

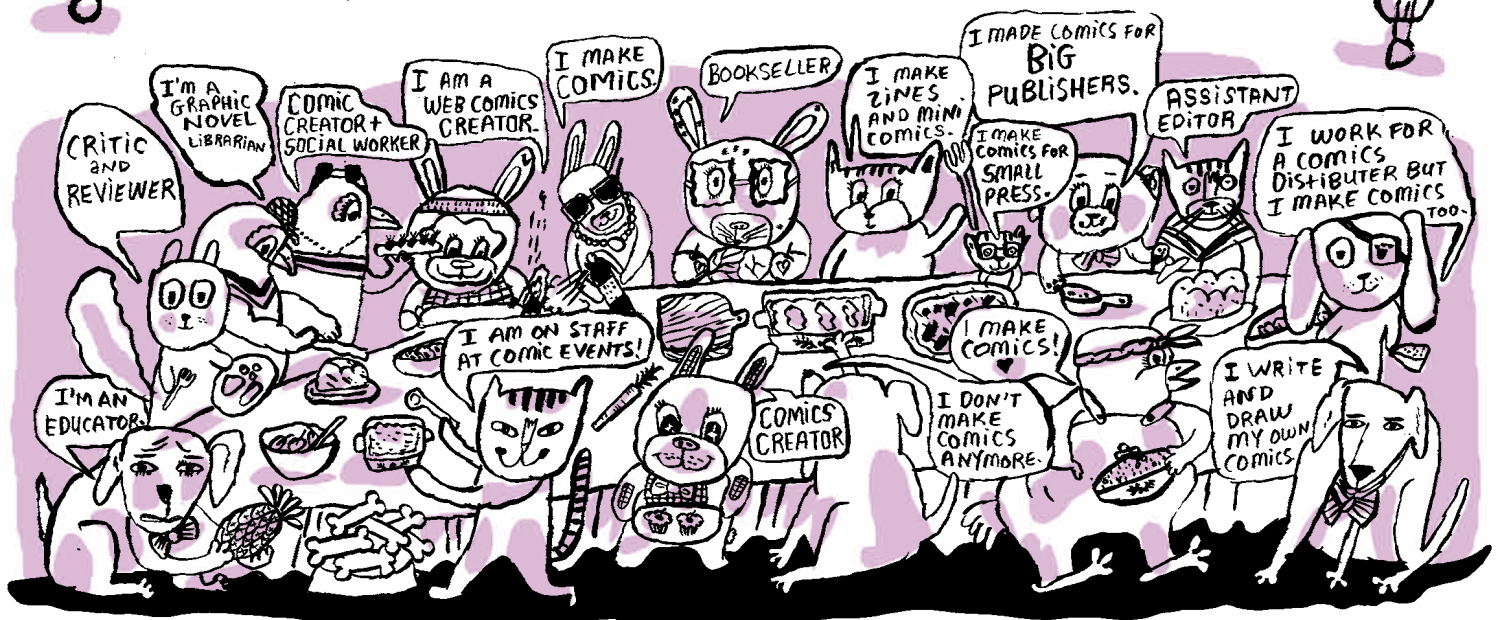
# GENDER AND COMICS

## POTLUCK

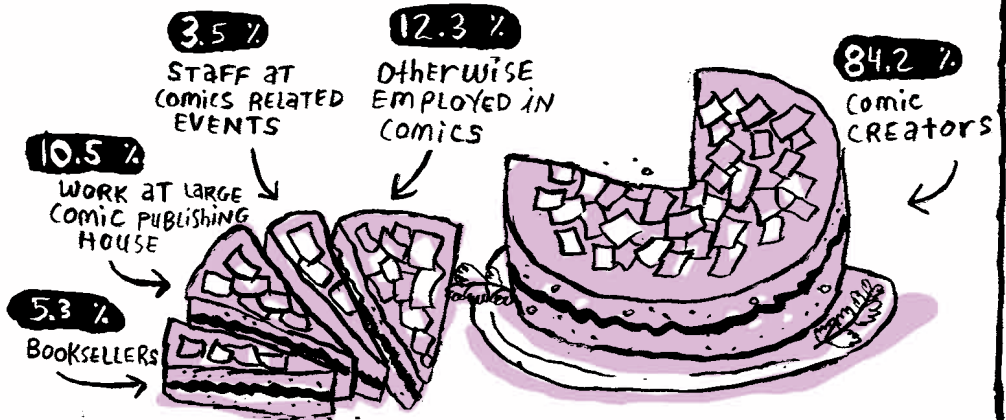
AN ANONYMOUS SURVEY OF 60+ WOMEN and TRANS PEOPLE IN THE COMICS INDUSTRY

BY ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE AND ESTHER PEARL WATSON  
WITH ASSISTANCE FROM JAMES PAYNE

### EXPERIENCE BROUGHT TO THE TABLE:



IN WHAT  
AREA OF  
★ THE  
COMICS  
★ INDUSTRY  
DO YOU  
WORK?



