OH, HELLO! YOU MAY BE ASKING: WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT COMICS, ANYWAY?

I'M SO GLAD YOU ASKED!

HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF COMICS' UNIQUE STRENGTHS:

1. WE LIVE IN AN INTERFACE-DRIVEN SOCIETY WHERE VISUAL LANGUAGE WAS DEVELOPED IN COMICS BY CARTOONISTS OVER THE PAST CENTURY, FULL STOP.

COMICS LITERACY IS KEY TO A SHARPER MODERN LITERACY IN GENERAL.

2. COMICS OPERATE ON MULTIPLE LEVELS AT ONCE—OFFERING A MORE IMMERSIVE, ENGAGING READER EXPERIENCE THAN ANY OTHER MASS MEDIUM.

(SO MUCH CONTENT IS CONVEYED NON-VERBALLY, AND OUR BRAINS PROCESS IT READILY WHEN WE READ COMICS!)

3. COMICS CAN MAKE HUGE IDEAS AND SUBJECTS ACCESSIBLE!

TAKE IT FROM ME, WORKING TO CONVEY A FIRST-PERSON HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT INTO SOMETHING MANY MORE PEOPLE CAN PROCESS, HUMANIZE, AND APPLY TO OUR WORLD TODAY.

(THEY DON'T NEED TO BE HUGE IDEAS, THOUGH! COMICS CAN JUST AS EASILY BE ABOUT DONUTS, SQUIRRELS, OR THE FEELING OF BARE GRASS ON YOUR FEET.)

4. COMICS ARE THE MOST DEMOCRATIC MASS STORYTELLING MEDIUM!

THEY'RE CHEAP, LOW-RISK CREATIVE PLATFORMS FOR PEOPLE TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES, HELPING REFLECT OUR SOCIETY MORE FULLY WHEN WE ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO BOTH CONVEY THEIR OWN IDEAS, AND BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PEOPLE AROUND THEM.

5. AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, COMICS ARE OFTEN EASY TARGETS FOR THOSE AVERSE TO IDEAS, EMPATHY, AND UNCOMFORTABLE HISTORY:

THEIR HISTORICAL VULNERABILITIES (FROM MCCARTHYISM TO TODAY) AND VISUAL NATURE ALLOW COMICS' SUBJECT MATTER TO BE ATTACKED WITHOUT EVEN BEING READ, ALL TO UNDERCUT THE IMPACT OF POINTS 3+4.

COMICS ARE OUR CANARY IN THE COAL MINE.

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AND

6. COMICS MAKE LIFELONG READERS!

THEY'RE NOT A "GATEWAY" AS MUCH AS AN EFFECTIVE FORMAT FOR CULTIVATING HABITS AND CURIOUSITY, MAKING READING PART OF THE FABRIC OF EVERYDAY LIFE.

AMEN!

THANKS FOR LISTENING!