

# Comics & Culture Overview & Student Projects F2018

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<http://spinweaveandcut.com/education-home/>

Comics Studies @SFSU

<https://humanitiesliberalstudies.sfsu.edu/minor-comics-studies>

Part 2: Sketchnotes of readings, authors, Joe Field

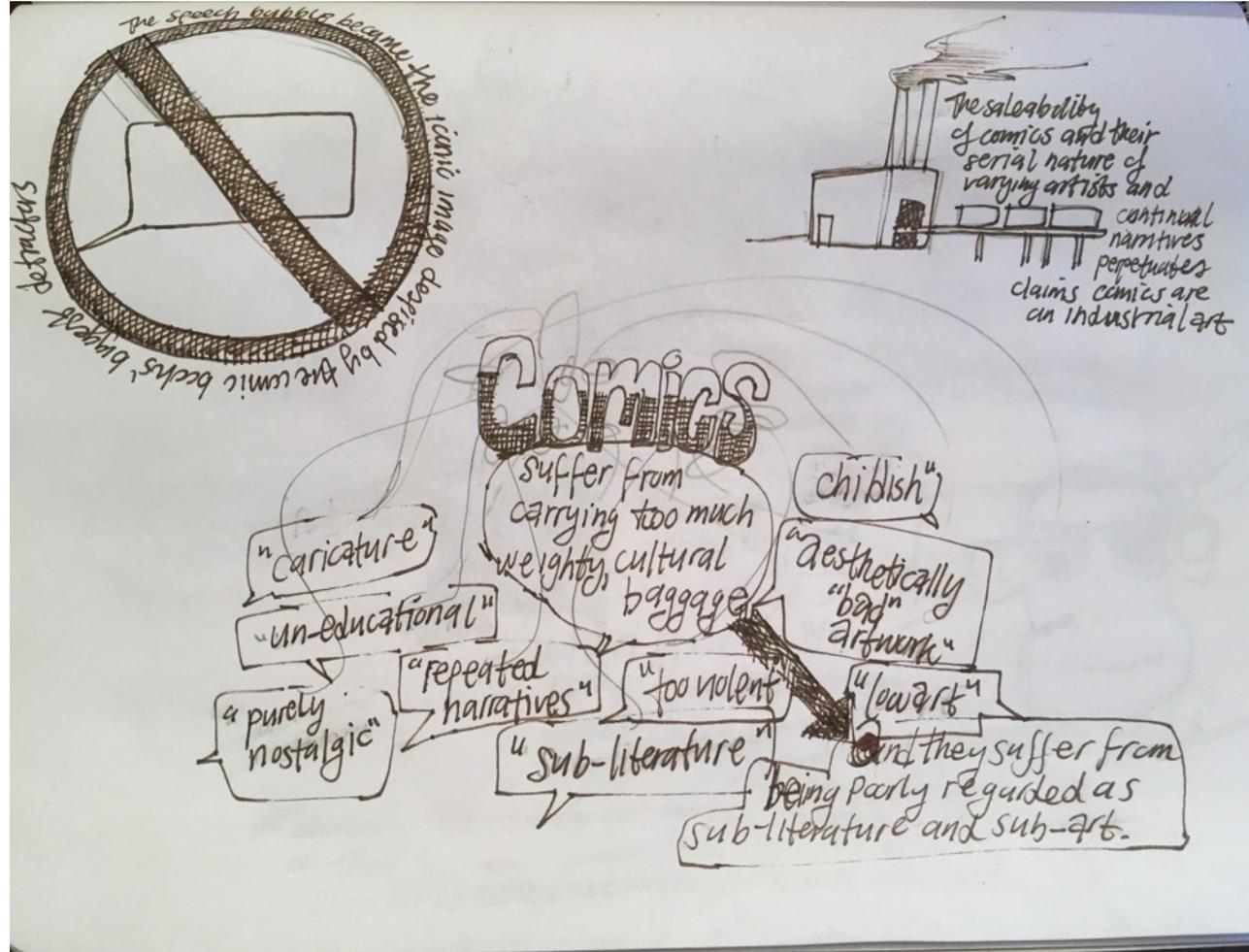
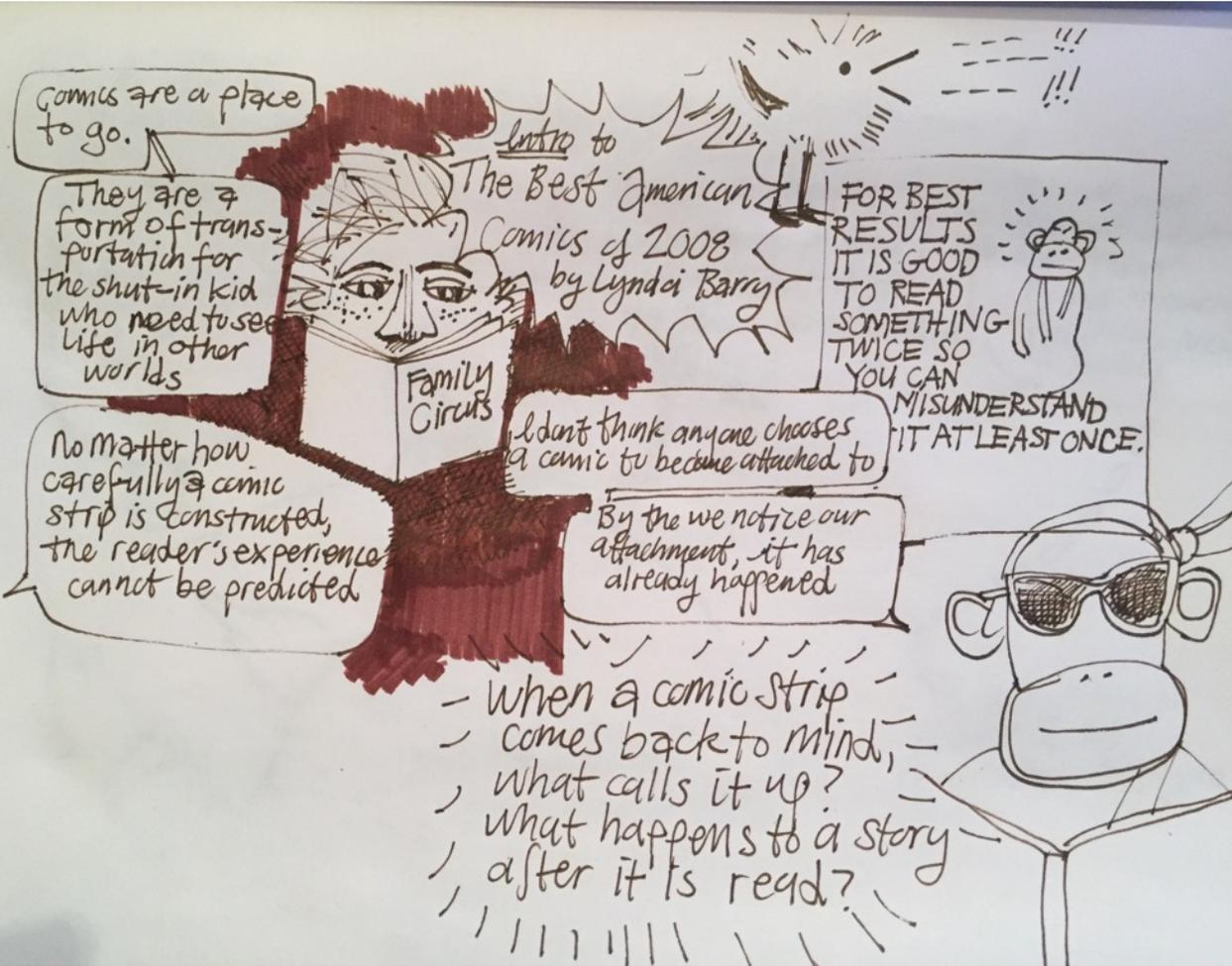
## Sketchnotes! Visual notetaking in class and to readings

Sketchnote response to readings: Read Groensteen's essay & Lynda Barry's short comic and then make a sketchnote of your response to it - by first reading/watching the quick sketchnote resources I have provided.

