

# Comics & Culture Overview & Student Projects F2018

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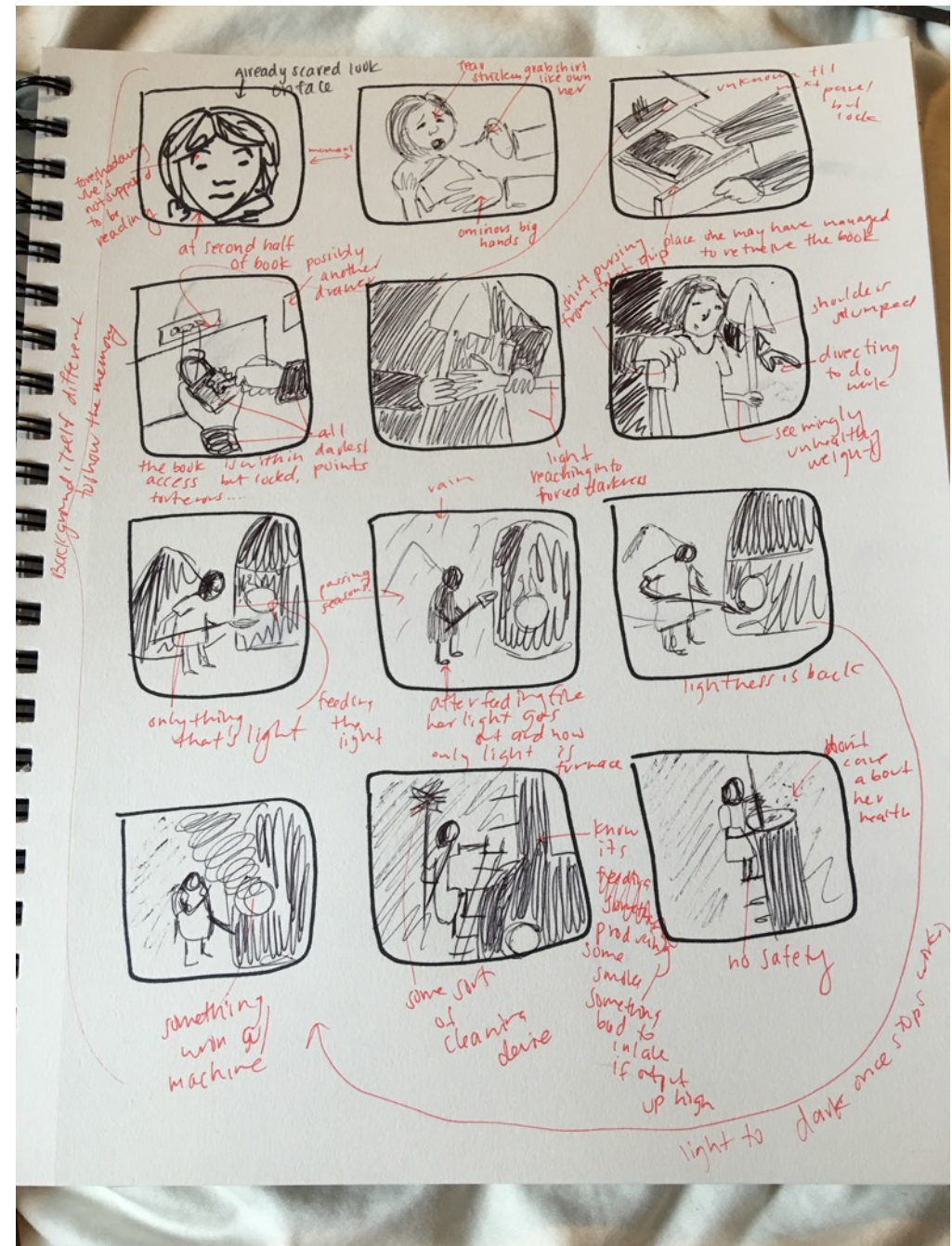
<http://spinweaveandcut.com/education-home/>

