

COMIC BOOK CAPERS

Students immerse themselves in a world of adventure within pages of comic books

By TRAVIS IRBY
Staff writer

Comic books provide college students with an affordable and accessible method of escaping from the sometimes mundane existence. Fans of funny books will be the first to point out today's comic books are more than a bunch of in-fights. Josefina Morales, who co-owns Lytle's Comics and Games with David Lytle, said comic books appeal to a wide range of fans and genres. "We have kids, students and even professors

come in," Morales said. "And they'll go for super hero books, realistic books, fantasy books or some other type (of book)."

Morales, who was raised in Chile, said comic books are viewed differently in the U.S. than they are in South America.

"In Chile, they are a very disposable form of entertainment," Morales said. "We read them until they fall apart."

Morales said she was shocked when she saw how the books were treated in the states.

"I was like, 'what are you doing,' when I saw the comics books in plastic bags," Morales said.

She is now used to bagging comics after working in the store.

Morales said many college students are

involved in collecting comics.

"I'd say about half the customers are college students," Morales said.

John Willis, a junior business major, unlike many collectors, only recently started collecting. "A lot of people started when they were kids," Willis said.

"While I read some books, I really didn't start collecting and following certain titles until I came to college."

Willis said he prefers the traditional super hero books.

"Some people are kind of down on super hero books, preferring realistic-type comic books," Willis said. "Super hero books are fun; right now I'm into the likes of JLA, Flash and Captain America."

While there is a cornucopia of comic book types and the fans who follow them, when it comes to what makes a comic book good, some think it is an issue of write and wrong.

Robert Colon, an avid reader for 15 years, said if the story is not strong, his interest won't be, either.

"I really follow writers," Colon said. "I mean there are some incredibly good writers in comics today." Morales, however, is into the look of the book. "I'm more attracted to a book because of its art," Morales said.

Christie Cooper, a junior chemical engineering

major, said comics provide the best of both worlds.

"I am really into the mixture of art and writing," Cooper said. "In comics, I enjoy artists and writers I can't see anywhere else."

Comic books often have been seen as a male-dominated and driven market.

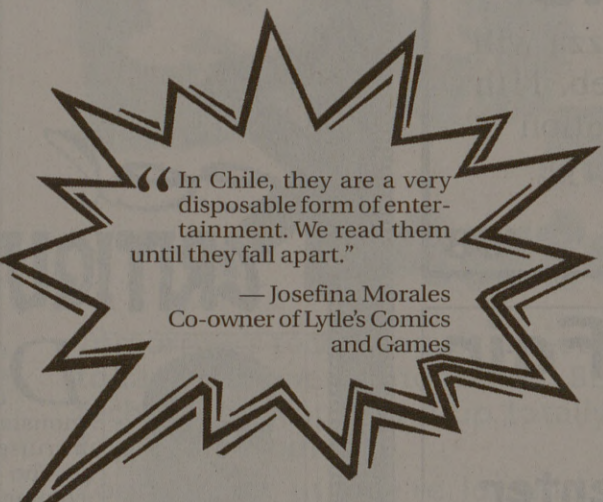
Morales said she believes there is some truth to such thinking, but things are changing.

"One of the things I think is great is more women are getting into comics these days," Morales said. "We have a wide age range of women getting into comics."

Cooper said she has noticed the gender differences in comic readers, but it does not bother her.

"There will be times when I'm with a group of people and we start talking about books and then I'll look around and I'll be the only girl," Cooper said.

One of the defining characteristics of the comic book market is its readiness to follow trends.



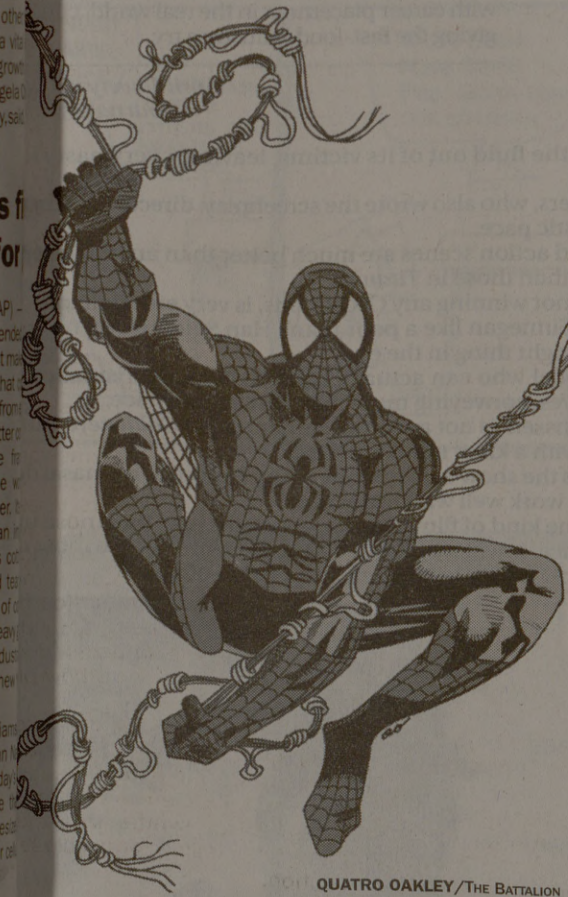
"In Chile, they are a very disposable form of entertainment. We read them until they fall apart."

—Josefina Morales
Co-owner of Lytle's Comics and Games

Guy Jones, owner of B-CS Books and Comics, said current trends tend to be the use of "bad girls."

"I thought bad girl books were on their way out, but they have been strengthened by a number of titles, like *Shi* and *Witchblade*," Jones said.

PLEASE SEE COMICS ON PAGE 5.



QUATRO OAKLEY/THE BATTALION

Flashback

Noises Off

No one heard of this movie when it was released, and even fewer have heard of it now.

In spite of some redundant dialogue and having to watch Nicolette Sheridan run around in her underwear throughout the movie, it is actually entertaining and funny.

The cast of the movie includes such timeless comedians as Carol Burnett, Christopher Reeve and John Ritter. And, although it has a slow start, the characters will have audiences laughing at the ways they tackle the chaotic task of putting on a Broadway play.

—April Towery

Noises Off does not represent the standard '80s fare. Movie watchers expecting to see thin ties, pastel clothes and humorless substance abuse-centric plot themes will be disappointed.

What this flick does offer, however, is a beautifully crafted story revolving around a love dodecahedron that changes so rapidly it becomes

lunacy to attempt to keep track of it.

Instead, viewers are welcomed to shut off the reasoning part of their brains and enjoy the fireworks as they occur, leaving to the actors the responsibility to stay abreast of new developments. After all, the viewers did not sign on to expend mental effort. This was the '80s.

—Stephen Wells

Of all the movies I have ever seen in my lifetime, I can honestly say without a scintillation of hyperbole that *Noises Off* is the latest.

It stars a company of bad actors belching forced dialogue about a company of bad actors. It's like watching the Stone Temple Pilots pretend to be Kiss.

The sparkling cast includes skeleton girl from *Airplane*, Cousin Larry from "Perfect Strangers," and *Superman*.

Rounding out the roster are überwusses Michael Caine and John Ritter.

You know who would win in a fight between those two? Humanity, pending they destroy each other like matter and anti-matter.

—Chris Martin

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