

How to make and distribute 45,350 comics about political participation

Lydia Wysocki

Torch network, Oxford University, 18th February 2020

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Staff Profiles - Education, Commu +

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School of
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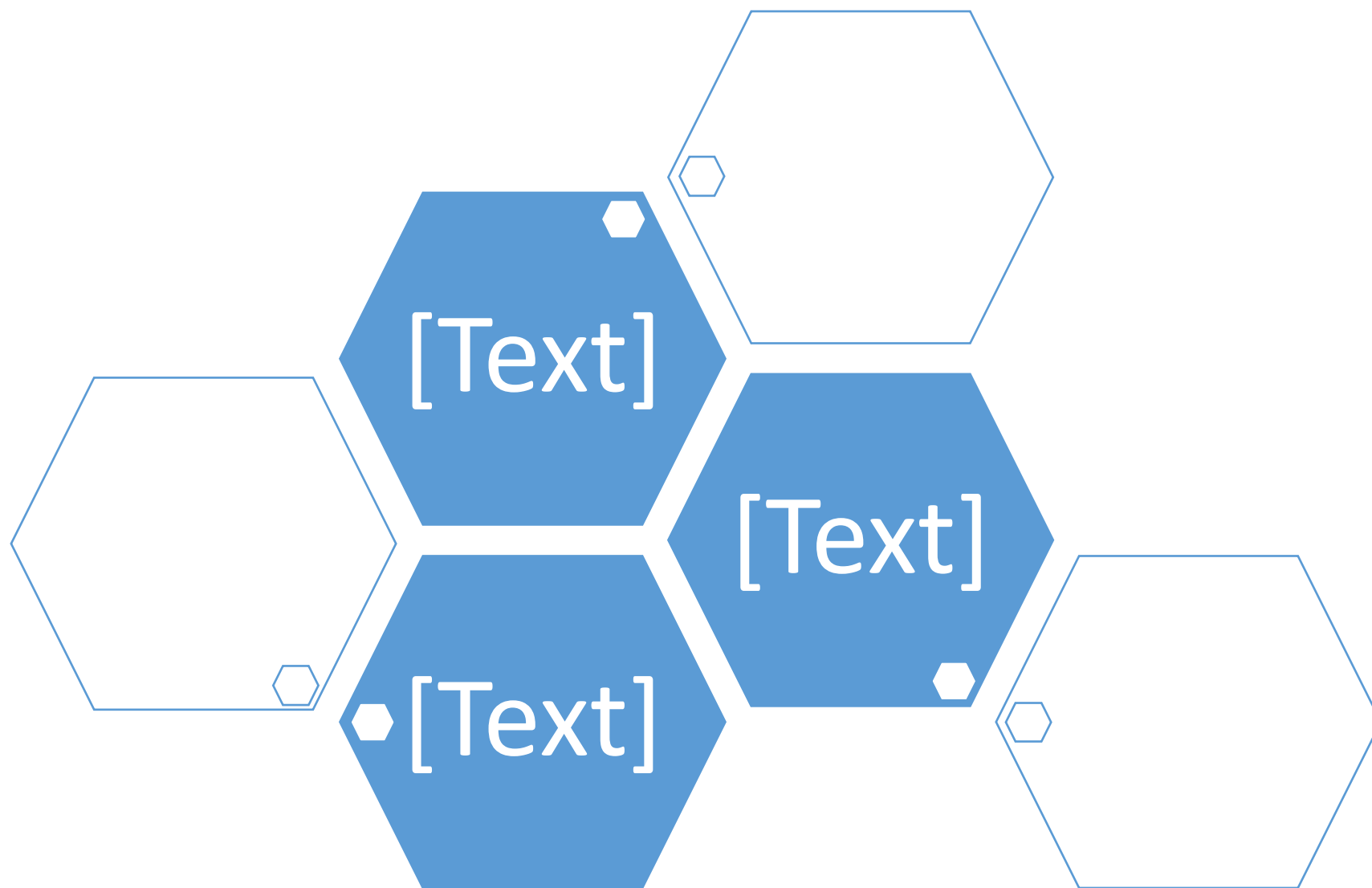
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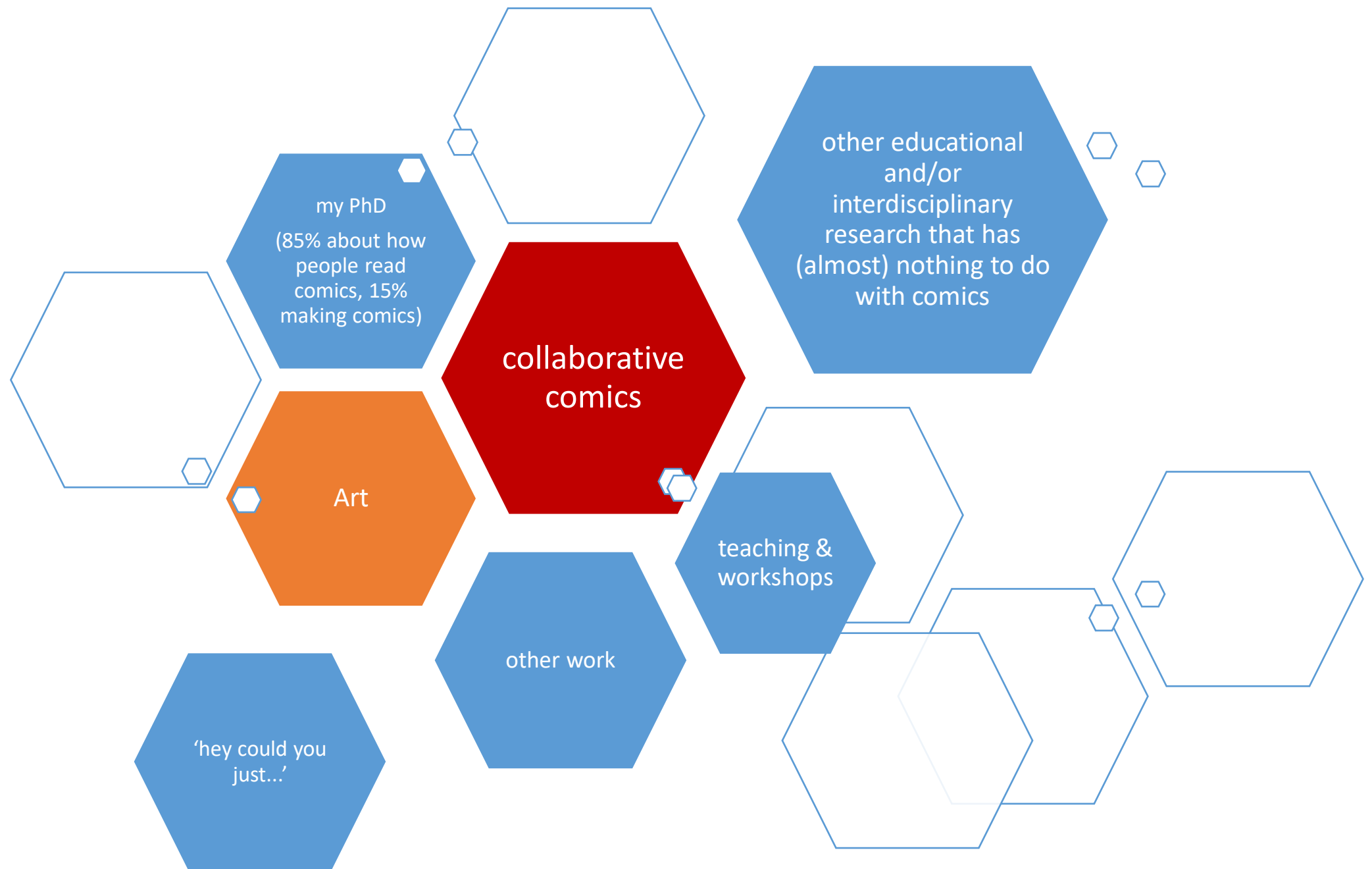
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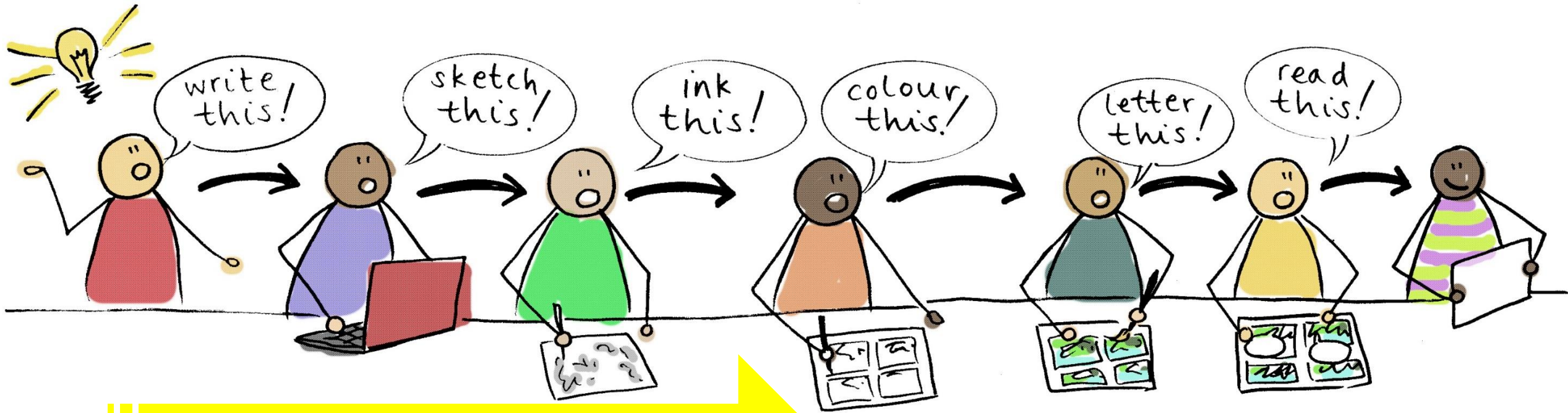
Publications +

