Gene Yang Lecture Notes

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Gene Yang is currently a schoolteacher, who teaches Computer Science, Math and Art.

What is Comics?

Notice something strange about that sentence? It's because, according to Scott McCloud (the author of "Understanding Comics")'s definition, we're regarding comics as it's own medium, as credible as say art, prose, music, etc.

Several definitions for comics have been created to settle the dispute of what "comics" is exactly:

"Sequential Art" - Will Eisner
Any art that is meant to be viewed in sequence.

"Images juxtaposed in delivered sequence in order to convey an idea and/or an aesthetic response" - Scott McCloud

From David Kunzle- The 4 prerequisites of the 'comic strip'

1. There must be a sequence of separate images
2. There must be a preponderance of image over text.
3. The medium in which the strip appears and for which it is originally intended must be reproductive; that is printed for a mass medium.
4. The sequence must tell a story that is both moral and topical.

BIG QUESTION: How do you get published?

Distributing self-made comics and making it public: the internet is a great facet for this, with methods like: posting on review sites, sending out emails, making a blog, etc).

Getting a publisher, for book publishing is trickier -- you need an agent.

Getting a publisher:

1. Make your comic book.
2. Look on publisher’s website for guidelines.
3. Make a proposal (summary, sample, cover).
4. Send it.
5. They print it.
Gene Yang himself first got published through the Xeric grant, a grant created by the makers of Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles for aspiring comic book writers.

**ANOTHER BIG QUESTION: How do you make comic books?**

A: Comic books are created from ideas through your personal creative process. They can be gathered through personal life, problems, influences, etc. As soon as you have an idea, make a plot summary. Create character designs showcasing sketches in different positions. Make a draft of your script; describe each panel, dialogue, sound effects. Get feedback from your friends, if you want to be particular you can use the Steven King method. Send your material to four friends, have them review it. If more than two decide that something needs to be changed, change it. If approximately two decide that something needs to be changed, you decide for yourself whether you would like to change it.

How to make a Comic book:

1. Have an idea: Yang drew inspiration from his life.
2. Write out a plot summary.
3. Design characters.
4. Sometimes, Yang makes scripts with ‘shots,’ then dialogue.
5. Draw thumbnails: Yang draws on Velum in order to be able to reverse picture and catch his mistakes; Others may draw on Bristol board.
6. Do final draft.
7. Publish.