

Q&A WITH DAVID WONG

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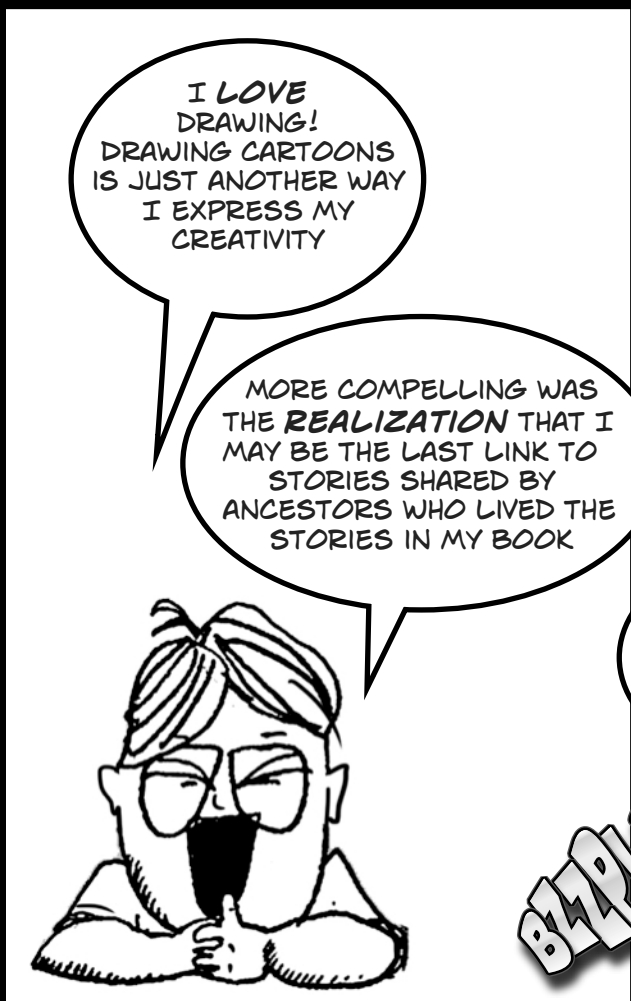
AN INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL, *ESCAPE TO GOLD MOUNTAIN!*



YOU'RE AN ACCOMPLISHED ARCHITECT IN ONE OF CANADA'S MOST VIBRANT CITIES...

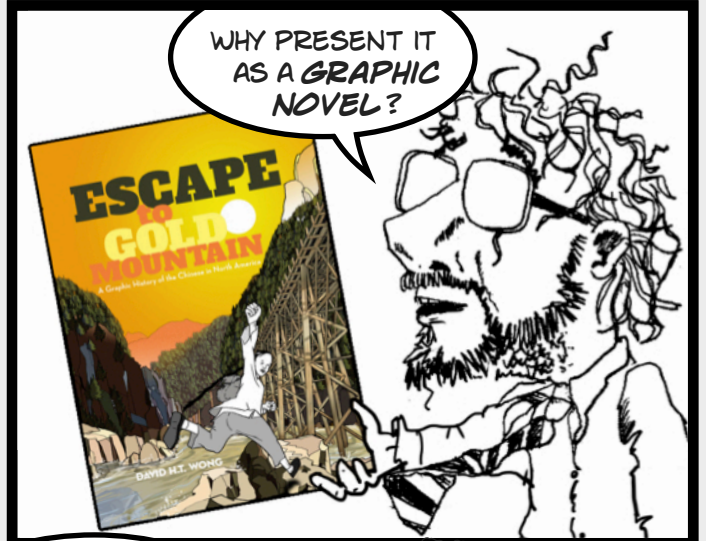


WHAT COMPELLED YOU TO STEP OUTSIDE YOUR PROFESSION AND PEN THE STORY OF CHINESE IMMIGRATION IN NORTH AMERICA?



I LOVE DRAWING! DRAWING CARTOONS IS JUST ANOTHER WAY I EXPRESS MY CREATIVITY

MORE COMPELLING WAS THE REALIZATION THAT I MAY BE THE LAST LINK TO STORIES SHARED BY ANCESTORS WHO LIVED THE STORIES IN MY BOOK



WHY PRESENT IT AS A GRAPHIC NOVEL?



YOUNG MINDS ARE EASILY DISTRACTED WITH THE MANY COMPETING TECHNOLOGIES OUT THERE...

