

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



The Honest Alan Moore Interview

Honest Publishing

Honest Publishing
The Honest Alan Moore Interview
2011

Retrieved on 22nd September 2020 from
[https://www.honestpublishing.com/news/
honest-alan-moore-interview-part-1-publishing-and-kindle/](https://www.honestpublishing.com/news/honest-alan-moore-interview-part-1-publishing-and-kindle/)

theanarchistlibrary.org

2011

Contents

Part 1: Publishing and Kindle	5
What do you think of the state of British publishing at the minute? Is it edgy enough?	5
So do you not have a Kindle?	7
What was the last brilliant book you read? Which writers deserve more recognition?	8
It's incredibly hard to make a living from writing...	11
Part 2: The Occupy Movement, Frank Miller, and Politics	12
With the Occupy movement, it seems you and Frank Miller have conflicting views. Would you say that he's against it and you're for it?	12
What do you think needs to change in our political system?	13
The economic problem is a strange one...	15
Part 3: On Comics, How to Break Into Comics, and Modern Culture	15
If you were starting out today in the writing world, or even the comics writing world, how would it be different from when you first started out?	16

In the past you've talked about the decline of culture, saying "it's turning to steam." As individuals, do you think we can reverse this and reclaim culture? 18

Over the course of your career, what was your favourite project to work on? What made it special for you? . . . 20

Do you think comics have reached their full potential? 21

Have you read any particularly ambitious comic of late? 22

In terms of your books, and the adaptations of your books, you've chosen to stay away from Hollywood. What advice would you give to an indie book company like ourselves about rights, Hollywood, and dealing with big players? . . . 22

How do you want to be remembered? . . . 23

to the best of his ability. And also that I was really sexy. That would do. Put that on the tombstone.

Part 1: Publishing and Kindle

Honest Publishing recently spoke to writer and comic book legend **Alan Moore**, creator of critically acclaimed works including *Watchmen*, *V for Vendetta*, and *From Hell*. We'd like to thank Alan Moore for his incredible generosity and for being very open and honest with us.

In the first part of our interview, we picked his brains on the shape of publishing, writing as a full-time occupation, and his take on the Kindle.

What do you think of the state of British publishing at the minute? Is it edgy enough?

From my somewhat distant perspective, it looks pretty wretched. That's not to say it's not without really interesting signs of regeneration and recovery, but the mainstream of publishing seems to be locked in a self-negating downward spiral. It's largely to do with the way the people in publishing have given up any personal integrity in favour of sales returns. This has meant that presumably there are as many great first novels as there have always been, but when publishers insist upon squandering their budgets on people that they believe to be celebrities, they're obviously not going to have anything left to encourage new talent, even if those are talents that could potentially change the entire literary scene or world of publishing.

In *Private Eye*, they published a very informative list of sales figures for political biographies. These are all ones that had been trailed in the national press, had been talked about on television programmes, had been given an immense amount of hype. I think from the biographies they talked about, Cherie Blair's was the out-and-out winner. I think it sold something like 167 copies. John Prescott had sold 65 copies of his biography, *Prezza*. What the advances were for

that book I would estimate would be getting on for the quarter million mark, something like that. For something that sold 65 copies, if there was an advance of a hundred pound, you'd be lucky to make it back.

“Publishers in the old days [...] they were prepared to go out on a limb for something they believed in. They weren't waiting for someone to do a television series about Mrs Beeton so they could get her to write a celebrity chef book.”

Celebrities will always be desperate for money, so you can't really blame them, although most days I still do, but the fault is really with the ethics of the heart of the publishing trade. Publishers in the old days, people like Victor Gollancz, they were prepared to go out on a limb for something they believed in. They weren't waiting for someone to do a television series about Mrs Beeton so they could get her to write a celebrity chef book. The landscape has changed and I think that sadly a lot of people have used that as an excuse for changing their ethos. There are some things that never need to change, and ethics should be one of those things.