- Wysocki L, Jackson M, Miers J, Webster J, Coxon B. [Making the invisible visible: hyperlinked webcomics as alternative points of entry to the digitised Gertrude Bell archive](#). *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 2019, epub ahead of print.
- McNicol S, Wysocki L. [Using comics as a research method](#). In: Paul A. Atkinson, Sara Delamont, Alexandru Cernat, and Richard Williams, ed. *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*. SAGE, 2019. In Press.
- Wysocki L, Leat D. [Collaborative comic as Boundary Object: the creation, reading, and uses of Freedom City Comics](#). *Cómic colaborativo como Objeto de Frontera: la creación, lectura y usos de Freedom City Comics*. *Tebeosfera* 2019, 3(10).
- McLaughlin J, Wysocki L. [Drawing the MRI: Qualitatively evaluating a comic form information guide to having an MRI and reflecting on the collaborative process](#). In: *Great North Children's Research Community Conference: Child Health Research Across Organisational Boundaries*. 2019, International Centre for Life, Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Wysocki L. [Linking research and practice: qualitative social science data collection at a UK comics convention](#). *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* 2019, 10(5-6), 505-524.
- Wysocki L. [Comics as a method throughout an empirical research process](#). In: *National Centre for Research Methods Research Methods Festival 2018*. 2018, University of Bath, UK.
- Wysocki L. [Farting Jellyfish and Synergistic Opportunities: The Story and Evaluation of Newcastle Science Comic](#). *The Comics Grid: Journal of Comics Scholarship* 2018, 8(1), 6.
- Wysocki L, Coxon B. [Freedom City Comics](#). Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Lydia Wysocki, 2017. Anthology of comics.
- Wysocki L. [Internet research methods second edition](#). *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* 2017, 40(1), 109-110.
- Wysocki L, Coxon B, (eds.). [Spineless: The Newcastle Science Comic](#). Newcastle: Lydia Wysocki, 2015.
- Wysocki L, Thompson M. [EPIC THEMES IN AWESOME WAYS: How we made Asteroid Belter: The Newcastle Science Comic, and why it matters](#). In: *Comics Forum*. 2014, Leeds, UK.
- Wysocki L, Thompson P, (eds.). [Asteroid Belter: The Newcastle Science Comic](#). Newcastle: Lydia Wysocki, 2013. Comic.
- Wysocki L. [Sociometric mapping of who talks to whom in class](#). In: *BEPA Special Interest Group: Innovative research*.





