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#2



underground comix from the state of
Idaho

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Questions? Submissions? :

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What is the most popular genre of manga?

Joe Pullin

"Slice of life manga is the most -popular kind." (That's paraphrasing what I saw. I can't remember what forum I saw it on so I can't get the exact quote.) At the time I agreed. Look at Lucky Star. It was published in two magazines simultaneously, had a show, toys, video games, and even shown up in fan made flash movies. Why was Lucky Star so popular? Was it the character designs? Personally that kinda creeped me out. These characters were supposed to be 17 and 18 years old yet they looked like they were 12. Doing some serious thinking about it you have to look at what Lucky Star DIDN'T have. It didn't have magic girls, giant transforming robots, or flying samurai. Lucky Star didn't even have characters eyes bugging out of their heads or people getting punched into the sky. It was about a group of four girls and their friends growing up in a high school setting. Most of the time it was them talking at at each other. How could that have possibly been so popular? Look at the conversations. In the very first chapter they are talking about how to eat a dessert. I've been in that conversation many times all over the world. It was those things that made it so popular. It stood out from everybody else by being so close to real life.

Where is Lucky Star today? Surely such a world renowned series would be on Volume 20 by now. However you can't find it on the shelf anywhere. Maybe it's like Oh My Goddess. The longest running manga in America. I am totally mystified as to why. If you read more than three volumes in one sitting something pops out at you: these characters have been stuck in neutral for over 24 years. Yet it is on volume 43 here in The States. My theory is that it is new readers sustaining this. People like me who discover it. Then buy all the back issues to get caught up, and get caught alright. Oddly enough you can only buy them online. Maybe you can only buy Volume 9 of Lucky Star on the net. I checked and no.

In doing research for this I found that the name Lucky Star and its characters are alive and well. Though it's not really the same series. It's still in the slice of life genre, but all the stuff absent from the original series is now included in this current one. It's pretty much like Azumanga Daioh and Pani Poni now. Things like characters suddenly becoming super-deformed, shrinking to tiny size, action lines, casting Meteo, suggestive poses, hints of yuri between Konata and Kagami, and more too numerous to name. (I'm kind of addicted to this version.)

I will not disagree that slice of life is popular. I just wonder if it is the most popular. While many new stories are published every year, what individual series has staying power? Some can last a number of years like Bunny Drop. A man goes to his grandpa's funeral and finds that there is a six year girl that is apparently grandpa's daughter. The family shuns her but Daikichi takes her in and learns all about the trials and tribulations of raising a daughter all on your own. As good as this series was, it only lasted nine volumes. Then there is Girlfriends. Akiko befriends shy loner Mariko and goes out of her way to transform her into the cutest girl in school. In the meantime they develop a deep emotional bond. Can it grow and survive the greatest of all tests? Their own emotional hang-ups? This series was a bit too much on the girly side for me. (This coming from the guy who read Sailor Moon. Which originally ran for about 18 volumes.) I think the stuff about finger nail polish and cell phones straps could have been left out in favor of further character development and maybe some additional conflict. Still, Girlfriends was really good. So good in fact I couldn't wait for the second Complete Collection to come out. I cheated and read it online. I'm still going to buy it. I'm a big proponent of supporting the original artists. Still I was disappointed in the fact that it ended so quick.

Girlfriends ended way too soon. Yet we have Inu-Yasha, Naruto, Bleach, One Piece, and Suzumiya filling up the shelves in the tens, twenties, thirties, and forties. I do spy Yuki-chan in the mix, but I doubt it will outlast Soul Eater: (I think) NOT!

In fairness I need to discuss my methodology. I don't have access to Japanese bookstores so I can't see what all is on the shelf. Looking at resellers on the web is no help because I can't read Japanese. Bookstores here in The States is not a good measure because American tastes are different than Asian ones. I seriously doubt a fishing manga or anime would last more than a couple of episodes. You read that right, fishing. I can't stand the thought that a fishing anime replaced Sailor Moon. It was getting to a big final battle of the season and the next day we get some kid monologing about the honor of his rod and reel. That was worse when quote: "The stupid talking whale" replaced Sonic the Hedgehog. (As I recall that line is from a letter to the editor in the comic book. Which is the longest running video game comic book. I quit reading it a very long time ago, on occasion I will flip through an issue and note that all the action and characters seem to be stuck where they were twenty years ago.)

