



Getting Graphic with the Past

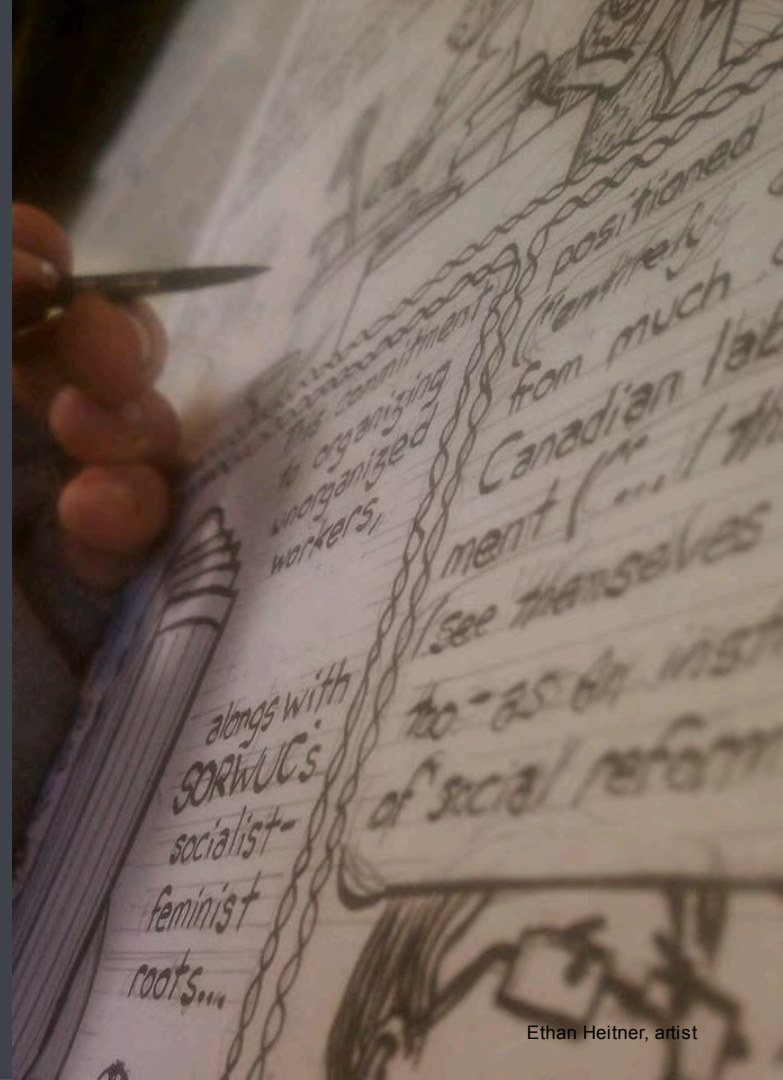
Graphic Histories and the Uses of Comics in
Education

Canada's History Webinar
May 17, 2016

*Kara Sievewright & Robin Folvik
Graphic History Collective*



**Graphic
History
Collective**



Ethan Heitner, artist



GETTING GRAPHIC WITH THE PAST: GRAPHIC HISTORIES AND THE USES OF COMICS IN EDUCATION

Who is the Graphic History Collective? What do we do?

Learning through doing

Reading & creating comics in the classroom

Who is the Graphic History Collective?

We are a group of activists, artists, writers, and researchers passionate about comics, history, and social change.

Collective Members



Sam Bradd, MEd
Graphic Recorder,
Illustrator



Julia Smith, PhD
Author, Researcher



Sean Carleton, PhD
Author, Researcher,
Illustrator



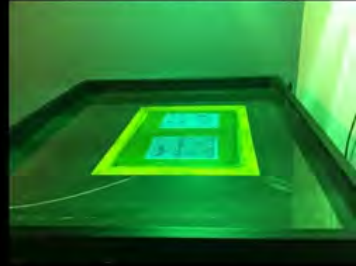
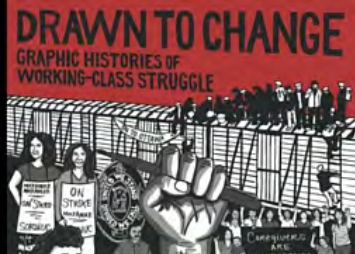
Kara Sievewright, MFA
Illustrator, Designer,
and Writer



Robin Folvik
Researcher, Writer

Collaborators

We work with historians, artists, unions, activists, artist-run galleries, progressive presses, museums, academics, and writers on projects, comics, events, and books.