**Read** interview w/Mike Rohde on Sketchnoting: <https://creativemarket.com/blog/how-to-sketchnote-an-interview-with-mike-rohde>

**Watch** this short interview w/Giulia Forsythe on Sketchnotes: <http://gforsythe.ca/visual-notes/>

**Look** at this short drawn essay by Scott Torrance <https://medium.com/visual-thinking-in-business/the-shift-from-text-to-visuals-e260ef138fae>



Joseph



Chad

August 2018

# WHY ARE COMICS STILL IN SEARCH OF CULTURAL LEGITIMIZATION?

-Thierry Groensteen

REWIND!

France:  
COMICS → THE 9<sup>th</sup> ART!  
1830s - Rodolphe Töpffer - Pioneer of comics  
1960s: BANDES DESSINÉES

"strips that have been drawn"

how creative!

COMICS

HISTOIRES EN ESTAMPES

HISTOIRES EN IMAGES

RÉCITS ILLUSTRÉS

COMICS ARE RAD!

insignificant!

THIS IS

NARRATIVE...

infantile!

vulgar!

just for kids

'cuz people think they're dumb???

THESE COMICS SOIL THE IMAGINATION OF YOUR CHILDREN! ← HA!

Educationalists thought comics were bad - comics for adults couldn't find their audience.

1930s THE SPEECH BALLOON

COMICS ARE NOT A SINGLE ENTITY

When did this shift in thinking occur?

19<sup>th</sup> c. Comics intended for adults

→ 20<sup>th</sup> c. childrens Comics

Silly rabbit...



Comics published in newspapers

"Why is 'Kid's stuff' BAD?"

"Comics still have a privileged relationship w/ childhood bc it is in childhood that each of us discovered and learnt to love them."

YEAH!

LYNDA LOVES Family Circus

"...A PORTAL EDGED IN INK"

COMICS = contained world  
MICRO + MACROCOSMIC

these COMICS MEAN SOMETHING TO US.

COMICS ARE A PLACE TO GO.  
COMICS HOLD EVERY SORT OF EXPERIENCE

A meanwhile...  
A somewhere...

LYNDA BARRY  
2008 BEST AMERICAN COMICS  
INTRO

THERE ARE AS MANY VERSIONS OF EACH COMIC STRIP AS THERE ARE READERS.

GIVES US THAT "SNEAKY KID" FEELING...

NOSTALGIA!

WHAT MAKES A STORY COME BACK TO US?

STORY POWER  
need to understand what we can't think out loud

GOOD

TIME TRAVEL

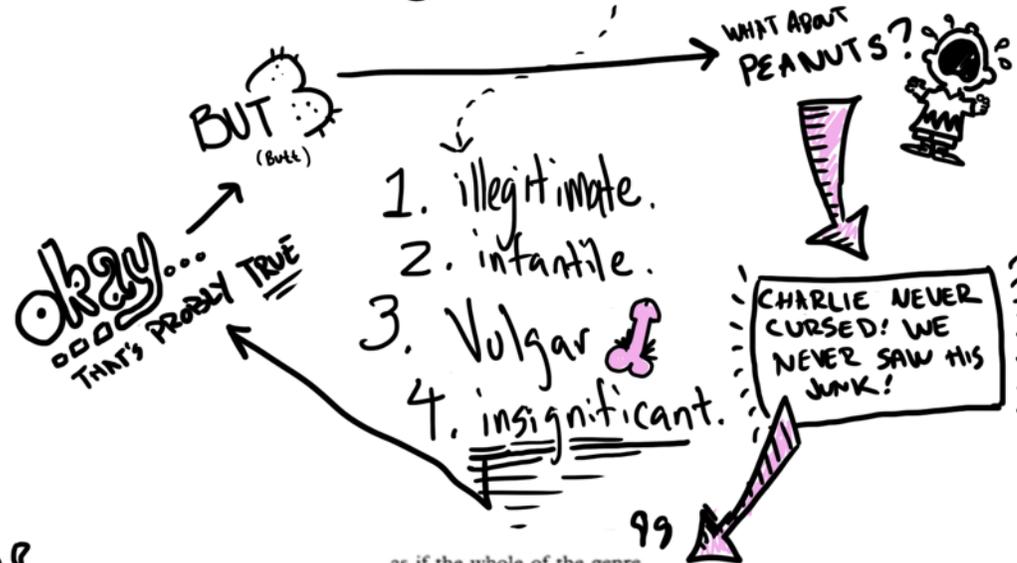
HERE. GONE.

MISUNDERSTANDING



Erika

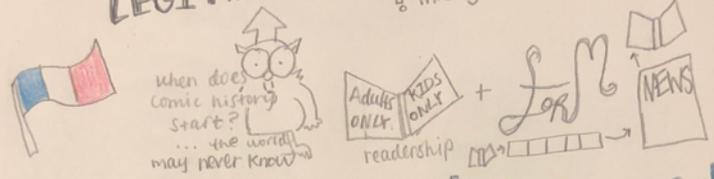
WHAT'S **Wrong** WITH COMIX?



as if the whole of the genre were to be lowered to the level of its most mediocre products – and its most remarkable incarnations ignored.

why can't comix reap the benefits of its  
**MOST ACCOMPLISHED  
ACTEMENTS?**

# WHY are Comics Still in Search of Cultural LEGITimization? Mierry Groensteen



We need new criteria  
 "Comic art is an autonomous and original medium"  
 9th art

**Violence**  
**Irreality:** stupid dangerous  
**POWER** of the image

## Bad for Kids

- Protect children  
NO CHILDRENS RIGHTS
- No such thing as Teenage Culture img
- Kids are stupid, their imagination is greater than **REASON**

We hate word balloons!  
**FREE THE SIMPLE DIALOGUES & SAVE Literature!!**

↑ vs. ↓ art **The sins**

- Hybrid - text + **IMAGE**  
[we only like it in cars!]
- sub-literature, stories para-literature
- similar to caricature. [which we all hate...]
- stuck in childhood [grow up!] nostalgia

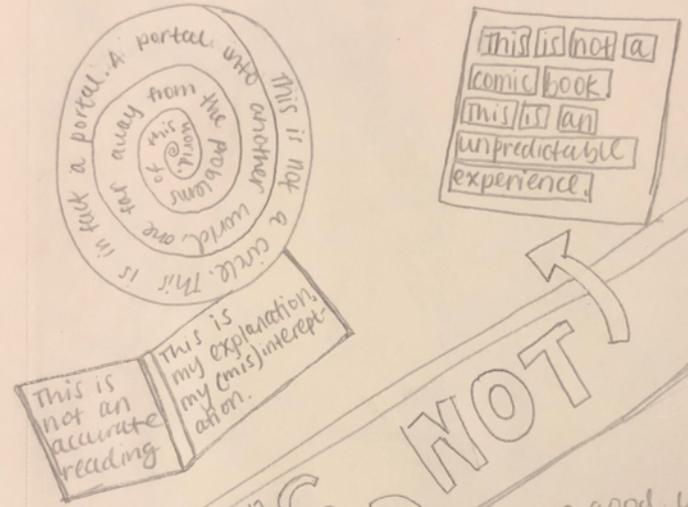
West is Logocentric  
 East blends the two  
 NOT PURE

diametrically opposed words VS image  
 reason VS emotional expression

Humor isn't funny. **Beauty merit utility**

Daylan Buchanan

# Intro into the Best American Comics 2008 Lynda Berry



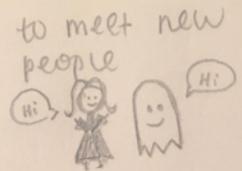
This is not an accurate reading

This is my explanation, my (mis)interpretation.

