

2025 COMICS STUDIES SOCIETY CONFERENCE

RESISTANT, RESILIENT, & RESOLUTE: SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMICS



CONFERENCE PROGRAM

July 10th -12th

STEM EDUCATION AND
LEARNING BUILDING

Michigan State University

Dear CSS Community,

Welcome to the 2025 Comics Studies Conference, “Resistant, Resilient, and Resolute: Social Justice and Comics” at Michigan State University!

This year, perhaps more than any other, we are grateful for the opportunity to come together to witness the dynamic ways comics artists, writers, and publishers have resisted regressive social and political paradigms. However inevitable our current circumstances may seem, the history of comics and creators on the margins of American visual culture proves that diverse comics have a long legacy.

Our focus this year is, on the one hand, to elevate and reflect on the progress made, and on the other hand, to reckon with the work that remains. The work presented here will bear witness to the history of resilience of marginalized creators in the US, and will celebrate the new worlds imagined in their comics. We are here to recognize that the revolution will be drawn!

This much-needed gathering would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the CSS Conference Committee, led by Julian Chambliss, and the generous support of MSU. Please join me in thanking them for this exceptional opportunity.

Finally, whether you are new to CSS, or a long-standing member, we hope that you will extend your passion for comics studies beyond this weekend and join us for many more society events and initiatives.

In solidarity,
Sam Langsdale

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Langsdale', with a stylized, cursive script.

2024-2025 CSS President



Department of English MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Welcome to the 2025 Comic Studies Society Conference at Michigan State University!

We are honored to host this year's gathering in East Lansing, where comics have long held a vital place in the academic and cultural fabric of our institution. Michigan State University's legacy in comic studies is nationally recognized, anchored by the MSU Libraries' Comic Art Collection—one of the world's largest publicly available collections of comic books and graphic novels. That commitment runs deep in the Department of English, where faculty and students have championed comics as a powerful lens for storytelling, cultural critique, and scholarly inquiry.



College of Arts & Letters

Department of English

Michigan State University
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Wells Hall, C614
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This year's conference, organized around the theme "Resistant, Resilient, and Resolute: Social Justice and Comics," is timely and meaningful to our community. We're proud to offer a space where scholars, creators, teachers, and fans can share ideas and build new connections. From panels to roundtables, the conference embodies MSU's ongoing commitment to comics as a space for interdisciplinary dialogue. Thank you for being here. Your presence continues the tradition of innovation and critical engagement that defines comic studies at Michigan State University. Let's make this gathering an inspiring celebration of the stories, struggles, and futures that comics illuminate.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Comics Studies Society Conference highlights the critical importance of comics as an interdisciplinary visual medium capable of exploring complex narratives of identity, memory, resistance, and social change. This year's theme, "Resistant, Resilient, and Resolute," demonstrates the capacity of this field to engage across disciplines, foster inclusive scholarship, and bridge academic and public conversations through accessible and impactful storytelling. I am proud that the College of Arts & Letters at Michigan State University is hosting these vital conversations.



**College of
Arts & Letters**
Office of the Dean

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Thomas Stubblefield (he/him)
Dean, College of Arts & Letters
Michigan State University



On behalf of the Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections at the Michigan State University Libraries, we are delighted to welcome you to the Comics Studies Society conference.

Special Collections is proud to be home to one of the world's largest publicly accessible comic book collections and related materials. We serve as a hub for research, preservation, and discovery in comics and popular culture - supporting scholars, students, and fans alike.

We are thrilled to host and connect with a community as passionate and insightful as the Comics Studies Society. We invite you to explore the collection during your visit, engage with our staff, and discover the depth and diversity of comics history housed right here in East Lansing.

Thank you for the work you do to advance the field of comics studies. We are honored to be part of your journey.

Welcome, and enjoy the conference!

Leslie Van Veen McRoberts, Head, Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections and University Archives

Welcome to Michigan State University's campus and this year's conference!

The Comics Collection is considered the largest publicly available collection of comics in the world. And while the collection has its roots in the Superhero genre, today it houses numerous others like Graphic Medicine and Social Justice.

We strive to promote and make these diverse materials accessible not only to scholars, but also the surrounding communities who support our campus and the wider public as part of our university's land grant mission.

As comics is ever evolving, so is our collection. We continue to hold comics from all over the world but are excited to share our refined focus on comics published in North and South America.

We hope you enjoy your time on our beautiful campus.

Jason Larsen, Comics Studies Librarian, Stephen O. Murray and Keelung Hong Special Collections



CSS Ombuds

The CSS Ombuds serves as an independent, neutral, off-the-record, and confidential resource for conference attendees to discuss any concerns they may have concerning conference-related behaviors and activities. The Ombuds provides information confidentially and offers a safe place for people to discuss their concerns in a confidential way and to explore options for any further action. The Ombuds can provide information about how to file a claim with the CSS, but they do not file notice of claims to the organization. Likewise, the Ombuds does not have responsibility or authority to conduct a formal investigation on any issues raised, though they may gather information in the process of addressing a concern. Andy Kunka serves as the CSS Ombudsman. He can be reached by phone or text at 843-229-8929 or by email at ajkunka@gmail.com. Please feel free to contact him with any issues you might have during the conference.