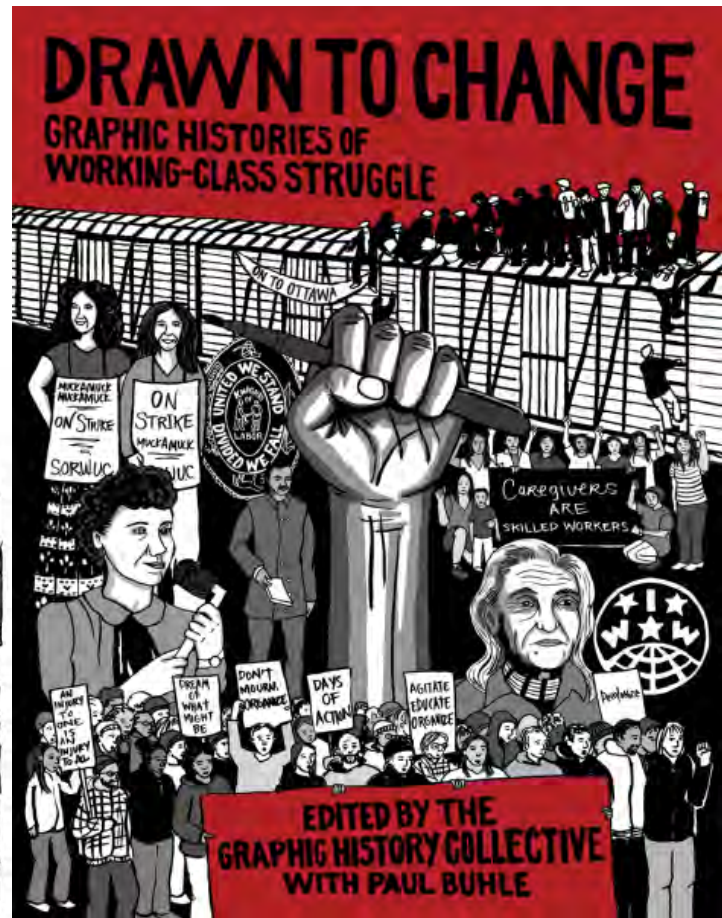


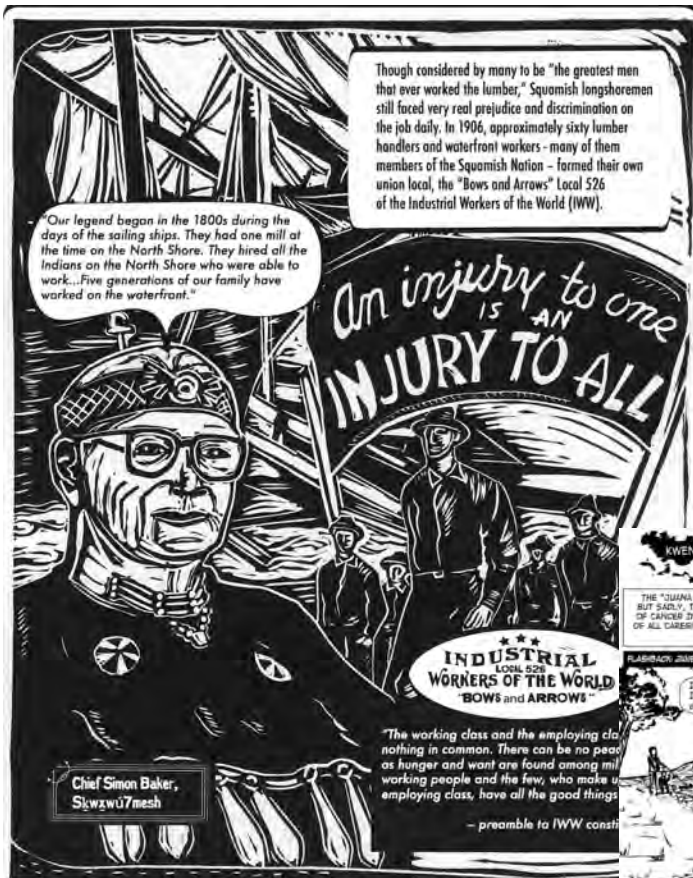
Drawn to Change: Comics and Critical Consciousness
Sean Carleton
ONE OF THE LAST PROJECTS that activist and academic Howard Zinn completed before his death in 2010 was a comic book. With the help of Paul Buhle and cartoonist Mike Konopacki, Zinn released *A People's History of American Empire* in 2008 as an illustrated adaptation of material from his bestselling book, *A People's History of The United States*.² The comic is narrated by Zinn, and it depicts him at a teach-in during the height