**THIS IS NOT**

a good way to understand yourself

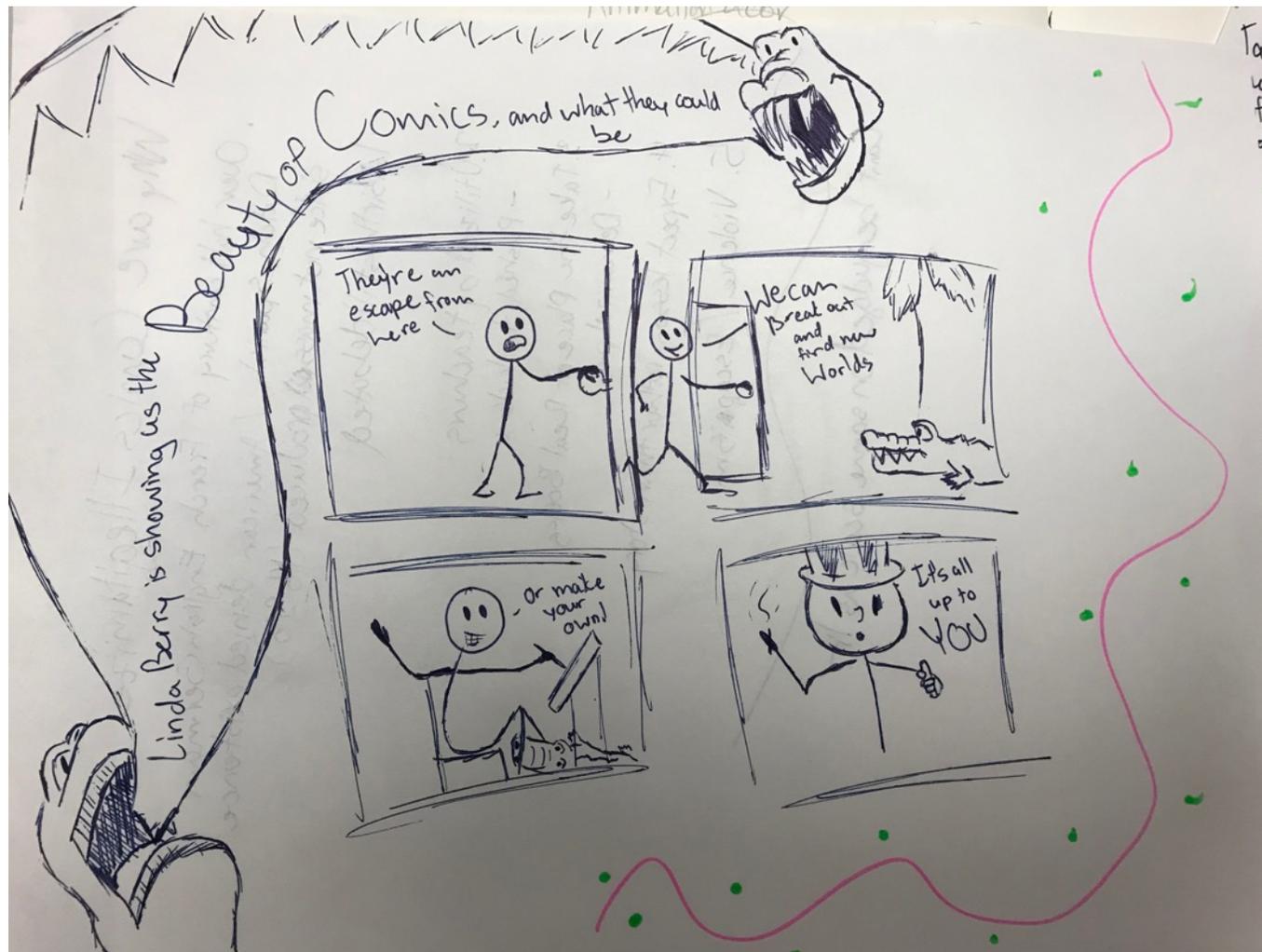
Dealing with complex human emotions and experiences