Going on a little more about American sensibilities. I would pick up a book because it had a nice cover and the synopsis on the back seemed interesting. Giving it a test read I soon discover that it is yaoi. Even at some of the conventions I would hear vendors shouting about all the yaoi they had. Some of the quieter ones I would go to had tons of stuff like Sailor Balls. (Picture a really busty Sailor Moon sitting on a giant Dragon Ball.) If it sells, be my guest. It's a free market, give them what they want. However I find it odd that only in the last year have I started seeing yuri on the shelves. Are you telling me that even in this state that yaoi is more popular? Only now has yuri found a customer? Me?

Another thing about the American side of things is that we are at the mercy of big publishing. They decide what it is they want to bring over. I understand that it is a big financial risk to do so. They have to hire people to touch up artwork, translate from the original Japanese, ship it out to bookstores, and more and more buy better scanners and people to run them, plus write the apps for iDevices and Androids, the server space to hold the files. While every book has its hard core fan base, (yes even fishing,) sales have to justify the cost of doing so.

So the last resort of any in depth analysis are manga fan sites. What a lot of fans all over the world have done is take various series they like and translated them and posted them to the net. The main reason why is that they enjoy the series and want to spread the gospel to as much of an audience as possible. Often one shot stories will be made available. Like Magic Bloomers. Story of a young boy who really wants to win a

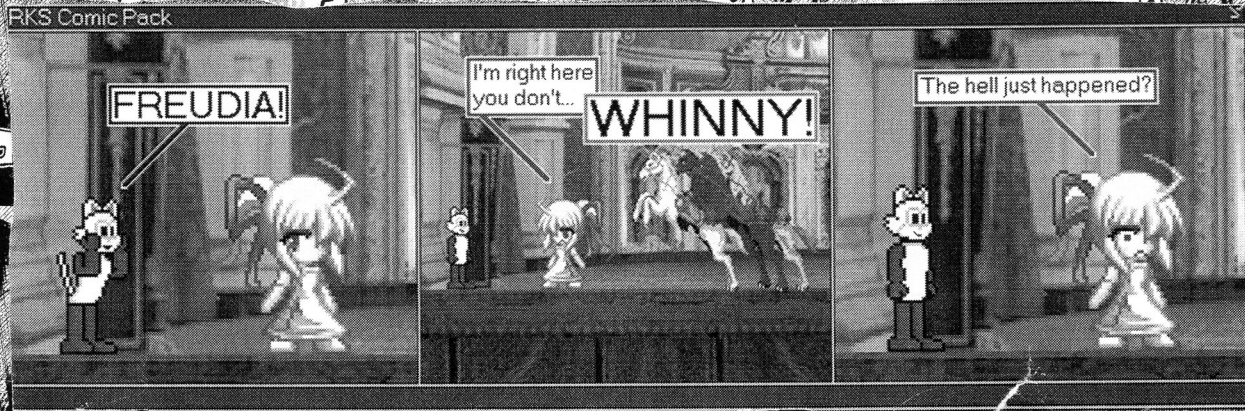
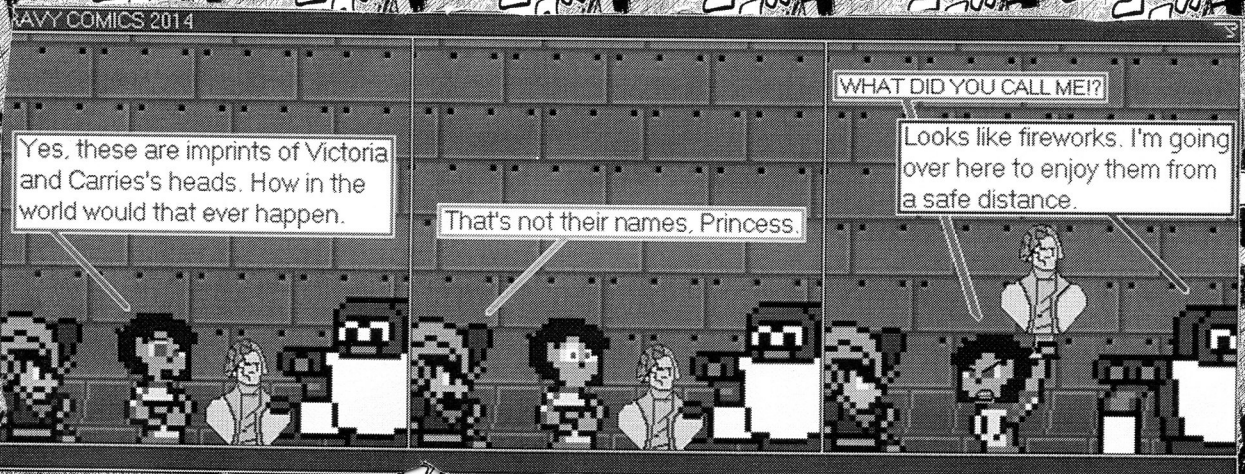
race and falls for a prank his big sister pulls on him. Series that probably should be popular but aren't. For instance Pocket Monster. The games are still selling well, the anime is holding its own, but for some reason the manga has only had a few issues released here.

