Call for Papers

DIEGESIS 8.1, summer 2019

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Topic: "Narrating Reality in Comics"

Special issue with guest editors:

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Deadline for the submission of abstracts: January 7th, 2018

Deadline for the submission of articles: August 31st, 2018

About the TOPIC:

While comics are still primarily associated with fictional stories and humorous content, from very early on, factual narration had a firm place in the history of comics. Already in the 1940s, various institutions and interest groups recognized the potential of comics to bring certain ideas to a reading public. In this way, educational or informational comics served as a vehicle to transfer specific knowledge, promote desired attitudes, or simply sell products. Despite such instrumentalization, the entertainment factor in comics continued to play a role. From 1941 on, readers could regularly find issues at their newspaper kiosk that provided them with *real* stories, for reality – according to the slogan of the series *True Comics* – was "a thousand times more exciting than fiction".

With the establishment of graphic novels in the 1980s, comics were finally liberated from constraints imposed by the narrative medium: from this point on, comics could present expansive and ambitious self-contained narratives independent of any formal or content requirements. The graphic novel has shown a particular propensity for narrating reality, which has given rise not least to the prominence of countless auto/biographical texts. This in turn set new standards for comics. In addition to biographical and autobiographical comics, historical and political reportage currently draws great attention within the realm of graphic narratives.

Against this backdrop, the issue of *DIEGESIS* on "Narrating Reality in Comics" seeks to highlight the particularities of factual graphic narration and thereby focus on the following questions:

- Why are comics and graphic novels increasingly used in order to examine aspects and themes in our reality? What possibilities do these forms afford in comparison to other media?
- How are the specifics of factual narration captured in comics (for example with regard to temporal and narrative levels, the interrelationship of text and image, or self-reflexivity)?
- How does factual narration justify itself in comics, and which narrative strategies and techniques evoke both the demand for legitimacy and a way of upholding this ideal?

Beyond these aspects, we welcome contributions that take a historical perspective, pursue a typological approach (examining individual genres), or discuss fundamental systematic lines of thought. Case studies of individual works are welcome insofar as the texts are discussed with regard to broader aspects of factual narration in comics.

We invite abstracts of approximately 350-400 words by January 7th, 2018 at the latest. Please send your abstract, along with a brief CV, to the editorial team of *DIEGESIS*: diegesis@uni-wuppertal.de. The editorial team and the (guest) editors

will decide on the acceptability of proposals by February 15th, 2018. Contributions have to be submitted by August 31st, 2018. The issue will be published in June 2019.

In addition, we always welcome REVIEWS of new works (i.e. works published in the last three to four years) in the field of narratology; we specifically welcome cross-disciplinary contributions in addition to contributions from those working in the fields of language and literature. Recommendations for reviews can be sent to the aforementioned e-mail address at any time; in your e-mail, you should name the book(s) you would like to review and provide a brief overview of your academic career.

Furthermore, we would also like to invite suggestions for CONFERENCE REPORTS on any events in the field of narrative research. If you want to send us proposals for such reports please include brief information on the topic, venue, date, and organizers of the event as well as a short outline of your academic career.

About *DIEGESIS*:

DIEGESIS is the first interdisciplinary journal dedicated to narrative research that provides free online access to full-text articles and reviews (www.diegesis.uni-wuppertal.de). The high standard of work published in DIEGESIS is ensured by a combination of competitive calls for papers and a peer review process.

DIEGESIS is published at the University of Wuppertal and in cooperation with the local Centre of Narrative Research (CNR) (www.zef.uni-wuppertal.de) by Matei Chihaia (Romance studies), Sandra Heinen (literature and media studies), Matías Martínez (German studies), Michael Scheffel (general literary studies) and Roy Sommer (English and American studies).