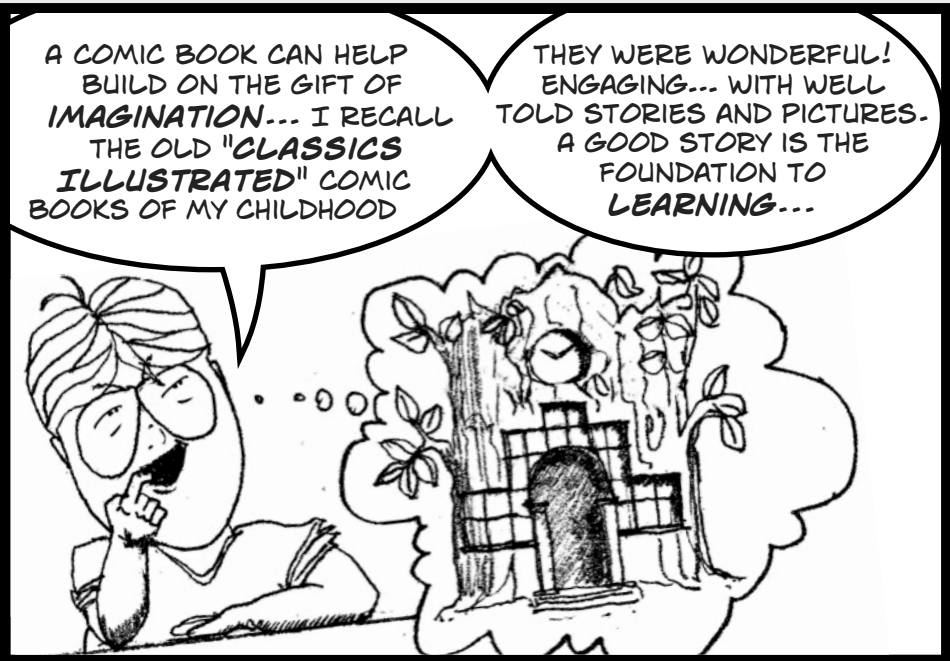
BZP! BZP!
U WIN AGAIN!



Escape to Gold Mountain: A Graphic History of the Chinese in North America by David H. T. Wong. \$19.95. Ages 12+. Publishing Fall 2012 from Arsenal Pulp Press. www.arsenalpulp.com



BUT ANYONE CAN READ A BOOK ANYWHERE - IT MAY BE PAUSED, RE-READ AND CONTINUED ANYTIME



A COMIC BOOK CAN HELP BUILD ON THE GIFT OF IMAGINATION... I RECALL THE OLD "CLASSICS ILLUSTRATED" COMIC BOOKS OF MY CHILDHOOD

THEY WERE WONDERFUL! ENGAGING... WITH WELL TOLD STORIES AND PICTURES. A GOOD STORY IS THE FOUNDATION TO LEARNING...



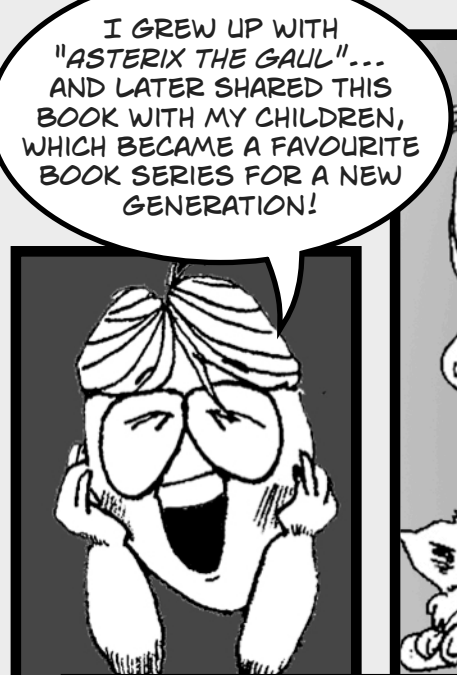
DID ANY PARTICULAR GRAPHIC NOVELS INSPIRE OR INFLUENCE ESCAPE TO GOLD MOUNTAIN?



WILL EISNER'S MANY BOOKS INSPIRED ME. IN PARTICULAR, "FAGIN THE JEW"*

IT OPENED MY EYES TO A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES... OF CREATING AND EXPANDING NARRATIVES

*FAGIN THE JEW, WAS EISNER'S PREQUEL TO OLIVER TWIST!



I GREW UP WITH "ASTERIX THE GAUL"... AND LATER SHARED THIS BOOK WITH MY CHILDREN, WHICH BECAME A FAVOURITE BOOK SERIES FOR A NEW GENERATION!



GOOD STORIES ARE TIMELESS!

THAT'S FOR SURE!

WERE YOU INSPIRED BY ANY OTHER MINORITY NARRATIVES?

MY CHILDREN AND I HAD THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE HAD WONDERFUL ABORIGINAL (NATIVE AMERICAN) FRIENDS.

DAVID! DID YOU EAT UP ALL THE BANNOCK... AGAIN?

David Wong

A MOST FAVOURITE EVENT FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD WERE THE COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS...

EVERYONE LOOKED FORWARD TO THE STORIES OF CREATION AND THE STORIES OF THE TRICKSTER (I.E. RAVEN)!

IN ADDITION, GRANDMA TOLD ME STORIES OF HER YOUTH... WITH MANY CHINESE FOLKTALES

I'm Skyfighter! Hyah Yah!!

I'm mighty Monkey King!

CRASH! Pow! Blam!

GRANDMA! Turn down your Chinese Opera !!!

David Wong



HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED **PREJUDICE** OR **RACISM** BECAUSE OF YOUR CHINESE HERITAGE, OR BECAUSE OF YOUR FAMILY'S IMMIGRANT HISTORY?



SADLY, YES



THERE ISN'T A YEAR THAT PASSES BY WHEN I OR A FAMILY MEMBER DOES NOT EXPERIENCE **RACISM**



SOMETIMES THE **PREJUDICE** IS NOT BASED ON RACE



I'VE ALSO EXPERIENCED BIAS FROM OTHER **ASIANS**

SOME OF OUR NEW CITIZENS TO OUR NATION LOOK DOWN AT MULTI-GENERATIONAL **CBCS/ ABCS** FOR NOT BEING ABLE TO SPEAK CHINESE

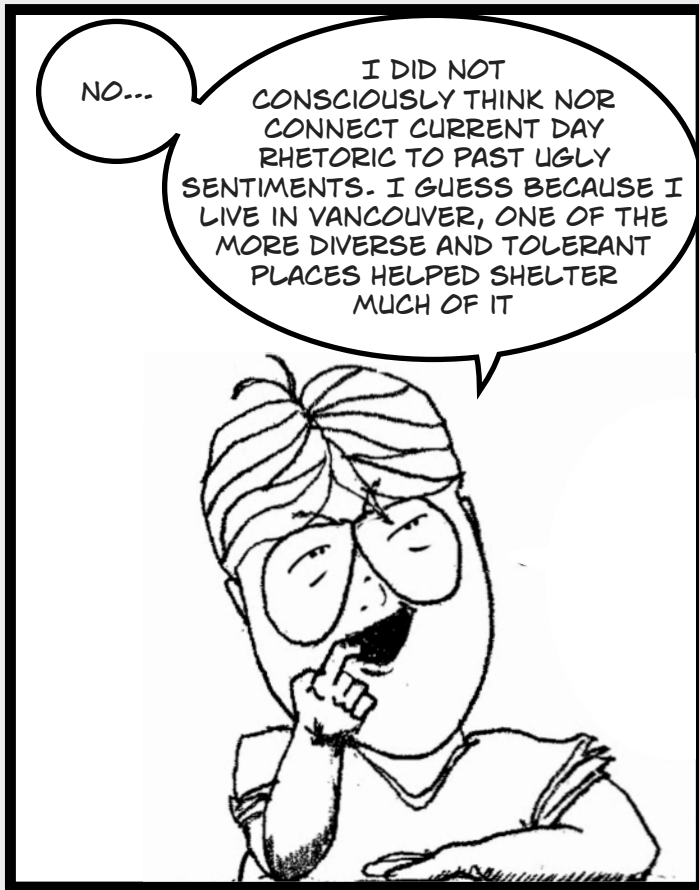
...OR BECAUSE WE NO LONGER SHARE THEIR MANNERISMS OR VALUES ...AND SEE US AS **OUTSIDERS**

***CBC/ABC**: CANADIAN BORN CHINESE/ AMERICAN BORN CHINESE



READING **ESCAPE TO GOLD MOUNTAIN**, ONE IS STRUCK BY HOW SIMILAR SOME OF THE HISTORIC ANTI-CHINESE SENTIMENTS WERE TO THE **ANTI-HISPANIC** AND **ANTI-MIDDLE EASTERN** RHETORIC AND BEHAVIOR WE SEE HAPPENING TODAY...

WERE YOU CONSCIOUS OF THESE SIMILARITIES AS YOU WROTE AND SKETCHED THE BOOK?



NO...

I DID NOT CONSCIOUSLY THINK NOR CONNECT CURRENT DAY RHETORIC TO PAST UGLY SENTIMENTS. I GUESS BECAUSE I LIVE IN VANCOUVER, ONE OF THE MORE DIVERSE AND TOLERANT PLACES HELPED SHELTER MUCH OF IT



I WAS AWARE OF HOW HISTORY SO OFTEN REPEATS ITSELF

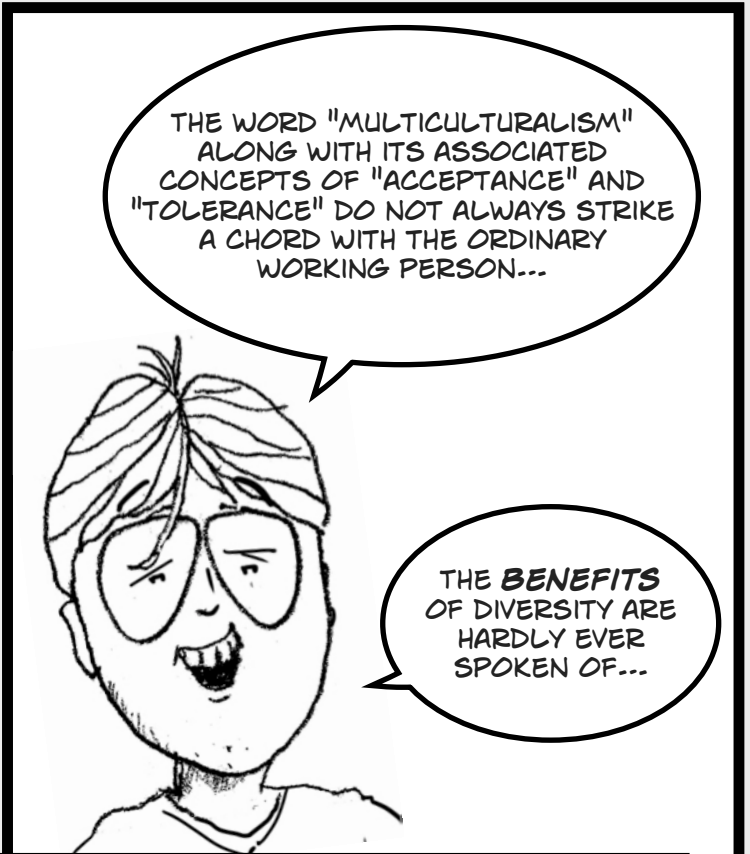


HOW PEOPLE OFTEN FIND A SCAPEGOAT TO LAY BLAME

I ATTRIBUTE THIS TO LEADERSHIP, AND HOW THE PERSONAL BIASES AND PREJUDICES OF A LEADER CAN INFLUENCE A POPULATION



WHAT MESSAGE MIGHT READERS TAKE FROM ESCAPE TO GOLD MOUNTAIN ABOUT THE FUTURE OF IMMIGRATION IN THE US AND CANADA?

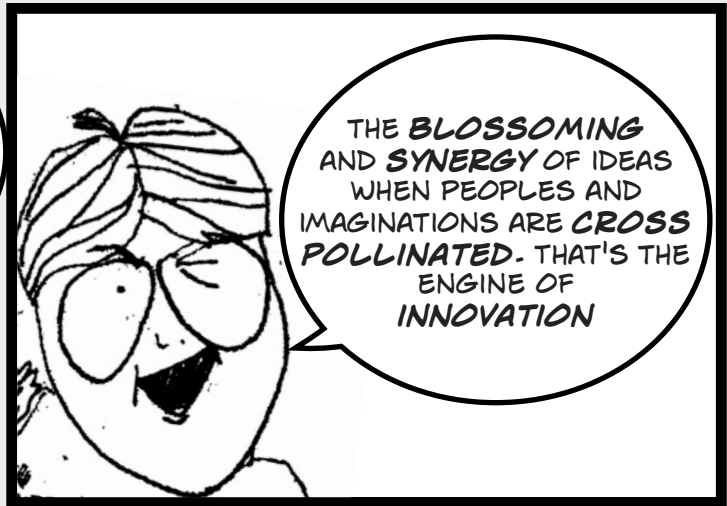


THE WORD "MULTICULTURALISM" ALONG WITH ITS ASSOCIATED CONCEPTS OF "ACCEPTANCE" AND "TOLERANCE" DO NOT ALWAYS STRIKE A CHORD WITH THE ORDINARY WORKING PERSON...