There's one really great site. You can browse manga by genre. Clicking on "Slice of Life" (wondering when I was going to get back at that?) I am first taken to the most popular. I click on each one and read the descriptions and am befuddled as to why a samurai drama from the 1880's and one about a lamia attending high school could possibly be considered slice of life. My only guess is that people are randomly tagging series in the hope of brining in a few more readers. Looking at the tags for each series and reading the descriptions, I find little that even remotely resembles the original Lucky Star.

No matter the series, you can find a bit of slice of life in it. Whether the series is about a boy attending a high school for monsters, or a magical girl that repeatedly travels into the past to protect her best friend from a tragic end, there is a bit of everyday life to make things more realistic.

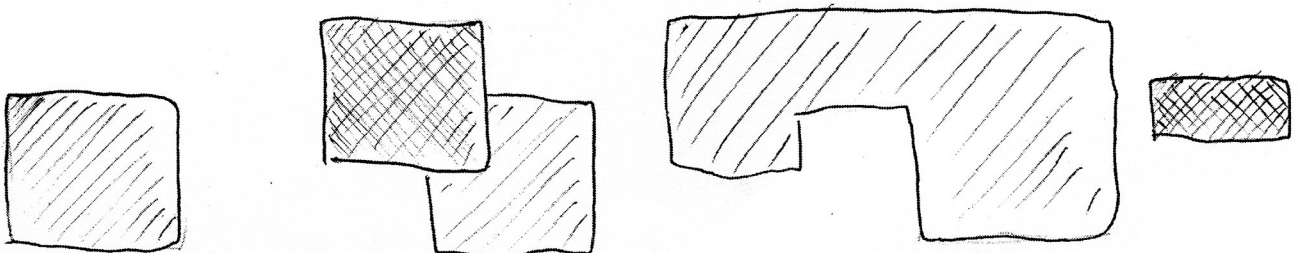
Side note: I do not publicly give the names of the manga/anime sites I go to. I think the people translating the series of their choice do it out of devotion to their favorites and are all truly labors of love. However the original mangaka do not get any pay for this. I am a true believer that you must support the original artists by buying their work. I will tell people one on one were to go to get a free review of what their kids are asking them to buy. (Especially those who don't want to be seen standing in the manga aisle of their local bookstore.) These sites are not hard to find at all. Just do a Google search for whatever series. No doubt you will find the manga, anime, sound tracks, fan art, fan fics, fan music, fan games, AMV, ecchi, yaoi, yuri, et al. Probably all on one site.