Comics Studies @SFSU

<https://humanitiesliberalstudies.sfsu.edu/minor-comics-studies>

Part 4: The Arrival, Wordless, Persepolis, Satrapi-  
You, Dave Gibbons-You

## Visual analysis to pages from The Arrival





made together



industrial background



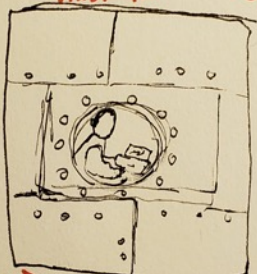
something sad in eating alone

eating is a very common activity

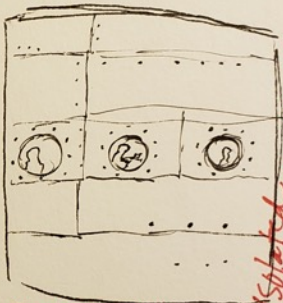


looking outward

isolation

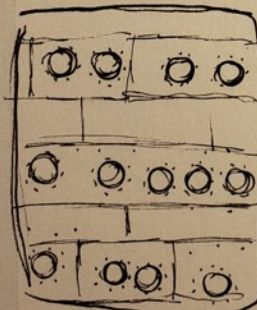


back in

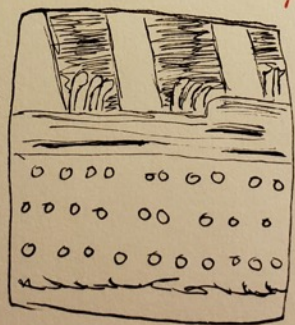


isolated individuals; almost in cells

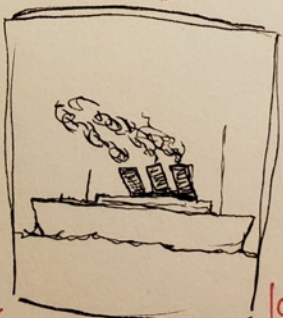
This entire scene has a very prison-like feel to it; each room on the ship is a prison