**GOOD CONTENT**

Daylan Buchanan

Daylan



Ellis

# Why are Comics Still in Search of Cultural Legitimization?

by Thierry Groensteen

19th Century Comics were intended for adults

Modern (Printed) Comics Appeared in the 1830's

Comic Art suffers from an extraordinarily narrow image

News! Comics became popular in the press in the 1870's

Comics: ~~BAD~~ for CHILDREN

They began to draw attention to educators

Speech Balloon was a central target for educators

and those who side w/ written WORDS

Imprisoning verbal content within visual system

reduce the amount of description and literary expression

-Annie Renonciat

Publishers - even some authors - a child NOT understand in pictures the help

? thought could properly a story without of words

Movies & Theater Present aurally

Comics Must BE READ

Related to Literature

Help Children learn to read

Encourage Beautiful Texts to Great Authors

Contains Linguistic Statements - Educators

Imagination - Educators

Must Be Real

Literature Comics

Printed Sold in book stores

Comics:  Humor  Caricature  Satire

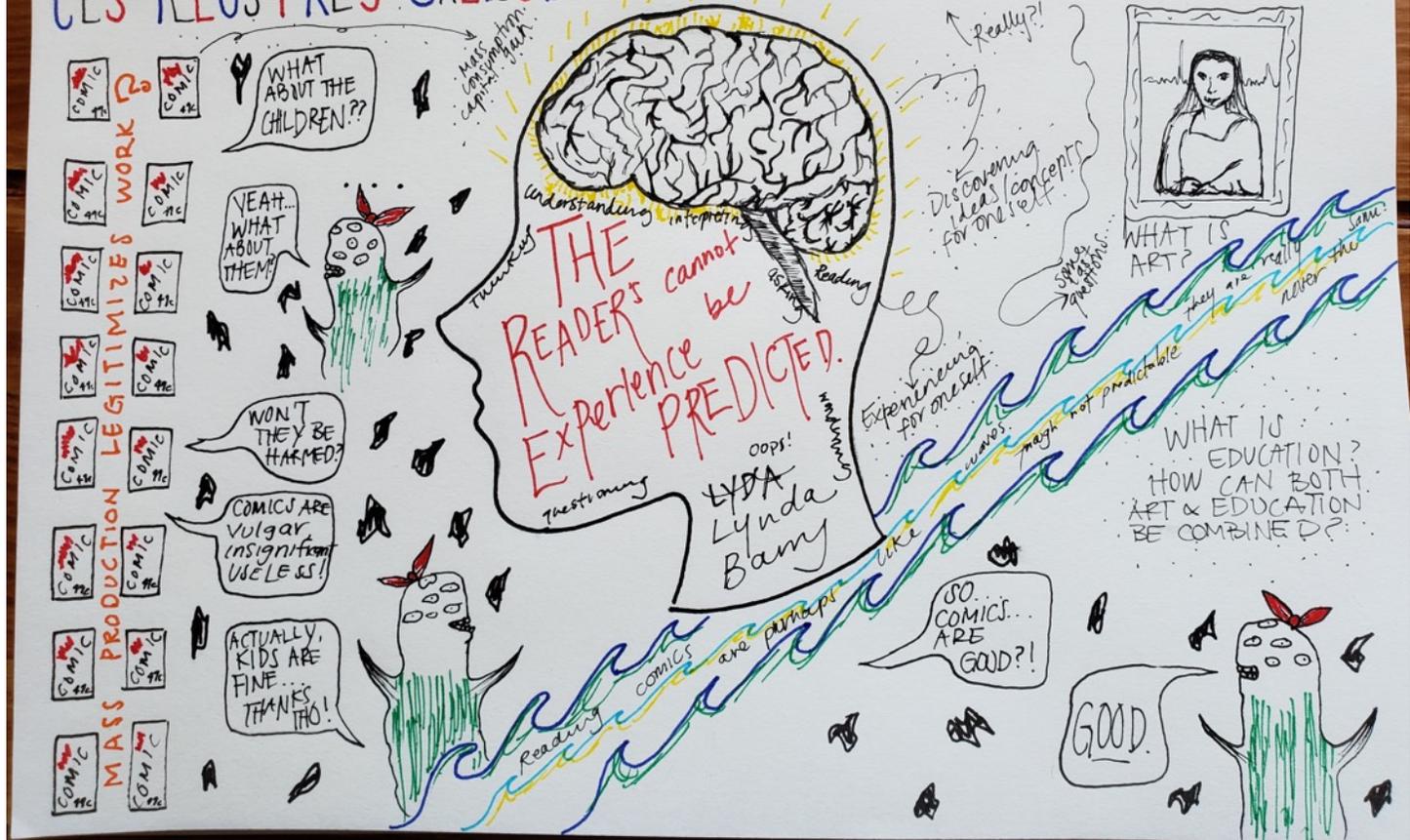
Comic Art is the art of details

Many Adults have forgotten or rejected Childhood pleasures

NOW! Comics have a way of giving rise to some strongly nostalgic emotions

Samantha

# CES ILLUSTRÉS SALISSENT L'IMAGINATION DE NOS ENFANTS



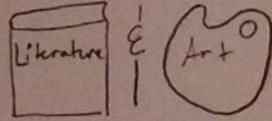
Gina

a look at

# COMICS

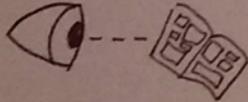
and their perceived unimportance

both

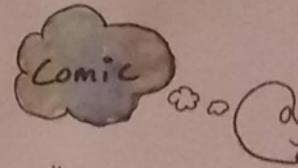
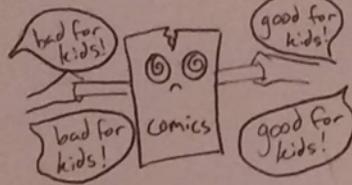


it is considered  
NEITHER

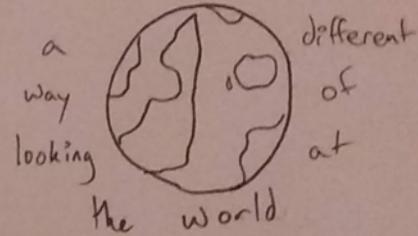
not originally meant  
for kids but still  
caught their  
attention



When the tug-o-war began



They have a way of staying  
with you



there's **NOTHING**  
else like them

a way to go back and be a kid again

for Kids

**1830's**  
by Rudolphe Töpffer

BIRTH name:  

**1960's**  
Bandes dessinées (manga)  
\* strips that have been drawn \*

OR ADULTS?

educators denounced comics as BAD for children

comics were criticized for imagery, for being TOO APPEALING to children, etc...

Speech bubbles thought to be "immoral content" 

They were thought to be "immoral content"

simple dialogue!

VIOLENT!

corrupting!

**GRAPHIC**

TO write AND TO paint

**1970**

Antoine Roux SEARCH WHY ARE COMICS STILL IN OF CULTURAL LEGITIMIZATION?

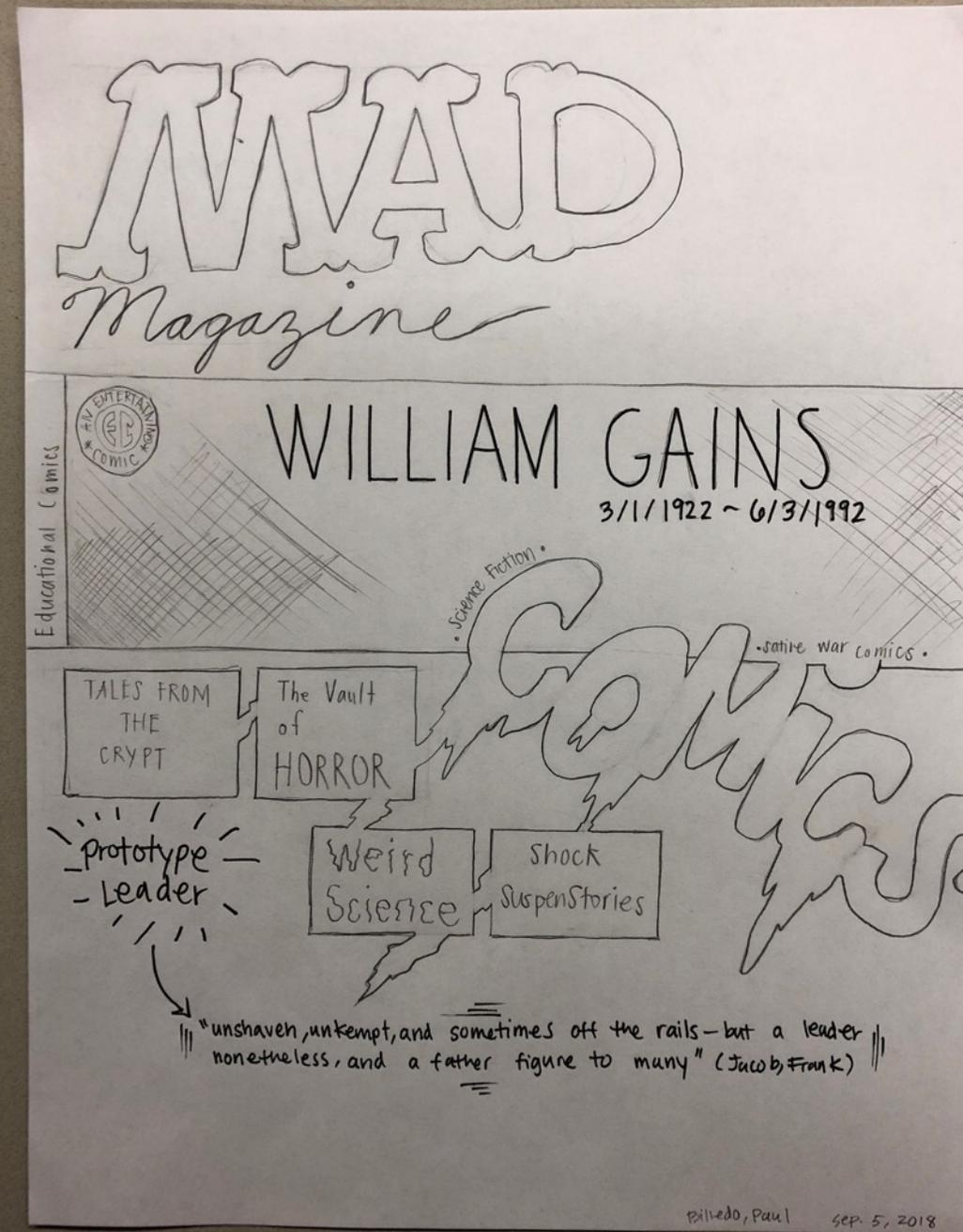
comics can be educational!