Comics Studies Society 2025 Schedule

Updated July 11, 2025

At a Glance

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Registration: 8:30 AM- 3:00 PM
Welcome: 9:30 AM
Session 1: 10:00 AM- 11:15 AM
Break: 11:15 AM-11:30 AM
Session 2: 11:30 AM- 12:45 PM
Lunch: 12:45 PM- 1:45 PM
Session 3: 1:45 PM- 3:00 PM
Break: 3:00 PM- 3:30 PM
Session 4: 3:30 PM- 4:45 PM
Break: 4:45 PM- 5:00 PM
Award Ceremony: 5:00 PM- 6:00 PM
Reception: 6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

Friday, July 11, 2025

Registration: 8:30 AM- 3:00 PM
Session 5: 9:00 AM- 10:15 AM
Break: 10:15 AM-10:30 AM
Session 6: 10:30 AM- 11:45 AM

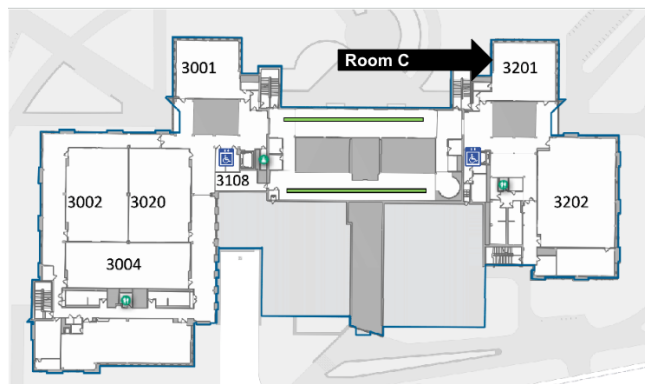
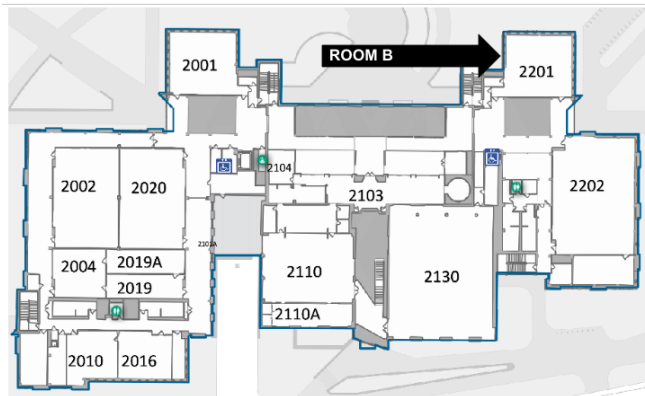
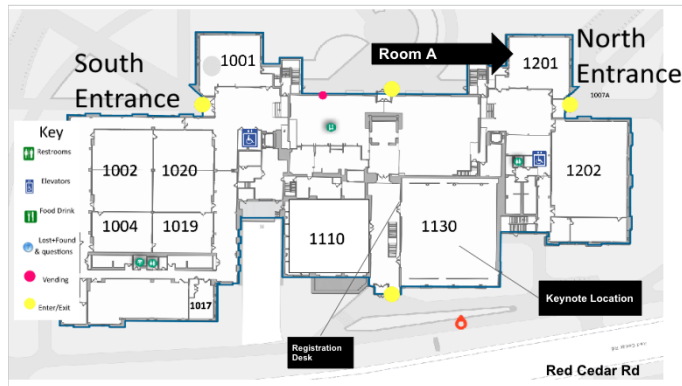
Lunch: 11:45 AM- 12:45 PM
Session 7: 12:45 PM- 2:00 PM
Break: 2:00 PM- 2:30 PM
Session 8: 2:30 PM- 3:45 PM
Break: 3:45 PM- 4:00 PM
Scholar Keynote: 4:00 PM- 5:30 PM

Saturday, July 12, 2025

Registration: 8:30 AM- 3:00 PM
Session 9: 9:00 AM- 10:15 AM
Break: 10:15 AM-10:30 AM
Session 10: 10:30 AM- 11:45 AM
Lunch: 11:45 AM- 12:45 PM
Session 11: 12:45 PM- 2:00 PM
Break: 2:00 PM- 2:30 PM
Session 12: 2:30 PM- 3:45 PM
Break: 3:45 PM- 4:00 PM
Artist Keynote: 4:00 PM- 5:30 PM
Break: 5:30 PM- 5:45 PM
Closing: 5:45 PM- 6:45 PM

MSU Teaching and Learning Facility Map

642 Red Cedar Rd, East Lansing, MI 48824



STEM 1201 [1st Floor] -- ROOM A
STEM 2201 [2nd Floor] -- ROOM B
STEM 3201 [3rd Floor] -- ROOM C
STEM 1130 [1st Floor] – Keynote Location

Daily Schedule

Day 1: Thursday, July 10, 2025

8:30 AM- 3:00 PM Registration

9:30 AM Welcome

10:00 AM- 11:15 AM Session 1

Panel 1 (Room A): Urbanity, Identity, and the Politics of Space

Chair: Shawn Gilmore, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Ritam Sarkar, Symbiosis International University, “Frames of Injustice: Urban Comics, Infrastructure, and Right to the City in Simon Lamouret’s The Alcazar”

Christopher A. Covington, Bowling Green State University, “Negotiating Identity: Black Lightning and the Manifestation of Dubious Double Consciousness in Black Superhero Narratives”

Fi Stewart-Taylor, Northeastern University, “My Crisis is Not Yours to Write About: Problems of Restoration and Representation in Vivian's Ghost”

Panel 2 (Room B--ONLINE): Margins and Mirrors – Exploring Diverse Identities in Comics

Chair: Samantha Langsdale, Independent Scholar

Estee Ellis, Independent Scholar, “Identification and Alienation: First-person Comics by American Jewish Artists in the Wake of Oct. 7th”

Elk Paauw, University of Western Ontario, “Transnormativity in Transmasculine Graphic Narratives”

Sonali Agarwal, Indraprastha College for Women, Delhi University, “Female Trauma and Resilience: Fighting Gender Violence in The Priya Trilogy”