The process of making comics



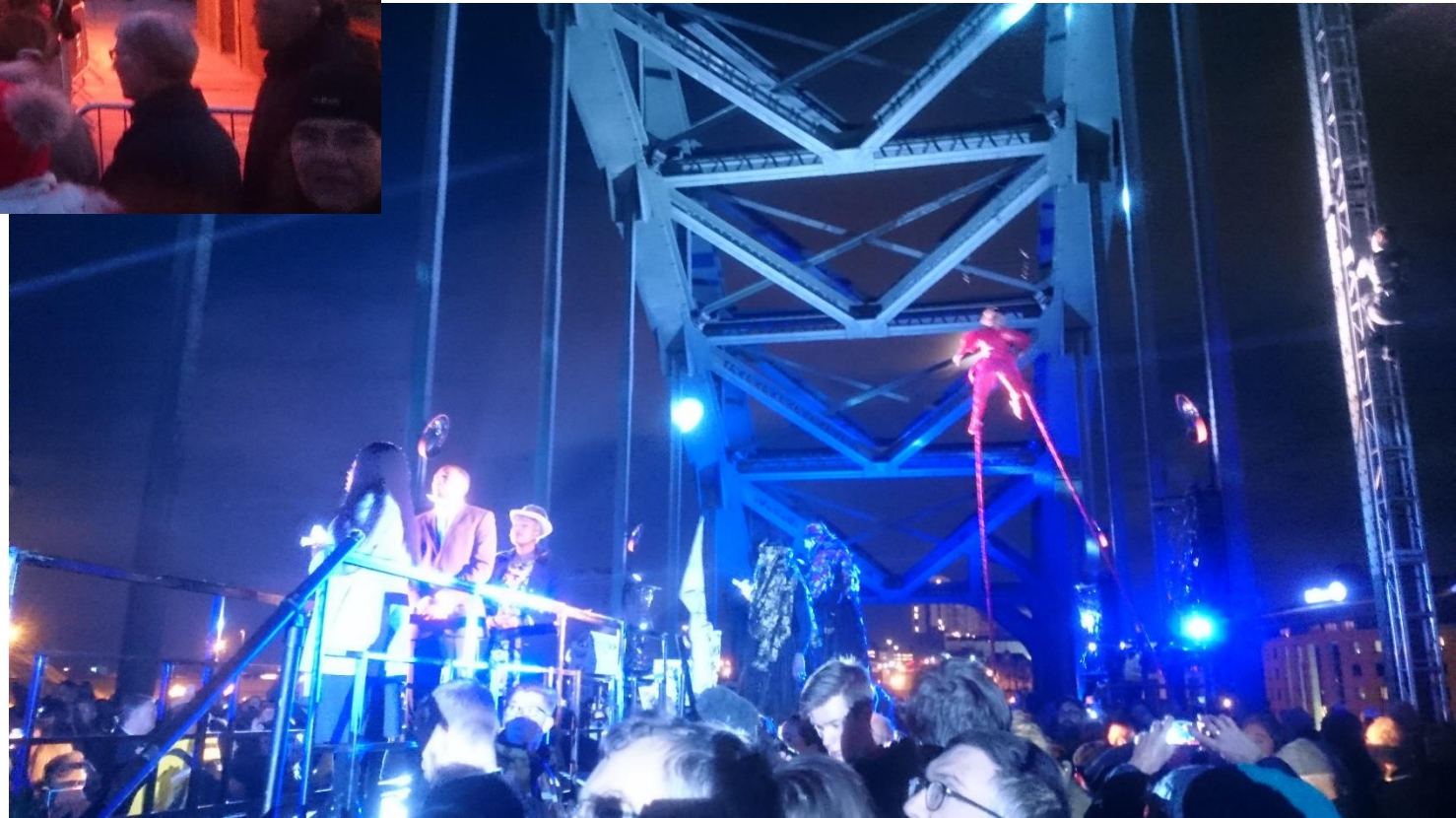
Input from subject specialists

Role of editor



Newcastle upon Tyne





FREEDOM CITY Comics

(stages: plan, recruit, draft, redraft, proof, final artwork, distribute, learning framework, evaluate)

Project: 9 comics creators, 7 academic researchers

Cover: comics creator Paul Peart-Smith, with alumnus Paul Barry and researcher
Brian Ward

Terry Wiley, working with researcher Rachel Hammersley

Patrice Aggs, working with researcher Brycchan Carey

Mack Chater and Ian Mayor, working with researcher Joan Allen

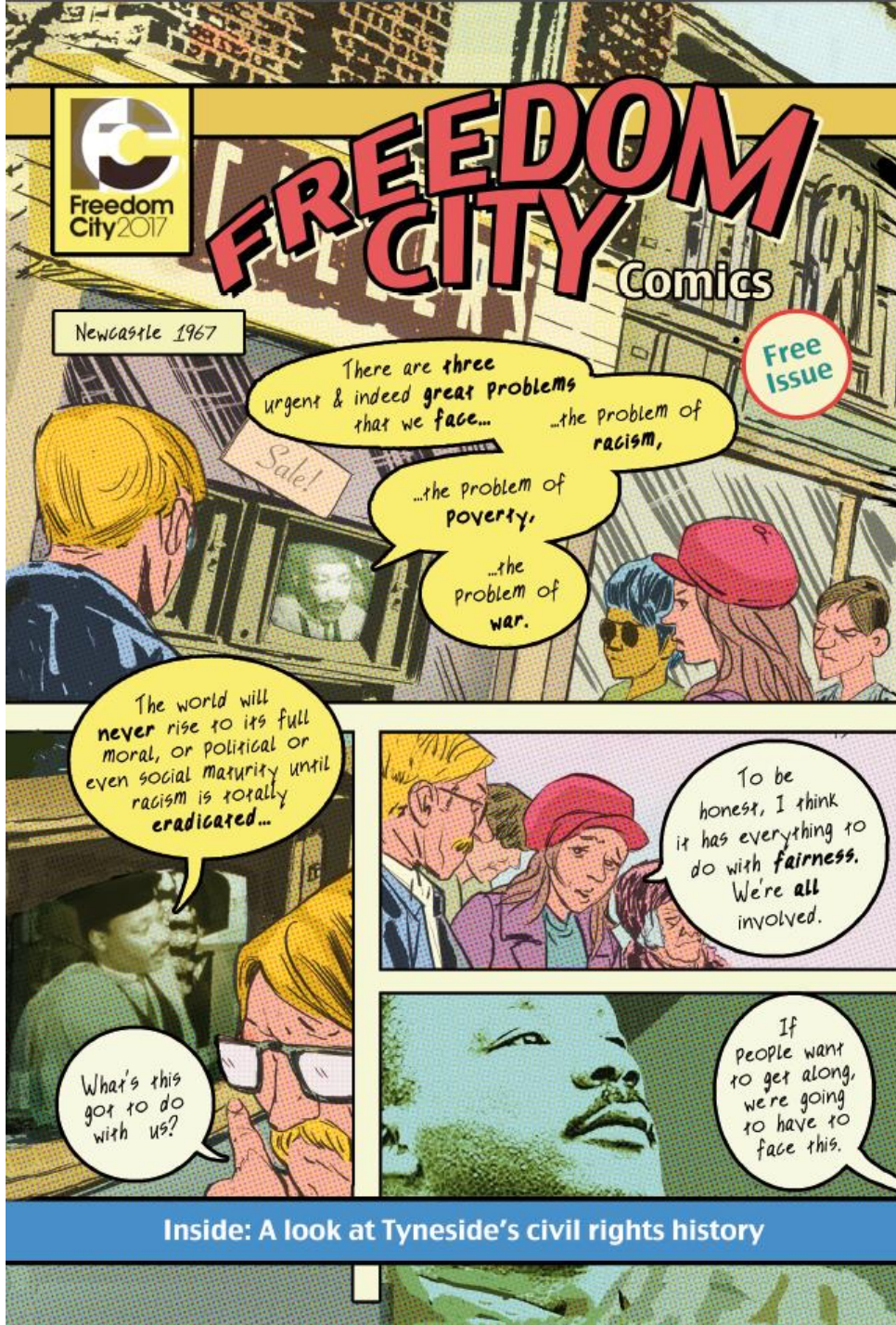
Sha Nazir, working with researcher Matt Perry