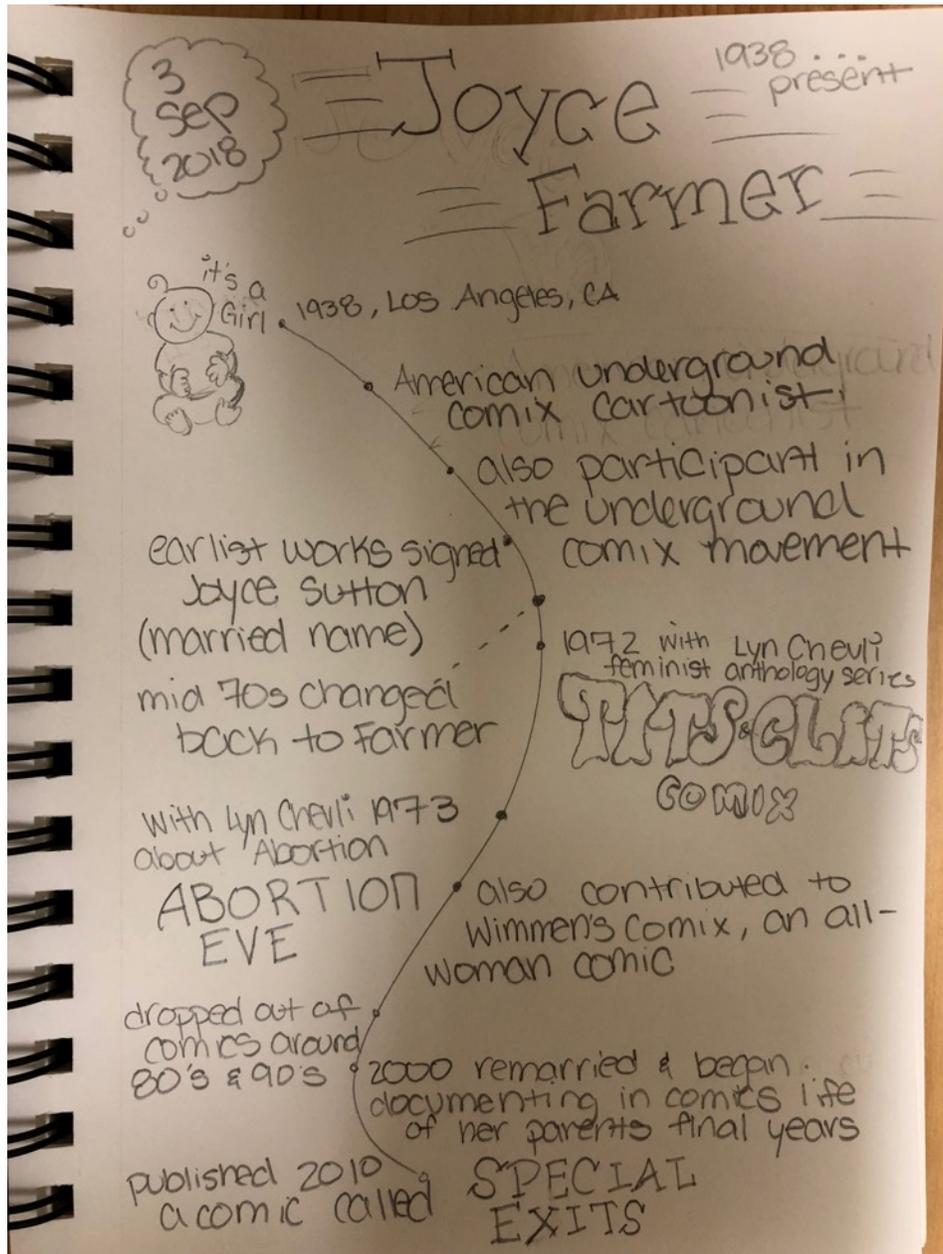
Ramasha

## Sketchnote of a Comics Creator

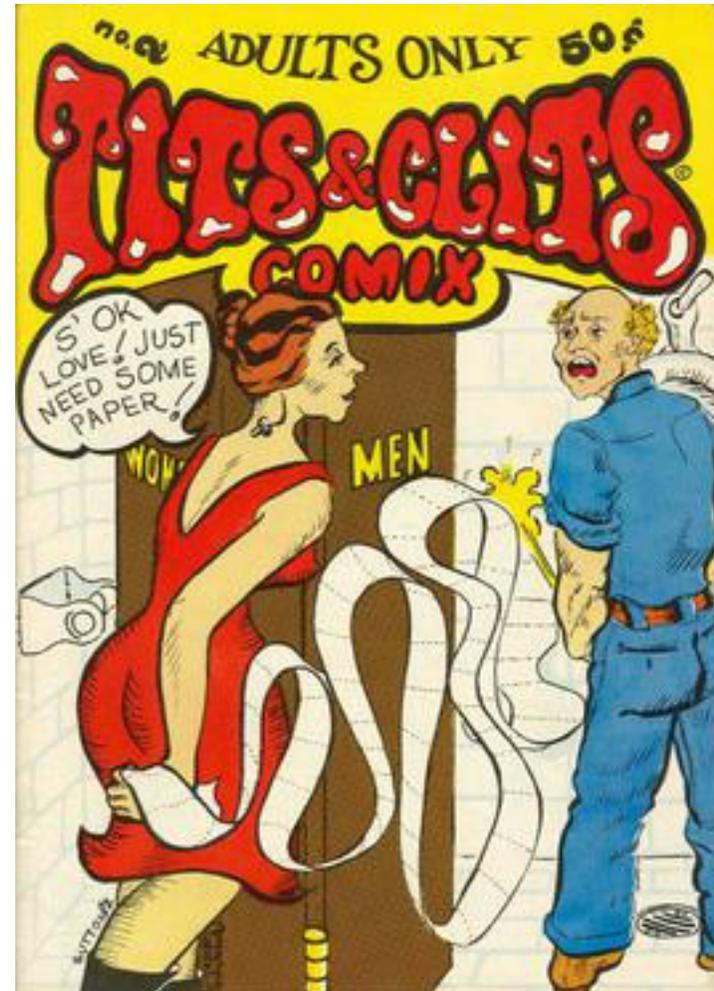
You are to do a small amount of research about a comics creator selected in class. Wikipedia is fine - but back it up with some other site where you see a sample or two of their work. **MAKE** a quick sketchnote about your author - what is significant about them in the history of comics - and post that along with an image or two of their work here (this could also be something you redraw or paste within your sketchnote). It's not a huge assignment - I just want you to spend a little bit of time learning about someone you are interested in or perhaps never heard of. I included these in the class slides.