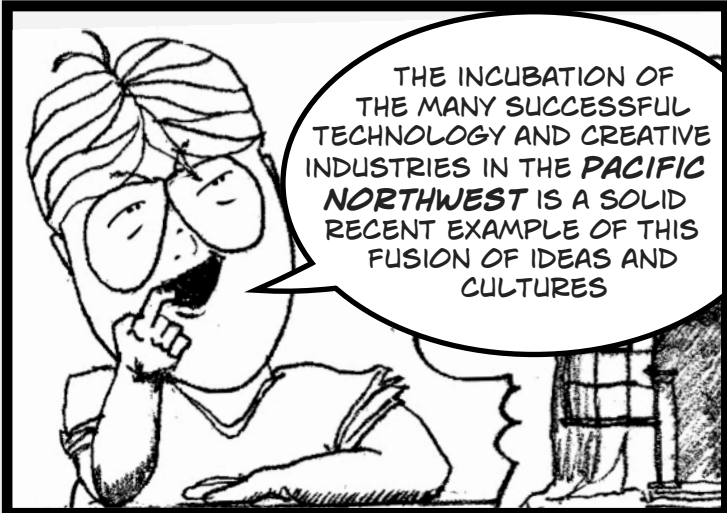
THE BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY ARE HARDLY EVER SPOKEN OF...



IT WOULD BE BETTER IF PEOPLE **EXPLORE THE BEAUTY** AND **JOY** OF DIVERSITY - HOW MAGIC IS CREATED WHEN CULTURES AND PEOPLES INTERMINGLE...



THE **BLOSSOMING** AND **SYNERGY** OF IDEAS WHEN PEOPLES AND IMAGINATIONS ARE **CROSS POLLINATED**. THAT'S THE ENGINE OF **INNOVATION**



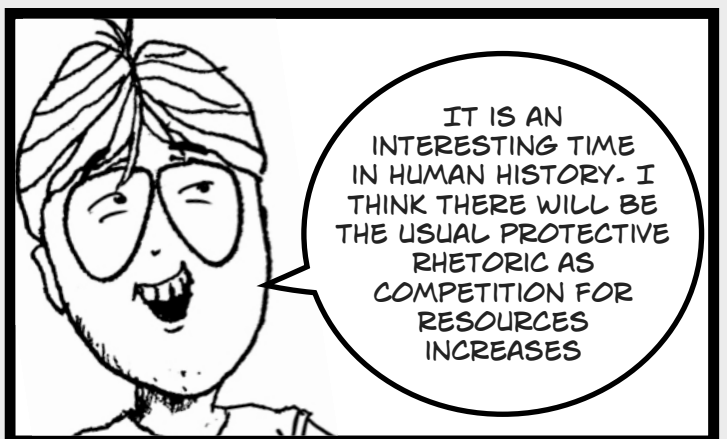
THE INCUBATION OF THE MANY SUCCESSFUL TECHNOLOGY AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN THE **PACIFIC NORTHWEST** IS A SOLID RECENT EXAMPLE OF THIS FUSION OF IDEAS AND CULTURES



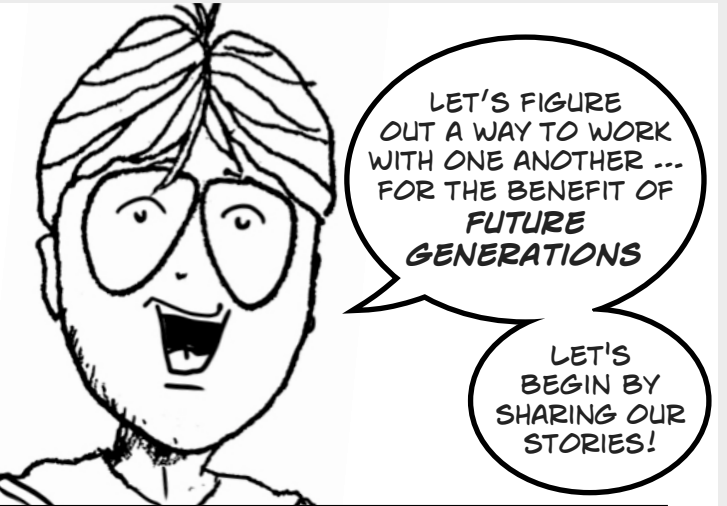
SO IMMIGRATION SHOULD BE SHOWCASED AS A BENEFICIAL INGREDIENT TO THE OVERALL HEALTH OF A COMMUNITY



ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE **POLITICAL** AND **SOCIAL** RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE **US**, **CANADA**, AND **CHINA**?



IT IS AN INTERESTING TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY. I THINK THERE WILL BE THE USUAL PROTECTIVE RHETORIC AS COMPETITION FOR RESOURCES INCREASES



LET'S FIGURE OUT A WAY TO WORK WITH ONE ANOTHER ... FOR THE BENEFIT OF **FUTURE GENERATIONS**

LET'S BEGIN BY SHARING OUR STORIES!