Graphic History Collective's Books



May Day: A Graphic History of Protest (Between the Lines, 2012)
Drawn to Change: Graphic Histories of Working-Class Struggle (Between the Lines, 2016)





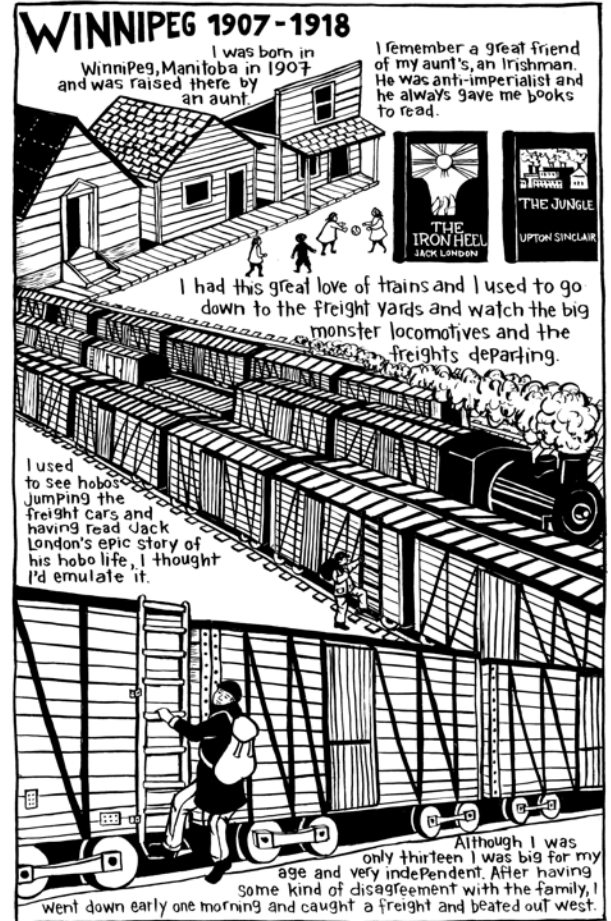
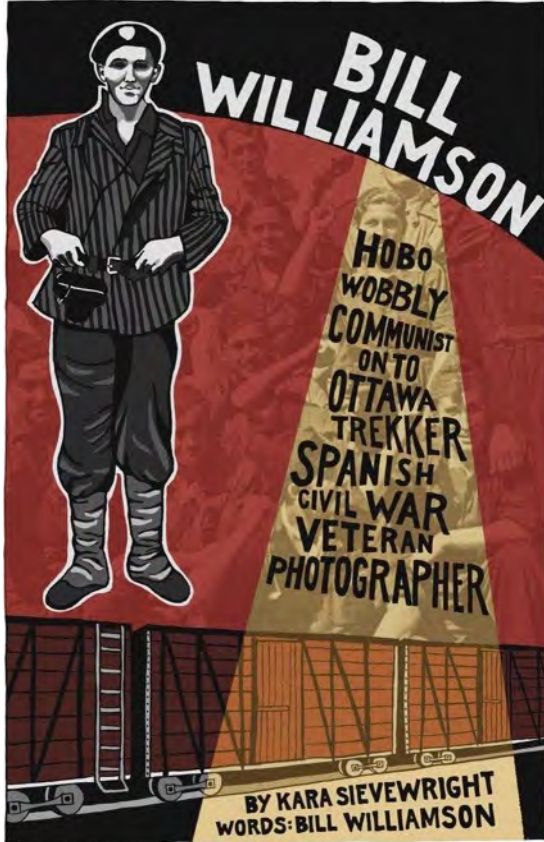