William Gaines by Paul





Joyce Farmery by Eden



**Will Eisner**

1917 - 2005

Born in NYC, Eisner grew up in Brooklyn  
 Subjected to Antisemitism  
 Always had niche from framing & his father supported his talent.

1941 DRAFT into WWII  
 Drew for the Camp Newspaper

1978 THE GRAPHIC NOVEL FORM

THE BUILDING AS A TEEN!  
 A CONTRACT WITH GOD

THE MAN HIMSELF

Did the cover art for this...  
**WOW**  
 WHAT A MAGAZINE!

Considered one of the earliest cartoonists to work in the comic book industry, working publishing his own pieces & with companies like DC comics.

the Spirit 1940-1952 Summer

COMIC CON INTERNATIONAL

AWARDED IN HONOR OF EISNER "THE EISNER AWARDS FOR COMICS" @ SDCC

Prof. Stryker won this eye this Summer!

Run in the Newspaper every Smaddy!

Eisner's Urban crime-fighting series

Friends w/ Bob Kane in high school!

That's Wow... friends w/ Bob Kane in high school!

and they into comic world past!

Fagin the Jew






By Gina

SEPTEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup>, 2018  
E's SKETCHNOTES!

# Harvey Pekar

1939-2010

## AMERICAN SPLENDOR

GOOD TO KNOW THAT  
THERE'S OTHER PEOPLE  
AFFLICTED LIKE  
YOU.

### YOUNG PEKAR:

- felt different from his family
- 1<sup>st</sup> language - Yiddish
- Got beat up a lot
- "profound sense of inferiority"
- became "respected street scrapper"
- dropped out of college, joined Navy, became file clerk
- remained a file clerk even after Comics success!

Pioneer of  
Memoir Comics!  
In the mid '70s  
Harvey Pekar  
was doing this  
before it was  
ubiquitous  
and  
commercialized.

### WHAT I KNOW...

- Kind of curmudgeon-y with a big heart
- Comics writer
- read a few of his comics (bits + pieces)
- B. Crumb drew some of his comics/friend
- loves record
- Cleveland born and bred!
- Saw the American Splendor film and loved it!
- Saw him on Anthony Bourdain's No Reservations Cleveland episode - it was a bit awkward, but awesome!
- A purist in every sense... a true eccentric!
- Record collector
- File clerk

ALL THIS  
MAKES FOR  
GREAT COMICS!

Becomes friends  
with R. Crumb  
who draws many  
of the American  
splendor series.

other artists:  
Robert Armstrong  
Greg Budgett  
Willy Murphy  
Spain Rodriguez  
Josh Neustadt

His comics start  
with stick figures  
and chicken scratches  
I'M ON  
STREET

THE POET LAUREATE  
OF CLEVELAND

Cleveland  
Rocus!

looks like this  
= UNDERGROUND  
COMICS =

then an artist  
draws his  
stories

### PROCESS

Think a lot,  
then get it down.

DARK HUMOR  
SOCIAL ISSUES  
DIVULGENT  
POIGNANT  
RELATABLE

"YOU CAN DO  
ANYTHING  
WITH WORDS  
AND  
PICTURES"

"Chronicles Cleveland's  
Commonplace lives."

1994: "Our Cancer Year"  
Written w/ wife Joyce Brabner  
and illustrated by Frank Stack  
Wrote it about his experience  
with lymphoma, also  
a social commentary.  
Won the Harvey Award

WHO IS A  
COMICS  
ARTIST?

Challenged  
what this  
means

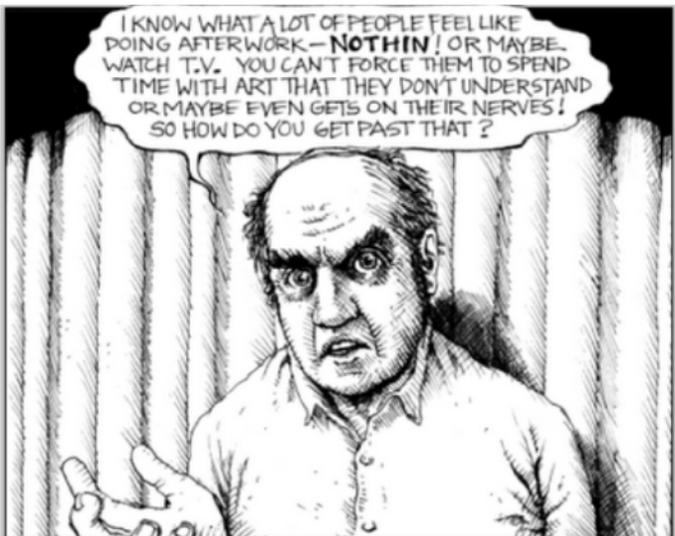
Followed his  
own path...  
also uncomfortable  
with his recognition -  
doesn't quite accept/  
fit in with the world

2012: Statue of  
Harvey Pekar  
erected in  
Cleveland Library

testament  
to importance  
of Comics + creators

Comics Connect  
us to our  
humanity

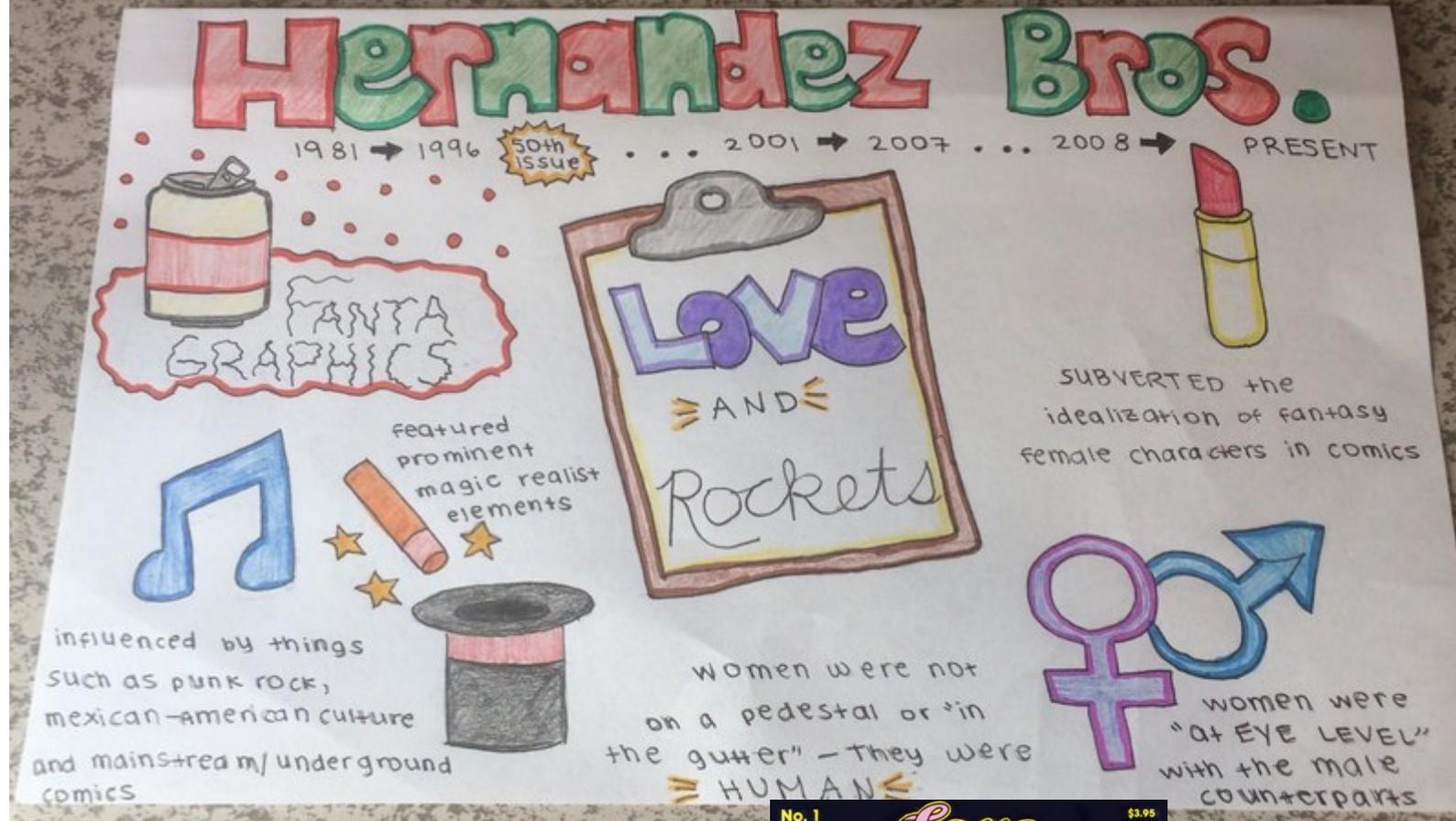
ORDINARY  
LIFE IS PRETTY  
COMPLEX STUFF.



