

Elizabeth Rae Coody,
“Punk Rock Paul: The Cross as a ‘Dumb’ Symbol in Comics and Paul’s
Epistles”

Bible and Popular Culture, Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical
Literature and American Academy of Religion at San Diego, CA, November 22, 2014.

I argue that hearing a cross—symbol of Roman occupation and cruelty—used to
represent the whole of the Jesus-*kerygma* provoked rage and revulsion in Paul’s
contemporary hearers, but traditional exegesis blunts the irony of the symbol. Comics with a
punk sensibility can provide insight into the ways Paul’s use of crosses provokes his addressees;
the art and text form of comics is particularly suited to reveal irony in symbols. In this paper, I
use contemporary comics that use crosses in provocative ways to illustrate the emotional
impact crosses can elicit when their meaning is in flux.



**Locating
information:**

Cite your own work.
Abstract

**Take-home
Information:**

Something useful!
Including a limited
bibliography

Particular References to Where Paul is a Punk (Mostly) *about the Cross*

Galatians: 2:19-21; 3:1-5; 5:11; 6:14-17

1 Corinthians: 1:18-23; 2:1-5; 15: 31a, 33a, 36a

Primary Sources (in order of appearance):

DenBleyker, Rob (w,a). *Cyanide and Happiness* #3202. June 14, 2013, *explosm.net* Accessed
October 2013. <http://explosm.net/comics/3203/>

Ennis, Garth (w), Jacen Burrows (a). “Crossed: Nine” *Crossed* #9 (February 2010) Rantoul, Il.:
Avatar, 2010.

Ennis, Garth (w), Steve Dillon (a). Until the End of the World. *Preacher*. vol. 2, #8-17. New
York: Vertigo, 1997.

McKeever, Ted (w, a). *Miniature Jesus*. #1-5. Berkeley: Image, Shadowline, 2013.

Find the slides from this presentation on my academia.edu site:
<https://udenver.academia.edu/ElizabethCoody>

**Professional
background:**

Connections, Skills,
Expertise, Links

If you have an interest in the study of comics and religion, be sure to check out the work of
the **Sacred and Sequential** group for religion scholars who study comics
(sacredandsequential.org). Ask me how you can get involved. You can follow the group on
twitter: @religioncomics.

Hashtags for comics-related activities at this meeting: #S&S #SBLAAR14