By the late 1940s, several groups were worried about the impact violence and gore in comics had on children. In response, the industry created the Comics Code Authority in 1954 to self-censor; one of the first things prohibited was the zombie. However, from the start, comics producers tried to find ways around the Code, and in the early 1970s, the Code was finally relaxed. It remained firm on zombies, though: as creatures without literary antecedent, zombies were considered too unrefined for comics readers. Yet, the zombie was experiencing a renaissance in pop culture, largely due to the cult success of *Night of the Living Dead* (1968), so Marvel found a new way to circumvent censorship with creatures called “zuvembies.”

This presentation traces the history of the living dead in comics—from the horror comics of the 1950s to the zuvembies of the 1970s—to explore how zombies in comics have consistently pushed the boundaries of acceptability while anticipating later shifts in how the undead have been conceived of in other mediums. It will ultimately argue that from almost the beginning of their tenure in comics, zombies have existed as “zuvembies,” both embodying and challenging popular expectations of the undead.

**Chera Kee** is an Associate Professor of Film & Media Studies in the English Department, where she teaches courses on popular culture, identity, and horror, among other things.