

**ENGLISH WI/ 200G**  
**INTRODUCTION TO GENRE: GRAPHIC NOVELS AND COMICS**  
**Cross-listed as WS 294**  
**SPRING 2013**

UCB 113 - University of Hawai'i at Hilo

Monday & Wednesday 3:00-4:15 p.m.

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**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- Herge. *The Adventures of Tintin. Vol. 3.* New York: Little, Brown & Co, 2007
- McCloud, Scott. *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art.* New York: Harper Perennial, 1993
- Moore, Alan. *Watchmen.* New York: DC Comics, 1986
- Simmonds, Posy. *Tamara Drewe.* New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2008
- Pollock, Ian. *William Shakespeare's King Lear.* New York: Black Dog, 1984
- Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis.* New York: Pantheon, 2003
- Yang, Gene Luen and Derek Kirk Kim. *The Eternal Smile.* New York: First Second, 2009

**PREREQUISITES:** C or better in ENG 100H, ENG 100, ENG 100T, ESL 100 or ESL 100T

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is an introduction to the major concepts in the academic field of graphic novels and comics. Students will learn about the history and development of sequential art and pictographic storytelling in popular media. We will examine a representative span of subgenres within the field of graphic novels and comics and consider their historical, cultural and social contexts. These contexts include the representation of gender, sex, and sexuality in graphic narratives, and the paradigms that govern representational praxis. The course is cross-listed with Women's Studies (WS).

Class time will be structured around lectures and discussion, and supplemented with films. Students are expected to participate actively in class discussions, complete all assignments on time, and keep a journal. Students will be evaluated on

the basis on their participation, attendance, and timely completion of written and oral assignments.

ENG 200G is WI (Writing Intensive)

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (in relation to English Studies):**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the basic concepts and methods used in the study of graphic novels and comics.
- Situate graphic novels and comics as a distinct field within literary and cultural studies.
- Discern the relationship between narrative and picture.
- Practice and precisely demonstrate the fundamentals of close reading in coherent sophomore-level essays.
- Prepare and articulate coherent interpretations of graphic novels and comics in logical and critically astute papers that identify and analyze story, form, and technique in conjunction with schools of theory and/or socio-historical contexts.

### **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (in relation to Gender & Women's Studies)**

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify feminist and queer theory on the social constructions of sex and gender in visual art
- Recognize and understand variations in conceptions of and attitudes towards gender, reproduction, and the human body
- Recognize graphic literature as a site of women's activism and cultural debate
- Reflect upon and evaluate the intersectionality of race, class, nationality, gender, and sexuality in comics and graphic novels
- Identify structures of oppression and systems of inequality in popular culture
- Integrate critical reading, writing, and research skills in oral and written communication

### **PLAGIARISM & CHEATING**

**One incident of academic dishonesty will result in an “F” for the course.** The UHH general catalog states, “Plagiarism, cheating and collusion as defined in the University of Hawaii at Hilo Student Conduct Code, Category 2, H, will not be tolerated.” For the official university statement about cheating and plagiarism, see the relevant page(s) of the Student Conduct Code.

**Student conduct:** Students are required to conduct themselves appropriately in the classroom by respecting all members of the classroom community, appreciating

difference, and following instructions. The full text of the Student Conduct Code is available online at <[www.uhh.hawaii.edu/studentaffaris/conduct/](http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/studentaffaris/conduct/)>.

**Attendance & Participation:** Regular on-time attendance in class is expected. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to explain the reason for an absence and to ask for missed assignments, photocopies, etc. Students are expected to engage actively in class activities, demonstrating preparedness and intellectual curiosity. Course grade will reflect level of attendance and participation.

#### **DISABILITIES:**

Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Office at (808) 933-0816 (Voice), 808) 933-3334 (TTY), or [uds@hawaii.edu](mailto:uds@hawaii.edu), Hale Kauano'e A Wing Lounge, as early in the semester as possible.

#### **ADVISING:**

Advising is a very important resource designed to help students complete the requirements of the University and their individual majors. Students should consult with their advisor at least once a semester to decide on courses, check progress towards graduation, and discuss career options and other educational opportunities provided by UH Hilo. Advising is a shared responsibility, but students have final responsibility for meeting degree requirements.

