

History 304: Teaching History with Comics

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T/Th 9:35 -10:50, HSS 153

Office hours: T/Th 11-12



Content and Objectives

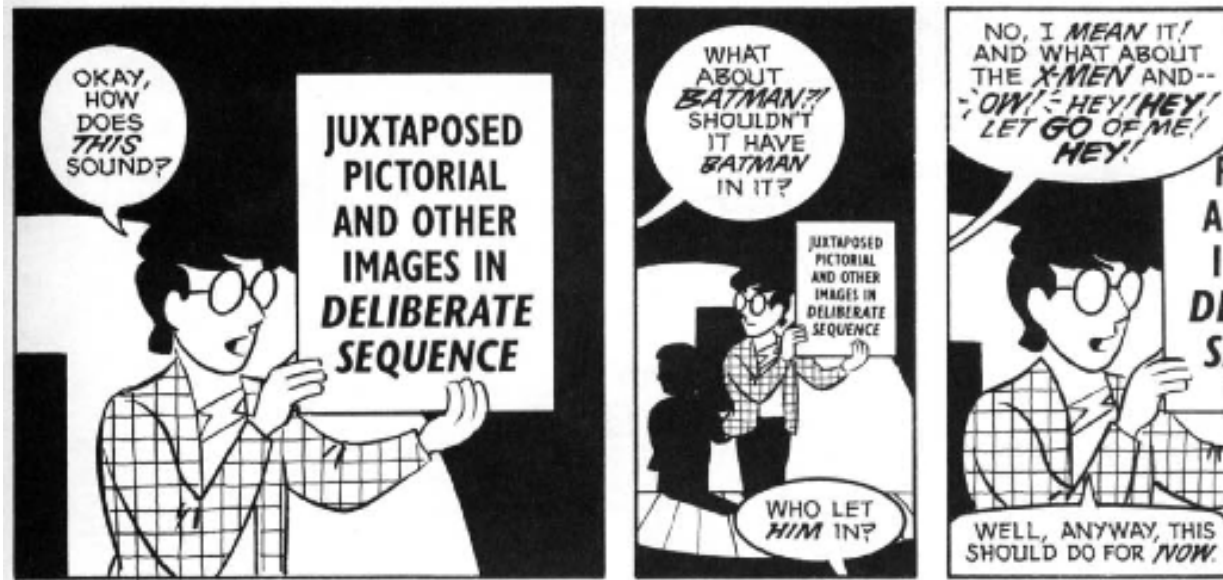
The point of this course is to combine three linked questions into practical answers:

- How should we teach history? What are our goals? What is a useful pedagogy?
- How do we study comics as 'primary' sources? What can they tell us about the past?
- How can we study comics as 'histories'? How are they interpretations of the past? How can they help us to share these lessons with students?

Other iterations of this course will address U.S. history or regional topics, but for this course we are imagining and modeling teaching a world history course, 1500-present, utilizing five graphic novels. I will begin the class by introducing the graphic novel/comics, visual rhetoric, and pedagogy in history. Over the next four units, I will give examples of units that might be used in a world history classroom (college or high school). The final unit will ask you to take on the role of the teacher and to design a unit on a topic of interest to you using a comic book or graphic history of your choice.

Note: You must bring the relevant book to class with you every day!!!!

Course outline



Introduction:

August 24: Introduction

Aug 29: A brief global history of the historical graphic novel

Aug 31: Five outcomes of a history education, world history standards, and where comics fit into them

Sept 5: Visual rhetoric of comics

Sept 7: How to build a unit around comics in History: curriculum and pedagogy [introducing project and portfolio]

Sept 12: Visual rhetoric activity, featuring Nick Sousanis

Unit 1: *Abina and the Important Men* – Historical knowledge and power – Slavery and colonialism

Sept 14 Slavery, abolition, and colonialism in world history

Sept 19: Analyzing *Abina and the Important Men*

Sept 21: Was Abina a slave?

