



## Graphic Cultures (WST 390: 01)

Professor Lisa Diedrich

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M-W 2:30-3:50

In recent years, comics and graphic narratives have become a popular and innovative form for telling auto/biographical stories in a medium that artfully combines—co-mixes—words and images. The touchstone text of the form is *Maus*, Art Spiegelman's graphic narrative of his parents' experience of the Holocaust and his own transgenerational trauma. Other key texts in the hybrid genre include Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, which, like *Maus*, have reached a wide readership, garnered popular and critical acclaim, as well as scholarly attention. These texts all share a preoccupation with exploring how subjects come into being in relation to experiences and events that are both ordinary and extraordinary—e.g., childhood, sexuality, war, illness, trauma, shame, stigma, love, hope. Our class will take a multi-faceted and interdisciplinary approach to graphic cultures. We will begin with questions about form, exploring how lines, panels, pages, etc. are drawn, read, and interpreted. We will then turn to many examples of the genre, focusing in particular on graphic family histories of war and migration, graphic activism and politics, and graphic medicine and bodies.\*

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\* Image is a still from the film version of *Persepolis* (2007).