There is one site I go to using my browser of choice, Firefox, that deserves credit. When a series is licensed for import, it is removed from that site. Usually



KENNY ♥ TRACY FOREVER

Tunnel Graffiti in Pocatello



It often gets painted over in various shades of grey

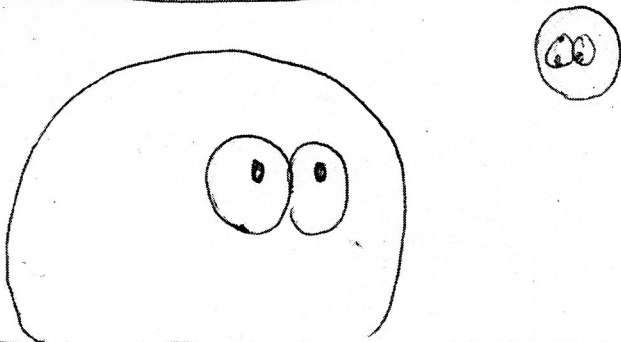
A lot of it is vulgar

FUCK

but some is clean
and nice

BENNY
♡
TRACY
FOREVER

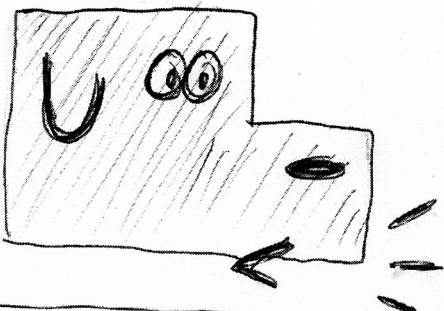
There used to be these 'Big
Face Little Face' tags, but a
lot of them are gone now.



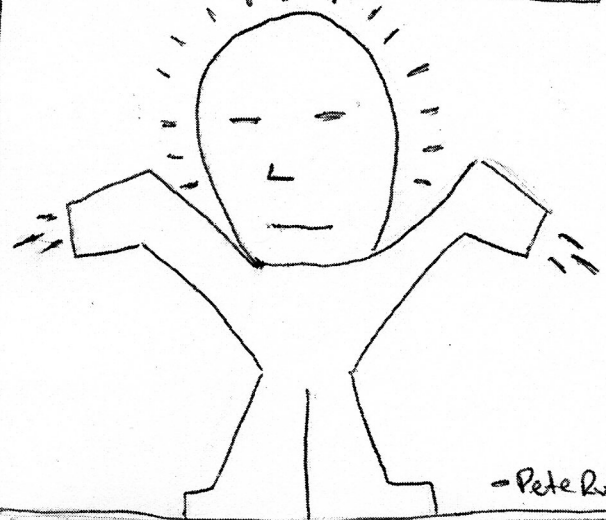
And some people write
little messages

are you
living your
dream?

My favourites were
when someone painted on a
grey splotch to make it
into a dog



and the gleaming man.