LEARNING THROUGH DOING

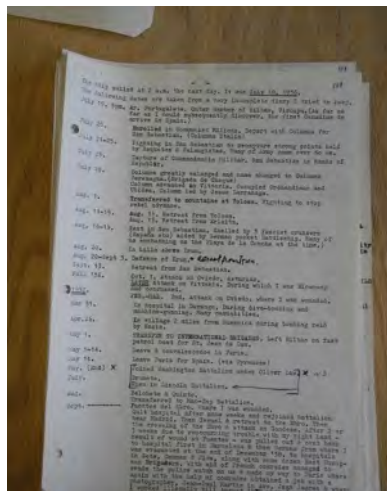
Bill Williamson

By Kara Sievewright

from *Drawn to Change*



Comic Process: Researching and Writing



Reel 8 of 18

First of all I was working for while as a longshoreman before this and then I thought they needed organizing, these guys in the relief camps. I quit that work and got a job there.

I think afterwards we were transferred to the Citadel in Halifax. The Citadel is a Napoleonic fort built against the French in Canada at that time. It was a big rambling fort and it was just falling in to disuse so they thought that it was a good place to put the guys for the relief camp. The others were in huts and so on and most were in wooden shacks of different sorts...

This was of course age of three hundred year old fortress with walls about fifteen foot thick.

They had big barrack rooms for the soldiers for the British soldiers and you had bunks in there. Not all that different from other one. In the winter you had a big stove going, it was warm. It was there we started getting the newspaper out, The Relief Camp Workers Times or something.

PAGE 2: Ship to Spain

PANEL 1

Bill sneaking into the ship.

Narration:

And then just as the longshoreman were battening down the hatches, I got in and right down into the bowels of the ship.

PANEL 2

Sailors playing cards in a room on the ship.

Narration:

Near the coalbunkers, there were a half dozen Spanish freeman playing cards. I had picked up a few words of Spanish, because I had worked for a little while in Mexico on a ranch but all I remembered was, "ooh aucha pay," U.H.P. which stood for the Union Humanos Proletarian, which is sort of the password of the left in Spain.

Bill has one finger to his lips and one fist in a salute.

Bill:

"Uuh aucha pay."

The sailors pointing and laughing.

Narration:

They just looked at me and laughed and pointed to the coalbunkers.

PANEL 3

Bill climbing into the coal pile.

Narration:

I climbed into the coal bunkers and made a hollow out of the coal. And then I pulled my mackinaw over my head and some more coal on top of that. And then stopped there until I could tell that the ship was under way.

PANEL 4

Bill blackened with coal dust on the deck of the ship.

Narration:

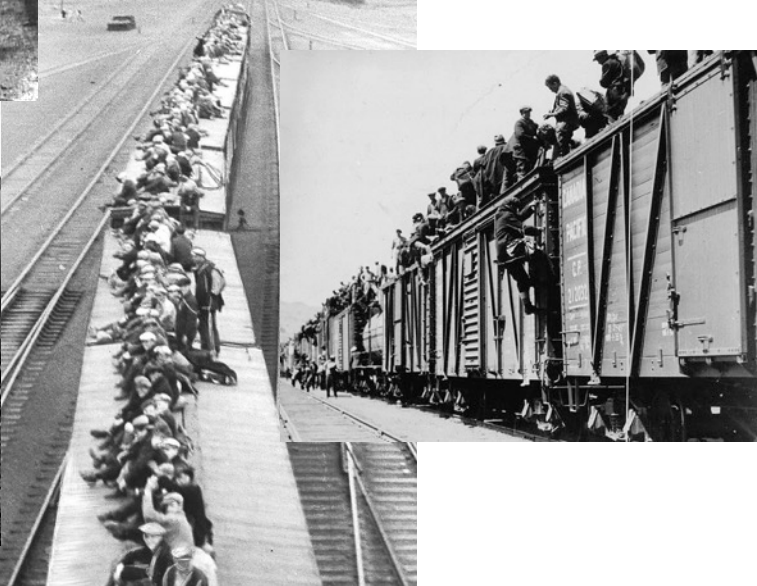
In the bright sunny morning I came up, all covered in black coal dust.

