pour elles et eux de se réapproprier cette histoire, mais derrière ces projets se dessine la volonté plus ou moins explicite de transmettre cette mémoire auprès de la diaspora et de permettre aux descendants des victimes de s'imaginer un futur dans lequel ils peuvent de nouveau être "Arméniens".

J. Andrew Deman - St. Jerome's University

Naked Days of Future Past: Re-Visiting the X-Men in the Context of Exhibitionist Erotic Humiliation

Where theories on comics eroticism tend to read characters in various states of undress as strictly the subjects of an objectifying gaze, it is also possible to locate the erotic instead within character identification in the context of what is referred to as "exhibitionist erotic humiliation," a common kink that sees individuals deriving sexual pleasure from being

publicly exposed. Erotic humiliation is considered a subset of masochism (famously, the 'M' in 'BDSM'). According to famed social psychologist Roy Baumeister "masochism involves the desire for an enjoyment of sexual experiences involving pain, loss of control, and humiliation." In terms of purpose/function, Baumeister concludes that "masochism fosters an escape from the stressful awareness of one's ordinary identity." In this sense, it is a performative/escapist sexual practice, which makes it ideal for representation in visual media such as comics. Adding to this, Scott McCloud's foundational theory of the gutter and related theories of comics' potential for reader-participation and narrativization create potential spaces for a visceral experience of EEH without the many legal and social risks associated with the actual practice. Using my years-long study of Chris Claremont's X-Men as my object text, my presentation will frame key scenes from Claremont's works through the lens of exhibitionist erotic humiliation in order to build a critical recontextualization of how states of undress have been historically simplified in comics criticism and scholarship as a one-size-fits-all sexology that homogenizes our understanding of things like the male gaze, implicit misogyny, and the very nature of the erotic appeal of a visceral and deeply sexually symbolic medium.

Faiz Elahi - McGill University

The Conflicting Conceptions of Heroes Guiding Marjanne Satrapi's *Persepolis*

This paper presents an alternate, but complementary, framework with which to examine *Persepolis*: a character's definition of a "hero." While Satrapi does not frame her story with this lens, and scholarship on this text has centered on war, survival, identity, and womanhood, conceptions of heroes pervade the text and serve as an implicit guiding principle for the plot, themes, and characters of *Persepolis*. Two characters are in focus: Marji, Satrapi's character in the comic, and the fundamentalist regime of Iran. They have contrasting ideologies - liberal and fundamentalist respectively. Their ideals manifest their differing notions of the hero. Marji's heroes evolve from the war hero to the political prisoner to the mythological hero, and each originates from events of her life, the analysis of which undergirds previous research into thematic concerns associated with Marji: womanhood, identity and cultural translation. The regime employs the religious symbol of the martyr in response to war, glorifying martyrs as its heroes to first attract men into joining their army and later to enforce its dogmatic laws; investigating the theocracy's heroes gives cultural insight into fundamentalist regimes and religious extremism. Their contrasting ideals manifest opposing heroes, which culminates in a direct confrontation between Marji and Iran's respective heroes, which contributes to Marji leaving Iran at the end of *Perspolis*. By analyzing *Persepolis* from this perspective, I present a framework with which we can analyze comic books, cultural artifacts, and sociological identities, unearthing the socio-political ideals dictating their mechanisms.

Kate Fedchun - Carleton University

“Finally, I can put my lady boner to use”: Edelman’s reproductive futurism and Muñoz’s queer utopia in Dhaliwal’s *Woman World*