Ragavee Balendran, working with researcher Matt Perry

'Brick', working with project lead Matthew Grenby

Managing editor is Britt Coxon; Editor in chief is Lydia Wysocki







FREEDOM CITY comics

Newcastle 1968

There are 3 urgent
& indeed great problems
that we face...

...the problem of racism,

the problem of poverty,

& the problem of war.

...the world will never
rise to its full moral, or
political or even social
maturity until racism is
totally eradicated...

To be honest, I
think it has
everything to do
with fairness. We're
all involved.

What's this
got to do
with us?

if
we want
to get
along, we
all have
to face
this.

Inside: A look at Newcastle's civil rights history

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/fccomics/>



FREEDOM CITY comics

Newcastle 1968

...we are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. There can be no separate black path to power and fulfilment that does not intersect white roots and there can be no separate white path to power and fulfilment, short of social disaster...

...that does not recognise the necessity of sharing that power with coloured aspirations of freedom and human dignity.

To be honest, I think it has everything to do with fairness. We're all involved.

What's this got to do with us?

if we want to get along, we all have to face this.

Inside: A look at Newcastle's civil rights history

<https://research.ncl.ac.uk/fccomics/>

Notes on intro/conclusion comics

1 page intro, 1 page conclusion, to introduce and bookend this anthology. Need to show links between Martin Luther King's honorary degree ceremony and the broader civil rights (civic/political participation) history of the North East.

Introduction (1 page): watching MLK's speech on a shop window TV, crowd grows, discussion of relevance of racism/war/poverty to NE. The crowd, prompted by MLK's speech, thinking about and debating the notion of rights. Racism, war, poverty. Perhaps someone in the crowd could advance the view that these are all part of some distant American Civil Rights movement. But no, the comic could go on to show, these are our fights too, and fights that have been fought on Tyneside in fact...

nefa



▶ ▶ 🔊 8:42 / 9:50

⚙️ 📺 📱 🖥️


Feedback

Martin Luther King Jr. Meme Generator

The Fastest Meme Generator on the Planet. Easily add text to images or memes.

Opsgenie Never Miss Critical Alerts Start for Free

Spacing Add Image Draw




Upload your own image

Search all memes

Martin Luther King Jr.

My Popular



Top Text

Bottom Text

More Options

Pro-tip: If you Login or Join Imgflip, your captioned memes will be saved in your account

Private (must download image to save or share)

Remove "imgflip.com" watermark

Generate

Reset

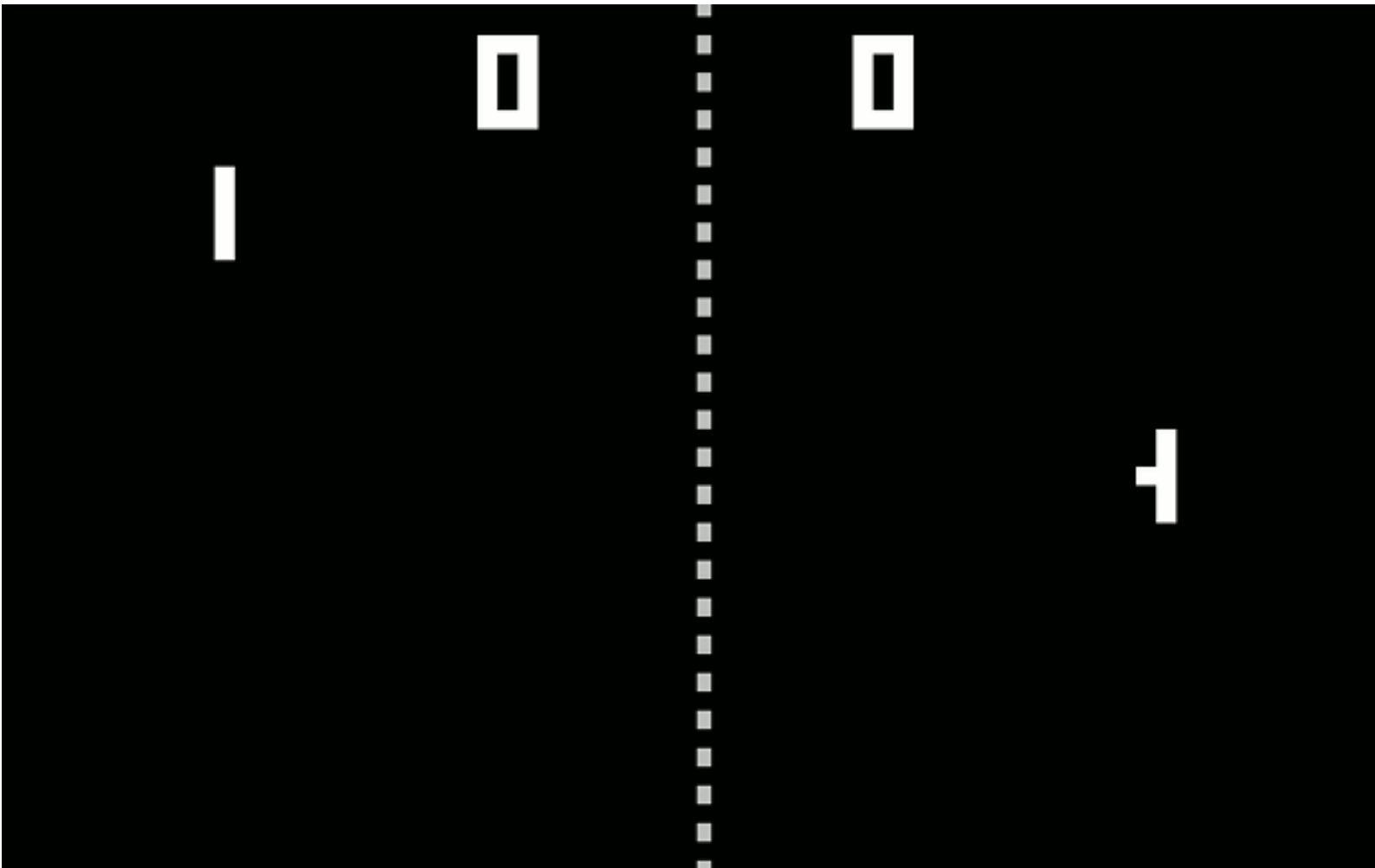
Featured Martin Luther King Jr. Memes See All