1. Research

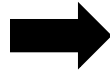
2. Transcribing

3. Script Writing

Comic Process: Visual Research



Comic Process: Drawing



1. **Thumbnails or Storyboards**
2. **Pencils** - use coloured pencil that can be easily erased digitally
3. **Inking**
4. **Scanning**
5. **Photoshop** - clean up and fix mistakes



LEARNING THROUGH DOING





WALK WITH US
Through the heart of Vancouver's working class & labour history

Vancouver Labour History Walking Tours
labourheritagecentre.ca
DOWNTOWN CENTRAL EASTSIDE

WORKING PEOPLE
A History of Labour in British Columbia



10

SORWUC & the Bank of Commerce

Organizing the ignored and marginalized
300 West Hastings Street

Involuntary and unpaid overtime provoked six women at this branch to initiate an organizing drive in 1976. They founded the United Bank Workers and successfully certified 24 locations in BC as the Service, Office, and Retail Workers' Union of Canada.



Founded by members of the Vancouver Women's Caucus in 1972, SORWUC was based on feminist and democratic principles. It organized workers who had been overlooked by the mainstream labour movement – mostly women and retail workers. Although SORWUC eventually lost the campaign to organize this particular bank, its campaign inspired other bank and credit union workers to unionize in the 1980's.

SORWUC also won a court ruling that individual branches of a corporation could be organized as distinct bargaining units. Banks had insisted the entire corporation had to be organized to qualify for union status. SORWUC's legal victory has made it possible to organize at corporations with many branches, including at large retail and fast food chains.



Photos: Courtesy private collection

For Women By Women

WORKING PEOPLE
A History of Labour In British Columbia



SPRING 2014 PRINTemps
LABOUR/LE TRAVAIL
AU PESS 73

Madeleine Parent *ACTIVIST*
ED. ANDRÉE LÉVESQUE SUMACH PRESS

McCALLUM **INDIGENOUS WOMEN, WORK, AND HISTORY** UMP

FUDGE/TUCKER **LABOUR BEFORE THE LAW** OXFORD

"MANY TENDER TIES" SYLVIA VAN KIRK WATSON & DWYER

VANCOUVER'S HOBOES Andrew Roddan

Rebel Life MARK LEIER NEW STAR BOOKS

JOAN SANGSTER **DREAMS of EQUALITY** U.S.

WORK, CULTURE & SOCIETY HERBERT G. GUTMAN

WORKING PEOPLE MORTON/Copp DENEAU


WORKING-CLASS EXPERIENCE
THE RISE AND RECONSTITUTION OF CANADIAN LABOUR, 1800-1980

The Canadian Labour Movement A SHORT HISTORY Craig Heron LORIMER

CANADIAN LABOUR HISTORY BERCUSON Copp Clark Pitman

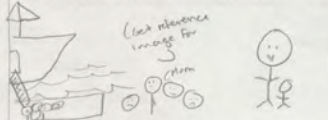
PENTLAND **LABOUR AND CAPITAL IN CANADA 1650-1860** LORIMER

Not much is known about Nancy.
She was born in 1762, somewhere in Maryland



The Maryland

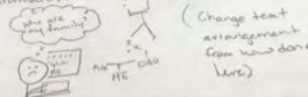
At least one of her parents were from Africa, kidnapped and forced into slavery in the Thirteen Colonies *



Let someone arrange for them

LIDGE might have been his son

... under slavery, families were often torn apart, making it difficult to locate information



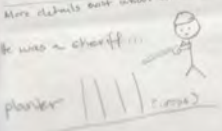
who are you family?

(Change text arrangement from what's done here)

Meaning his allegiances were with Britain

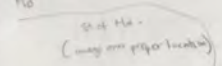
More details about what Gates does...

He was a sheriff...



planter

Slaveowner in Somerset Co, Md



said he -
(may not be a true)

He was also a Loyalist...

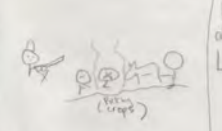


image: John or the "creek"
(maybe at different times)

Rafte Smuggler

More on Patriotism... maybe of people as ideology

Even though it's not perfect, it still helps think about the story in a different way!





Illustrate! Educate! Organize! Installation at the Cumberland Museum & Archives



MAKING COMICS IN THE CLASSROOM

Warm Up Drawing Activities

Creature drawing

1. First person uses paint or markers to create a random mark on the page
2. Second person uses a different marker to create a creature



Portrait drawing

Sketch the person next to you:

1. In 1 minute
2. 30 seconds
3. 5 seconds

What happens?