# HOW LONG HAVE YOU WORKED IN THE INDUSTRY?

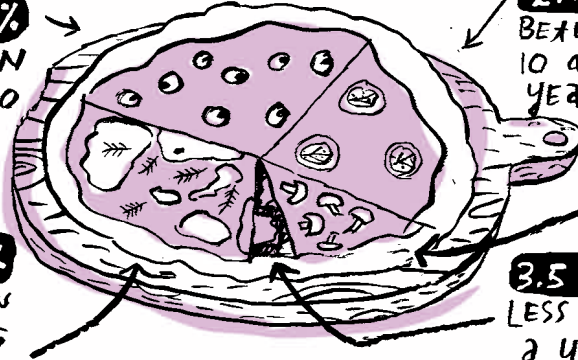
36.6% BETWEEN 5 and 10 years

29.8% LESS than 5 years

21.1% BETWEEN 10 and 25 years

12.3% OVER 25 years

3.5% LESS than a year



# TESTIMONIALS

In the 5 years since I've been making comics, the comics world has changed and is changing for the better.

COMIC CREATOR

NOTICE: THE NUMBER OF WOMEN WORKING IN COMICS DROPS AFTER 10 YEARS! WHY?

Over 25 years, I've encountered jealousy, sexism in hiring, pigeon-holing in job assignments, and old-fashioned chauvinism in how my work is regarded.

COMIC CREATOR

# SO FROM COMICS YOU MADE ...

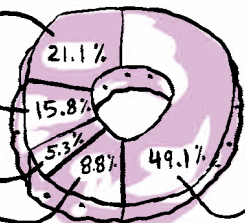
Income testimonials from comic creators:

- \$7,000
- ABOUT \$500 BUCKS.
- \$19,000
- VARIES FROM YEAR TO YEAR. BETWEEN 1K UP TO 10K.
- \$2,200
- \$6,000
- 25K BEFORE TAXES
- No idea. I'm guessing \$30K OR \$40K.
- NOTHING.
- \$35K
- \$4,000
- This year will come in over \$100K.
- \$30,000

# WHAT PERCENTAGE OF YOUR ANNUAL INCOME IS FROM COMICS?

ALL FROM COMICS.

MAKE BETWEEN 75-100%  
MAKE 50-75%  
MAKE BETWEEN 25% AND 50%.



LESS than 25%.

# THE PRONOUN I USE IS...

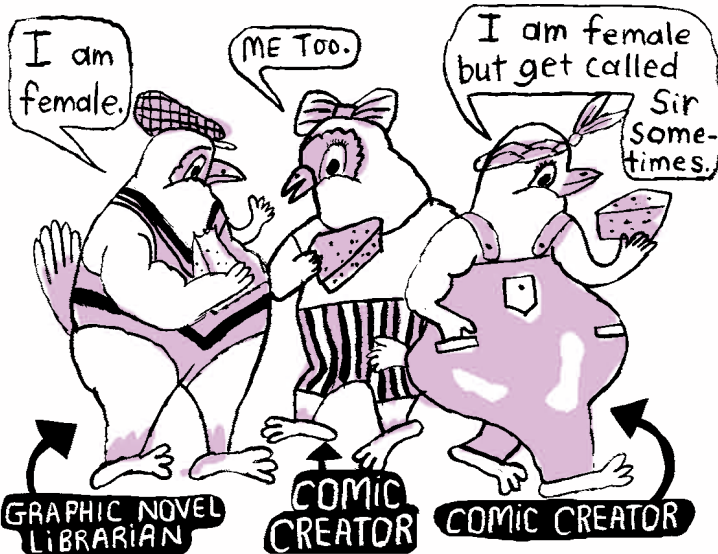
97%  
SHE



1.5%  
SHE  
but others use "he."

1.5%  
HE but others use "she."

# TESTIMONIALS



I am male but am identified by some as female. I often use male pronouns... But I Kind of like it all and don't feel any [pronoun] is necessarily wrong in my case.



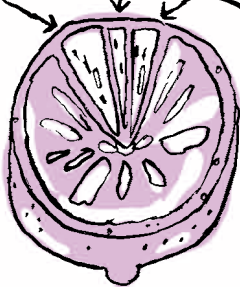
# UNDER WHAT NAME DOES YOUR WORK APPEAR?