Maybe all in the same moment and time, just moving further away



an isolated moment that is slowed but then speeds up w/ image of boat

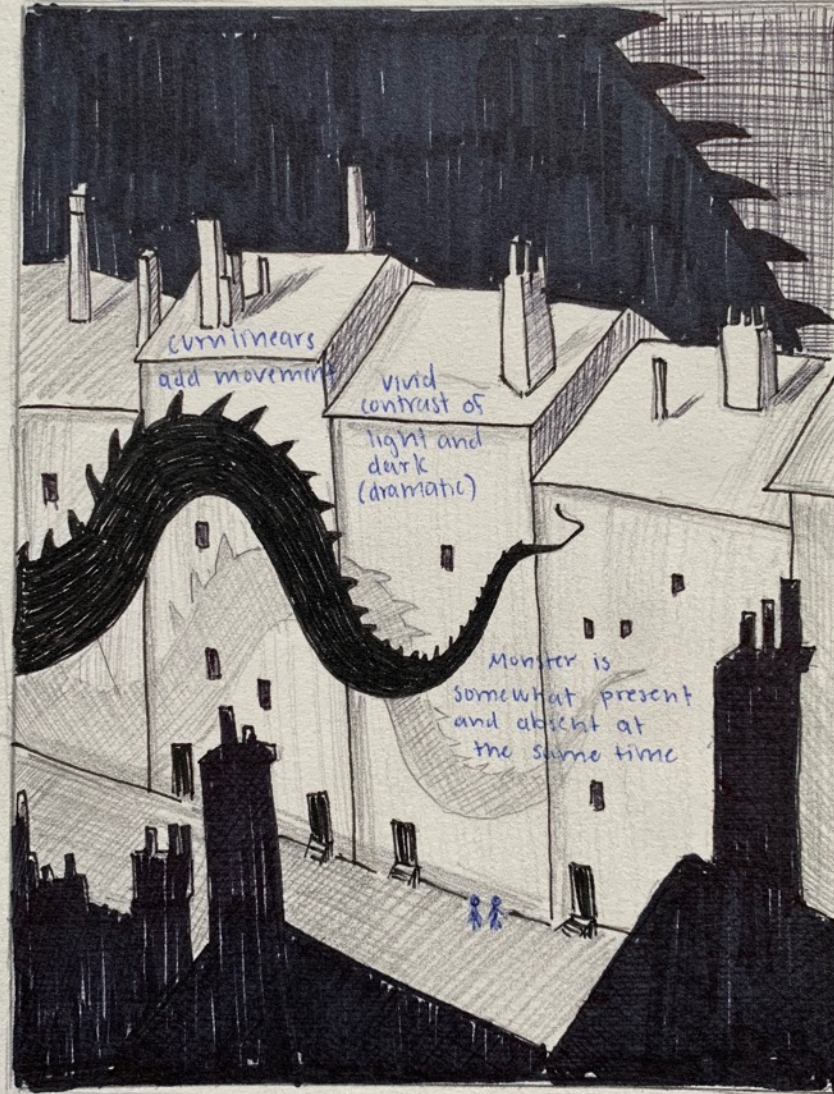


The progression of the image of going further away while he travels further away.



The page suggests  
that there is danger  
or something ominous lurking

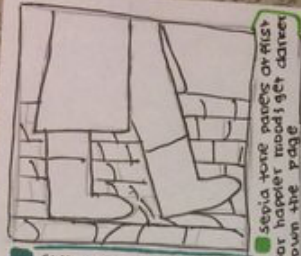
The idea of danger is  
suggested through the  
silhouette of the monster  
and its shadow



the tail of dragon/monster  
is curved throughout and it  
leads the movement in this  
page

→ also continue  
from 1 to the  
next page



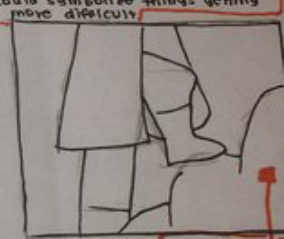
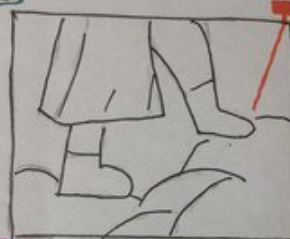


sepia tone panels of first for happier mood; get darker down the page



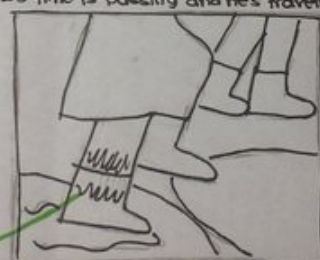
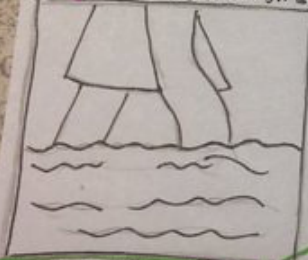
Follows one person's mvmt through time in panels

his ascent in this panel and the next could symbolize things getting more difficult



the changing scenery he's walking through shows time is passing and he's traveling

the climb is steeper here, perhaps metaphorically too



casualty of war; he's more alone now

the accumulating dirt shows things are more difficult and he's worn down

"découpage" used throughout page to focus on just the man's legs - this is selective framing