FREEDOM CITY Comics

Learning
framework



Wysocki L, Leat D. (2019). Collaborative comic as Boundary Object: the creation, reading, and uses of Freedom City Comics / Cómic colaborativo como Objeto de Frontera: la creación, lectura y usos de Freedom City Comics. *Revista Tebeosfera* (Special Issue: Comics and Education), 3(10). ISSN: 1579-2811

https://www.tebeosfera.com/documentos/collaborative_comic_as_boundary_object_the_creation_reading_and_uses_of_freedom_city_comics.html in English

https://www.tebeosfera.com/documentos/comic_colaborativo_como_objeto_frontera_la_creacion_lectura_y_usos_de_freedom_city_comics.html in Spanish

Distribution:

- print (15k initial print run)
- digital
- Freedom City 2017 festival (venues around Tyneside)
- The Crack regional listings magazine (22k additional print run)
- learning resource pack
- BALTIC Gateshead/Great Exhibition of the North
- V&A (Race, games and play study event)
- academic article (Tebeosfera)

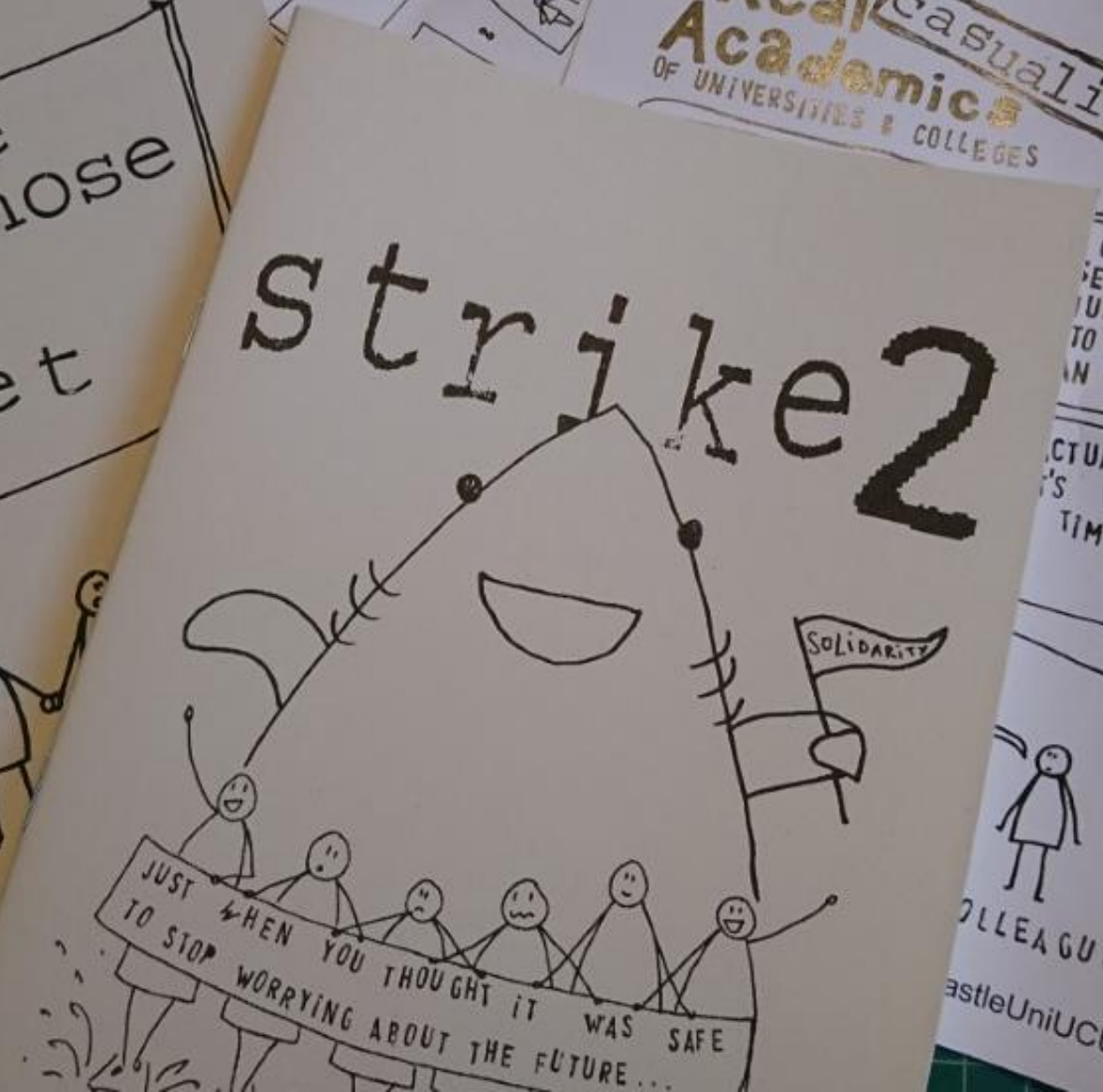
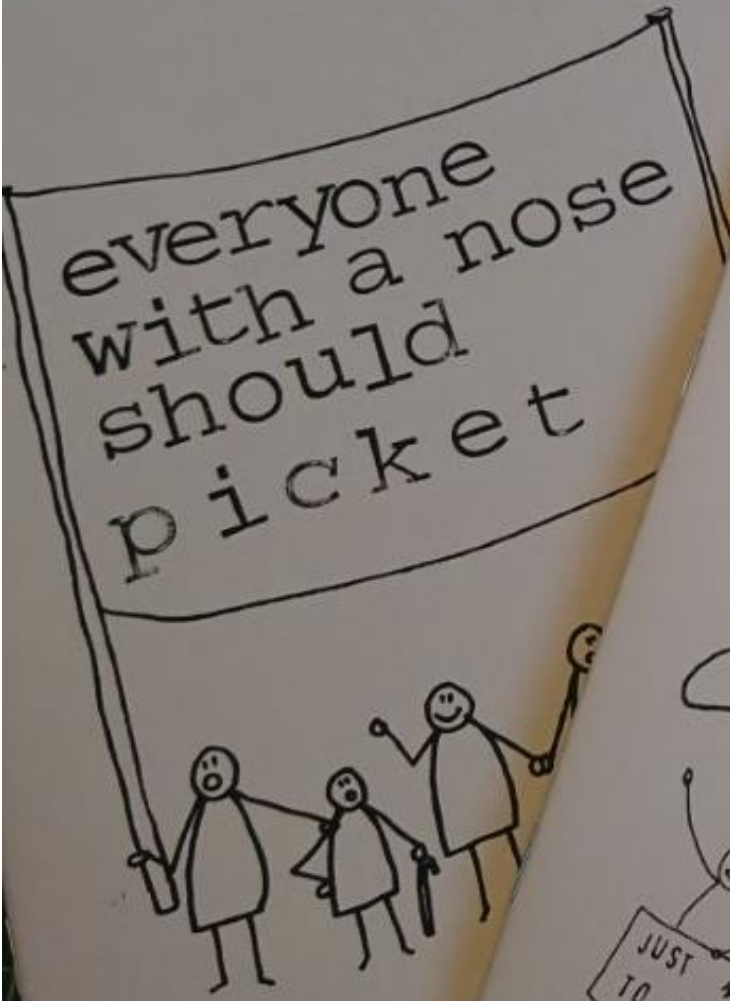
**THE
CRACK**



