

Call for Papers – CLOSURE: The Kiel University e-Journal for Comics Studies #5 (November 2018)

Open Section

In the fall of 2018, CLOSURE will once again offer a forum for all facets of comics studies. From literary, cultural, media, social and image research to the sciences and beyond: the fifth edition of CLOSURE continues our ongoing search for the best and most innovative articles and reviews representing the state of the art in comics research. We welcome detailed close readings as much as comics theory and pioneering approaches to the medium —our open section comprises a diverse range of interdisciplinary studies of all things ›comic«.

Thematic Section: »Failure«

The focus of the thematic section in CLOSURE # 5 is ›failure«. How do comics approach the habit of the ›best-laid plans of mice and men« to go askew? Whether things fall apart on the personal or the collective level: mishaps and deficits appear as an ineradicable shadow of perfectionism. Failure is a dogged reminder of the limits of growth, the flaws in a design — and the lopsided image in the nine-panel grid. For CLOSURE #5, we seek contributions that trace the ways in which comics address failing fortunes, regrettable calamities, and abject frustrations. The social and political dimension of failure can be addressed as much as formal and narrative failures. Whether Charlie Brown misses the football yet again, Maggie Chascarillo in *Love and Rockets* faces all-too realistic adversity or Admian Tomine traces the disappointments of his solitary figures — is there a form of failure specific to comics?

Possible topics for the thematic section include, but are not limited to:

- Failure as a narrative strategy
 - Loss, victory, and perspective
 - Fear of failure: the narration of emotion and empathy
 - Thwarted evil plans: failure, (re-)narration, and seriality
 - After failure: catharsis, apocalypse, and learning from mistakes

- Characterization and Representation
 - The art of failure: hero's journeys, myths, progress (and regression)
 - Heroes and antiheroes, losers and outsiders
 - Self-reference: interrogating the failures of comics in comics
 - Failing at conformity: queerness, heteronormativity, and the interrogation of failure

CLOSURE

Kieler e-Journal für Comichforschung

- Formal failure
 - Comics, art, fragmentation
 - Aesthetics and non-narrative
 - The failure of form: thwarted closure, collapsing panels, text and image at odds
 - Changing taste, shifting canon: 'bad' comics and their critics
- Intermedial failure
 - Publishing booms and busts: target audiences, ill-timed ventures, dead-ends
 - Failed careers: exploitation, discrimination and the production of comics
 - Failure as a matter of principle: DIY, Comix, Underground, Zines
 - A failing medium? Markets, value, cultural capital

Please send your abstract for the open section or the thematic section (~ 3000 chars.) as well as a short bio-bibliographical blurb to closure@comicforschung.uni-kiel.de until December 1st, 2017

The contributions (35.000-50.000 chars) are expected until March 30th, 2018.

For more information about the e-journal CLOSURE and our previous issues, please visit www.closure.uni-kiel.de