

CORE-UA.711

❖ Expressive Cultures: The Graphic Novel ❖ Fall 2020

M/W 2:00-3:15
On Zoom

Prof. Eliot Borenstein
19 University Place, 210

Office Hours:
By Appointment
(on Zoom, Skype or Google Hangouts)

www.eliotborenstein.net

(212) 998-8676
eb7@nyu.edu
Skype: eliotb2002

Preceptors

Juan Manuel Ávila Conejo
jac1184@nyu.edu

Bruno Guaraná
bruno.guarana@nyu.edu

Anneke Rautenbach
ahr318@nyu.edu

Randy Rowe
rr1614@nyu.edu

Course Description

This course examines the interplay between words and images in the graphic novel (comics), a hybrid medium with a system of communication reminiscent of prose fiction, animation, and film. What is the connection between text and art? How are internal psychology, time, and action conveyed in a static series of words and pictures? What can the graphic novel convey that other media cannot?

NYU Classes and the Internet

NYU Classes, which is accessible through the "Academics" tab of NYU Home, is an important part of the course, facilitating announcements and the distribution of course materials.

Please keep in mind that, by default, NYU Classes uses your NYU email account. Many of you may have other email accounts that you use. If so, it is a quite simple matter to arrange for your email from one account to be forwarded automatically to the other. I strongly urge you to do so. It is **your responsibility** to make sure that you are receiving official email sent to your NYU account.

Zoom

All lectures and recitations will be held on Zoom. The recurring link for the lectures can be accessed through NYU Classes.

Students are expected to attend all lectures and recitations (Zoom keeps track of attendance). Lectures will also be recorded and made available on NYU Classes, but will be deleted after 30 days.

By default, everyone will start out muted on Zoom. If you have a question or comment, you can use the “raise hand” function, ask the question in chat, or simply speak up.

In addition to the live lectures, **your assignments include viewing brief (10-minute) recorded introductions** to the readings and to the authors. In normal times, this would be a part of the main lecture. This will allow us to deduct the time from our scheduled lecture and end early.

Course requirements

No knowledge of any foreign language is expected, as all works will be read and discussed in English. It is essential that you keep up with the reading assignments and come to class prepared. Lecture attendance is, of course, mandatory.

Lecture Attendance

You are required to attend class lectures, and to sign in. **If you miss more than two lectures, your final grade will be docked by a third of a letter** for each unexcused absence.

Recitation Sections

In addition to the lectures, all students must enroll in a discussion section led by one of the preceptors assigned to this course. This will be an opportunity for you to become actively engaged in the material, as well as simply to ask clarifying questions.

These recitations sections are an integral part of the course and are the **basis of your participation grade**. **More than three absences from recitation will cause you to fail this course.**

Assignments

There are no exams in this class (thanks to Covid-19). Instead, you will be required to do short, frequent writing assignments along with two slightly longer papers. In all, there are three types of assignments:

- 1) Six blog posts. This is a piece of informal writing posted to the NYU Classes shell for your recitation section. It is an opportunity to raise

- questions and make observations about the readings. These assignments are not graded, but if you do not do them, your grade will suffer.
- 2) Four two-page papers. There will be four of these, with writing prompts distributed in advance. If you want to write on a different topic (related to the week's reading), please ask your preceptor for permission. This is a formal writing assignment, with a thesis that you are arguing based on evidence from the text.
 - 3) Two 5-6 page papers. Again, there will be prompts, but also the opportunity to come up with your own topic with your preceptors' permission. This is a formal writing assignment, with a thesis that you are arguing based on evidence from the text.

All of this works out to one assignment per week. Check the schedule at the end of this syllabus for the due dates.

All assignments must be turned in either before you come to recitation (i.e., digitally) or at the beginning of recitation (if you have printed them out). Ask your preceptor about their preference.

Lecture Outlines

When appropriate, lecture outlines will be made available on NYU Classes prior to the class meeting.

Office Hours.

Under current conditions, I see no point in setting up specific office hours. I am happy to meet with any of you by appointment, on Zoom, Skype, the phone, or whatever medium you prefer.

Final Grade

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Recitation (including blog):	20%
Short Paper 1:	10%
Short Paper 2:	10%
Short Paper 3:	10%
Short Paper 4:	10%
Long Paper 1:	20%
Long Paper 2:	20%

Useful Reference Material

For writing papers and citation formats (you may choose any citation format so long as you use it consistently):

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

** This site reproduces much of the information located in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 7th ed.

Strunk, William & White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon, 2000)

Williams, Joseph. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. 8th ed.

Disability Accommodations

Academic accommodations are available to any student with a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility, learning disability, or is deaf or hard of hearing. Students should please register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980.

NYU's Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities

726 Broadway, 2nd Floor

New York, NY 10003-6675

Telephone: 212-998-4980

Voice/TTY Fax: 212-995-4114

Web site: www.nyu.edu/csd

Required Texts, Part One

(NYU Book Store)

- Barry, Lynda. *One! Hundred! Demons!* Montreal: Drawn & Quarterly Books, 2017
- Bechdel, Allison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. New York: Mariner Books, 2007.
- Brosh, Allie. *Hyperbole and a Half: Unfortunate Situation, Flawed Coping Mechanisms, Mayhem, and Other Things that Happened*. New York: Penguin, 2013.
- DeConnick, Kelly Sue and Valentin De Landro. *Bitch Planet Volume 1: Extraordinary Machine*. Portland: Image Comics, 2015
- McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics*. New York: William Morrow, 1994.
- Moore, Alan and David Lloyd. *Watchmen*. New York: DC Comics, 1994.
- Okorafor, Nnedi and Tana Ford. *LaGuardia*. Milwaukie, Oregon: Berger Books, 2019.
- Ware, Chris. *Jimmy Corrigan, The Smartest Kid on Earth*. New York: Pantheon, 2000.
- Wilson, G. Willow and Adrian Alphona. *Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal*. Marvel Comics, 2014.
- Yang, Gene Luen. *American Born Chinese*. Square Fish, 2003.

Required Texts, Part Two

- Goldstein, Sophie and Jenn Jordan. *Darwin Carmichael Is Going to Hell*. 2014.
<https://gumroad.com/1/dcigh> PDF. (\$9.99)

Required Texts, Part Three

(Online)

- Scilipoti, Tess. "Barren." <https://tscilipoti.com/barren-1>
- . "Closet." <https://tscilipoti.com/closet-1>
- . "Trans Bee Sex Comic." <https://tscilipoti.com/trans-bee-sex-comic>

Required Texts, Part Four

(NYU Classes)

- Doom Patrol Volume 2, Issue 34.
- Doom Patrol Volume 2, Issue 70.
- Eisner, Will. *The Best of the Spirit*. New York: DC Comics, 2005.
- Gaiman, et. al. *The Sandman v.5: A Game of You*. New York: Vertigo, 2011.
- Gerber, Steve, et al. *Howard the Duck*. *Howard the Duck* (Volume 1). Marvel Comics. Issues 1-7 published bi-monthly (January 1976-December 1976). Issues 8-27 published monthly (January 1977-September 1978). *Howard the Duck Annual 1*. Marvel Comics (1977).

These files contain Gerber's complete Howard the Duck comics. You're encouraged to read the entire thing, of course, but here's what you have to read for the purposes of our class:

Howard the Duck 5-15, 17-19, 24-27

If you do want to read all of *Howard*, this is the best reading order:

Start with HTD 1-7, and then the Treasury Edition. Then read HTD 8-14, followed by HTD Annual 1. Then read HTD 15. HTD 16 is a weird, text-based fill-in issue. Then go on to HTD 19-27.

Hernandez, Jaime. *Love and Rockets: Locas*. Contains "Locas tambien," "Hopey," "Locas," "Locas en las cabezas," "Locas at the Beach," "Locas vs. Locos," "8:01 am," "Locas," "The Return of Ray," "The Death of Speedy Ortiz," "A Mess of Skin Issue," "Flies on the Ceiling."

Mazzucchelli, David. *Asterios Polyp*. New York: Pantheon, 2009.

Miller, Frank. *The Dark Knight Returns*. New York: DC Comics, 1997.

Milligan, Peter and Duncan Fegredo. *Enigma* 1-8. Vertigo Comics (DC). March - October 1993.

Monster, Sfé. *Eth's Skin* Chapters 1-3.

Morrison, Grant and Frank Quitely, *We3*. New York: Vertigo, 2011.

Spiegelman, Art. *Maus: A Survivor's Tale* (Volumes I & II combined). New York: Penguin, 2003.

"Hero's Journey" readings

Action Comics Volume 1, #1. DC Comics. June 1938.

Detective Comics Volume 1, #27. DC Comics. May 1939.

Fantastic Four Volume 1, #48-50. Marvel Comics. March-May 1966.

Amazing Spider-Man Volume 1, #33. Marvel Comics. February 1966

Green Lantern Volume 2, #76. DC Comics. April 1970.

Amazing Spider-Man Volume 1, #96-97. Marvel Comics May-June 1971.

Strange Tales Volume 1, #178-179. Marvel Comics February-April 1975.

Doctor Strange Volume 2, #4. Marvel Comics October 1974.

"Black Panther" readings

Black Panther Volume 3 1-5 (1998)

Prose

Carrier, David. "Chapter Four: Words and Pictures Bound Together; or, Experiencing the Unity of Comics." *The Aesthetics of Comics*. Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000. 61-75

Exhibit 33 from the transcripts of the 1954 Senate Subcommittee Hearings into Juvenile Delinquency with a Special Focus on Comics.
<http://www.thecomicrobooks.com/1954senatetranscripts.html> Last accessed March 3, 2008.

Harvey, Robert C. "Comedy at the Juncture of Word and Image: The Emergence of the Modern Magazine Gag Cartoon Reveals the Vital Blend." Varnum, Robin and Christina T. Gibbons (eds.) *The Language of Comics: Word and Image*. Jackson: The University Press of Mississippi, 2001. 75-96.

Wolk, Douglas. *Reading Comics. How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean*. New York: Da Capo Press, 2007. 3-28, 60-88.