5.30% publish under ambiguously gendered name

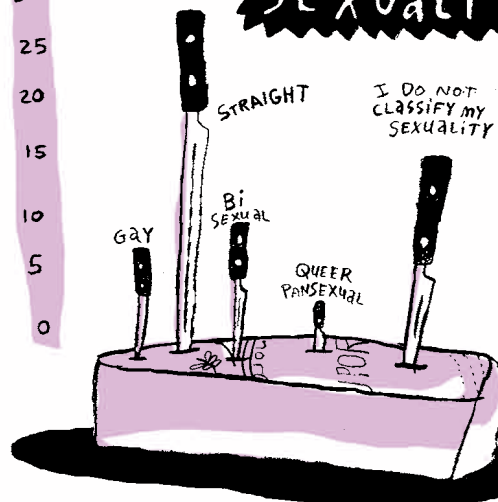
1.80% publish under initials

89.50% publish under own name

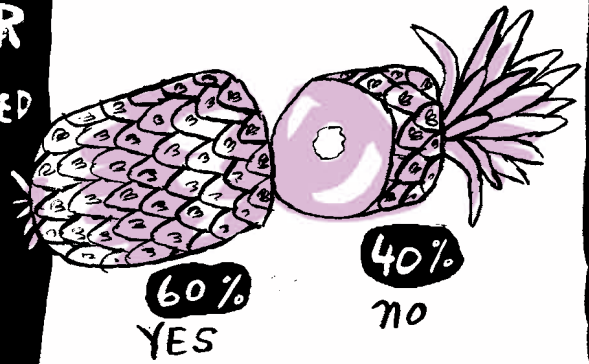
3.50% name does not appear on work



# HOW WOULD YOU CLASSIFY YOUR SEXUALITY?



HAS YOUR SEXUALITY EVER BEEN DISCUSSED OR QUESTIONED DURING THE COURSE OF YOUR WORK IN THE COMICS INDUSTRY?



# TESTIMONIALS

**COMIC CREATOR**  
I've made a few stories about menstruation and my publisher wanted me to tell other stories to avoid being "Period Girl!"

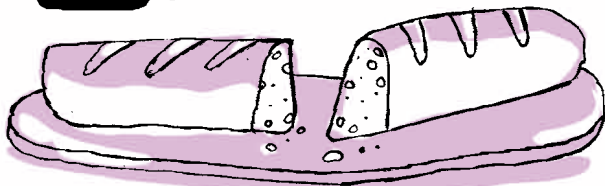
**EDUCATOR**  
My boss asked me questions about my sexual identity. I don't hold it against him. ... though I could see how others might be offended.

**EX-COMIC CREATOR**  
No one discussed my sexuality. Not to my knowledge.

HAVE YOUR **RELATIONSHIPS** EVER SUFFERED DUE TO YOUR WORK IN COMICS, SUCH AS FROM PROFESSIONAL JEALOUSIES, PAYSCALE IMBALANCE, OR OTHERWISE?

43% YES

57% NO



I have experienced professional jealousies/sexism, but working in comics isn't like working in an office where you have to cooperate with your peers.

I had a boyfriend who told me my comics got more attention than his because I was a girl, and girls always got more attention from comic guys.



HAS YOUR GENDER EVER BEEN MISIDENTIFIED BY A FAN THROUGH THE MAIL OR THE INTERNET?



# TESTIMONIALS

On social networking sites, my name is gender ambiguous, so I've been mistaken for a guy a few times.

**WebCOMICS CREATOR**

No, I have not been misidentified.

**BOOKSELLER**

It seemed to be the quality of my work that started a disagreement on a message board about whether I was a male or female.

**COMIC CREATOR**

HAS YOUR GENDER EVER BEEN MISIDENTIFIED OR DISCUSSED WHILE WORKING IN A COMICS ENVIRONMENT:  
INCLUDING AT A PUBLISHING HOUSE, IN A COMIC-BOOK STORE, OR AT A COMIC CON?

|        |     |
|--------|-----|
| 65.5 % | NO  |
| 34.5 % | YES |

A man in his 20's pointed to a strip I was working on and said 'Do you know the guy that draws that strip?'

My publisher actually asked me really politely what pronoun I preferred because he heard both used.

**COMIC CREATOR**

No.

**COMIC CREATOR**

**COMIC CREATOR**

So what can we conclude?

Many of the concerns that women expressed in our survey are more significant than they realized.

There's a great deal of competition in this medium. I've felt guilt, Shame and depression based on my perceived inability to measure up.



The incidents of individual discrimination here are mirrored in the lesser number of women and trans artists in anthologies (and in the smaller number of pages they are given), fewer graphic novel deals; and less women and trans people working at conventions and publishing comics.



## HERE'S SOMETHING TO CHEW ON:

The **EQUAL PAY ACT of 1963** is a **FEDERAL LAW** that protects men and women who perform equal work in the same establishment from pay disparity.

Making excuses for discriminatory behavior, like "People like to gossip" or "Others might be offended" allows these attitudes to go unchallenged.

Most of us do not like to think of ourselves as victims of discrimination.

Comics are a form of media, and have the responsibility to represent its readers.

Many STATES have laws against discrimination that are **MORE STRICT THAN FEDERAL LAWS.**

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS.**

**GIRLS ARE AWESOME!**

Co-workers have said "We're so glad you are part of this publishing house." More females in the industry is a good thing!

For the sake of our industry, our fans, the students we teach, and the future generation of comic creators, let's work together for equality.