Storytelling Activities

Activity: The Wrong Treasure*

Materials: Post it notes and pencils

Step 1

Break off into groups of five. Assign each person a number 1 - 5

Step 2

Write the story on the board:

1. An explorer is looking for treasure in the ocean
2. They go to the bottom of the ocean
3. They pick up a treasure at the bottom of the sea
4. They return home to lots of excitement
5. But then they realize they got the wrong thing

Step 3

Each person is going to draw their number line of the story in 3 – 5 panels. One panel per a post-it note.

Step 4

Each group is going to stick their panels to the wall or lay them on the table in order. Take a look at everyone's stories. Look at how different people told the same story. Ignore visual differences.

Step 5

Go back to your group, together decide where you need to add more panels to make the story better. Do you need to stretch out the action or create bridges between sections. Thinking about pacing.

Step 6

Look at your story now. Are there panels you can take out? Are there funny parts that you can make funnier.

Step 7

Look around at everyone's stories. Review them together. Talk about how the stories work.

***Also called The Wrong Planet, from *Drawing Words and Writing Pictures*, Jessica Abel and Matt Madden**

1. Creating Comics: Comic Jam

Activity: Create an improvised collaborative comic

1. Everyone gets a page with 9 panels on it.
2. Usually you start with a prompt like:
 - I used to... (like, believe, do something)
 - This can be fictional or non-fictional
1. Everyone starts their comic in the first panel using the prompt and then passes it to the person on their left.
2. Each panel gets 4 minutes.
3. At the end you can go through the stories.



2. Creating Comics: One page autobiographical comics

SIX PANEL BIOGRAPHY



Jeffrey Brown 2008

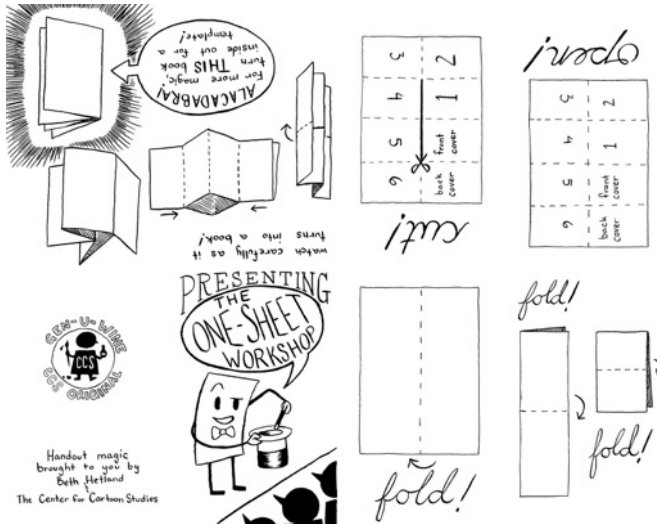


A PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE
CYNICAL OPTIMIST

3. Creating Comics: Mini comics

Activity: Create a one page comic that can be folded into a small book

Comics are meant to be reproduced whether in print or online, and they are meant to be shared and read. This activity allows students to create a comic under creative constraints (six panels plus front and back cover) using a template. The finished comic can be easily photocopied to create multiple copies.



4. Creating Comics: Graphic History

Activity: Create a historical comic

1. Students do archival research or interview elders
2. Write a story script based on research
3. Create a storyboard
4. Create the visuals either through drawing, using found or historical photographs, digitally or even through simple stick figures

Skills:

Reading, researching, writing, story creation, digital skills

Subjects:

English (or other language), Art, History, Computers





READING COMICS IN THE CLASSROOM

SPIEGELMAN MADS II PANTH

TRICKSTER

LOUIS RIEL CHESTER BROWN D&C

THE COMPLETE PERSEPOLIS Marjane Satrapi 

 GOLD PRESS NORTHWEST PASSAGE Scott Chantler 

BAKER NAT TURNER

DRAWN TO CHANGE Graphic Histories of Working-Class Struggle
THE 500 YEARS OF RESISTANCE COMIC BOOK GORD HILL ARS

