COMICS IN ACADEMIA

Presented at Comicpalooza, May 12-14, 2017, Houston Texas

Dr. John Edward Martin, Scholarly Communication Librarian, University of North Texas Libraries

Dr. Krista Gehring, Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice, University of Houston-Downtown

Dr. Jason Helms, Assistant Professor of English, Texas Christian University
Comics @UNT

- The UNT Comics Studies Conference
- An interdisciplinary conference devoted to Comics Studies
- Gave special attention to comics in education
- Also featured local creators, comic shops, and other resources
- Ran from 2011-2014
- Still has an active Facebook page that shares news and resources
- https://www.facebook.com/UntComicStudiesConference/
• March 2017: Brownbag discussion with Spencer Keralis, John Martin, Shaun Treat, and other librarians to discuss reviving a comics studies event
• Solicited information from librarians about comics resources in their areas
• Agreed to organize a series of events to generate interest and bring faculty & students together
• Began planning for a comics exhibit to run April-August 2017 in the Willis Library Forum
BAM!

POW!

BOOM!

COMICS IN THE LIBRARY

APRIL 10TH

AUGUST 15TH

WILLIS LIBRARY FORUM EXHIBIT SERIES

WILLIS 140
The exhibit brought together materials from across the libraries, including:

- Special Collections (comic books)
- Graphic Novel collection
- Government documents
- Fashion collection
- Music library (scores, records)
- Media library (films, games)
- General collection (comics studies scholarship, literary studies, art & design, radio/tv/film, popular culture studies)
The colors chosen for the background were the three primary colors used in comics printing for most of the 20th century.
A nearly two-hour discussion about comics history, theory, cultural implications, teaching, and scholarship.

The event attracted over 60 attendees, including faculty, students, and librarians.
Monstrous Women in Comics Conference

A two-and-a-half day interdisciplinary academic conference which seeks to examine monstrous women in comics and graphic novels.

**Thursday, May 25, 2017**: Welcome Drinks Reception and Pop-Up Art Exhibit, from 5:30pm–7:30pm, featuring art from the comic *Deer Woman* produced by *Native Realities Press*. Open to the public. Location: Eagle Exhibit Hall, Environmental Sciences Building, 1704 W. Mullberry, Denton, TX 76201.

**Friday, May 26, 2017**: 9am Welcome and conference open; panel presentations from 9:30–12:15 and from 1:30–5:15pm. Keynote speech at 5:30pm: Dr. Carol Tilley, "A Regressive Formula of Perversity: Fredric Wertham and the Monstrous Women of Comics." Open to all registered attendees. Location: Willis 140, Willis Library, 1506 Highland St. Denton, TX 76203.

**Saturday, May 27, 2017**: 9:30am Welcome; panel presentations from 9:45–12:15 and from 1:30–4:15pm. Conference close. Open to all registered attendees. Location: Willis 140, Willis Library, 1506 Highland St. Denton, TX 76203.

Full conference program available at [http://monstrouswomen.blogspot.com](http://monstrouswomen.blogspot.com)

Registration is required for all but the Pop-Up Art Exhibit.

UNT Students may register for free; all others may register for $5 plus a $1.27 service charge at the site linked above.

**When**

Thursday, May 25, 2017 (All day) to Saturday, May 27, 2017 (All day)

**Where**

Willis Library
The Forum, Room 140
Monstrous Women in Comics

The relationship between women and the comics industry is contested perhaps now more than ever before. Far from being novel, these tensions are rooted in the very history of comics. Here, as in other areas of popular culture, women are treated in very Aristotelian ways—at best, they are deemed to be monstrous derivatives of men, and at worst, they are simply monsters for daring to enter “man’s domain.” Through this interdisciplinary conference, we seek to examine monstrous women in comics not only in order to question and contest normative boundaries, but also to begin to imagine how the relationship between women and comics might be otherwise.

We lurk in the margins (and the gutters)

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Carol Tilley

Hosted by the Department of Philosophy & Religion

May 25–27, 2017

University of North Texas
Denton, TX 76203
www.monstroustwomen.blogspot.com
COMICS IN THE LIBRARY, V.2

Follow-up events:

• Conversation with Sommer Browning: Comics as Poetry (June 6, 2017)
• Film Screening: Wonder Women: The Untold Story of American Superheroines (July 27, 2017)
• Comics Studies Reading Group pilot (August 2017)
• Pop-up Museum Event (Fall 2017)
• Graphic Novel Collection Enhancement project (2018-19)
“UP, UP, AND AWAY!”

Ambitions for the future:

- An ongoing Comics Studies Reading Group
- Support for new courses utilizing comics & graphic novels (Fall 2017)
  - English 220: World Lit II—Image/Text
  - English 3913: Jewish Graphic Narrative
  - Info 5415: Comics & Graphic Novels
  - Philosophy 3200: Philosophy and Literature
- Speakers on comics-related topics from a variety of disciplines
- Comics in library outreach: course support, public programming, information literacy instruction, and research support.
- Continued growth and maintenance of comics studies collection
Comics as textbook or textbook as comics?

Pedagogy & comics

Comics as scholarship
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QUESTIONS?