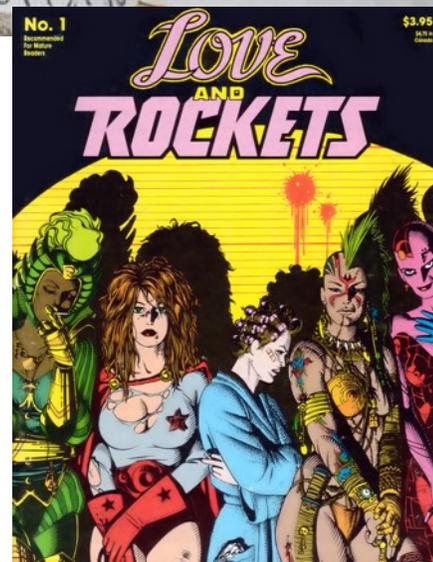
Erika



Chad on Alan Moore



Hernandez Brothers by Ramasha



# LYNDA BARRY

author, teacher, compulsive doodler

Lynda Barry  
by Chance

GET THE  
LOOK:

- Red Hair \$5
- Nerd glasses \$100
- Red Lipstick \$10
- Bowties \$25



the evergreen state college → MATT GROENING



ERNIE POOK'S COMEEK

MEL MAKES ME NERVOUS  
AND JESUS MAKES ME ALSO  
NERVOUS AND MY MOM MAKES  
ME NERVOUS AND MY AUNT  
MAKES ME NERVOUS

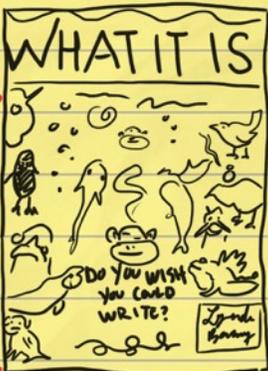


the formless THINGS which GIVES things Form

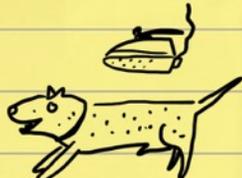
## WHAT IS AN IMAGE



"My strips are not always funny, and they can be pretty grim at times, and I know I lose readers because of it, but I can't do anything about it. My work is very much connected to something I need to do in order to feel stable.



"People think if you're writing a story that you have to follow story structure. It's like thinking the only reason we have teeth is because there are dentists."



Sketchnotes to Joe Field's talk at the  
comics archive in the library

COMICS ARE...

"THE GENESIS of all VISUAL ENTERTAINMENT."

quote by Joe Field of FLYING COLORS

I actually live right down the street from this book shop



CULTURAL Relevance of COMICS

COMPREHEND VS US?

How do we communicate?

Time period

what's happening in the world?

Seduction of the Innocent. Adventure

1930's - 1950's @ Now SFSU

Thomas Rue's Treasure

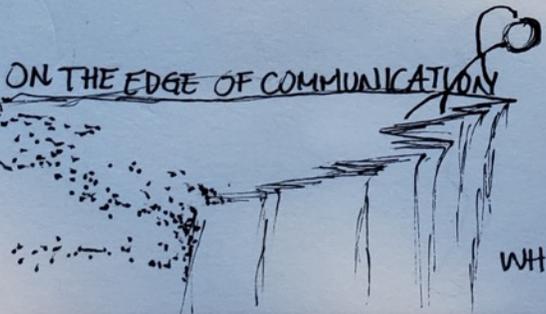
Color

(Not really)

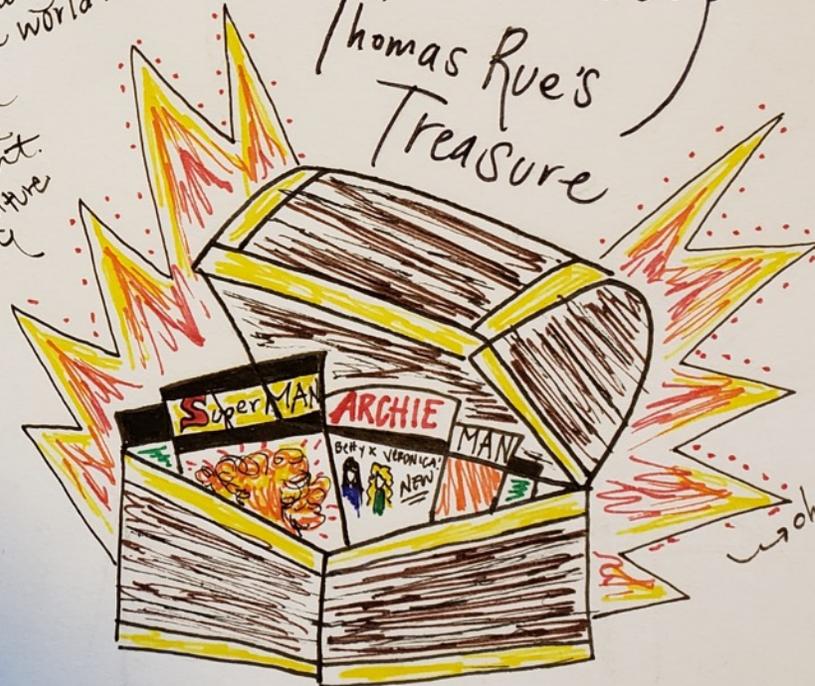
excites the senses (which is BAD!)