All of these prose readings are also available as eBooks, in epub format (for virtually every eReading device and/or program besides the Kindle) and

mobi format (for the Kindle).

Reading Digital Comics

These are mostly .cbr and .cbz files, which are simply renamed archive files (.cbz=.zip; .cbr=.rar) containing a series of .jpg files (one for each comics page)

To read these files as is, you'll need to download some software. A good, free program for Mac OS X, iOS, Windows, and Linux is YAC Reader

<https://www.yacreader.com/>

There are also several readers available for the Android platform, but I don't know enough about them to recommend one.

Or you can expand the .cbr or .cbz archive files and read them in any jpg or pdf readers.

CLASS SCHEDULE

September 2 (W) Introduction

September 4 (F) Recitation

September 7 (M) LABOR DAY

September 9 (W) How To

- ▼For Today:
- * McCloud Intro Video
- * McCloud, *Understanding Comics*

September 11 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Blog Post Due

September 14 (M) Paper Movies

- ▼For Today:
- * Eisner Intro Video
- * Eisner, *The Best of the Spirit*

September 16 (W) The Hero's Journey

- ▼For Today:
- * Wolk (3-28)
- * *Action Comics* 1
- * *Detective Comics* 27
- * *Fantastic Four* 48-50
- * *Amazing Spider-Man* 33, 96-97
- * *Strange Tales* 178-179
- * *Doctor Strange* 4

September 18 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Blog Post Due

September 21 (M) Funny Animals (1)

- ▼For Today:
- * Gerber Intro Video
- * Gerber, et al,
Howard the Duck (5-15, 17-19, 24-27)

September 23 (W) The Grim and the Gritty

- ▼For Today:
- * Miller Intro Video
- * Miller, *The Dark Knight Returns*

September 25 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Two-Page Paper Due

September 28 (M) Yom Kippur NO CLASS

September 30 (W) Who Was that Masked Man?

- ▼For Today:
- * *Enigma* Intro Video
- * Milligan and Fegredo, *Enigma*

October 2 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Blog Post Due

October 5 (M) Raw Sharks (1)

- ▼For Today:
- * *Watchmen* Intro Video
- * *Watchmen* (1-6)

October 7 (W) Raw Sharks (2)

- ▼For Today:
- * *Watchmen* (finish)

October 9 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Blog Post Due

October 12 (M) Pretty Ugly

- ▼For Today:
- * Barry Intro Video
- * Barry, *One! Hundred! Demons!*

October 14 (W) Wakanda Forever

- ▼For Today:
- * Black Panther Assignment

October 16 (F) Recitation

- ▼For Today:
- * Two-Page Paper Due

October 19 (M) Bleeding History

▼For Today:

- * Spiegelman Intro Video
- * Spiegelman, *Maus*

October 21 (W) All-American Girl

▼For Today:

- *Ms *Marvel* Intro Video
- *Wilson, et al. *Ms. Marvel*

October 23 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Blog Post Due

October 26 (M) Family Portraits

- *Bechdel Intro Video
- * Read Bechdel, *Fun Home*

October 28 (W) The Outer Boroughs of Hell

▼For Today:

- *Jordan & Goldstein, *Darwin Carmichael* (pages 1-180)

October 30 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Two-Page Paper Due

November 2 (M) Goth Tragedy

▼For Today:

- * Gaiman Intro Video
- * Gaiman, et al. *A Game of You*

November 4 (W) Queer as Comics

▼For Today:

- * *Doom Patrol* 34, 70
- * *Eth's Skin* (1-3)
- * Scilopoti, "Barren," "Closet," "Trans Bee Sex Comic"

November 6 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Blog Post Due

November 9 (M) Art Objects

▼For Today:

- * Ware Intro Video
- * Ware, *Jimmy Corrigan*

November 11 (W) Funny Animals (2)

▼For Today:

- *Morrison Intro Video
- *Morrison & Quitely, *We3*

November 13 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Blog Post Due

November 16 (M) Locas

▼For Today:

- *Hernandez Intro Video
- *Hernandez, *Locas* (selections)

November 13 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Five-Six Page Paper Due

November 18 (W) Behind Bars

- **Bitch Planet* Intro Video
- *DeConnick & De Landro *Bitch Planet*

November 20 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

- * Blog Post Due

November 23 (M) Clean All the Things

▼For Today:

- *Hyperbole Intro Video
- **Hyperbole and a Half*

**November 25 (W) Thanksgiving
NO CLASS**

November 30 (M) Immigrants and Orphans

▼For Today:

- *Yang Intro Video
- *Yang, *American Born Chinese*

December 2 (W) Ruben Bolling

▼For Today:

✿ Read TBA

December 4 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

✿ Blog Post Due

December 7 (M) Citizen Future

▼For Today:

✿ *Laguardia* Intro Video

✿ Okorafor & Ford, *Laguardia*

December 9 (W) Design Flaws

▼For Today:

✿ Mazzucchelli Intro Video

✿ Mazzucchelli, *Asterios Polyp*

December 11 (F) Recitation

▼For Today:

✿ Five-Six Page Paper Due