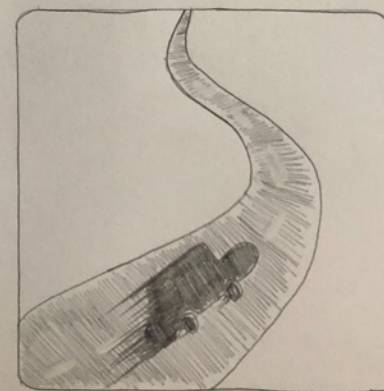
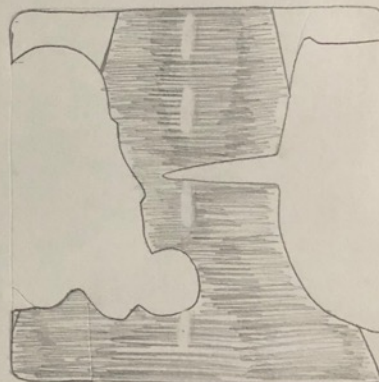
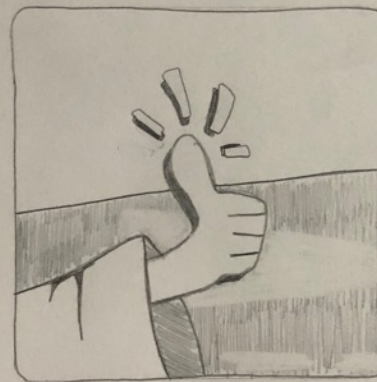
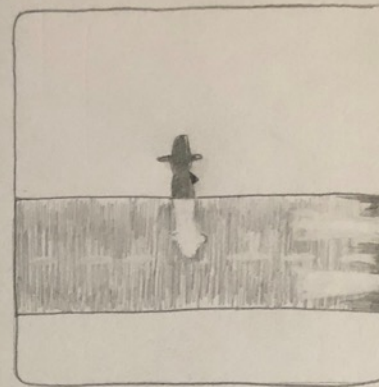
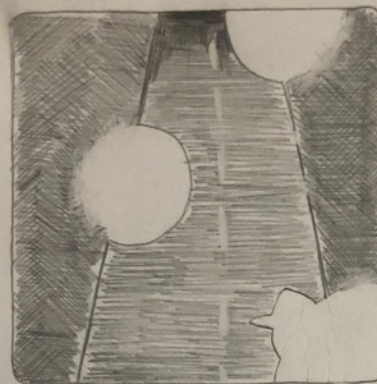
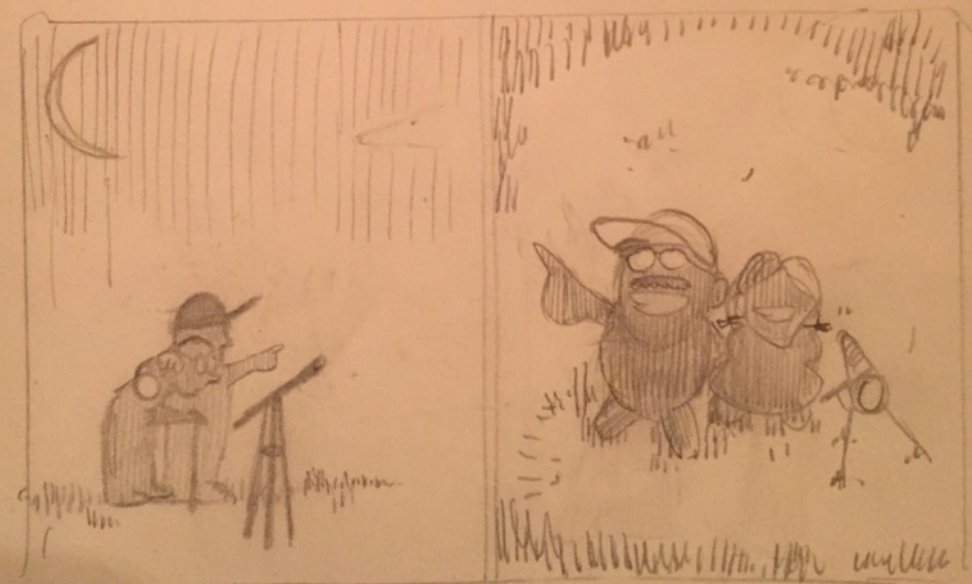


tension builds in these panels as he runs faster, becoming more of a blur by the end