Seduction of the Innocent

ON THE EDGE OF COMMUNICATION

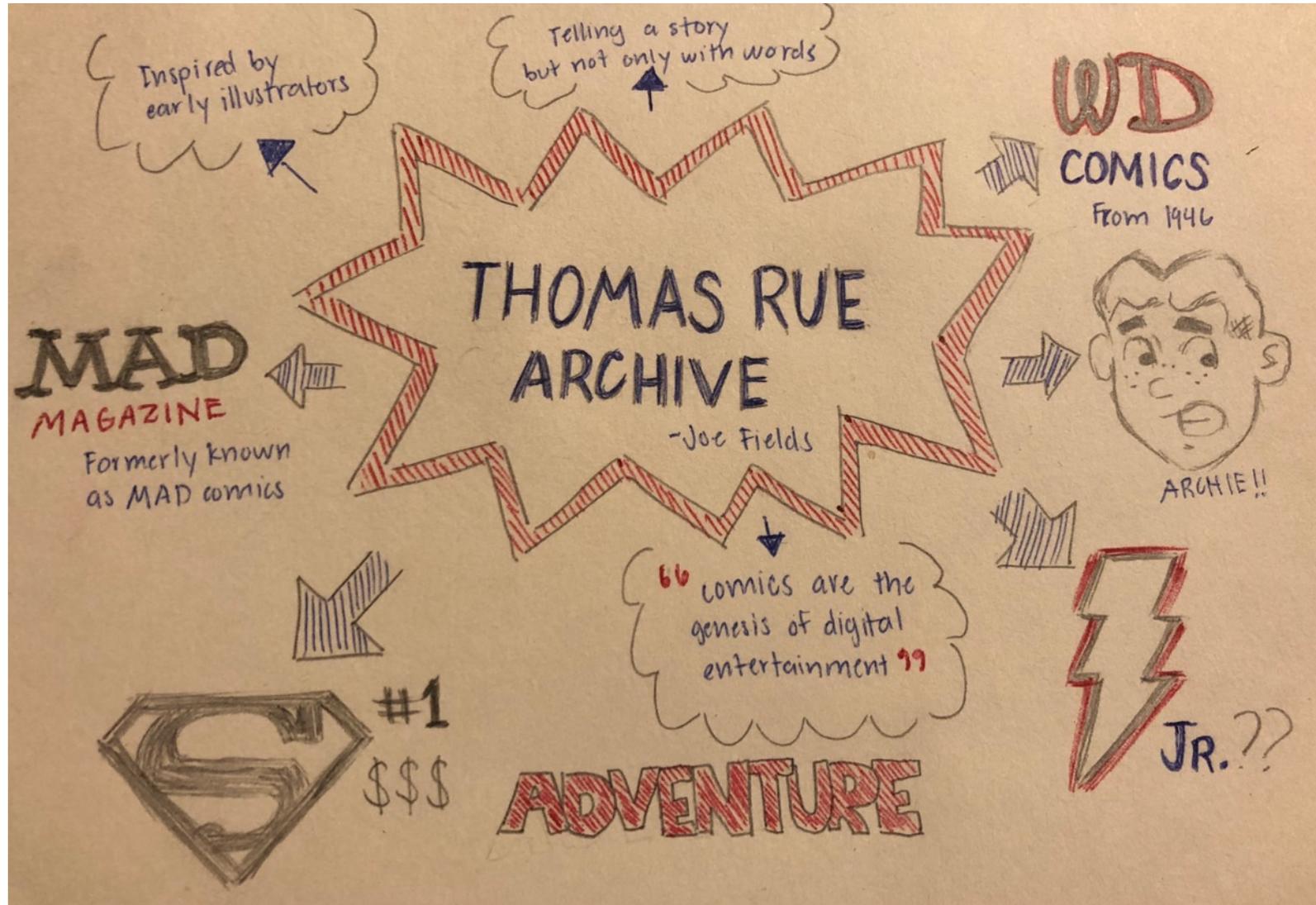


WHAT WILL BE NEXT?



childhood

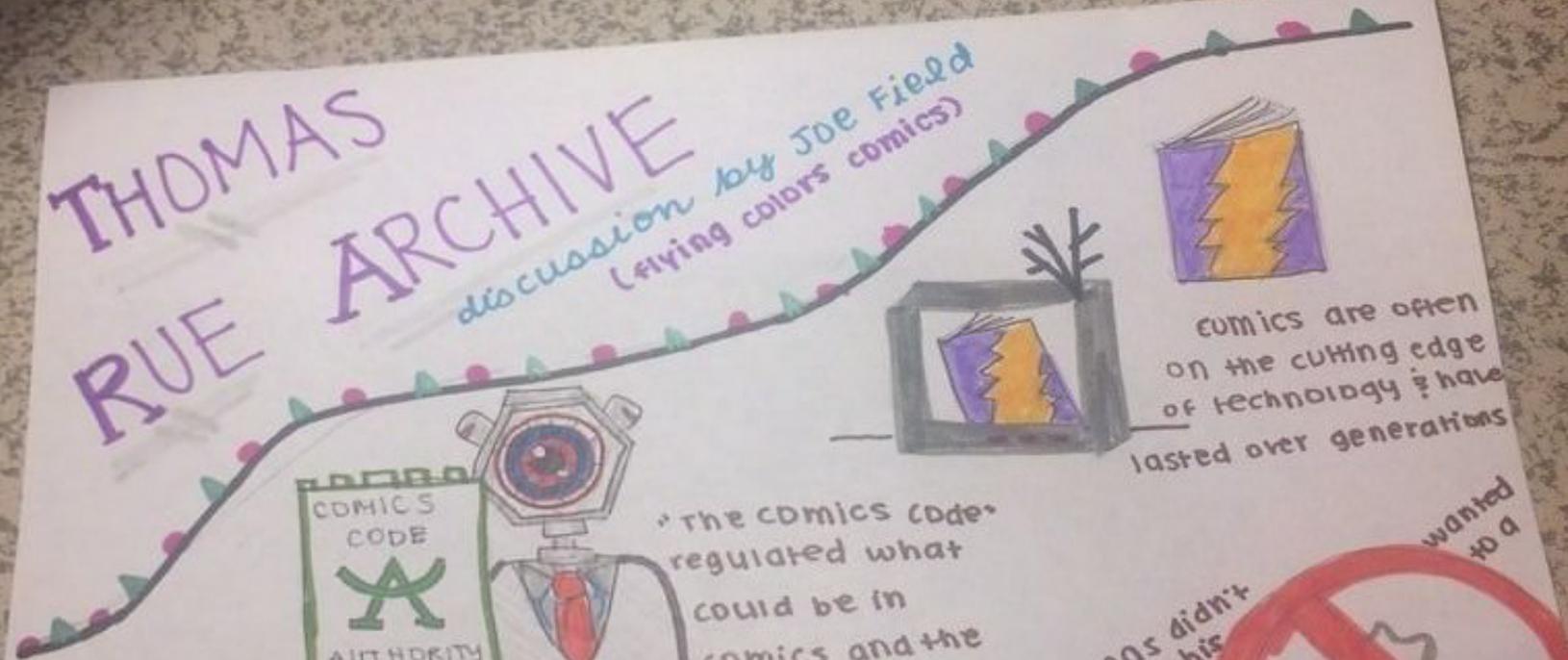
Gina: I greatly enjoyed the discussion on the history of comics by Joe Field and a peak into Thomas Rue's amazing collection; we are so lucky to have his treasure at SFSU! I wanted to highlight the quote by Mr. Field "Comics are the genesis of all visual entertainment" which was fascinating and made me think about comic cultural significance today.



Justin: I think it was exciting to know that they are adding this collection to the archive. I know that specific comics are pretty hard to come by and having this collection gives us access to some rare comics.

# THOMAS RUE ARCHIVE

discussion by Joe Field  
(flying colors comics)



"The comics code" regulated what could be in comics and the messages they put out to impressionable children"



comics are often on the cutting edge of technology & have lasted over generations



## SYMBOLIC LEARNING

Thomas didn't want to sell his collection. He wanted to donate it to a university!



Ramasha