This paper uses Lee Edelman’s (2004) concept of reproductive futurism and Jose Esteban Muñoz’s (2009) theory of queer utopia to analyze Aminder Dhaliwal’s graphic novel *Woman World* (2018). *Woman World* was originally a web comic by Aminder Dhaliwal that tells the story of a world where a birth defect wiped out the entire population of men, leaving women to rally together and rebuild civilization (2018). In Edelman’s significant work, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (2004), Edelman considers the significance of the child as a representation of the future. He positions queerness in opposition to this concept of reproductive futurism. Edelman argues that the “child remains the perpetual horizon,” implying that there is no future without the image of the child (2004, p. 3). In Jose Esteban Muñoz’s (2009) book *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity*, Muñoz directly contradicts Edelman, claiming that “queerness is primarily about futurity and hope... queerness is always in the horizon” (2009, p. 11). Muñoz argues that “to live inside straight time and ask for, desire, and imagine another time and place is to represent and perform a desire that is both utopian and queer” (2009, p. 26). *Woman World* is overflowing with queerness: queer reproduction, queer animals, queer sexualities, queer genders, and queer love. By analyzing specific panels that focus on queer sexuality and reproduction using close reading, I assert that *Woman World* is a graphic novel that denounces Edelman’s concept of reproductive futurism and instead is an exploration and illustration of a queer utopia.

Christopher J. Galdieri - Saint Anselm College

Art Imitates Life Imitates Art: The Parallel Presidencies of Lex Luthor and Donald Trump

Donald Trump's election and conduct in office confounded traditional models of how candidates win nominations, get elected, and govern. What if the best explanation for understanding Trump lay not in academic work but in the pages of Superman comics? I examine the story arc in which Lex Luthor became president of the United States and suggest that the abundant parallels between Luthor and Trump provide insight into Trump's administration that cannot be found elsewhere.

Natalie Garceau - Independent Scholar

Listen to the Monster: Frankenstein’s Creature and Female Characters

When Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* in 1818 she created a compelling character, Frankenstein's creature, a monster literally and figuratively unique. The Creature is always a marginal character looking for acceptance that is always denied to him.

Part of the Creature's popularity is because of his connection with themes such as parenthood, justice, responsibility and rejection. In the 20th century, in pastiches of the original tale the popularity of the Creature grew thanks to adaptations portraying him as a mute brute terrorizing young girls in popular media including comics.

Timothy Golub and Jeff Swim - University of Western Ontario

Familiar Violence: Evan Dorkin & Jill Thompson and the Burden of Anthropocene Beasts

Evan Dorkin and Jill Thompson's *Beasts of Burden* grants animals a liminal status that imbues them with agency and being, distinct from human ends. We argue that these books pursue a liminal space within the intertwined domesticated animal-human relationship and that this envisions a new idea of the Anthropocene by foregrounding animals' essentiality.

We will position our paper in relief to Donna Haraway's *Companion Species Manifesto* (2003) and Jack Halberstam's *Wild Things* (2020). Haraway and Halberstam query the human/dog relationship along the lines of agency and ends: Haraway ultimately finding the potential for mutually caring symbiosis between humans and dogs; and Halberstam ultimately rejecting this in favor of an emancipatory, revolutionary revision of the significance of the otherness of dogs. In short, Haraway sees dogs and humans potentially caring for each other in a process of evolutionary becoming, whereas Halberstam sees this as overdetermined by Anthropocentric capitalism, and advocates for a harnessing of radical otherness.

Our paper attends to two significant features of *Beasts of Burden*. Firstly, we will show Dorkin and Thompson exploiting comics as a visual medium through the graphic violence and gore highlighting cross-species antagonism. Secondly, *Beasts of Burden* is a curious thematic mix of folk and suburban horror. This genre hybridity is motivated by Anthropocene anxieties which are both projected on to and ameliorated by the animals. We demonstrate how the stories' pets present a liminality between Haraway and Halberstam, appearing as a "companion species" that nonetheless harbors a radical "antihumanist" alterity.

Dominick Grace - Brescia University College

Aardvarkian Emancipation

There are many notably odd elements in Dave Sim's long-running comic-book series *Cerebus*, but one that is easy to overlook is the revelation late in the second volume, *High Society*, that Astoria, the mysterious woman who appeared early in the series and through cunning and manipulation helped *Cerebus* become Prime Minister, was motivated by the hope that her efforts would one day help get women the vote. *Cerebus* finds this notion risible, and indeed many readers of *Cerebus*, especially of the latter years of the title, in which Sim's misogynistic politics became increasingly apparent, might be skeptical that *Cerebus* has anything worthwhile to offer in terms of a commentary on women and politics. However, it is difficult not to recognize