#### **ACADEMIC SUPPORT:**

Kilohana: The Academic Success Center provides academic support opportunities for all UH Hilo students that foster their development into independent, self-motivated learners. Students who visit Kilohana have access to subject-specific and academic skills tutoring from UHH students selected for their academic achievement and dedication to helping others succeed. Kilohana is located on the lower level of the Mookini Library and on the web at <http://hilo.hawaii.edu/kilohana/>

#### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES:**

The use of personal laptop computers and other electronic devices (i.e. phones, PDAs, iPads, etc) is only permitted in class to assist learning at specified times. Any use of any device that can lead to the distraction from class instruction for both the user and other students will not be tolerated. Inappropriate use may include viewing online content not related to class (including social networking sites), text messaging, answering phone calls, viewing video, and listening to music on such devices. Violators of this code will be asked to leave the classroom and will lose attendance and participation points.

**Keep yourself informed** by checking your [hawaii.edu](http://hawaii.edu) e-mail regularly for important course information.

#### **METHODS OF ASSESSMENT:**

5 journals (@ 5 points each).....	25 points
3 short papers (@10 points each).....	30 points
6-9 panel autobiographical graphic narrative.....	10 points
Dyad presentation.....	10 points
Write-up on dyad presentations.....	5 points
Attendance and participation.....	20 points
TOTAL.....	100 points

**GRADING:**

A (90-100 points), B (80-89 points), C (70-79 points), D (60-69), F (below 60 points). +/- grades will be calculated within these parameters

**ASSIGNMENTS**

All written assignments must be submitted in hard copy, on time, using 12 pt. Times New Roman font, correct MLA citation, double-spaced. Minimum and maximum page length is specified for each assignment. Failure to comply with instructions costs points, so make sure to read each prompt carefully.

**Late assignment policy:**

- Late assignments will only be accepted with **instructor's permission**
- Late assignments **cannot be revised**
- Late assignments will receive **a full grade lower** than the same assignment would have received if it had been submitted on time

**Revisions:**

- Optional, but highly recommended.
- All short papers may be revised, not journals.

**Dyad project (10 points)**

- Topic: superheroes (both male and female)

At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to form a learning community called a dyad with another student. A dyad is a team of two students who support each other in presenting researched information to the class.

Each dyad presentation must

- Be 10 minutes long
- Include PowerPoint

- Briefly outline the character's origin, traits, gendered characteristics and powers
- Summarize the types of plots this character appears in
- Relate the character to a relevant section of your own choice in Scott McCloud *Understanding Comics*

### **Write-Up on Dyad Presentations (5 points)**

To encourage active listening, you're required to write a 3-4 page evaluation of the dyad presentations. Discuss what you learned from the presentations and how it contributed to your understanding of superheroes (male and female), the gender roles they portray, and their social impact on American pop culture.

### **Journal Instructions (25 points + 2 points extra credit for portfolio w/cover letter)**

- Write a 2 - 3 page journal in response to assigned course readings.
- Journals will be graded on the basis of detailed discussion of course texts.
- Avoid lengthy summaries. Instead, focus on something you find interesting, annoying, surprising or curious about the text and discuss it, using examples and details to support your point of view.  
 \*Example A: "*Tamara Drewe* has a much more literary feel to it than *Batman* or *Watchmen*. One of the things that stands out about it is that it reads like one of Jane Austen's novels of manners: what is important are not cataclysmic world affairs, but the intrigues of the domestic circle."  
 \*Example B: "In the movies, *Batman* seems to be a pretty straightforward good guy who effortlessly switches between being human and being superhero. The graphic novel, however, paints a much darker and more complex picture that really makes you wonder if there really is a good guy in this story".
- Submit all journals in a portfolio with cover letter at the end of the semester. The cover letter is a 1-2 page, double-spaced assessment of what insights and writing routines you've gained from writing journals. Discuss your two favorite journal entries and explain what you like about them.
- Journals cannot be revised

### **Short Paper #1 (10 points)**

- 3-4 pages, MLA, double-space
- MUST include at least three citations in reference to Scott McCloud *Understanding Comics*
- Topic: Compare and contrast character development in any two narratives from *The Eternal Smile* and/or *Tintin*
- Short paper #1 can be revised

### **Short Paper #2 (10 points)**

- 3-4 pages, MLA, double-space
- MUST include at least three citations in reference to McCloud *Understanding Comics*
- Topic: Analyze a topic of your own interest in relation to *Watchmen*
- Short paper #2 can be revised

**Short Paper #3 (10 points)**

- 3-4 pages, MLA, double-space
- MUST include at least three citations in reference to any course texts.
- Topic: Discussion of gender roles in *Tamara Drewe* and at least two other course texts
- Short paper #3 can be revised

**6-9 panel autobiographical graphic narrative (10 points)**

Sign up to consult with instructor about your graphic narrative during office hours.