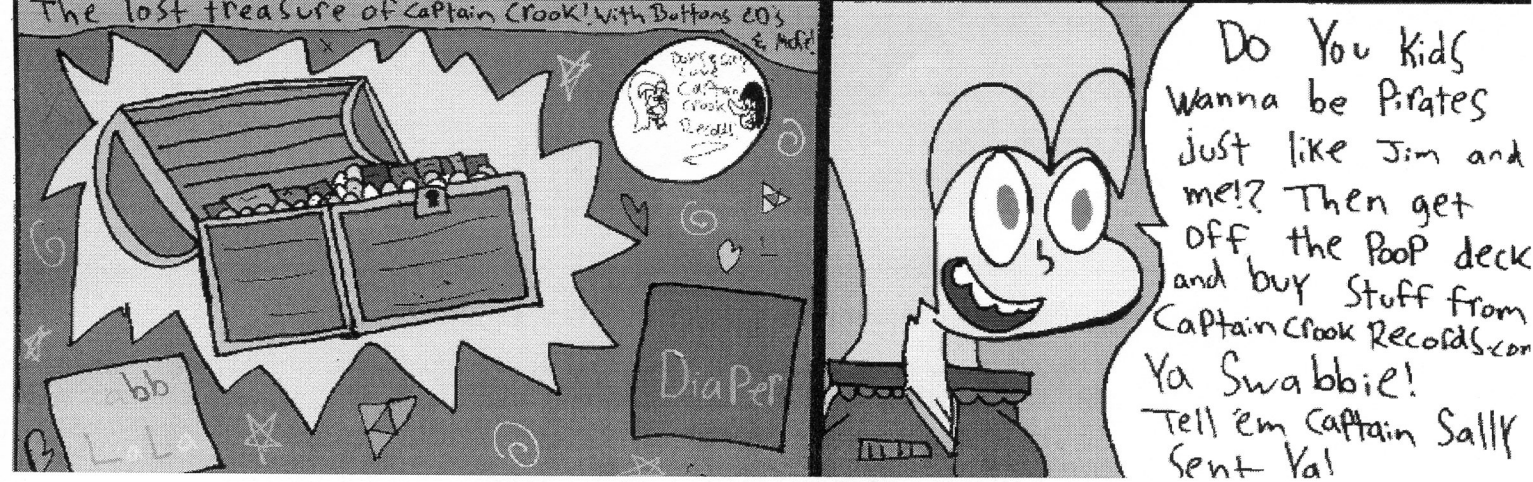


- Pete Rude ♡



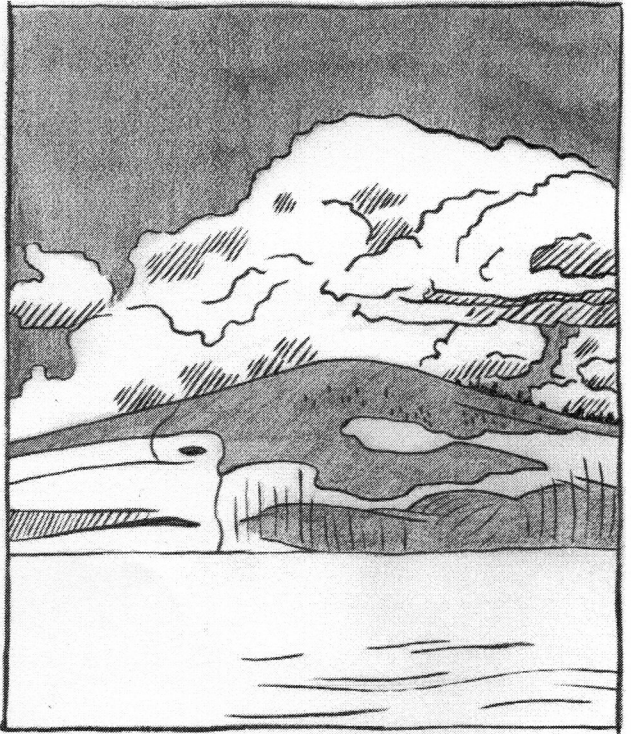
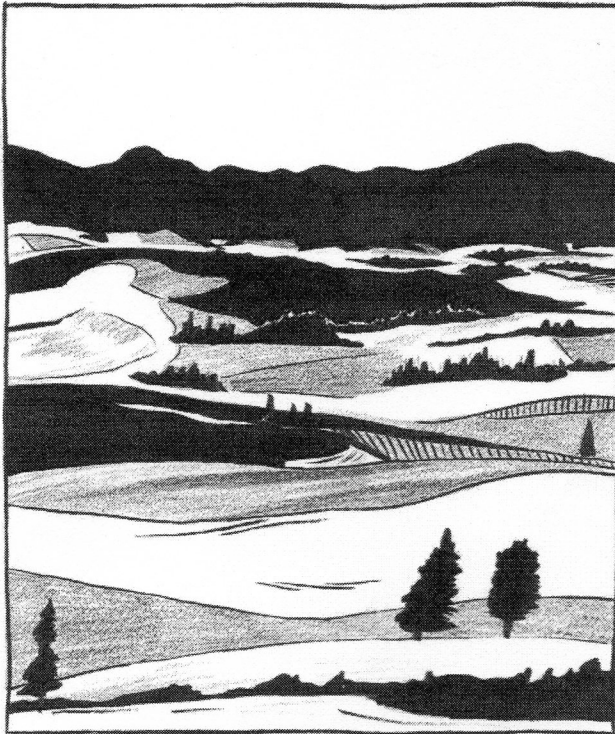