that Astoria is the most politically astute figure in the entire series, even though she disappears midway through its run. Furthermore, the original Cirin's utopian social concept is arguably the most egalitarian political model in the series. The first significant model of masculine politics, Lord Julius (appropriately modeled on the anarchic Groucho Marx), does not offer a promising contrast. Cerebus's ultimate ascent to authoritarian power is hardly a more salutary political model. One need not deny the deeply troubling depictions of women in Cerebus in order to recognize that toxic masculinity, especially in relation to political power, is interrogated in the book as thoroughly (if not as overtly) as is feminism. This paper will explore the generally under-acknowledged complexities of Sim's sexual politics in his depiction of power systems.

Michael Hancock - University of Waterloo

"You Are Judge Dredd": The Affordances of the Gamebook, Comics, and Gamebook Comic

The intersection between game and comic can take many different forms. One understudied intersection is the comicbook form of the cyoa (Choose Your Own Adventure) or gamebook. The Choose Your Own Adventure book is a prose text that has been broken up into a series of pieces with instructions leading to different pieces, and the gamebook builds on the format by adding further elements for the reader to track, such as items, statistics, and codewords. Little attention has been paid to the way that comics complicate gamebooks, and I propose a study of the game book comic series *You Are Deadpool* and *Diceman*, and *One Thing After Another*. Gamebooks are known for their merging of reader and protagonist, but gamebooks, by virtue of visually depicting the protagonist, or starring an existing fictional character, need to find other ways to create immersion. This presentation will look at how each text addresses this issue. With *Diceman*, the non-canonical gamebook stories use spectacular deaths and experimental rules to explore the 2000 AD characters. With *You Are Deadpool*, the visuals are used to create an inventory puzzle system and the lead character's fourth wall breaking traits draw attention to the choice-based strangeness. And with *One Thing After Another*, the gamebook is brought into line with superhero norms via a karma points system and an alternate universe plot that matches the gamebook's array of choices. Through these texts, the gamebook comic illustrates its widening of possibility for comics and game.

Julian Lawrence - Teesside University

Serious Funny Papers: A Contextual Examination into the Making of an Academic

In this academic comic (or acadomic), I broadly reflect on impacts to the creative process during the Covid-19 pandemic, upon reconceptualising and recontextualising a comics-based research project titled *21st Century Winter Journey: Exploring Comics, Adaptation, and Community Art Education* as a chapter for an edited book. The process of creating a comic as an academic output is multi-layered, may take years to complete, and can flourish provided there is good communication between the author(s) and the editor(s). Thus, *Serious Funny Papers* is an

academic that reflects on creating the 21st Century Winter Journey academic, which in turn reflects on the production of the After Winter graphic novel project with Year 2 comics students at Teesside University.

From writing the proposal to interpreting data as sequential pictures, the techniques required to make comics as outputs in academia hinge on the Five Cs of Cartooning: consistency, clarity, communication, composition, and calligraphy. It is by documenting the impacts that emerge in my practice as an academic and cartoonist (or acadoonist), that I aim to place the reader in the creative process as I think through the development of the comic.

Reflecting on the making of an academic created during a global pandemic reveals tensions between the virtual and the lifeworld. I argue that Baudrillardian applications of theoretical violence and Giroux's critical utopian pedagogy provide pathways out of the neoliberal digital colonialism and capitalist realism we are increasingly experiencing. Thus, the resulting output is a comic that explores the impacts of making an academic, which in turn documents a comics-based research project between university students and a national charity as they collaborate on making a comic book together.

David Lewkowich - University of Alberta

On the vast spillage of teachers' emotions in comics

This paper questions how comics set in school employ a variety of gestures and sketchy symbols to describe teacher's emotions, asking what these traces may indicate about the cultural expectations of those who teach. In conceptual terms, I turn to non-representational theory – with its focus on movement, non-cognitive embodiment, interactions, and backgrounds – as a means of understanding how meaning itself remains possible apart from the major modal entities in comics: words and image. Examining the extra-linguistic details surrounding teacher's bodies in comics – facial gestures, body language, and characteristics that are variously referred to as emanata, pictorial runes, and emotion lines – I describe how comics strive to represent the affective resonances and affective atmospheres of teaching, experiences that can nevertheless never be represented. This brief analysis turns to examples of teaching found in Frankie Comics (1948), Archie (1961), Batman and the Outsiders (1984), Bartman (1993), and Stan Silas' Norman (2015).

Lisa Macklem - University of Western Ontario

Bridging Past and Present: Mimi Pond Brings Meaning to Memoir

Mimi Pond's graphic novels *Over Easy* and *The Customer is Always Wrong* are her memoirs about coming of age in 1970s San Francisco. Her story provides a bridge between past and present and between author and reader as she finds universal stories within the walls of the Imperial Diner where she takes work as a waitress after dropping out of art school. Hilary Chute, Candida Rifkind, and Linda Warley remark on the prevalence of women to use comics to "push

on conceptions of the unrepresentable” (Chute 2) to find “truth in life narratives” (Rifkind and Warley 11). There is a long history of women using memoir and travelogues to push the boundaries of their own existences. Pond remarks in her interview with Alison Lebovitz that the graphic novel gave her complete control over the cinematic experience, setting, characters, make up, and so forth, that she wanted to provide in a book. In terms of graphic novels, geography is also very much a feature of narratology. Pedri points out that “The privileging of a diegetic self in graphic memoir is why style, which is so personal and subjective, actually betrays important truths about the storyworld presented” (145). Pond also states that *Over Easy* and *The Customer is Always Wrong* examine what society was like at that time as much as what was happening in her life. These are more than just a personal story; this is a bridge between past and present, private and universal.

Paul M. Malone - University of Waterloo

Social Democracy in Form and Content: The Bobby Bär Comic Strip and Its Readership in Interwar Vienna

The Viennese daily newspaper *Das Kleine Blatt* (The Little Paper) was an organ of the Social Democratic Party in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Its weekly comic strip for young children, Bobby Bär (Bobby Bear), inculcated Social Democratic values and attempted to foster a sense of participation in its readers; the comic altered its mode and frequency of presentation, for example, in response to children’s letters, and the paper organized social and charitable clubs in Bobby Bär’s name.

The strip’s democratizing tendency apparently ran aground, however, on a 1929 mail-in campaign to create a new cast member for the strip; not only was the most popular suggestion excluded—if on reasonable grounds—but the editorial staff’s preference was also overruled by the strip’s artist, Franz Plachy, though again for reasons that were defensible and certainly not arbitrary. In the resulting controversy, the paper nonetheless felt forced to defend its actions, and the adult editors had to forestall young readers’ feelings that *Das Kleine Blatt* and Bobby Bär had betrayed their own ideals.

Daniel Marrone

Haejin Park: Impressions of Rhythm and Density in “Poetic” Comics

Plum Press, an illustration collective based in Brooklyn, often publishes work that affords readers many of the pleasures of comics, but which does not quite conform to the narrative conventions that dominate the medium. As Thierry Groensteen writes in his discussion of such work, its “marginal status qualifies it as experimental, but it would be more apt to describe it simply as poetic.” Haejin Park’s inventive watercolour comics invite a consideration of this and related concepts that Groensteen addresses, namely rhythm and density.

Groensteen defines density in terms of “the variability in the number of panels that make up the page” – the higher the number, the greater the density. While this provides a serviceable starting point, it is hardly exhaustive. Even two comics pages with identical panel layout can exhibit very different levels of density. Elements such as words, shading, and various qualities of line and shape have a significant effect on the density of a page. In Park’s comics, it is the distinctive use of vibrant colour that most affects density.

Rhythm is the product of visual intervals, verbal cadences, and conventions unique to cartooning – all mobilized by readers to create a unique impression. While an artist may establish compositional parameters, every reader’s rhythm will vary. Groensteen states: “Rhythm, in comic art, is never a matter of time intervals that can be measured but of time intervals that are felt, through an impression that is built up in stages.” What do the impressions that Park builds up feel like?

Christopher Maverick - Duquesne University

Polyamory Fixes Everything... and Breaks It: The Difficulty of Non-Mononormativity in Modern Superhero Comics

Jonathan Hickman’s 2019 X-men reboot, House of X, subtly insinuates that Cyclops, Jean Grey, and Wolverine are now in a committed polyamorous relationship, effectively resolving their decades-long love triangle. Fan reaction has been mixed. Even many receptive to the general idea question the vagueness of its presentation, particularly with regards to the intimacy between the two male members of the triad. That said, it is perhaps the most visible ethically non-monogamous relationship in mainstream superhero comics. In recent years the genre has attempted to explicitly recognize varying flavors of non-monogamy in titles including Guardians of the Galaxy, Hercules, Mockingbird, Harley Quinn, Starfire, Savage Dragon, and Wicked + Divine.

However, polyamory presents a unique set of challenges to the open-ended, serialized, visual storytelling of the superhero comics. It naturally resists many conflicts that the soulmate tropes of genre formula romance rely on. Furthermore, superhero comics tend to naturally focus on the visual and erotic fantasy spectacle that non-monogamy provides. This ignores many concerns that the subculture is currently far more invested in, such as: the ethics of non-monogamy, legal and cultural recognition of n-ary relationships, the non-homogeneity of beliefs between the various non-monogamous subcultures, and internal struggles to situate exactly where (and if) resistance to sexual mononormativity fits within the queer spectrum. As with any othered community, the superhero genre presents an opportunity to explore non-monogamy through metaphor, however, this exploration requires an understanding of how current narratives succeed and fail to represent the community as it stands.

Shannon McAlorum - University of Lethbridge

(Re)conciliation Through Storytelling: Teaching an Indigenous Graphic Novel to Indigenous Students

Although we are all treaty people, those of us born into undeserved privilege as settlers are necessarily responsible for decolonizing our own thinking. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (2015) clearly stated the need to dismantle systemic racism perpetuated by education, and included charges to develop “culturally appropriate curricula” (10:iii) and “to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (62:2). We as educators must challenge ourselves to use materials representing Indigenous voices and values for all our students.

There are countless examples of comic and cartoon art that have misrepresented Indigeneity. Although the form is not inherently racist, comics have caricatured the Indigenous ‘other’ and perpetuated negative and racist stereotypes, allowing for the continuation of systemic oppression.

But this is changing.

This Place: 150 Years Retold is a graphic novel anthology from Indigenous authors and illustrators, an effort of conciliation that retells Canadian stories from a perspective many settlers (and some Indigenous peoples) have not heard. I integrated it into a first year university preparatory program for Blackfoot students in the hopes of opening conversations acknowledging the problematic nature of traditional academic pedagogy and conciliation.

In this presentation, I will give a snapshot of my university classroom, explaining how I teach the text and contrasting this with my experiences of using more traditional texts from previous semesters. I will candidly discuss my experiences teaching This Place: 150 Years Retold to Blackfoot university students of southern Alberta.

Elisabeth Pfeiffer - Memorial University of Newfoundland

Basic Bitches and curiosity with Blackness: comics and Blackface

This presentation will draw on three instances of the use of Blackface in comics: specifically, pulling from the short comic “Basic Bitch” (2017) by an all-Black creator team (Basse Nyambi, Alobi, Nyambi Nyambi, and Chris Visions) whereby a White woman uses advanced technology to don become Black, and horrifically, experiences police violence because she is viewed as Black. This concept has been employed in ways that both reveal and subvert racist ideology by White creators, notably with Lois Lane, where she uses Kryptonian technology to become Black for a day to generate an award-winning story; and, in Locke and Key where two main characters use a “skin key” to change White skin to Black. This presentation will discuss the use of Blackface, briefly summarize and offer further analysis on each comic.

Matt Poulter - York University

Chiba City Dreams: Cyberpunk and the Japanese Aesthetic

Cyberpunk has remained one of the most significant and popular Western science fiction genres since the dual release of Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* and William Gibson's *Neuromancer* in 1982. In the forty years since, there has been a constant stream of cyberpunk content, from revolutionary films such as *The Matrix*, to hit video games like *Deus Ex* and *Cyberpunk 2077*, and indeed, to comics, including touchstones such as *Transmetropolitan* and *The Invisibles*.

However, it's impossible to explore cyberpunk without noticing the influence on the genre by the nation of Japan. Even without the significant references made to Japan throughout Western cyberpunk literature, the nation's own additions to the genre, particularly in comics, are some of the most significant of all. Starting with *Akira* in 1982, Japanese manga has yielded titles like *Ghost in the Shell* and *Battle Angel Alita*, some of the most beloved cyberpunk works both domestically and around the world.

This presentation will examine some of the questions that arise from this cultural exchange happening through genre comics, questions like; Why are North American cyberpunk protagonists criminals while Japanese ones are cops and soldiers? Why is it a problem that the Hollywood adaptation of *Ghost in the Shell* cast Scarlett Johansson as a previously Japanese character? What do these vastly different depictions of similar subjects say about these cultures and their relationship to technology? And, most of all, what do we leave behind when we "borrow" Japanese aesthetics for North American stories?

Shailee Rajak - McGill University

'Bhimayana': Why is it still relevant?

"*Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability*", published in 2011, is a stunning graphic novel about caste discrimination in India, drawn by Gond artists Durgabai and Subhash Vyam, and co-written by Srividya Natarajan and S. Anand. It is based on the real-life experiences about 'untouchability' and caste-oppression as narrated by DR B.R. Ambedkar in his autobiographical notes. The paper seeks to explore the interactive amalgamation of different styles, formats and artistic elements—both indigenous and modern—as employed by the graphic novel to make it relevant for communicating the nuances of the Indian context. The traditional form, the vibrant art with its bold colours and fluid boundaries, not only allows the words and visuals to interact with each other, but also offers an exploration of the inherent divisive ideologies of Indian culture and how these persistent structures of marginalisation determining 'untouchability' continue to hold sway in contemporary times. Thus, the paper seeks to critique the historical narrative about oppression as it has functioned, and continues to function, in India beyond the colonial/anti-colonial perspective through the popular medium of visuals.

Chris Reyns-Chikuma - University of Alberta

Manga & Canga in Anglo-Canada and in Québec

Manga has been successful all over the world (Johnson-Woods). This success gave birth to various local adaptations, the most famous ones being called OEL and manfra/franga (French manga). Canada is actually divided in its reaction to manga in two ways. First, there is a quite strong difference between the success of manga in Anglo-Canada in terms of its inspiration for Anglo-Canadian creators (e.g., O'Malley's Scott Pilgrims and the Tamaki cousins' Skims). In Québec, one cannot find any manga-influenced BDQ that could be considered successful on a regional-national-Québécois level. Second, while in Anglo-Canada, the welcoming of manga could be found in all actors of the comic world (from publishers to fans and creators), in Québec, it can hardly be located outside fans' events (otakuthons, websites, fan-fictions). It is rare to find interest in manga in publishers' and creators' productions. With few exceptions (e.g., Tshimbalanga, 2008), it exist only nominally in one fragile publisher's website (Studio Lounak), and rarely in some Québécois creators' style (e.g., Boum). More recently, new bédéistes produced more obvious canga but that are self-published (e.g., Dez's Frivolesque). Finally, in the First Canadian "nation", indigenous comics have sometimes been using manga (e.g., Yahgulanaas), like it has been in some other cultures, to resist what is perceived as the main cultural imperialism (e.g., in Algeria with DZ; see Gueydan).

In my presentation, I will try to show the multiple factors that made manga less successful in Québec than in Anglo-Canada or in France and even in Canadian Indigenous comics.

Sylvain Rheault - University of Regina

Analyse de l'énonciation dans les traductions canadiennes

Si une personne canadienne traduisait en anglais une bande dessinée francophone du Québec, puis qu'ensuite une personne québécoise re-traduisait en français cette bande dessinée, est-qu'on obtiendrait exactement le texte de départ? Le but de la communication n'est pas de réaliser ce genre d'exercice et d'en observer les résultats. La question permet cependant de comprendre que, ce qui est en jeu, ce sont les choix effectués lors d'une traduction faite en contexte canadien. Les personnes qui font de la traduction doivent faire des choix non seulement du point de vue de l'énoncé (le contenu de l'oeuvre), mais aussi du point de vue de l'énonciation.

Nous allons donc observer les adaptations de l'énonciation dans deux oeuvres canadiennes: Paul à Québec (2009), de Michel Rabagliati, album traduit en anglais sous le titre The Song of Roland (2012). Long Red Hair (2015), de Meags Fitzgerald, roman graphique traduit en français sous le titre Longs Cheveux roux (2017).

L'énonciation ne concerne pas directement le contenu mais tout ce qui peut en modifier la signification. Par exemple, on peut tenir compte de la situation, du contact, du locuteur/la

locutrice, du destinataire, du façonnement esthétique et de la visée argumentative pour comprendre comment ont été nuancés les choix de traduction qui prennent place dans le texte ou dans son environnement immédiat. Il s'ensuit alors de subtiles modifications de contenu. C'est ce que nous volons observer et faire comprendre.

Ishaan Selby - McMaster University

Planet-Size X-Men and the Politics of Utopia

This paper is a close examination of the comic book "Planet-Size X-Men" by writer Gerry Duggan and artist Pepe Larraz. I read this single issue as a story in itself and in relation to the Marvel Comics property known as the X-Men. Within the universe of Marvel comic books, the X-Men are a group of mutants, i.e. characters empowered by genetic mutation as opposed to external sources or magic. Due to the innate rather than externally gained nature of their super abilities, the mutants function as an oppressed group within the shared Marvel universe. I read this comic in the context of the fantasies of tech billionaires' plans to inhabit and terraform Mars. The central argument of the paper is that this comic offers an alternative politics of inhabiting Mars than the one offered by oligarchs such as Elon Musk which are premised on dreams of exploitation and private ownership. Instead, Duggan and Larraz offer a vision of terraforming and inhabiting Mars as the fulfillment of a collective political project by an oppressed group.

The current X-Men status quo inaugurated by the books *House of X* and *Powers of X* shift the political emphasis from a group trying to achieve recognition by a dominant group and toward the exertion of political power by the marginalized. Duggan and the rest of the creative team use this shift in political emphasis to put forth an alternative to real world politics that moves beyond a future premised on private appropriation to collective good.

Kalervo Sinervo (University of Calgary), Anna Peppard (Sheridan College), and Benjamin Woo (Carleton University)

Wizard: The Acafanzine ([link to zine](#))

From 1991-2011, *Wizard* magazine covered pop culture as hobby, industry, and lifestyle. Paying special attention to comics content and professionals, the periodical chronicled the 1990s boom and bust of the speculator's market, the market growth of manga and anime in the US, and the rise of the superhero movie blockbuster. But did *Wizard* just tell these stories, or actively shape the culture it claimed to reflect? At its late-1990s peak, the magazine outsold most of the comics it covered, and before its publication run came to an unceremonious end, parent company Wizard Entertainment had diversified into online collectible sales and running comic conventions. In spite of the influence *Wizard* wielded during its 235 regular issues, it is largely unaccounted for in comics studies scholarship and pop culture histories.

Wizard: The Acafanzine will begin to address this absence by offering an introduction to *Wizard's* key recurring components. Our zine uses *Wizard's* regular features as points of departure and provocation, sketching potential lines of analysis to suggest how *Wizard* can be a window onto comics fandom and the comics industry during this pivotal period: How did the tone of the letters column change? How did the magazine address gender and sexuality? What was the role of market information? In an accessible format inspired by the fan outreach the magazine purported to model, we seek to productively explode the magazine's own reductive view of industry and fans, drawing attention to the fertile territory *Wizard* offers for scholarly explorations of comics' past – and future.

