

The Graphic, the Comic, the Postmodern, and the Fantastic: A Study on Alan Moore's League of Extraordinary Gentlemen.

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Abstract

This paper explores the postmodern and fantastic aspects of Alan Moore's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, while simultaneously delineating the differences between comic books and graphic novels. In the first section of the text, the author explicates the historical development of the art of comics, then describes the borders between the comic book and graphic novel genre. In order to surmount the already confusing classification of both categories, the author uses the complexity theory proposed by Achim Hescher to distinguish traditional/lengthy comic books from graphic novels. When one applies the theory of complexity to the first two volumes of *The League*, the work resembles more of an extended or augmented comic book than a conventional graphic novel. This result makes perfect sense considering that one of the primary intents of the authors is to connect the comic tradition with Victorian print media and literature. In the next section of the text, the author touches upon the postmodern and the fantastic elements that are located within the world of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. Moore seamlessly blends in his steampunk narrative. Both Moore and O'Neill enforce a process of constant intertwining of science fiction, history, fiction, and pop culture, which allow them to be admitted into the literary world, as well as provide ample evidence connecting Victorian century popular fiction with the comic book medium, including the graphic novel. In *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, Moore has created an effective simulation of the Victorian era, which serves to challenge the very form and content of the narrative. On the one hand, the metafictional narrative image of what reading a Victorian juvenile magazine would be like and on the other hand,

expand on it, creating connections between the graphic novel and other media. The League is a highly interesting graphic work as it integrates, both visually and textually, the low-bracket literary tradition. The graphic novel, first seen as a mere capitalist category and market, is a natural continuation of the comic book medium. Comic books and graphic novels are better than the other genre. The League demonstrates the flexibility and hybridity of the present theme in most postmodern works, as well as shows the close connections between

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