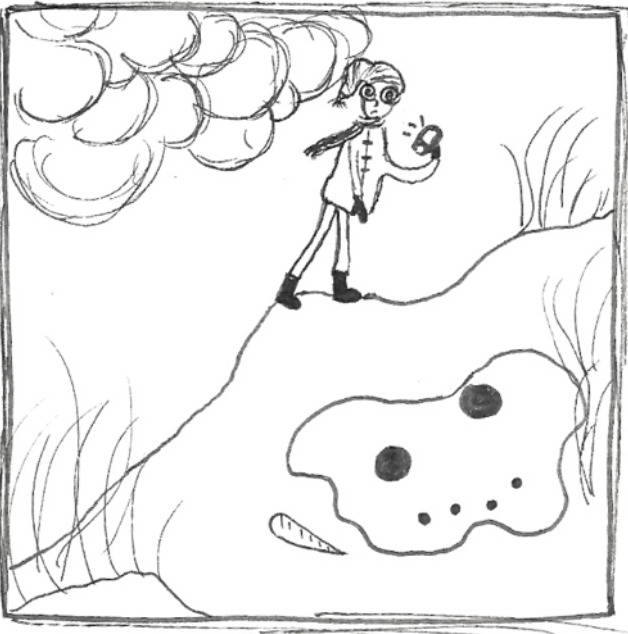
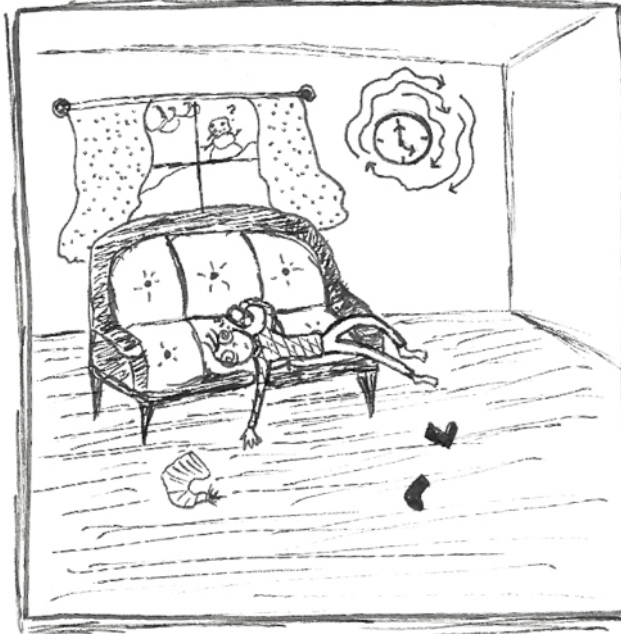