Kira Smith - York University

Representing Disability in Josei Manga: What *Perfect World* Tells Us About the State and Future of Disability

Perfect World stories the relationship of Tsugumi Kawana, and Itsuki Ayukawa. In this twelve volume josei manga series, it follows their trials and tribulations in mixed ability relationship. Through their romance, readers learn about accessible architecture and the stigmatization of people with disabilities in Japan. However, it also reinforces problematic narratives. Ayukawa is often portrayed as the supercrip – becoming a successful architect despite his disability, and his disability as a burden is a theme throughout the series. This presentation seeks to examine the successes and shortcomings of this series in order to address what this means for disability and manga readership. With its popularity, it may make space for disabled manga artists and writers to come forward with their stories that might avoid some of the pitfalls of *Perfect World*.

Reginald Wiebe (Concordia University of Edmonton and Dorothy Woodman (University of Alberta)

"Ain't no choice at all": drafting Marvel's cancer plot in Thor Vol. 2 #26 and 27

The driver of superhero comics is the nature of power and its relation to moral practices. Power is thus represented in cultural categories easily identified by the comic reader. One unexamined story helps clarify Marvel's diegetic and thematic uses of cancer. In Thor Vol. 2, Issues 26 and 27 (2000), a longtime Thor antagonist called The Absorbing Man, breaks into a hospital and kidnaps Dr. Jane Foster (in this series a friend and co-worker of Thor) for the sole purpose of having his wife treated in the safety of their decrepit home in the heart of New York's slums. His destruction and violence, indeed his criminality, is driven by an unexpected motivation: his wife, fellow super-villain Titania, is dying of cancer. However, Thor, caught up in his superhero narrative, battles his foe, unaware of the cause of the latter's behavior. The story reminds us of their undeniable differences by amplifying them, so as to cast power and responsibility as inflected by gender, class and economics, while simultaneously erasing them through the story's focus on conventional superhero codes. The battle between the two men only ends when two

women, one deathly ill and the other helplessly kidnapped, step out of their prescribed roles as enemies. The narrative of these issues seems straightforward in its purpose: re-introducing a recurring antagonist and developing a domestic subplot of the series. However, though mostly ignored by fans and critics alike, it provides a gestational version of Marvel's engagement with cancer over the past decades.

Zachary Winchcombe - McGill University

Alternative to... Tatsumi East and West

In 2005, Canadian publisher of literary comics Drawn & Quarterly began publishing the early works of Japanese cartoonist Yoshihiro Tatsumi. Under the editorial gaze of Japanese American alternative cartoonist Adrian Tomine, Tatsumi's work has been marketed as an early precursor to alternative comics. What, however, are we talking about when we speak of alternative comics? To what do these comics offer an alternative? And, while alternative comics are often thought of as having emerged simultaneously in the global 60s, does alternative always mean the same across contexts and discourses? This presentation will interrogate the transnational adaptation and marketing of Tatsumi's work as alternative comics and will argue that attempts to interpret his work according to the distribution and history of North American alternative comics occludes the historical and social contexts from which his work emerged. Tatsumi's gekiga (dramatic pictures), a genre of manga he is famous for helping to fashion, are closely related with the kashihon-ya (Japanese rental bookshop), a venue with no clear analogue in North America. The loss of this context ultimately results in the necessary recontextualization of Tatsumi's work according to the discourse of North American alternative comics and its repackaging in a graphic novel format. This recontextualization attests to the different modalities of alternative comics in North America and Japan.

Daniel Yezbick - St. Louis Community College

Walt Disney's Bluesies and Beasties: Animal Kink and Interspecies Encounters in the FURRY-ous Frolics of the Tijuana Bibles

This presentation will explore the use of animal parody in the American Tijuana Bible or "Bluesie," a form of cheaply printed "under the counter" pornographic pamphlet comic that circulated widely from the 1920s to the 1950s. Though most Tijuana Bibles were meant to shock, titillate, and even teach readers about all forms of sexual behavior, they also retained a powerful tradition of ribald comedy that frequently targets hierarchies of celebrity, class, and culture. The cartooning itself objectifies all genders in its frank depiction of magnified genitalia, exuberant intercourse, and especially "filthy" language. Yet, the appropriation and desecration of Funny Animal forms from newspaper "funnies," Hollywood studio shorts, and of course, mainstream comic books themselves reveals an additional layer of consumer resistance and creative critique.