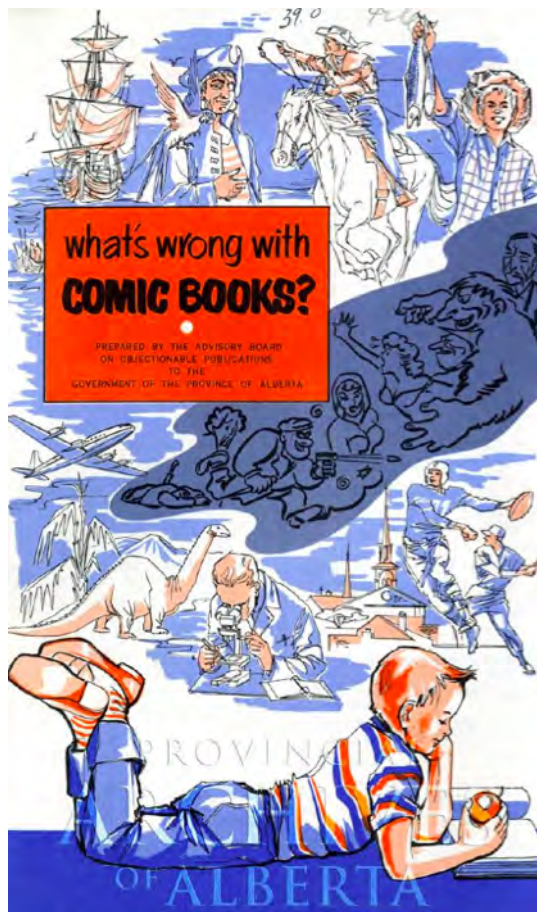
RED ROSA KATE EVANS

PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF AMERICAN EMPIRE ★ HOWARD ZINN ★
MIKE KONOFACK
PAUL BUELL

ESCAPE TO GOLD MOUNTAIN DAVID H.T. WONG



*Display on comics prepared for the April 1954 Senate Subcommittee Hearings into Juvenile Delinquency. At the hearing there was a special focus on comic books
(TIME Magazine)*



3 SOME "COMICS" FOSTER PREJUDICE AGAINST CLASS, RACE, CREED, AND NATIONALITY.

Is the villain usually a foreigner? Is he a person not of the white race? Is the villain usually from another country? Are pagan beliefs being spread?



"Comics" which depict . . . race hatred impair the ethical development of children.

-Report of the New York State Joint Legislative Committee to Study the Publication of Comics.

4 SOME "COMICS" PORTRAY VIOLENT DEATH, GROTESQUE, FANTASTIC AND UNNATURAL CREATURES WITH REPULSIVE REALISM.



Do the "comics" your children read promote good mental health? Do they cause tension and fear?

One wonders what place they [Comics portraying fear and horror] have in the life of a child other than to fill him with unnatural fears and forebodings.

-Mrs. C. W. Mellish, Children's Reading Committee, The Canadian Home and School and Parent Federation.

5 MOST "COMICS" ARE INARTISTIC.



Is the paper poor, the printing blurred and the colour gaudy or unpleasing?

Most comics could not be called artistic by any stretch of the imagination. They are cheap taudry commercial reproductions that haven't anything to do with art. The pictorial content seems to me most damaging to growing children, especially those with sensitive artistic notions.

-H. G. Glyde, Edmonton, Alberta, Head of Department of Fine Arts, University of Alberta.

6 ALL "COMICS" ARE DETRIMENTAL TO GOOD READING SKILLS.

Are lines of type floating in small balloons, training your child to become a slow word-by-word reader? Is the print cramped? Are "comics" enlarging your child's vocabulary? Is there anything "comics" do for your children that a good children's book won't do better?

No informed thought is given to the fact that far from instilling into children and adolescents a taste for books, the habit of reading "comics" exclusively tends to destroy this taste. That is the most serious aspect of the matter. A people who thrive on comics will never progress beyond the digest stage and a nation of digest readers will never be a cultured nation.

-The Senate of Canada, Proceedings of the Senate Committee on Sales and Distribution of Salacious and Indecent Literature.



Featuring **THE BLACK TERROR**, *Nemesis of Crime*

OCT.

EXCITING COMICS



10¢



JOHNNY CANUCK



BY **BACHLE**

THE BERLIN BLAT
BRONTZ MUNITION FACTORY SABOTAGED
JOHNNY CANUCK BELIEVED RESPONSIBLE

GESTAPO PROMISES ARREST SOON.

ACH! FOOLS...YOU PROMISE ARREST, BUT DOT SVINE CANUCK GOES ON DESTROYING OUR WAR MACHINE!