Sept 26: Workshop: building a learning unit

Readings: *Abina and the Important Men*

Unit 2: *A Chinese Life* – Memory – 20th century China

Sept 28: China in the late 20th century [assignment #1 due]
Oct 3: China's Cultural Revolution – lesson plans from the Stanford History Education Group and University of Oregon Museum of Art, plus pages from *A Chinese Life*
Oct 5: Analyzing *A Chinese Life*
Oct 10: Workshop: building a learning unit

Readings: Li Kunwu with Philip Otié, *A Chinese Life*; Stanford History Education Group, “China’s Cultural Revolution”, Reading Like a Historian; “*Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: China’s cultural Revolution*”, University of Oregon Art Museum

Unit 3: *Maus* – Inter-generational memory -- Holocaust

Oct 12: WWII and the Holocaust [assignment #2 due]
Oct 17: Historians and the Holocaust/The origins of *Maus*
Oct 19: Visual rhetoric: *Maus*
Oct 24: Workshop: building a learning unit

Readings: *Maus (1 and 2)*; Terry Barr, “Teaching *Maus* to a Holocaust Class”, in Stephen E. Tabachnick, editor, *Teaching the Graphic Novel*, (New York: MLA, 2009).

Unit 3: *Barefoot Gen* – Historical empathy – Hiroshima

Oct 26: The dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima [Assignment #3 due]
Oct 31: “History wars” and Hiroshima
Nov 2: Visual rhetoric: *Barefoot Gen*
Nov 7: Workshop: building a learning unit [Project proposals due]

Readings: *Barefoot Gen, Vol 1*, Jeremy R. Ricketts, “Manga, the Atomic Bomb and the Challenges of Teaching Historical Atrocity: Keiji Nakazawa’s *Barefoot Gen*”, in Carrye Kay Syma and Robert G. Weiner, editors, *Graphic Novels and Comics in the Classroom: Essays on the Educational Power of Sequential Art*, (Jefferson: McFarland & Co, 2013).

Lesson plan portfolio development

Nov 9: Making your portfolio – what should it include? [Assignment #4 due]
Nov 14: Concept and pedagogy workshop – what are you trying to teach?
Nov 16: Content workshop – what is the history? How do you cover or ‘uncover’ your lesson?

Presentations

Nov 28, 30 and Dec 5,7, 12: presentations

Final exam: portfolios due!

Assessment

- 1) 4 lesson plan assignments. These assignments each comprises a brief, unique lesson plan for teaching the comic/graphic novel discussed in the unit. Lesson plans must include: outcomes/goals, a discussion of activities, and assessment. Specific directions will be given to students in each case. (4 X 15% = 60%)
- 2) One major portfolio assignment. Students will design a lesson plan using a comic book or graphic novel of their choice. The portfolio will include both content-based and skills-based outcomes, an aligned outline of the historical content/material of the unit, an analysis and reflection of the comic chosen and its utility for this lesson, a description of activities in the unit, and an assessment plan including at least one visual rhetoric assignment and one other assignment. (40% broken up as 5% for proposal, 5% for presentation, 30% for portfolio)

Some 'modern world history' graphic novels

Lockpez and Haspiel, *Cuba: My Revolution* (memoire)
Bogaert and O'Connor, *Journey Into Mohawk Country* (very much a primary source)
Lason Lutes, *Berlin* (on the border of historical fiction, but still usable)
Tan, *The Arrival* (a metaphor, but still usable)
Shigeru Mizuki, *Showa: A History of Japan* (any volume)
Sattouf, *The Arab of the Future* (memoire)
Geary, *Trotsky: A Graphic Biography* (biography)
Tardi, *It was the War of the Trenches* (approaches formal history)
Alexyeva, *Soviet Daughter* (intergenerational biography)
Spiegelman, *Maus* (intergenerational biography)
Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen* (memoire)
Birmant and Oubrierie, *Pablo* (biography)
Mizuki, *Onward to Our Noble Deaths* (memoire)
Kunwu and Otie, *A Chinese Life* (memoire)
Sowa, *Marzi* (memoire)
Fetter-Vorm and Kelman, *Battle Lines: Graphic History of the Civil War* (historical interpretation)
Abouet and Oubrierie, *Aya* (historical fiction, but appropriate for social history)
Satrapi, *Persepolis* (memoire)
Getz and Clarke, *Abina and the Important Men* (intersects scholarly history)
Schechter and Clarke, *Mendoza the Jew: Boxing, Manliness, and Nationalism* (scholarly)
Blaufarb and Clarke, *Inhuman Traffic* (scholarly)

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Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is not allowed in this class. The instructor may respond to plagiarism by awarding a student an F grade in the course.