Panel 3 (Room C): Narratives of Crisis and Care – Health, Environment, and Trauma in Comics

Chair: Ayana Dey, Michigan State University

Ebony Toussaint, Medical University of South Carolina, “From Panels to Patients: The Role of Comics in Science Communication and Health Education”

Iván González-Soto, Washington State University, “Nuestra Lengua, Nuestra Cultura: A Graphic Community History of Labor and Leisure on the US-Mexico Borderlands”

Jonathan Bass, Rutgers University, “Documenting FranDisco: Comics, Accessibility, and Outsider Art”

11:15 AM- 11:30 AM Break

11:30 AM- 12:45 PM Session 2

Panel 4 (Room A): War, Politics, and Propaganda in Comics

Chair: Julian C. Chambliss, Michigan State University

Elisabeth Pfeiffer, Memorial University (Nfld, Canada), “Drawn with intent: exploring forms of digital comics journalism”

Michael Kobre, Queens University of Charlotte, “Champion of the Oppressed: Resistance and Jewish Identity in Siegel and Shuster's Superman”

Andrew Kotick, Pratt Institute, “Antisemitism and the Illustrated Press in Belle Epoque France: The Case of the Frères Offenstadt”

Panel 5 (Room B- ONLINE) 4: Documenting Lives

Chair: Martha Kuhlman, Bryant University

Okan Keles, Istanbul University, “Visual Storytelling and Political Engagement: The Role of Comics in the Construction of Social Memory through Joe Sacco's Palestine”

Tess Do, The University of Melbourne, “Comics and the Cambodian Genocide: Buddhist Ethics and Just Memory in Tian’s L’Année du Lièvre / Year of the Rabbit”

Allison Bannister, Fort Hays State University, “Epideictic Rhetoric, Superheroes in the Zeitgeist, and Responses to the Shooting of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson”

(Room C): OPEN

12:45 PM- 1:45 PM Lunch

1:45 PM- 3:00 PM Session 3

Roundtable 1 (Room A): Preserving Afro-Brazilian Cultural Heritage Through Comics: The Role of the Graphic Heritage Program

The Brazil in Comics Program, launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, introduces a new approach to cultural policy aimed at connecting Brazilian creative industries with global cultural diplomacy initiatives. The Graphic Heritage Collection program, launched by Instituto Guimarães Rosa, is an initiative that focuses on heritage preservation and education through comics. By fostering the recognition of Brazil’s cultural heritage through graphic narratives, this collection not only preserves but also shares this legacy in a way that is accessible to the general public. The first volumes of the collection focus on Afro-Brazilian cultural heritage, with the inaugural volume highlighting the history of capoeira, which UNESCO recognized as an intangible heritage of humanity in 2014. This round table will feature a discussion between Felipe Maldonado, the author of the first Graphic Heritage book Campo de Mandinga, Marcos Maciel de Almeida of Brazil’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Dr. Leonora Souza Paula, professor in the English Department at Michigan State University. The discussion topics include memory recovery and preservation, cultural heritage, epistemic reparations, and the role of comics and graphic narratives in retelling the past.

Moderator: Leonora Souza Paula, Michigan State University

Panel 6 (Room B: Online): Comic + Culture

Chair: Marissa Zerangue, University of North Texas

Marissa A. Zerangue, University of North Texas, “The language is changing”: Racial Injustice, Order, and Truth in Saladin Ahmed and Sami Kivelä’s *Abbott*”

Natalie Fourmyle, Appalachian State University, “The Superhero Physique: A Study of Chris Hemsworth’s Thor in the MCU”

Shelby Rodgers, University of California, Riverside, “Bearing Witness through Reproductions of Art”

Reginald Wiebe, Concordia University of Edmonton, “Murder by Numbers: How to Read Joker across 85 Years”

Roundtable 2 (Room C): Worldbuilding and Mythmaking: Black Comics Creators in Conversation

Abdul Qadim Haqq is the creator of the *Book of Drexciya* comic series. Known for his vibrant portrayal of submerged worlds and Black resistance, Haqq’s work blends science fiction, electronic music, and African diasporic history to forge a powerful narrative that resonates with contemporary issues of race, identity, and creativity.

Dr. Walter D. Greason is the co-creator of *The Graphic History of Hip-Hop*. He teaches American and world history, using media ecology, economics, and African diaspora studies. His research areas include urban planning, Afrofuturism, and multimedia user experience design. He is an author, editor, and contributor to numerous books, most notably the award-winning book *Suburban Erasure*.

Moderator: Julian C. Chambliss, Michigan State University

3:00 PM- 3:30 PM Break

3:30 PM- 4:45 PM Session 4

Panel 7 (Room A): Race, Comics, and Progress?

Chair: Vincent Haddad, Central State University

Derek Lee, Wake Forest University, "Oriental Justice: The Good Asian, Charlie Chan, and the Art of Detection"

Jordi Giner-Monfort, Universitat de València (Spain), "Experimenting with Anti-discrimination Comics in the 1940s"

Cassandra Whisenant, West Virginia University, "All Y'all: Progressive Appalachia in Beetle & the Hollowbones"

Sean Patrick Casey, Minneapolis Public Schools, "Social Justice Superheroes: Shared Universes, Shared Missions"

Panel 8 (Room B ONLINE): Queer Resistance and Recovery

Chair: Salah Hassan, Michigan State University

Michelle Ann Abate, The Ohio State University, "Find Noriega! Win \$1 Million!": Comics Asides as Political Peritext and Queer Resistance in Alison Bechdel's Cartooning"

Matthew Mills, Louisiana State University, "Drawing Dissent: Gay and Lesbian Comics in the Aftermath of Miller v. California"

Serena Langdon, Appalachian State University, "The Evolution of Queer Allyship in Stuck Rubber Baby and Gender Queer"

William Orchard, Queens College & The CUNY Graduate Center, "On Comics, Coming Out, and Coalitions"

(Room C): OPEN

4:45 PM- 5:00 PM Break

5:00 PM- 6:00 PM Award Ceremony (Room 1130)

6:00 PM- 8:00 PM

Reception: International Center RM 303

Day 2: Friday, July 11, 2025

8:30 AM- 3:00 PM

Registration

9:00 AM- 10:15 AM

Session 5

Roundtable 3 (Room A): Beyond the Comics Pantheon (Part 1)

This roundtable will feature conversations between authors who are writing short book volumes dedicated to exploring the cultural and textual background of lesser-known characters on the edge of the zeitgeist. Focusing on both supervillains and superheroes, this University Press of Mississippi book series offers introductory volumes that bridge the gap between academia and popular culture, providing a launching pad for further discourse. As an introduction to scholars and fans alike, each book highlights one specific character, focusing on underrepresented figures who have not enjoyed as much academic attention as more popular characters. The themes of the CSS Conference, “Resistant, Resilient, and Resolute,” are integral what this series seeks to bring forth through close study of a diverse body of characters, including queer and feminist readings of Spider-Woman, the Dazzler, Red Sonja, Jon Kent, and She-Hulk, explorations of race through Mister Miracle, Static, and Moon Girl, and engagements with the industry and the environment through The Question, Rocket Raccoon, and Ambush Bug. The series balances a consistent structure with flexibility for authors, allowing them to explore personal insights in up to one-third of the book. Authors will also establish a clear thematic throughline that underscores the character's significance. This roundtable will highlight these personalized revelations given the opportunity for close, sustained attention to individual comic characters, their histories of production, and their engagements with fandom and identity.

Moderator: Vincent Haddad, Central State University

Panel 9 (Room B- ONLINE): Identity and Global Representation

Chair: Srishti Jha, Miami University

Siddharth Sinha, “From the Prehistoric to the Post-Colonial: Framing Native Identity in Turok, Son of Stone”

Mokshda Manchanda, “Graphic Warnings: Cartoons of Protest, Resistance and Dissent in India in the 21st Century”

Suniti Madaan, Vivekananda Institute of Professional Studies-Technical Campus, IP University, Delhi, “Comic Space and Time in Ita Mehrotra's Shaheen Bagh as Resistance: Reading the Overlaps in Space-Time Constructs in both Comics and Protest Sites”

Panel 10 (Room C): Comics, Symbolism, and Political Critique

Chair: Valentina Denzel, Michigan State University

Shawn Gilmore, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, “Captain America, Thor's Hammer, and January 6: Secret Empire, the MCU, and the Fraught Symbols of Superhero Comics”

Chris Wildrick, Syracuse University, “Power and Social Vulnerability in Black Cloak and The Power Fantasy”

Paul Noguerol, University of Connecticut, “Allegory and Social Justice in LGBTQ+ Argentine Auteur Superheroes During the Macri Administration (2015–2018)”

Lindsey Stirek, “Visibility, Tourism, and Social Change: Representations of Indigeneity in Golden Kamuy”

10:15 AM- 10:30 AM Break

10:30 AM- 11:45 PM Session 6

Roundtable 4 (Room A): Looking Back, Moving Forward: A Decade of the Comics Studies Society

While each of the listed participants will share their perspectives on the Society's formation, all in attendance will be invited to share memories of its formation and maturation. One of the themes that we hope to emphasize through these interactions is just how important it is for comics scholars to have an intellectual "home" to call their own. The founding of CSS in 2014 was never guaranteed and took years of perseverance. As such, the story of how institutional, financial, and logistical barriers were surmounted in those early years informs the Society's ongoing work for greater recognition and support for comics scholars, most especially rising graduate students. Prior to his election as first CSS president, Charles Hatfield was an early and vocal champion of the Society, and he was joined in those formative conversations by A. David Lewis, Jared Gardner, Susan Kirtley, Nhora Serrano, Matthew Smith, and Qiana Witted, each of whom helped contribute to the founding structures of the Society and all of whom became early officers in its administration. As the Society continues to evolve and now moves through its eleventh year and eighth conference, the gathering at Michigan State University seems an apt moment to reflect on the Society's progress from those early days and take stock of its promise moving into the future.

Moderator: Matthew J. Smith, The Ohio State University

Roundtable 5 (Room C): CSS RLC EC Panel: Enacting Social Justice in Comics Libraries: Stories from Librarians on the Frontlines

Libraries and institutions of higher education are on the frontlines of the new federal government regime's attempts to resegregate American and dismantle democracy. The roundtable brings together four papers on different ways comic librarians have enacted resistance and continue to uphold the social justice values that are core to librarianship as a profession. Technical services colleagues will share their efforts to remediate harmful language, and a project to develop a collection development policy that will protect collections in the face of books and challenges. Another paper will explore how diverse, niche comics collections can foment unique research. Our final paper shares how the American Library Association's Graphic Novels and Comics Roundtable developed a policy statement on generative AI. Following the presentations, we will discuss other ways libraries can enact resistance in these challenging times.

Nicole Smeltekop, Special Materials Catalog Librarian at Michigan State University, “Harmful Language Remediation: Cataloging with an Ethic of Care and Allyship”

Abstract: In 2022, MSU Libraries created the Harmful Language Remediation Working group. This group is charged with engaging in harmful language issues, creating project proposals, advising units on harmful language remediation projects, and receiving comments from the general public related to harmful language in our metadata. This presentation will detail the history of the working group, discuss a few remediation projects undertaken by MSU Libraries, and show some examples of cataloging with an ethic of care and allyship.

Bethie Seay, Assistant Technical Services Librarian at The University of Oklahoma-Tulsa, “Policy-Level Protections: An Example of Comics Collection Development”

Abstract: The Schusterman Library’s Graphic Scholarship Collection is approaching its 5th birthday and has yet to receive a single book challenge. The collection was created in 2021 at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa and contains non-fiction monographic comics that serve curricular needs, campus interests, and community/cultural discussions. The lack of challenges could be attributed to several possibilities: our policies are successfully dissuading complaints, we’re not pushing the boundaries of our collection enough, or we’ve gotten lucky. This presentation will examine the first and second possibilities by discussing our collection development policy. The wording of the collection’s development policy explicitly encourages works that contribute to cultural discussions. While the collection focuses on non-fiction works, the policy also specifies that fictional works of literary or artistic merit should be considered. These crucial elements of the policy help guide purchases and proactively defend the values of the collection. This discussion will also address the impact of the library’s circulation policies, limited user base, and potential scenarios for future challenges.

Stewart Brower, MLIS, AHIP, Director of the Schusterman Library, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa. “Policy-Level Protections: An Example of Comics Collection Development” (co-presenting with Bethie Seay, see abstract above)

Gene Kannenberg, Jr., Library Assistant at Northwestern University Libraries, “Captain Africa: Social Justice with a Pan-African Punch

Abstract: This presentation focuses on CAPTAIN AFRICA, a comics magazine published in Nigeria in the late 1980s featuring the title character drawn by the Ghanaian artist Andy Akman. I propose to look at it as an example of Pan-Africanism, as opposed to other contemporary “African” comic books like South Africa’s MIGHTY MAN (drawn by British artists). Unlike CAPTAIN AFRICA’s culturally aware and activist features and narrative perspective, MIGHTY MAN embraced a colonialist status quo. This presentation ties into contemporary work in Pan-Africanism such as the current PRESENT A BLACK PLANET traveling exhibition; in addition, it makes use of archival work on both the local level (my own institution) and that made possible by the Internet.

Ryan King, English Librarian, Vanderbilt University, “ GNCRT's GenAI Non-use Directive”

Abstract: This presentation will share the context and content for the “GenAI Non-Use Directive” recently developed by the American Library Association’s Graphic Novel and Comics Round Table.

Moderator: Mara Thacker, South Asian Studies and Global Popular Culture Librarian at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Panel 11 (Room B- ONLINE): Comics and Interdisciplinary Practices

Chair: TBA

Neale Barnholden, University of Alberta, “How to Read Richie Rich: Ernie Colón’s Global Adventures”

Tomasz Kaczynski, Independent Scholar and Andy Hartzell, Independent Scholar “Silent Stories: Radical Decoding and the Return of the Image”

Maria Sierro, “The Comic Petit Manuel as a Potential Countermove to the (in)securitization of Migration in France”

Joe Hilliard, Independent Scholar, “APB: Artists Against Police Brutality 10 Years Later”

11:45 AM- 12:45 PM Lunch

GSC Business Meeting During Lunch (Room A)

Research Librarians Cohort (Room C)

12:45 PM- 2:00 PM **Session 7**

(Room A): OPEN

Panel 12 (Room B - ONLINE): Satire and Style – Comics as Political and Aesthetic Critique

Chair: TBA

Sayantana Gayen, Independent Scholar, “Judge Dredd vs. Democracy: The Role of Satire in Giving Voice to a People’s Movement”

Nikhita Thomas, Department of English, St. Joseph's University (Bangalore), "The Art of Double Talk: A Note on Manjula Padmanabhan's Suki Comics"

Arkajit Das, "The Water-borne Trauma of the Eco-others: Exploring the Visual Depiction of Ecological Trauma in Seán Michael Wilson's Graphic Novel The Minamata Story: An EcoTragedy (2021)"

Ana Matilde Sousa, CIEBA - FBAUL (Artistic Studies Research Center of the School of Fine Arts of the University of Lisbon), "Cute Against The Machine: Moé, Labor Politics, and Resisting Power Harassment in Atarashii Jōshi wa Do Tennen"

Panel 13 (Room C): Intersectional Narratives

Chair: TBA

Rain Newcomb, Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, "Mazinbiige: 50 Years of Carl Gawboy"

Kathleen McClancy, Texas State University, "Everybody Wants to Rule New York: Vigilantism, Nostalgia, and Politics in Ex Machina"

Mena Nizam, Monmouth University, "Comics During World War II" (Online)

2:00 PM- 2:30 PM Break

2:30 PM- 3:45 PM Session 8

Panel 14 (Room A): Iconic Bodies, Ideals, and Identities – Rethinking Superhero Narratives

Chair: Gary Hoppenstand, Michigan State University

Norina Samuels, University of Kentucky, "The Tightrope of Hope: Balancing the Plurality of Luke Cage"

Thomas Donaldson, Florida Southwestern State College, "Flagship Fastrack: The Unusual Circumstances of Wonder Woman's Market Elevation During the Golden Age of Superhero Comics"

Tom Ue, Cape Breton University, "Becoming Superman 2.0"

Panel 15 (Room B): Race and Rep

Chair: Vincent Haddad, Central State University

Gabrielle Lyle, Sam Houston State University, "A Character Alone is Not Enough: An Analysis of the Legion of Super-Heroes' Struggles with Black Representation"

Kiana Murphy, Brown University, "John Jennings, Archival Speculation, and the Graphic Afterlives of Race" **{online}**

Chris Gavalier, Washington & Lee University, "The Colors of Jay Jackson's Colorless Future"

Panel 16 (Room C): Comic Fandoms and Cultural Discourse

Chair: Aaron Kashtan, UNC Charlotte

Aaron Kashtan, UNC Charlotte, "The Legion of Super-Heroes and Active Comics Fandom"

Brian Flota, James Madison University, "The Subversive Popular Music Comic Biography"

Cesar Mosquera, Savannah College of Art and Design, "Radical Puppets and the Detective as a Witness to History in the Comic Alack Sinner Nicaragua"

3:45 PM- 4:00 PM

Break

4:00 PM- 5:30 PM

Scholar Keynote (STEM 1130)

Dr. TreaAndrea Russworm, "When Comics and Video Games were Utopian, or, Notes on how We Rebooted the World"

Day 3: Saturday, July 12, 2025

8:30 AM- 3:00 PM

Registration

9:00 AM- 10:15 AM

Session 9

Panel 17 (Room A): Exploring Graphic Narratives

Chair: Shawn Gilmore, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Ishita Sehgal, Indiana University Bloomington, "Memory in the Gutters: Reading Colors and Graphic Memoirs"

Qiana Whitted, University of South Carolina, "The Comics of Lovecraft Country"

Christina M. Knopf, SUNY Cortland, "Dogfaced Soldiers: Rewriting War with Werewolves"

Panel 18 (Room B Online): Comics + Perspective

Chair: Julian C. Chambliss, Michigan State University

Regina Mills, Texas A&M University, "Miles Morales, Venom/Symbiote and the Politics of AfroLatinidad"

Troy Michael Bordun, University of Northern British Columbia, "Ms. Marvel, The Authentic Superhero"

Florens Debora Patricia, Sepuluh Nopember Institute of Technology, "Transmedia Culture: Reinventing Nostalgia Monomyth in Marvel Cinematic Universe and Bumilangit Cinematic Universe"

Gowri Nair, University of Oregon, "The Question of Evidence in Comics Journalism: Reading Pourquie and Tervonen's "Drowned Identities"

(Room C): OPEN

10:15 AM- 10:30 AM Break

10:30 AM- 11:45 PM Session 10

Panel 19 (Room A): Superheroes, Myth, and Theory

Chair: Gary Hoppenstand, Michigan State University

Alex Lane, Bowling Green University, "Comic Book Clergy: An Exploration of the Works and Philosophy of Grant Morrison as a Secular Spiritual Leader in the Comic Book Community"

Callum McNutt, Cape Breton University, "Making It New?: Style, Content, and Genre in the Batman Noir Series (2014-19)"

Ritesh Khandelwal, Michigan State University, "In Brightest Day, In Blackest Night: The Methodology of Anger in 'Far Sector'"

Panel 20 (Room B-ONLINE): Comics, Libraries, and Pedagogy

Chair: TBA

Prudence Kelly-Andrews, University of British Columbia and V. Rahbar, University of British Columbia, "Comic Book Club: Accessible Comics Engagement in Post-Secondary Environments"

Stewart Brower, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa and Bethie Seay, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa, "Revisiting Graphic Scholarship in Libraries: Our Successes, Failures, and Future Plans"

Keri Crist-Wagner, Clemson University, "This Looks Like a Job for Squirrel Girl: How Using Comics in College Lit Classes Can Help Students Identify, Analyze, and Discuss Systemic Oppression"

Panel 21 (Room C – ONLINE): Making Space Over Time: 10 Years of the Graduate Student Caucus

The Graduate Student Caucus, formed parallel to and in affiliation with the Comics Studies Society, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. In celebration, the GSC draws former committee members together in conversation about their experiences assessing and engaging the needs of comics scholars amid a rapidly expanding field. The GSC's efforts over the previous decade have centered around providing community, professional support, and recognition to students researching comics. From helping establish an annual conference to hosting annual professional development events and mentorship programs, the GSC's through-line is anchored in fostering graduate student comics scholars. Over the past 10 years, the GSC has kept pace with comics studies' rapid growth as a field, each Executive Committee facing its own unique challenges and opportunities in regards to supporting the polyvalent needs of upcoming comics scholars. How have student needs changed and shaped the GSC's goals and strategies? How has the field's nascency impacted the GSC's efforts to foster and support graduate student comics scholars. With this roundtable, we aim to collate the experiences, obstacles, and ideas of EC's past into a blueprint for the GSC's future.

Marissa Zerangue (she/her), Current GSC President, PhD Student, University of North Texas

Marissa A. Zerangue (she/her) is an ABD Ph.D. candidate in Literary Studies with the University of North Texas whose scholarly interests meet at the intersections of gender, race, and crime in American literature. Marissa's dissertation examines the less dead in crime fiction, graphic mystery, and true crime set in the Southern United States. Her book chapter "'From the Wrong Side of the Tracks': Ethan Brown's Murder on The Bayou and the Invisibilization of the Jeff Davis 8" was recently published in the edited collection *Reshaping True Crime Stories from the Global Margins: Voicing the Less Dead* (Lexington Books, 2025).

Bryan Bove-Wimberley (he/they), Coordinator, Center for Women and Gender Equity and Gender Violence Prevention & Education Services; PhD Candidate, American Culture Studies, Bowling Green State University

Bryan Bove-Wimberley is the Coordinator for the Center for Women and Gender Equity & Gender Violence Prevention and Education Services at Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio, where they are a PhD candidate in the American Culture Studies program. His graphic dissertation, "X-traordinary Bodies: Queer Crip Possibilities in Marvel's X-Men," examines shifting perspectives of queerness-as-illness in American culture from the 1980s to the present through autoethnography and a close reading of X-Men titles. Bryan is the current Webmaster of the CSS Executive Board and holds positions in the Northwest Ohio LGBTQ+ Coalition and other queer community collectives.

Elizabeth "Biz" Nijdam (she/her), Assistant Professor of Teaching, University of British Columbia, Vancouver

Elizabeth "Biz" Nijdam is an Assistant Professor and settler scholar in the Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, where she works, learns, and lives on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. She is currently completing her book manuscript *Graphic Historiography: History & Memory through Comics and Graphic Novels* (Ohio State University Press). Biz's research and teaching include the representation of history in comics, comics and new media on forced migration, intersections between Indigenous studies and German, European, and migration studies, digital and analog game studies, and feminist methodologies in the graphic arts. Biz sits on the Executive Committee of the International Comic Arts Forum and is the Director of the Comics Studies Cluster in UBC's Public Humanities Hub and the Popular Media for Social Change Research Excellence Cluster.

Sydney Heifler (she/they), PhD Candidate, Ohio State University

Sydney Heifler is historian who specializes in gender, sexuality, race, and romance comics during the post-war period in America. She has published on the topic in *PanelxPanel* and the *Journal of Graphic Comics and Novels*. She is currently a PhD student at the Ohio State University.

Moderator: Kemp, Northeastern University, Graduate Student Caucus

11:45 PM- 12:45 PM Lunch

Cohort Meetings During Lunch

Comics Scholars of Color Cohort (Room A)

K-12 Cohort Discussion (Room B)

12:45 PM- 2:00 PM Session 11

Panel 22 (Room A): Documenting the Craft

Chair: Chris Gavaler, Washington and Lee University

Kate Kelp-Stebbins, University of Oregon, "A map of the world: One panel at a time"

Alexander Ponomareff, University of South Florida, "Simple, Legible. and Clear: Comics and the Demand for Clarity"

David K. Palmer, South Dakota State University, "Frankenstein's Monster: If He was Banned by the Code, Then How Come He Was So Ubiquitous in the Silver Age?"

Panel 23 (Room B): Many Voices Hear: Comics and Identity

Chair: Justin Wigard, University of North Dakota

Sean O'Brien, Wayne State University, HELU, "Outside Respectability: How DC's Outsiders challenged superhero identity politics"

Biko Caruthers, New York University, "Unbinding the Metaphor: AfroPessimism, Queerness, and the X-Men"

Panel 24 (Room C): What's Next

Chair: TBA

Sean Thornton, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, "Teaching empathy through sequential art and storytelling to encourage bully prevention"

Maja Milkowska-Shibata, Sequential Artists Workshop Graphic Memoir Intensive Working Group, "Rewriting the Past through Graphic Medicine: The Role of Autobiographical Comics in Processing Trauma"

2:00 PM- 2:30 PM

Break

2:30 PM- 3:45 PM

Session 12

Roundtable 6 (Room A): Beyond the Comics Pantheon (Part 2)

This roundtable will feature conversations between authors who are writing short book volumes dedicated to exploring the cultural and textual background of lesser-known characters on the edge of the zeitgeist. Focusing on both supervillains and superheroes, this University Press of Mississippi book series offers introductory volumes that bridge the gap between academia and popular culture, providing a launching pad for further discourse. As an introduction to scholars and fans alike, each book highlights one specific character, focusing on underrepresented figures who have not enjoyed as much academic attention as more popular characters. The themes of the CSS Conference, “Resistant, Resilient, and Resolute,” are integral what this series seeks to bring forth through close study of a diverse body of characters, including queer and feminist readings of Spider-Woman, the Dazzler, Red Sonja, Jon Kent, and She-Hulk, explorations of race through Nubia and Moon Girl, and engagements with the industry and the environment through The Question, Rocket Raccoon, and Ambush Bug. The series balances a consistent structure with flexibility for authors, allowing them to explore personal insights in up to one-third of the book. Authors will also establish a clear thematic throughline that underscores the character's significance. This roundtable will highlight these personalized revelations given the opportunity for close, sustained attention to individual comic characters, their histories of production, and their engagements with fandom and identity.

Moderator: Vincent Haddad, Central State University

Roundtable 7 (Room B): Teaching Comics: Methods and Perils

This panel brings together faculty and graduate students to discuss their approaches to teaching comics in the classroom.

Moderators: Ritesh Khandelwal and Brittany Atkins, Graphic Possibilities Comic Research Workshop, Department of English, Michigan State University

(Room C): OPEN

3:45 PM- 4:00 PM

Break

4:00 PM- 5:30 PM Artist Keynote (STEM 1130)

Shawn Martinbrough, "Shaping the Culture: Comic Books-An American Art Form"

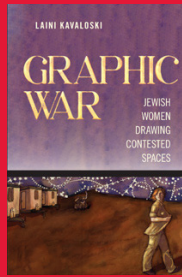
5:30 PM- 5:45 PM Break

5:45 PM- 6:45 PM Closing Activities
CSS AGM and Closing Remarks (STEM 1130)

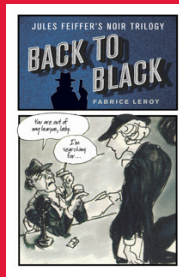
BOLD Ideas, ESSENTIAL Reading



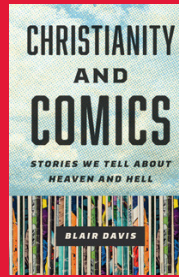
Killer Bodies
The Rise and Fall of "Bad Girl" Comics
Joseph Crawford



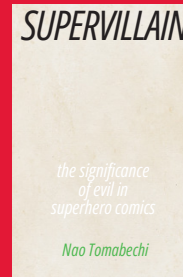
Graphic War
Jewish Women Drawing Contested Spaces
Laini Kavaloski



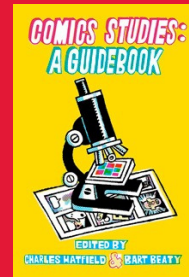
Back to Black
Jules Feiffer's Noir Trilogy
Fabrice Leroy



Christianity and Comics
Stories We Tell about Heaven and Hell
Blair Davis

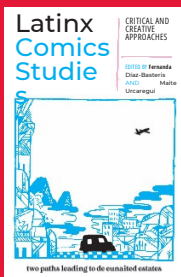


Supervillains
The Significance of Evil in Superhero Comics
Nao Tomabechi

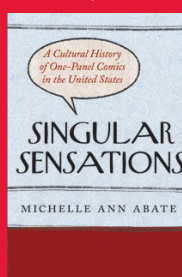


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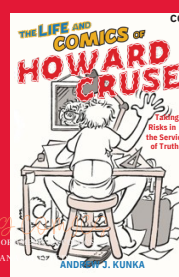
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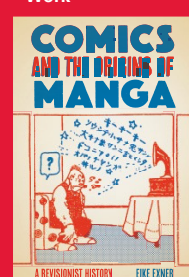
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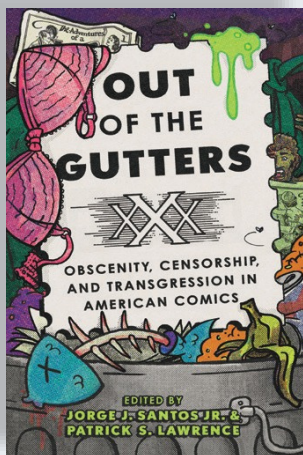
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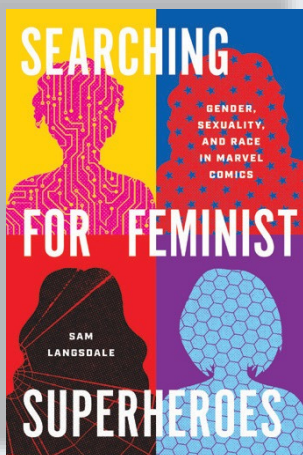
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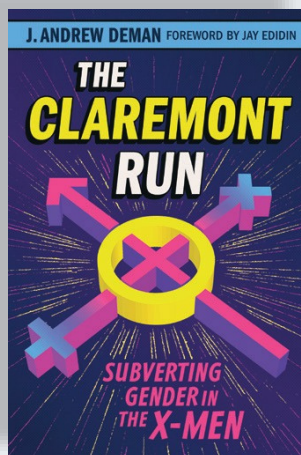
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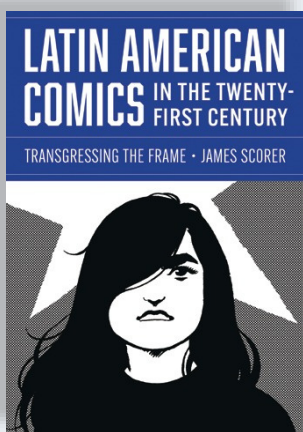
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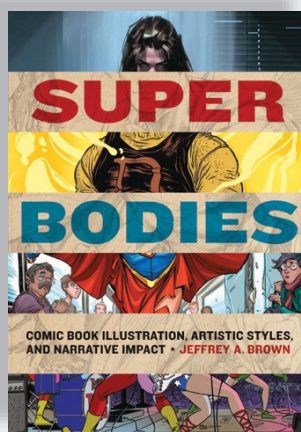
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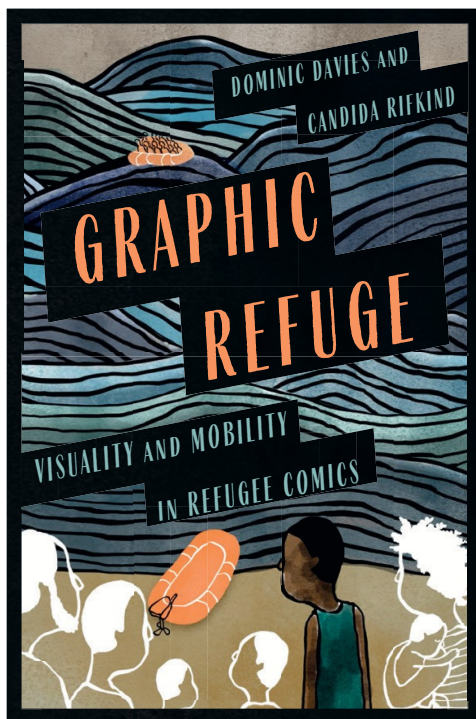
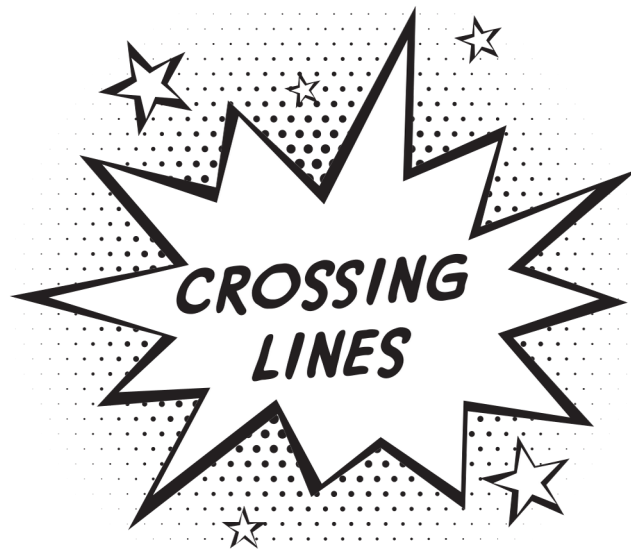
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