

Unraveling the connections between comics studies and fan studies in the context of political correctness: The case of Hergé's boy scout reporter Tintin

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There exist a substantial body of comic book studies on Hergé's Tintin pointing to many violations in relation to political correctness. Most (in)famous are the early works of Hergé portraying the population in Congo, in India and the native population in North and South America in racist or derogatory ways. Most notably the Tintingate in Sweden (2011), where copies of "Tintin in Congo" were banned and removed from some Swedish libraries.

The research interest of this paper is to understand how fans react to violations of political correctness, and how such fan studies can inform the comic book studies in relation to public discourse and political regulation. The problem is that comic books can be viewed as a medium for satirical selfreflection on cultural and political misconceptions. In "Valérien and Laureline" created by Pierre Christin and Jean-Claude Mézières the human race is portrayed as infinitely naïve and exhibiting vast misconceptions about their importance and contributions to the universe.

If comic book studies document the circulation of political incorrectness and the cultural imperialist ideology and fan studies document the celebration of diversity, satire, and fun, how are we to understand how comic book discourse is produced and how fans appropriate or domesticate franchises such as The Adventures of Tintin? Can European youth cosplay as the fair-haired Tintin?

This paper will present an analysis of both current Tintin community discourse and comic fan representations of Tintin and friends trying to answer the question: Is it possible to enjoy canonical comic books and at the same time being able of critically reflect the errors of the comic book ways?

Biography:

Tem Frank Andersen, PhD, Associate Professor, InDiMedia–Centre for Interactive Digital Media and Experience Design, Aalborg University, Denmark. Andersen's research focus on user studies and the Culture of Interactive Digital Media. His work range from studies in domestication of wearable technologies, visualization and animation of body performance. Further his research include studies of "the super human" in comic book representations, remediations and receptions. Andersen's work as a professional comic book reviewer has lead to interesting not yet published insights of the work of Hergé.

Thessa Jensen, PhD, Associate Professor, InDiMedia–Centre for Interactive Digital Media and Experience Design, Aalborg University, Denmark. Jensen's research has the ethical considerations of Løgstrup's ontological ethics at its fulcrum. Her work ranges from digital recognition based on Hegel and Honneth, to establishing design fiction as part of a strategic design process for corporations and institutions. She has been an active part of online fandom since 2012, maintains a Tumblrblog, and writes fan fiction.