BALTIC

V&A





What do we want? To support our students

the **Real** **Academic** **casualised**

OF UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES



COLLEAGUE

castleUniUCU



<https://twitter.com/NewcastleUniUCU/status/973491649685999616>

OUR PENSION AXED.



SUPPORT OUR STRIKE TO DEFEND USS

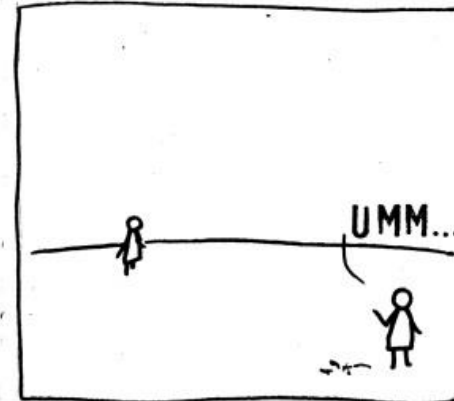
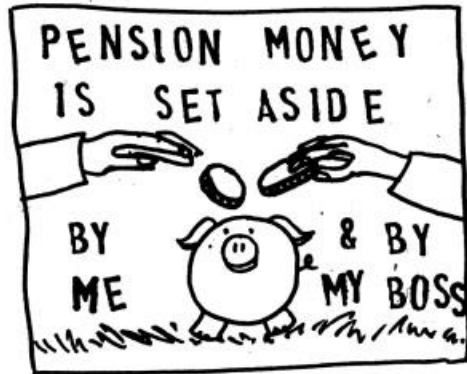
Why we are striking

We are university staff and members of the University and College Union (UCU) and we are taking strike action to defend our right to a fair pension. University employers want to end guaranteed pensions and reduce retirement income for all.

www.ucu.org.uk/strikeforuss

UCU
University and College Union

day
seven



limbo six



REMEMBER
THIS? (

hhho00000nnnnnnkk



WELL,
NOW
THIS



36 PAGES OF
COMICS FROM THE FEB - MARCH
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* SOLIDARITY PACK £6
{3 COPIES TO SHARE}

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Striike one 2018 distribution:

- self-publishing online, modern equivalent of photocopied zine – daily after picketing and defrosting
- twitter & blog, not viral numbers but plenty for me
- collected edition, ‘profits’ to union branch
- DIY, small press comics (not bijou imprint) approach, methods, and ‘profits’
- 200 print run



USS PENSION JUSTICE. WE EARNED IT.

Your pension contribution is already 8.8% of your salary. USS has ignored most of the Joint Expert Panel's (JEP) recommendations for changes to the discredited valuation methodology. If no agreement can be reached that the employers will pay any increases that arise, your contribution will rise to as much as 11.7% of salary by April 2020.

UCU's policy is for NO increases in member contributions and NO cuts to benefits. We must act now to protect our interests and secure pension justice for our committed and hard working membership.

VOTE YES TO STRIKE ACTION. VOTE YES TO ACTION SHORT OF A STRIKE.

www.ucu.org.uk

FOUR FIGHTS ONE VOICE

- Pay in equality • Job insecurity
- Rising workloads • Pay devaluation

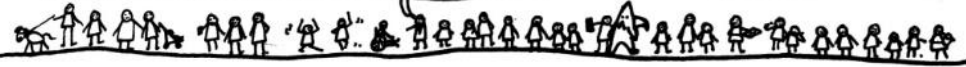
SUPPORT THE STRIKES

**Eight days from
25 November-4 December**

www.ucu.org.uk



BEING ON STRIKE IS ALRIGHT,
I DON'T GET PAID BUT I ACTUALLY
HAVE TIME TO HAVE A LIFE OUTSIDE WORK



YEAH, IT'S LIKE
MID-OCTOBER



UMM IT'S
NOVEMBER



THE DATE WHEN EVERYONE WHO IS
DISADVANTAGED BY **pay gaps**
FINISHES WORK FOR THE YEAR

FOR EXAMPLE, WOMEN WORKING HERE
EARN **18% less*** THAN MEN
DOING THE SAME OR EQUAL JOBS,

SO WE FINISH **18% EARLY**



THAT'S AMAZING!
CAN I JOIN IN?