- Storyboarding is a way of organizing the sequence of text and image. It will help you visualize scenes and determine how to create a logical narrative flow. You can find storyboard templates online or create your own. Storyboarding does what drafting, clustering and scribbling does for writers.
- Final version will be displayed in class
- Your work may be in color or in black and white, hand drawn, or drawn on the computer
- No photos! Collages of images from newspapers or magazines are OK.
- Your graphic narrative (art and story) must be your *own original work*

You may want to

- tell a short anecdote about a specific event in your life
- give a portrait of yourself as a member of a community (family, circle of friends, co-workers, sports team, school group, etc.)
- tell a joke
- show your relationship with a significant other (for better or worse)
- explore a moment of moral or spiritual insight

**DAILY SCHEDULE:**

Date	Required Readings & Class Activities	Assignments Due
M January 7	Introductions	In-class writing: "what is a graphic novel, and what is a comic?"

W January 9	<i>The Eternal Smile</i> (9-63)	
F January 11 @ 7:30 p.m.	<i>The Intergalactic Nemesis. Live-Action Graphic Novel. Book One: Target Earth</i> UHH Performing Arts Center	Attendance highly recommended!  Discount tickets available for ENG 200G students
M January 14	<i>The Eternal Smile</i> (67-98) <i>Understanding Comics</i> (2-23)	Journal #1
W January 16	<i>The Eternal Smile</i> (103-170) <i>Understanding Comics</i> (24-59)	
M January 21	HOLIDAY	
W January 23	<i>Understanding Comics</i> (60-93) <i>Tintin</i> (3-64)	Journal #2
M January 28	<i>Understanding Comics</i> (94-117) <i>Tintin</i> (67-128)	
W January 30	<i>Understanding Comics</i> (118-137) <i>Tintin</i> (131-192)	
M February 4	<i>Understanding Comics</i> (138-162)	Short paper #1
W February 6	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter I & II & "Under the Hood"	
M February 11	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter III & IV & "Under the Hood" & "Dr. Manhattan: Super-Powers"	
W February 13	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter V & VI & documents & "Treasure Island"	Revised short paper #1
M February 18	HOLIDAY	
W February 20	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter VII & VIII & "Blood from the Shoulder of Pallas" & "New Frontiersman"	Journal #3
M February 25	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter IX & X & "Daily	

	World" and documents	
W February 27	<i>Watchmen</i> : Chapter XI & XII "After the Masquerade"	
M March 4	<i>Understanding Comics</i> (162-215)	
W March 6	Dyad presentations	
M March 11	Dyad presentations	Short paper #2
W March 13	Dyad presentations	
M March 18	<i>King Lear</i> (1-72)	Write-up on dyad presentations due
W March 20	<i>King Lear</i> (73-139)	Journal #4 Revised short paper #2
March 25-29	SPRING RECESS	
M April 1	<i>Tamara Drewe</i> ("August" & "Autumn")	
W April 3	<i>Tamara Drewe</i> ("Winter" & "Spring")	
M April 8	<i>Tamara Drewe</i> dvd	Journal #5
W April 10	<i>Persepolis</i> (1-86)	
M April 15	<i>Persepolis</i> (87-163)	
W April 17	<i>Persepolis</i> (164-245)	Short paper #3
M April 22	<i>Persepolis</i> (246-341)	
W April 24	Satrapi: "Why" (Laulima: Resources) <i>Persepolis</i> (dvd)	Portfolio of all five journals due with cover letter (2 points extra credit)
M April 29	<i>Persepolis</i> (dvd)	Revised short paper #3
W May 1	6-9 panel autobiographical graphic narrative display in class	Autobiographical graphic narrative

**There is no final exam**

*Please note:*

SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE