AND IF THAT SOUNDS VERY AMBITIOUS FOR AN 8-PAGE MINI-COMIC, IT'S BECAUSE THE MINI-COMIC IS REALLY ABOUT A WHOLE BOOK CALLED UNDERSTANDING GENRES IN COMICS WHICH IS A MORE CONVINCING FORMAT TO DISCUSS THE MATTER. THERE, I HOPE IT'S CLEARER NOW.

NICOLAS LABARRE

JUNE 2020
As you may have heard, I have just published a new academic book.

My third monograph, in the past four years...

...somehow.

And once again, the project took a life of its own, without premeditation. I certainly hadn't planned to write a whole book on comics genre.
Looking back, the point of origin of the book is a talk I gave at a conference on **FEAR!** back in 2009.

I was still pivoting toward comics studies, and I set out to discuss horror in the Alien comics.

Since it was such a great topic, I included the movies, the merchandising...

The 1979 Simonson/Goodwin adaptation for Heavy Metal...

The Superman/Alien and the Wildcats/Aliens crossovers

And of course I also attempted to redefine "horror"

All in the course of 20 mn

It was perhaps a tad too much.
It was not ridiculous, though

Up to that point, I had thought "Comics" was a subject

But this prompted me to look at genre, and adaptation

While furthering my interest in horror

It was a roadmap for what I have been doing since.

And that map showed I had still a long way to go.
Soon afterward, I was recruited in Bordeaux, which allowed me to search for the necessary theoretical tools I now knew I needed.

I remember the elation of finding answers on genres.

One of the books which transformed my work the moment I read it.
Overall, the book "solved" genre for me

And I focused more on adaptation, writing, giving talks and practicing it myself.

Around 2013(?) I decided I was going to write a book about it.

So, I went back to my 2009 talk and rewrote the part about the 1979 comics adaptation, thinking it might later be turned into a chapter.

That text was published in 2014, and it felt right.
Still, I was left with a residue of that original, unsuccessful talk, including an extended close reading of the 1995 crossover between Aliens and Superman.

And I now had more tools to make sense of it.

So, I revised that residue, reframed and expanded it, before presenting the result in Leeds, in 2018.

"I eventually regurgitate the creature". Aliens, crossovers and genre introspection. Comics Forum #18

Closure, 10 years later.

And a talk that focused on genre, much more than on the adaptation process.
Then, in a fitting Hollywood twist:

I greatly enjoyed your talk. Have you considered writing a book about genre?

The Roger Sabin

As a rule I never say no when asked to write a book.

So I went back and asked myself: what if Altman hadn't solved genre for comics? Could I offer new insights that would be specific to the medium?

Hopefully, the book is the answer to these questions.