*18.1% MEDIAN GAP, 20% MEAN GAP
2018 REPORT BY NCL.AC.UK



IF YOU'RE A WOMAN, &/OR
BLACK OR ASIAN OR
MINORITY ETHNIC, &/OR
DISABLED, YOU'RE
ALREADY INVOLVED



HMM,
NOT ME
THEN



ALL THOSE PEOPLE
DON'T DISAPPEAR
THOUGH,
DO THEY



OBVS. WE KEEP
WORKING, UNLESS
WE'RE ON STRIKE



THAT'S
NOT
FAIR



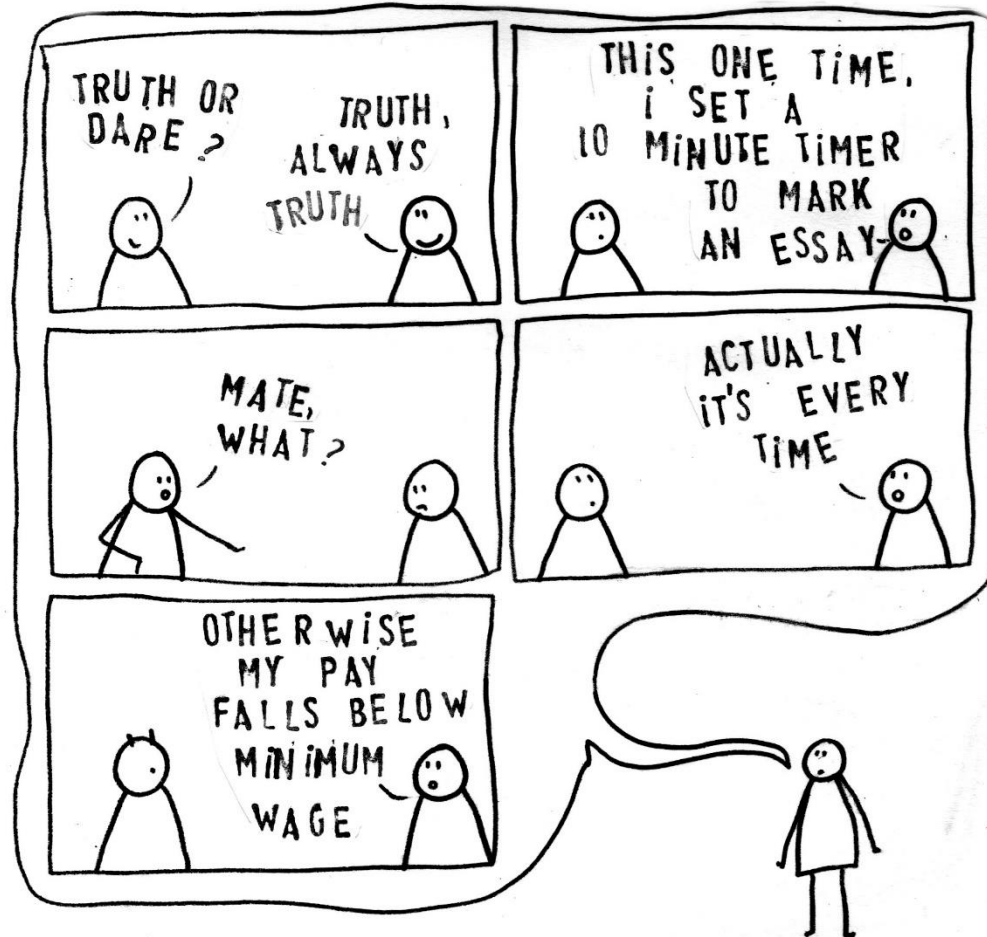
THAT'S OUR POINT



the Real Academics

casualised

OF UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES



A. COLLEAGUE



#UCUStrikesBack

@NewcastleUniUCU



#UCUStrikesBack

@NewcastleUniUCU



(Sussex University)

<https://twitter.com/aliasbelow/status/974293246301147138>

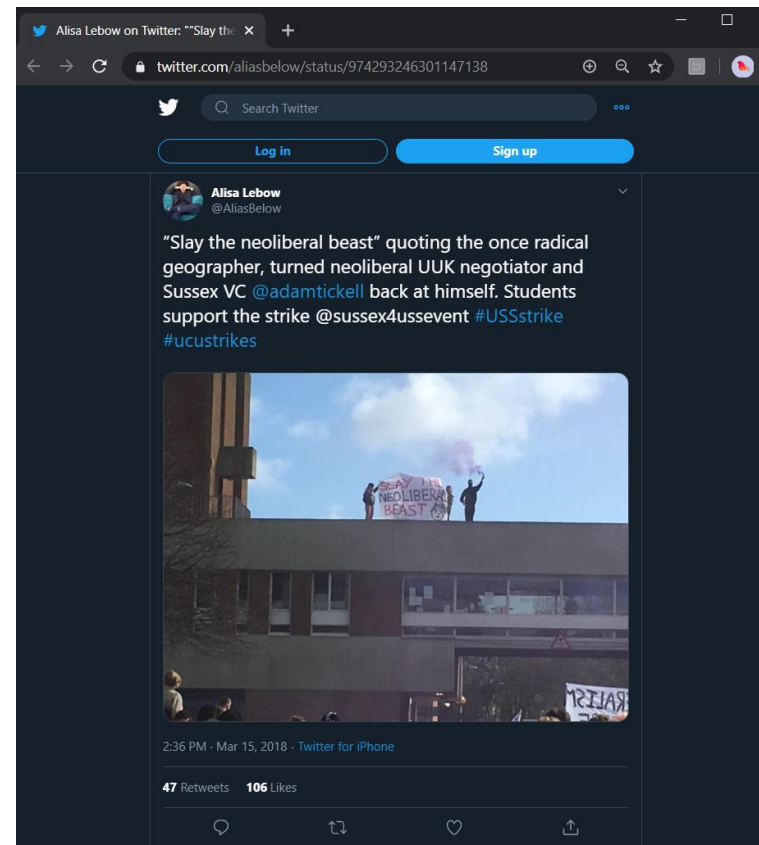


Laura Gill at the University of Sussex picket line holds a placard reading 'SLAY THE NEOLIBERAL BEAST,' a quotation from Adam Tickell. From a tweet by Benjamin Fowler, and used with both his and Laura Gill's approval.
Original tweet available at:
https://twitter.com/B_B_Fowler/status/968481178444541952