So that's pretty much my admittedly ill-informed view of today's publishing scene. Although, the very fact that people cannot get published by the big-name publishers in the way that they used to has meant that you've got some really interesting and often really beautiful little small publishing houses that are springing up and coming into existence. And the stuff that they're providing is actually a lot better. I'm thinking of people like Tartarus Press, Strange Attractor and various other commendable small publishers that do a beautiful job and that are producing books that are good to have on your bookshelf.

ably never meant to be a film, or it would've been thought of as a film.

“I'm sure that there a lot of people who think that *From Hell* was basically an exciting Jack the Ripper story with somebody who looks a bit like Johnny Depp. They'll probably never read the book because most people are waiting for the film. It's easier.”

There's a small film project that I'm working on at the moment but this is something that's not an adaptation of anything, it's been conceived as a film. Whether it'll ever see the light of day, who knows, because it's a very demanding process if you're doing it on a small tightly-knit level. It's obviously a lot more difficult than signing all the rights away to some film company and then seeing a film that will be nothing like your book. Yes, it will sell you more copies of your book, it will make you a more widely known proposition but, at the same time, there's a downside to it as well. I would hate to think that people who'd seen the films made of my books would think that they represented my books, but I'm certain that a lot of people do. I'm sure that there a lot of people who think that *From Hell* was basically an exciting Jack the Ripper story with somebody who looks a bit like Johnny Depp. They'll probably never read the book because most people are waiting for the film. It's easier. I tend to think that the films made of my work are rather to their detriment which is why I've severed all connection from them.

How do you want to be remembered?

I don't really much care, because I won't be around to glory in it. I don't know, as somebody who was a good writer, a decent magician and who tried to follow his path with integrity

There's still been very little done that's ever matched the work of people like Winsor McCay. A hundred years is nothing in the life of an art form. One would assume that most of the greatest works of comic art are yet to be created. At least you'd hope that is the case.

Have you read any particularly ambitious comic of late?

I haven't read any comics of late. That's not to say there aren't any ambitious comics out there, because as I say I haven't been reading very much at all. It's not intended as a slur that I haven't read the comics that are out there it's just that I can't while I'm writing this book, which is a very long process that's lasted for five or six years. I wouldn't suspect there'd be anything in the mainstream field. I'm sure that on the margins there are. I understand that Craig Thompson's new book is very beautiful and he's a great storyteller.

In terms of your books, and the adaptations of your books, you've chosen to stay away from Hollywood. What advice would you give to an indie book company like ourselves about rights, Hollywood, and dealing with big players?

I don't know if I could advise you. For a small publisher, there are lots of economic advantages to having one of your books made into a film. On the other hand, yourself and your authors, think long and hard about it first. Think about why you're doing it and then do what you're going to do. The best advice for anything is keep it as small as possible and that way you'll perhaps stand a little less chance of getting seriously messed up by some huge leviathan.

I'm not very big on the idea of adaptations. I think if something works great as a book best leave it as a book. It was prob-

It wouldn't be so good to have something that you can download onto your Kindle. Of course, I have a very archaic and hard-line approach to artefacts. I really like to hold something in my hands.

So do you not have a Kindle?

I've got very little connection to technology at all. I'm pretty Amish in most of my approach to technology. Anything after the horse and buggy, I'm a bit suspicious of. I can see that for some people having a Kindle would be a real benefit. I can also see the state of my home, which is pretty much surrendered to books. Me and Melinda, we make our living space around the books. But I kind of like that. I wouldn't prefer in a million years to have all of them – and I'm pretty sure I couldn't have all of them – downloaded on a Kindle. Because they've got an artefact value. I've got first editions that have got beautiful illustrations or are signed; it's all part of the mystique of books to me. Perhaps people would argue that that's not necessarily relevant, but I think our emotional attachment to an object is a part of all this.

Like I say, I'm not against electronic books per se. I don't think they're the downfall of civilisation or the end of literacy. I just tend to have quite a lot of faith in the book itself as the publishing world equivalent of a shark. Sharks have not evolved in millions and millions of years simply because they haven't had to. They were pretty much perfect to start with. And I feel the same way about books. I doubt that published books are going to go anywhere any time soon.