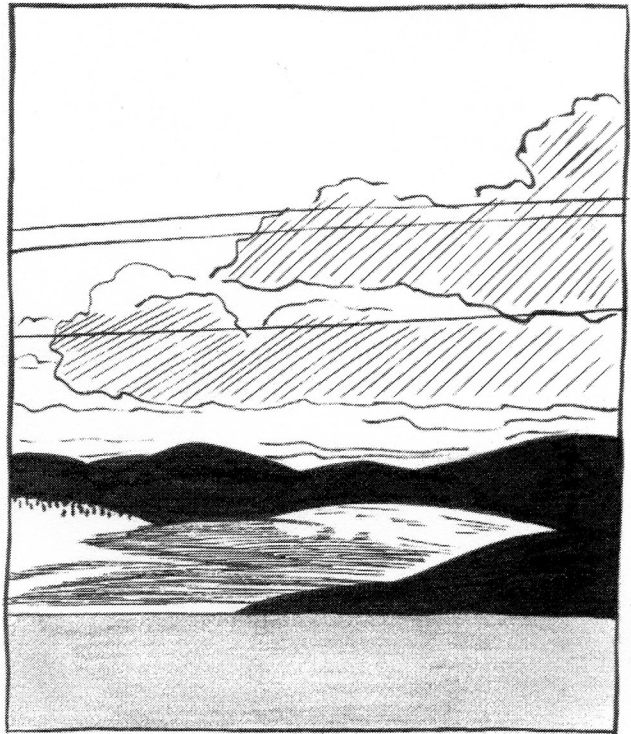
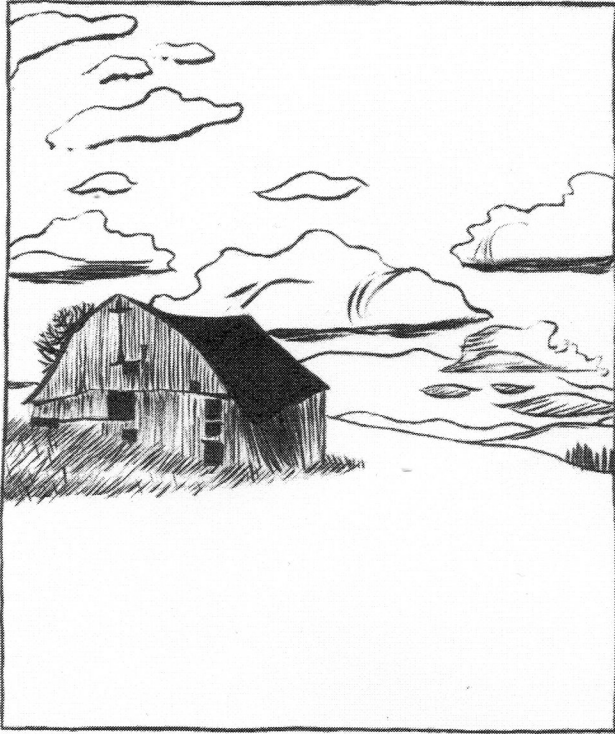
Jim & Sally BY John Blake ©2015

Let's Go Living in the Past!!

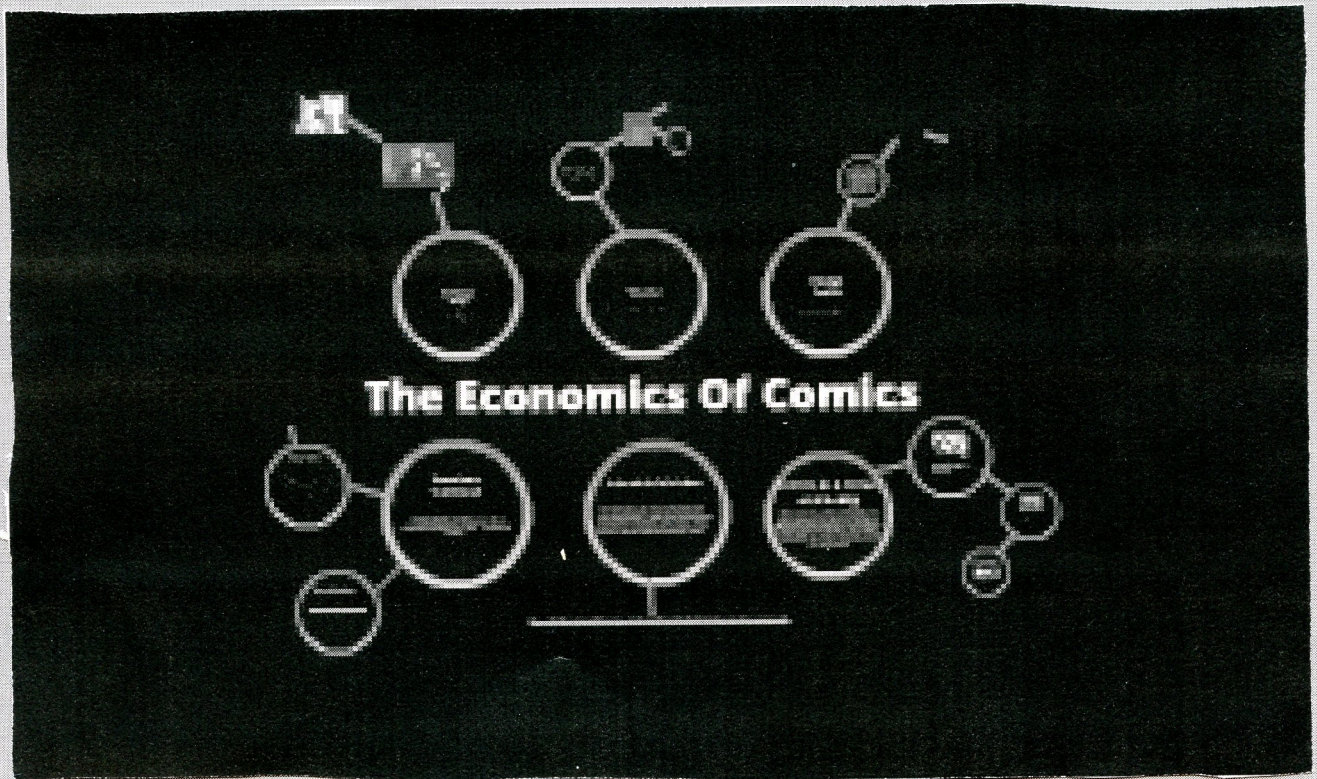








Annie Gaines



In the last decade, media as the world knew it has changed immensely.

Picture the music store of the 1970's. Back then, most towns had a thriving music store. Or the Book Store of the 1990's. Now, there is only one National bookseller. Now Picture the Comic Business. How has this economics of selling comics changed since it's inception? And how can an individual starting out in this business succeed?

Traditionally, the main outlet for comics were Newspapers and domestic comic books. But the marketplace has changed. Now, In addition to these outlets, there are: International Comics, feature films based based on comics and of course comics featured via the internet, or Webcomics.

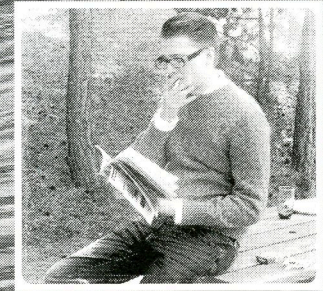
Each of these new fields of 'comicism' has intensified the business. the continued success of comics relies less on the traditional outlets of newspapers and books and more on niche aspects of the Comic Industry.

Check out our Prezi presentation:

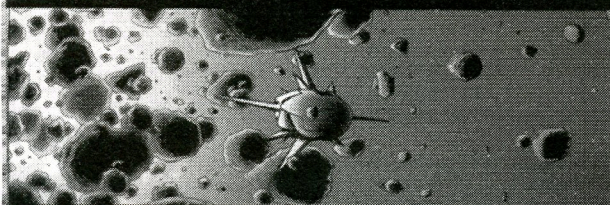
<http://prezi.com/hkt4bw5tbsqu/economics-of-comics/>

ICU

Comic Book Club



SUPERGODS



GRANT MORRISON



ISBN-13: 9780812981384

Publisher: Random House Publishing Group

Publication date: 6/26/2012

Pages: 480

Sales rank: 171,580

Product dimensions: 5.20 (w) x 7.90 (h) x 1.10 (d)

A few years ago DC rereleased a 15th anniversary edition of what is arguable Grant Morrison's best work: *Arkham Asylum*. This dark and cynical work included a copy of the original script accompanied by foot notes from Morrison him self. The graphic novel is loaded with symbolism, one example is Batman stabbing Killer Croc being alluded to St. George and the Dragon, to an overwhelming extent. Morrison's pointing out these homages and reflections, while interesting, could become incredibly exhausting after a time.