<https://www.histhum.com/notallgeographers/>



<https://thetab.com/uk/sussex/2019/11/27/breaking-sussex-house-has-been-blockaded-by-protestors-37750>



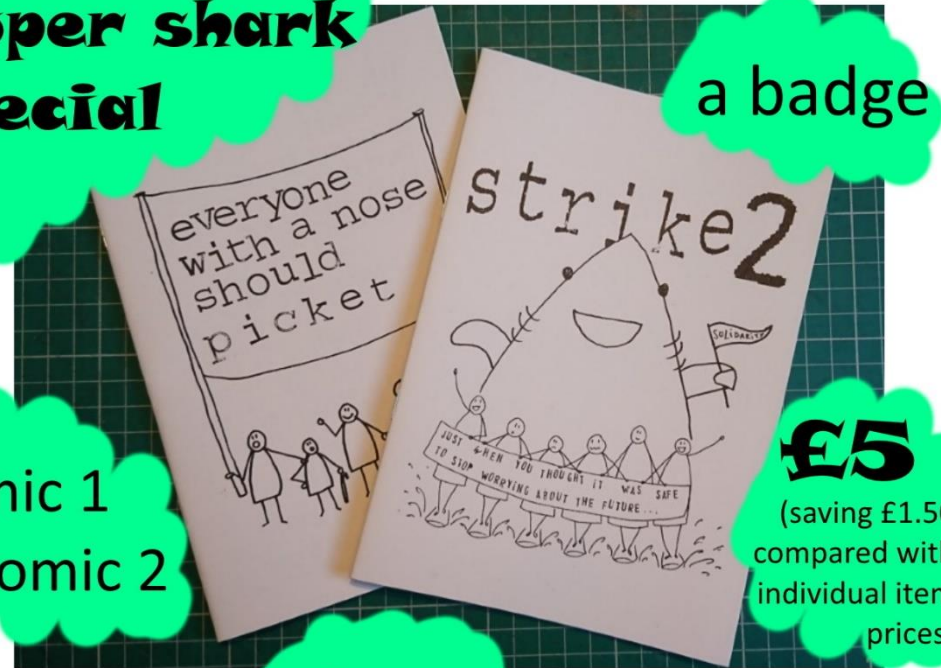
<https://www.facebook.com/pg/Occupy-Sussex-298629560259092/posts/>



Super shark special

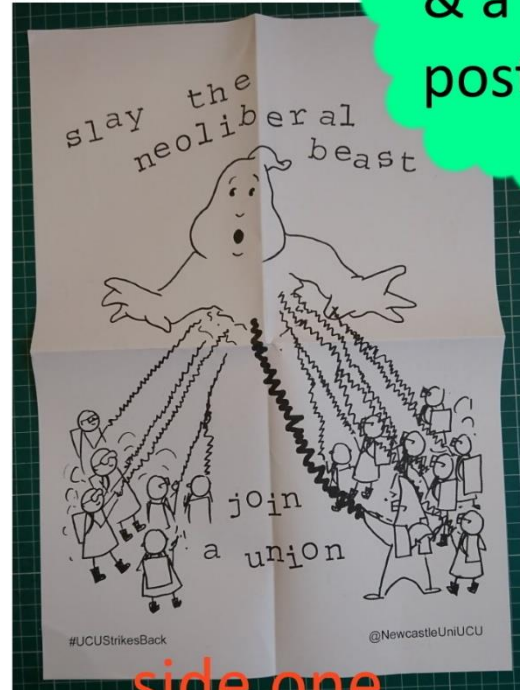
a badge

comic 1
& comic 2

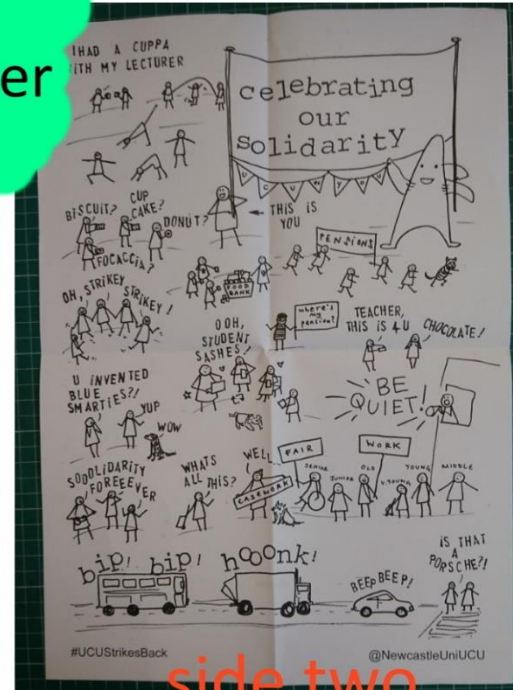


£5
(saving £1.50
compared with
individual item
prices)

& a
poster



side one



side two

Striike two 2019 distribution:

- sent to print day before (comrades collect from printers, box of fliers appears in union branch office)
- 1000/day x 8 days distributed from picket lines, sometimes all gone by 8am
- shared with sOciAL mEdIA StrAtEGy team, they post online each morning, then others share (mostly twitter, some instagram, don't entirely understand tiktok)
- collected edition, riso printed, 'profits' to union branch, 150 print run (+ 100 posters)
- Bishopsgate Archive (London)
- daily comics archive as PDFs free online

<https://appliedcomicsetc.com/portfolio/strike-comics-2019/>

Striiike three 2020?

Distribution maths:

Title	Print run
Freedom City Comics	37000
striike one collected edition (Everyone With A Nose Should Picket)	200
striike two from picket lines	8000
striike two collected edition (Just When You Thought It Was Safe To Stop Worrying About The Future)	150
TOTAL	45350

Distribution conclusions:

- the aim is not to get rich
- hybrids are good. Print/digital, research/practice, fun/serious
- scale is becoming an issue... total 84650+ printed
Applied Comics Etc comics, looking into ways to make this endeavour more sustainable
- getting good at this process, developing as a coproduction methodology

General comics advice:

1. Work with people who know what they're doing
 - a. experienced comics creators
 - b. subject specialists
 - c. print, web, distribution...
2. Be cautious about money
 - a. who pays? Where's their money coming from?
 - b. who gets paid? What are they being paid for?
 - c. who doesn't pay? Free at the point of use (don't expect people to pay to access engagement)
3. Be clear about audience(s)
 - a. core audience & broader audience(s)
 - b. how to get the comic to them
 - c. maybe involve them in the process

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