“I tend to have quite a lot of faith in the book itself as the publishing world equivalent of a shark. Sharks have not evolved in millions and millions of years simply because

they haven't had to. They were pretty much perfect to start with."

I can see that the people actually producing technology, such as Kindle and iPad, these are always the people who are telling us that we have to have these things. And being the type of creatures that we are, a fair number of us will naturally fall into that, will perhaps assume that as a status symbol it's much better to be seen reading a Kindle than a dog-eared paperback. Although I will note that the last two or three times I've taken train journeys, everybody around me was sitting round reading a dog-eared paperback. I tend to think that for most people the idea of the book, with its easy portability, where you can turn the corner of a page down, where you are basically working with ordinary, reflected light rather than screen radiance, I think that the book will end up as the reading method of choice.

What was the last brilliant book you read? Which writers deserve more recognition?

I've not been reading a lot of books lately, because I've been writing my book *Jerusalem*, which has taken up a lot of time. It's also meant that I've been anxious to preserve the atmosphere and the thought processes of the given chapters. A bit of non-fiction or something that's not competing with what I'm writing, that's fine, but the last thing I want to do is read an absolutely brilliant piece of fiction that will perhaps colour my work.

That said, just when I was starting to work on *Jerusalem*, I did read the first part of Brian Catling's unpublished *Vorrh* trilogy. I've known Brian for a number of years now. He's a fantastic artist in all sorts of different media. His poetry is brilliant, his performance art is always stunning and intense and transfixing, and as a sculptor he's of course the guy who's responsible for one of my favourite pieces of modern art, the monument

thing. The way the characters look, the way that they sound, the way that the environment looks, the weather, everything. And that is quite exhilarating. Quite exhausting as well, especially if you're thirty chapters into a thirty-five chapter novel. I'm just about to start chapter thirty-one and I'm sure it will be as exciting a ride as the previous thirty have been.

Do you think comics have reached their full potential?

No, but I think if they ever would I would have to give an ambiguous maybe kind of answer. I think that the comics medium is wonderful and it's certainly nowhere near reached its full potential. The comics industry has probably long exceeded its full potential and it's running on fumes for a decade or so now without any original ideas to sustain it. You look outside the mainstream industry and there's lots of wonderful creators who are doing fantastic, idiosyncratic work often in very poorly paid or precarious situations. That is where the comics medium, where its heart actually is, these days certainly. It's in the margins. At the mainstream of the field, it looks like a disaster area to me, largely born out of the fact of no new ideas in fourteen or fifteen years. For my part, I'm actively trying to distance myself from comics. There are a lot of other things to explore. Certainly, in terms of the comics industry I really don't want to be thought of in the same breath as the superhero set-up.

"One would assume that most of the greatest works of comic art are yet to be created. At least you'd hope that is the case."

There are still thousands of things that comics could do, with an intelligent application of the medium. You could argue that it goes back to the Egyptian hieroglyphics, but in its modern form it's less than a century old, perhaps just over a century.

self. I was an average, undergroundish cartoonist who was just making things up from week to week and hoping that the glaring flaws wouldn't be too apparent. From that I moved on in quite ambitious stages and, because I kept up that forward impetus, I've ended up being able to write some quite complex things that I would never have been able to even conceive of back when I was starting out. So put the work in and believe in yourself, believe in your ability to change yourself, if not the world, because changing the world does actually start with changing yourself. I think any individual can make a difference if they apply themselves and I think to accept a defeatist "Well what are you going to do?" is a sure way of guaranteeing that you won't change anything, that you won't achieve anything.

Over the course of your career, what was your favourite project to work on? What made it special for you?

There have been a few, and they all had their charms. I enjoyed working on *Promethea*. I also enjoyed working upon *Lost Girls* which was probably just as well as I was working for a long time on *Lost Girls*. It's an indication of how enjoyable the process was that we both got through it and were able to keep our interest in it for the sixteen years it took to complete. I'm very pleased with *Voice of the Fire*, my first novel.

As ever, if you ask me this question at any time, I'd probably say that my favourite is the thing I'm working on at the moment. That's just the nature of things, the stuff that my head's wrapped up in at the moment. Which would be *Jerusalem*. I'm five chapters away from the end. It's a very lonely process writing a book without a collaborator when you've been used to having that back-and-forth, but there is something very pure about it as well and, again, you've got responsibility for everything. You can't just write a description and hope for the artist to make it a pretty, realised thing. You've got to create every-

designed for the site of the execution block at the Tower of London. It's absolutely beautiful. It's a glass table and, engraved on its edge, there are the names of all of the people, perhaps only 12 people, who were beheaded at the Tower of London. Set on this glass table is a glass pillow. Apparently, it took a year for it to cool down. You have to reduce the heat by a degree a day, over the period of about a year, so that it doesn't cool down too quickly because then it would just crack. This beautiful glass pillow, with glass tassels at the corner of it, in the centre of it there's this wonderful, soft indentation that is like an invitation to rest your head.

Brian's also written a short novel that is about Bobby Awl. He was like a primordial dwarf who was a native of Edinburgh. Apparently his bed, when he was a child, was a boot, a boot that was hung up on the wall. He was a friend of another Edinburgh character called Daft Jamie who was another mentally incapacitated Edinburghian who, I believe, was one of the victims of Burke and Hare. Brian happened to find a cast of Bobby Awl's skull or death mask, and from this little thing he came across, he researched it and turned out this beautiful piece of prose. I remember reading it and thinking how maybe I shouldn't have launched into a three quarter of a million-word novel. Maybe I should've just written something a lot shorter and better.

But then Brian suddenly went into this manic state of overdrive, and turned out a three-part novel. It was a fantasy novel, probably one of the best fantasy novels I've ever read. It was called *The Vorrh* and it was all set in this primordial forest that does not know any boundaries of time or space. Worked into this incredible fantasy are all these real-life figures, like Eadweard Muybridge, the photographer. Brian has documented a period after Muybridge had been acquitted of murder, which he had actually committed, on the then-unusual grounds of insanity. Muybridge had come to London and been treated by Dr William Gull, who was the Jack the Ripper candidate in my book *From Hell*. It's this wonderful, sprawling fantasy. I read

the first volume and I thought, 'Right I'm not going to read the next volumes until after I've finished *Jerusalem*.' Since then, Brian has gone on to write a load of smaller books but they're all unpublished. I'm certain that they will be published because they are just too good not to be. Brian is an incredible talent.

“There are brilliant writers who we really need in our present day, when so much of our culture is retroactive and repetitious, where it's just recycling whatever the last big trend was, indefinitely, or revising a concept from some time during the last hundred years.”

The books of Iain Sinclair, which I can read because they're documentary, they're documentary but with the power of Iain's writing they're made into somewhat more. They're like a transcendent documentary. So Iain is somebody I will always find time to read. Michael Moorcock, his *Pyat Quartet*, an extraordinary series of books. Steve Aylett, for my money, one of the best, funniest and most original of science-fiction writers. He publishes most of his stuff himself these days, after his experience with big time publishing. There are lots of wonderful writers out there and, sadly, a lot of them can't make a living out of it.

One of my favourite biographers at the moment would be Phil Baker. He did *The Dedalus Book of Absinthe*. Then he went on to do a biography of the thoroughly unlikeable Dennis Wheatley, called *The Devil is a Gentleman*, which, despite not having any fondness for Dennis Wheatley's work or as a person, I found completely engrossing. Recently he's done the biography of Austin Spare, the 19th/20th century occultist and artist. I think Phil is teetering on the brink of deciding whether he can carry on with a writing career.

providers, like television or Hollywood, as culture. They're not. They're commercial entities which may occasionally or accidentally produce culture. But, they're not culture. We are culture.”

Taking responsibility for something is generally a good way of gaining some measure of control over it. That's certainly true when it comes to one's own life. You take responsibility for it and all of a sudden you have control over it. And I think it extends to other things as well. If we take responsibility for the way we're governed and the way that we're ruled economically and the way that the Anonymous and Occupy protesters seem to be doing, then that potentially can have a huge world-changing effect. That's the same whether you're talking about politics or whether you're talking about the arts. If I hadn't believed that it would be possible for me to have some sort of effect then I'd never have tried. As it turns out, my ideas have been communicated to a fair number of people. But back at the beginning, that was far from obvious. All that you had was your own belief in yourself. So yes, it's vital that individuals believe that they can have an impact upon society. For one thing, it's historically true. For another thing, it is the best thing to believe because if you believe otherwise that's a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is the philosophy of a natural-born slave in many respects.

There are people out there who are doing a lot of work to change things and they seem to be getting some reasonable results. I definitely think it's within anybody's power if they are sufficiently determined, if they have sufficient will and they are prepared to work upon any areas of their ability which needs work, their imagination or whatever, all of these things can be improved. I didn't start out with any of the capabilities that I've got now. You can look at my early work and see for your-

One of the things about becoming a writer, in the current climate, is the idea of self-publishing. It might have seemed a lot better to me because the prospects for it are more easily available. With the 'Print On Demand' books where you don't have to end up with thousands of unsold copies under your bed, it would at least seem to offer potentially more advantages than getting hooked up with a big company where you will probably end up regretting the acquaintance sooner or later. It's never easy, but if the quality of your work is good enough, I've got a great conviction that it will show through. And if the quality of your work isn't good enough, and we all start out like that, then with enough self-analysis you can make it better. That's the process really of being any kind of artist. You start out being able to do what you're able to do and if you're diligent and industrious you can improve that. If you just keep at it then with enough willpower and determination you probably will get there. Or you'll get somewhere.

In the past you've talked about the decline of culture, saying "it's turning to steam." As individuals, do you think we can reverse this and reclaim culture?

Yes, I think that we can. I think our mistake has been thinking, in the 20th and 21st century, of the big cultural providers, like television or Hollywood, as culture. They're not. They're commercial entities which may occasionally or accidentally produce culture. But, they're not culture. We are culture. Just ordinary people, what they do. You've only got to look at all sorts of areas around the world at present to see people taking things into their own hands. That seems to be the trend politically and I think it's a very good one.

"I think our mistake has been thinking, in the 20th and 21st century, of the big cultural

This is a little problem. There are brilliant writers who we really need in our present day, when so much of our culture is retroactive and repetitious, where it's just recycling whatever the last big trend was, indefinitely, or revising a concept from some time during the last hundred years. What we really need is fresh ideas but I think that the current publishing set-up is actually adverse to new ideas because they're unpredictable. You don't know which way they're going to go. You can't bank on them the way that you can on a Jamie Oliver cookbook.

It's incredibly hard to make a living from writing...

It certainly is. I've done alright. I've managed to support myself for a long time by writing. But that has been full-time writing for all of those years. Either I was good or I was lucky, or some combination of both. It's worked out for me, but I know for a lot of other writers it's been nowhere near as rewarding. These are writers who are every bit as good as I was but I guess it's being in the wrong place at the wrong time, something like that.

Steve Moore, who was probably my mentor, in terms of starting to write comics, he's now retired officially from comics, concentrating on other stuff he wants to do. His very personal novel, *Somnium*, has just been published by Strange Attractor Press and I know he's very pleased about that. It's also good to see somebody who's been a writer for that long, without great reward, reach a point where he can retire, can live comfortably, if not extravagantly, and he's still got time to pursue the things that he's really interested in. But, again, for every story like that there's probably a lot more that are less happily resolved.