"SELF-DETERMINATION"

THE MAJORITY OF RESEARCH ABOUT THE LCP IS DONE BY SCHOLARS INTERESTED IN MIGRATION, GENDER, AND LABOUR ISSUES. OUR FRIEND, ATE CORA IS THE FIRST PERSON WE'VE MET WHO IS WRITING A GRADUATE THESIS PAPER BASED UPON HER OWN LIVED EXPERIENCES AS A CAREGIVER IN CANADA AND ABROAD.

What's been your most proud moment so far?

When I graduated with my BSW, the twins I took care of since they were babies, came to my convocation ceremony!

They were 14 years old. So matangkad -- 6 feet tall! They gave me roses. Ang sweet, 'di ba?

Their mom treated me very badly. There was no pleasing her. But I loved those kids.

What do you want your work to accomplish, Ate?

I hope it changes the perception of caregivers as helpless victims.

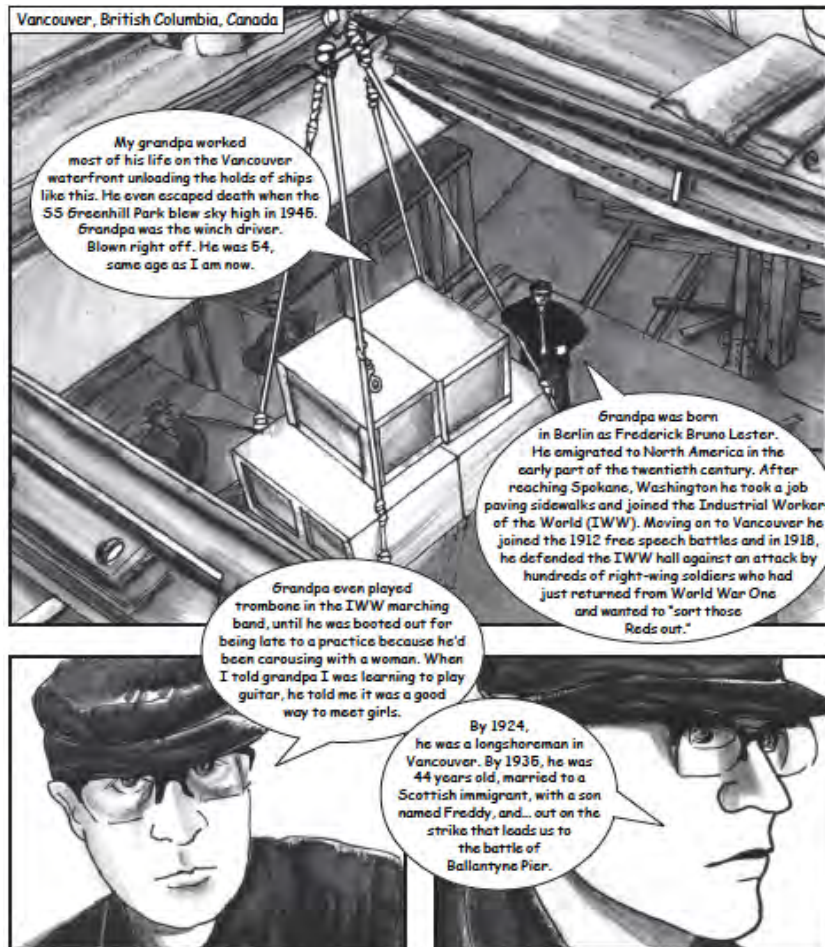
We are much more complex. People will learn that the more we tell our own stories.

Like that saying goes, "Nothing about us, without us!"

"Kwentong Bayan: Labour of Love" by Jo SiMalaya Alcampo and Althea Balmes

“The Battle of Ballantyne Pier: An Injury to One is an Injury to All”

David Lester



AUTHOR'S NOTE: All text in quotation marks are the actual words spoken by the historical characters.

*“Working on the Water, Fighting on the Land: Indigenous
Labour on Burrard Inlet”*
by Tania Willard and the GHC



By the late eighteenth century, word was spreading that newcomers from across the sea were arriving to trade in the bays and inlets of the coast. Increased trade ushered in a period of great transformation.



"A long time ago, [the Squamish] depended upon hunting and fishing as their only means of living. Now things have changed."

Mathias Joseph,
Skwxwú7mesh, 1915

“Working on the Water, Fighting on the Land: Indigenous Labour on Burrard Inlet”
by Tania Willard and the GHC



"Coal Mountain" by Nicole Marie Burton



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