

Faculti Summary

<https://faculti.net/the-new-nancy/>

This video discusses the history and evolution of the comic character Nancy, created by Ernie Bushmiller in 1933, who initially appeared in the comic strip "Fritz Ritz." Due to her popularity, Nancy received her own strip in 1938, which continued under Bushmiller until the early 1980s. After that, various artists continued the strip with less publicity, until Olivia James revived it in 2018, marking a significant change, as it was the first time a woman took the helm.

The speaker highlights key differences in the new Nancy, focusing on how contemporary comic creators, like James, operate within a different cultural and economic landscape compared to the past, when newspaper comics were hugely popular and financially lucrative. James, for instance, balances her comic work with a full-time academic career.

The digital shift in comic consumption is also explored, as fewer people read comics in print newspapers and instead access them online. The new Nancy incorporates modern themes and humor relevant to current society, like technology and online schooling, reflecting cultural changes. As the comic evolves, it embraces diversity and adapts to contemporary audiences, using elements from both the past and the modern world.

The narrative emphasizes the ongoing relevance of daily comics and argues for their importance in contemporary society, despite the decline of newspaper comics since the 1960s. It also calls attention to the need for scholarship on newspaper comics, which have been overshadowed by studies focusing on graphic novels and superhero comics.