Part 2: The Occupy Movement, Frank Miller, and Politics

Here's the second part of our interview with comic book legend Alan Moore, in which the creator of *Watchmen* and *V for Vendetta* speaks about the Occupy protests, Frank Miller (and Miller's trenchant anti-Occupy stance), and what needs to change in politics. Our thanks once again to Alan Moore for his time.

With the Occupy movement, it seems you and Frank Miller have conflicting views. Would you say that he's against it and you're for it?

Well, Frank Miller is someone whose work I've barely looked at for the past twenty years. I thought the *Sin City* stuff was unreconstructed misogyny, *300* appeared to be wildly ahistoric, homophobic and just completely misguided. I think that there has probably been a rather unpleasant sensibility apparent in Frank Miller's work for quite a long time. Since I don't have anything to do with the comics industry, I don't have anything to do with the people in it. I heard about the latest outpourings regarding the Occupy movement. It's about what I'd expect from him. It's always seemed to me that the majority of the comics field, if you had to place them politically, you'd have to say centre-right. That would be as far towards the liberal end of the spectrum as they would go. I've never been in any way, I don't even know if I'm centre-left. I've been outspoken about that since the beginning of my career. So yes I think it would be fair to say that me and Frank Miller have diametrically opposing views upon all sorts of things, but certainly upon the Occupy movement.

"[The Occupy movement] is a completely justified howl of moral outrage and it seems to

you can get a bit of a reputation. It's always good to serve an apprenticeship.

"... whatever you're trying to do, don't go to the most obvious place. If you've always dreamed of having a story in 2000 AD, probably best if you learn your chops somewhere a bit less well-known, a bit off the beaten track."

I'll always say that I was lucky personally in that when I got into comics it was still very much a medium that was largely for nine- to thirteen-year-olds with a few eighteen- or twenty-year-old outlaws. British comics had a quite standard format. They were all anthologies. They were all stories where you'd get a run of five or six or seven different stories that were probably at most five pages in length. Some of them would be longer, some of them shorter. They'd always be the short filler stories, that are very handy for an editor who's got to fill an issue every week. So this was what new writers were encouraged to do. They weren't going to trust a new writer with an established character like Judge Dredd, but little short twist-ending stories that could be slotted in anywhere, they were always useful if they were good.

So I would say if there's some way that you could do an apprenticeship that involves short stories that is probably the best way in. It teaches you so much as a writer. In a short story you have to develop all of the characters, you have to develop the situation and bring it to an interesting conclusion, all in three or four pages. So you have to do all of the things that you will have to do in a bigger work but in a much more constrained space, which teaches you an awful lot that you can then expand should you get the opportunity to turn it into a bigger and more ambitious work.

two parts of this interview at the links below. Yet again, we'd like to thank Alan Moore for his generosity and openness.

If you were starting out today in the writing world, or even the comics writing world, how would it be different from when you first started out?

Well, when I first started, one of the first things that I realised, when I was making a go of initially being a comics artist and writer, was that the comics field of that time was full of seasoned professionals, who were much better and much quicker at doing the work than I was. What I did was to kind of get in by the back door. I sent in some comic strips to the music paper *Sounds*, suggesting that I'd do a weekly comic strip. They accepted and that was the beginning of an education. I had to meet a deadline every week, I had to write an episode every week, I had to draw it, and after a few years of that I fortunately realised that I was much better at the writing than I was at the drawing and made a change of career accordingly.

It was a different culture back then. Today, for one thing there aren't really any music papers around any more. There's music magazines, but they seem to have a different agenda, although it couldn't hurt to try. Most magazines, if it's a good enough comic strip, would probably think "Well it's only a quarter of a page, half a page, readers do like comic strips..." What I'm saying is whatever you're trying to do, don't go to the most obvious place. If you've always dreamed of having a story in *2000 AD*, probably best if you learn your chops somewhere a bit less well-known, a bit off the beaten track. Then you can hone your talents. You can get a reputation for at least keeping a deadline that might serve you well when you do try sending some work to something that you actually want to pursue. There's probably equivalents of that these days, but like I say I'm quite cut off from modern culture, I don't have an internet connection, so there might be places on the web where

be handled in a very intelligent, non-violent way, which is probably another reason why Frank Miller would be less than pleased with it. I'm sure if it had been a bunch of young, sociopathic vigilantes with Batman make-up on their faces, he'd be more in favour of it."