Grant Morrison's book *Supergods* suffers from the same overextending analysis. Morrison utilizes this dissecting approach past his own works to create non-fiction work that is part analysis of the evolution of comics and part biography. The transitions back and for between the two often disrupt the flow of the book and show Morrison's limited training beyond the medium of comics.

Despite Morrison tooting his own horn throughout the book, he reveals some wonderful insights, such as Jack Kirby's description of Apokolips being similar to William Blake and Ginsberg's industrial machinations, which are eye opening. He also makes an important point of the nature of the mainstream comics author. You are either a missionary, imposing your will upon the work, or an anthropologist, digging through material to discover something new.

This work is an untrained beginner's English literature class as applied to comics and, besides Morrison's ego poking through the text, is a worth while read.

CLASSIFIEDS

MISSED CONNECTION: you said no sexism in the bathroom. i said i beg to differ. (c111)

MSW: public education enthusiast seeks television obsessed idahoan for a little tough love. (w112)

MISSED CONNECTION: you: watching the women walk by in the gym like they are chocolate covered slices of bacon. me: strangely attracted to misogynist asshats. cat-call me. (c113)

WSM: young, attractive woman looking for a cowboy. seriously just want to ride around in your pickup listening to country music. (m114)

STRICTLY PLATONIC: strictly in my pants! (p115)

MSW: moderately pretentious writer in hipster glasses seeks ironic and humorous romance interest to write mediocre poetry of. (w116)

WSM: non-traditional student seeking young, scruffy professor. let me read your manuscript? (m117)

MISSED CONNECTION: you know, if you weren't a woman for hire i'd be all over you. (c118)

STRICTLY PLATONIC: does anyone know what makes the coffee at bucer's so fucking fantastic? (p119)

WSW: scientist femme seeks a fascinating lady of similar smarts for long discussions about doctor who. (w120)

MSW: criminal with a bad conscience seeks real life goodie goodie for reformation. (w121)

MISSED CONNECTION: you were an artist at the market and i was the girl too shy to keep the conversation going. I love your work. (c122)

MSM: religious fanatic seeks partner for mail order faith success. must have good business sense, socialist leanings, and a nice suit. (m123)

WSM: hippie hipster seeks tall vegan to mate with. must eat only organic. coop employees a plus. (m124)

MSW: recently graduated male english major seeks female of dark humor and similar intelligence to drink beer and talk about Battlestar Galactica. making out not required but always appreciated. (w126)

Let our tiny paper craigslist help you find a mate, start a band, anonymously complain about the tedium of everyday life, or sell some shit. To respond: mail your message and the code to us. Or send in your own personals. idahocomixpersonals@gmail.com

MSW: older burnout seeks young hottie to harass in the bar. must have low self-esteem and a low cut top. (w102)

WSM: bookish girl seeks bookish guy for intensely literate conversation. must like coffee and long discussions about proust. in french. (m104)

MSW: genuine nice guy seeks model size lady to take to a frat party. (m105)

MISSED CONNECTION: you moved back to idaho from alaska. you worked in a fish factory over the summer. i think you're damn fine. call me when you drop your gf. (c106)

WSM: twentysomething seeks twentysomething for life partnership and future habitation of mars. tall men encouraged to apply. (m107)

MSM: good looking, intelligent dude just looking for some good conversation over dinner. (m108)

MISSED CONNECTION: i cant get over you. i know im difficult and you deserve better, i just wish you had the patients. (c109)

WSM: smart, kind, attractive, funny guy oh who the fuck it's idaho (m110)