As far as I can see, the Occupy movement is just ordinary people reclaiming rights which should always have been theirs. I can't think of any reason why as a population we should be expected to stand by and see a gross reduction in the living standards of ourselves and our kids, possibly for generations, when the people who have got us into this have been rewarded for it; they've certainly not been punished in any way because they're too big to fail. I think that the Occupy movement is, in one sense, the public saying that they should be the ones to decide who's too big to fail. It's a completely justified howl of moral outrage and it seems to be handled in a very intelligent, non-violent way, which is probably another reason why Frank Miller would be less than pleased with it. I'm sure if it had been a bunch of young, sociopathic vigilantes with Batman make-up on their faces, he'd be more in favour of it. We would definitely have to agree to differ on that one.

What do you think needs to change in our political system?

Everything. I believe that what's needed is a radical solution, by which I mean from the roots upwards. Our entire political thinking seems to me to be based upon medieval precepts. These things, they didn't work particularly well five or six hundred years ago. Their slightly modified forms are not adequate at all for the rapidly changing territory of the 21st Century.

We need to overhaul the way that we think about money, we need to overhaul the way that we think about who's run-

ning the show. As an anarchist, I believe that power should be given to the people, to the people whose lives this is actually affecting. It's no longer good enough to have a group of people who are controlling our destinies. The only reason they have the power is because they control the currency. They have no moral authority and, indeed, they show the opposite of moral authority.

In the sixth issue of *Dodgem Logic*, I remember doing an article and I was trying to think of possible ways in which our society might be altered for the better. I'm not saying that any of these ways would necessarily be practical but it's important that we try to think these things through. It's probably more important now than it ever has been. There is a sense that we don't have an infinite amount of time to get these things right.

“I think that since our leaders are not going to address any of these problems then we really have no choice than to attempt to wrest the steering wheel from them.”

With politics at the moment seemingly determined to keep ploughing on their same destructive course because they can't think of anything other to do, when we're facing the possibility of an economic apocalypse, of potentially an environmental apocalypse, we don't necessarily have an infinite amount of time. I think that since our leaders are not going to address any of these problems then we really have no choice than to attempt to wrest the steering wheel from them. If they're aiming at the precipice with the accelerator pedal flat to the floor, then we don't have any other choices left. Do it now, in this generation, because we don't how many more there's going to be.

The economic problem is a strange one...

Economics is always strange. You're not talking about anything that's actually real. Researching a chapter for *Jerusalem*, I read a couple of books on economics to see if I could get my head around the facts of the situation. I was astonished when I found out the value of derivative bonds, in 2008. These are bonds that have a value in themselves that were once connected to a real thing, there might have been a bond made for the sale of a herd of sheep, but that can be sold on and they gain in value. The notional value of the world's derivative bonds was in the region of sixty trillion. Exactly ten times the economic output of the entire planet, which is around six trillion. That means that the gap between what economists and what the world's economic forces and the banks thought they had to play with and what actually existed was fifty-four trillion. That would seem to me the depth of the hole we are in.

So something has to be done about that. I would suggest beheading the bankers, but while it would be very satisfying and would cheer us up, it probably wouldn't do anything practical to alter the situation. Behead the currency. Change the currency, why not? It would disempower all the people who had bought into that currency but it would pretty much empower the rest of us, the other ninety-nine percent.

Part 3: On Comics, How to Break Into Comics, and Modern Culture

Welcome to the third and final part of our interview with Alan Moore. In this concluding section, we speak to the *Watchmen* and *V for Vendetta* creator about comics, the work he has enjoyed most, the state of modern culture, the trick to making it big in the comics world, the potential of comics as a medium, and how he'd like to be remembered. You can read the previous