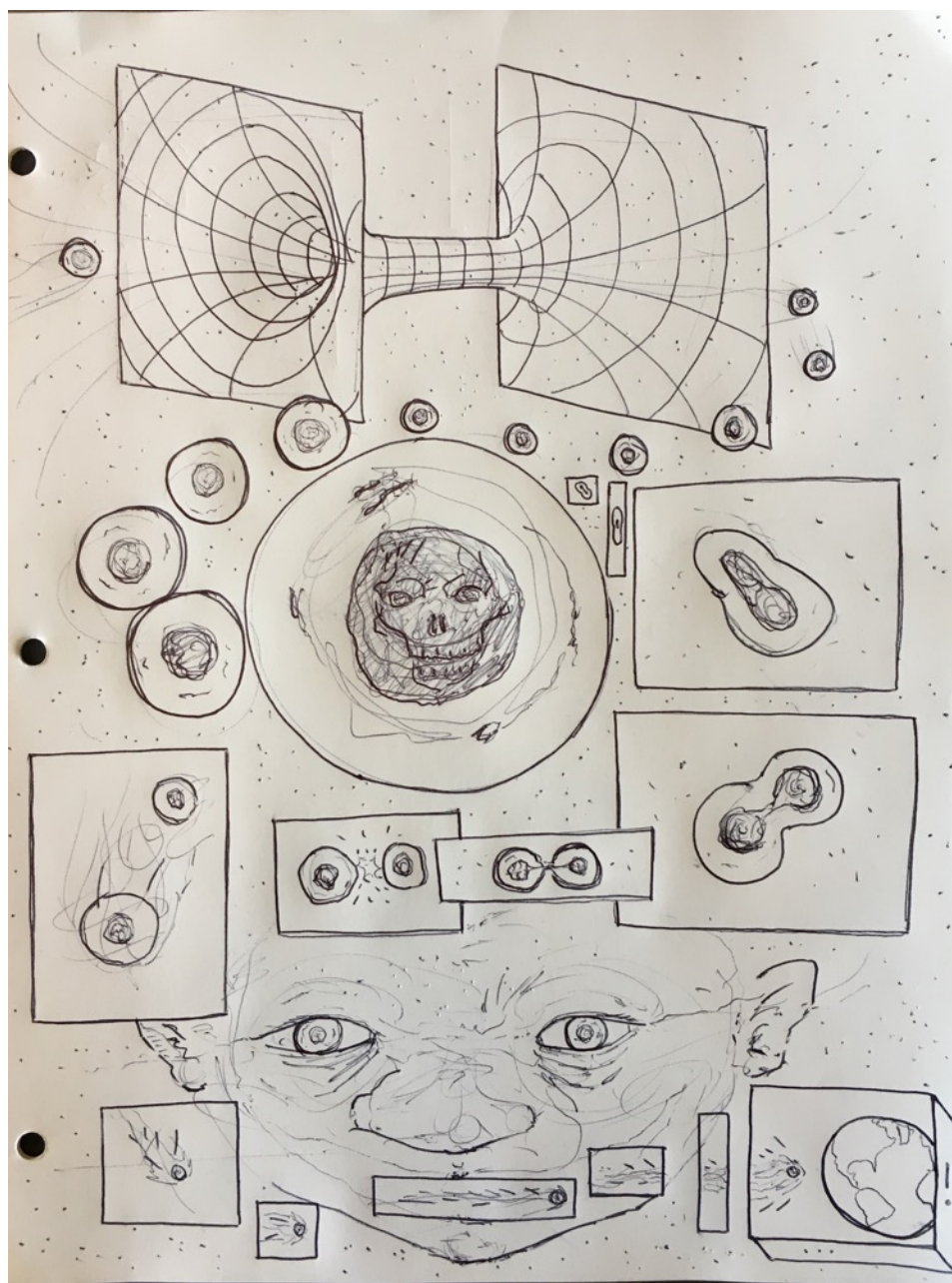


Wordless Comic

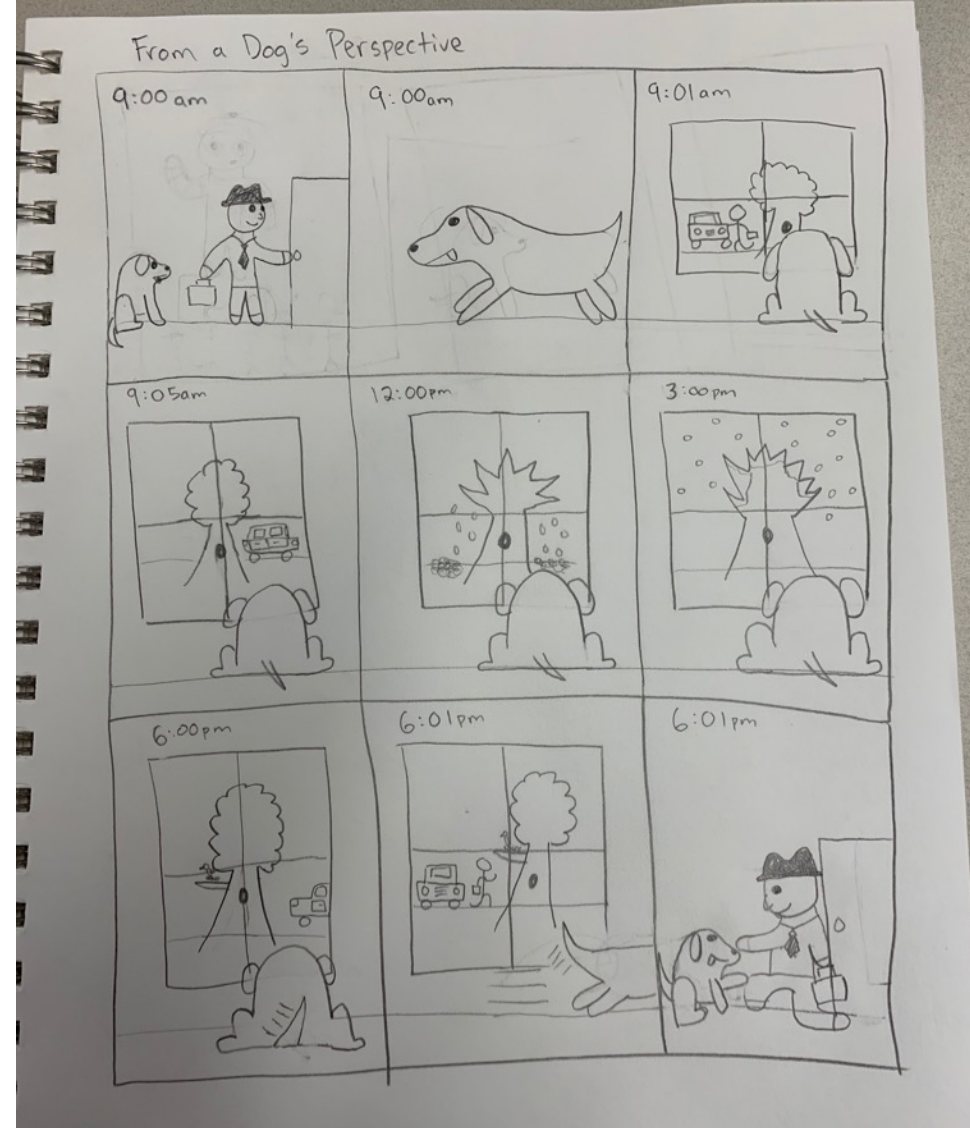






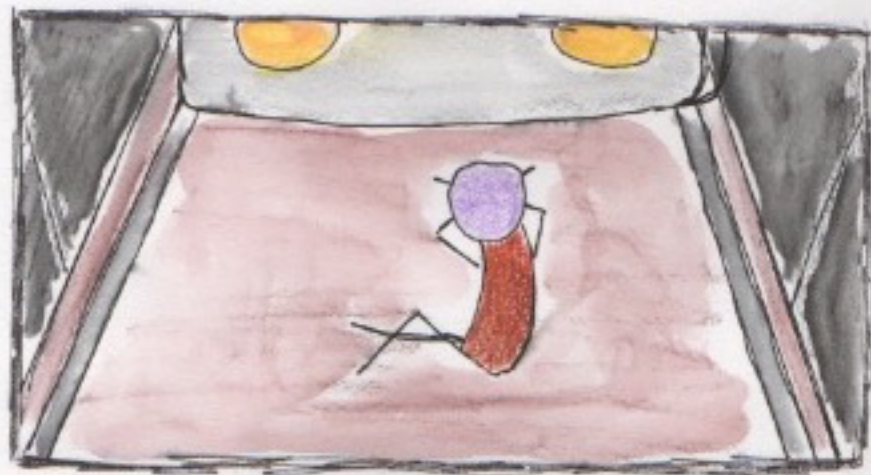


An Alien animal cell makes its way through time and space, to divide and conquer.



When I was thinking about what to do with my wordless comic, I thought about what conveys emotions the best without saying anything. That's why I chose to make my comic about the point of view of a dog whose owner left for the day for work. In the first few panels we see the dog seeing his owner off for work. And through out the day the poor dog just waits all day for his owner to return. And from his point of view it is taking forever for his owner to return. We see from the dog's perspective it's taking so long that all the seasons of the year are passing by with no sign of his owner's return. In reality it has only been a few hours, however in the dog's mind it's been years. And when his owner finally does return, the dog is relieved and ecstatic.

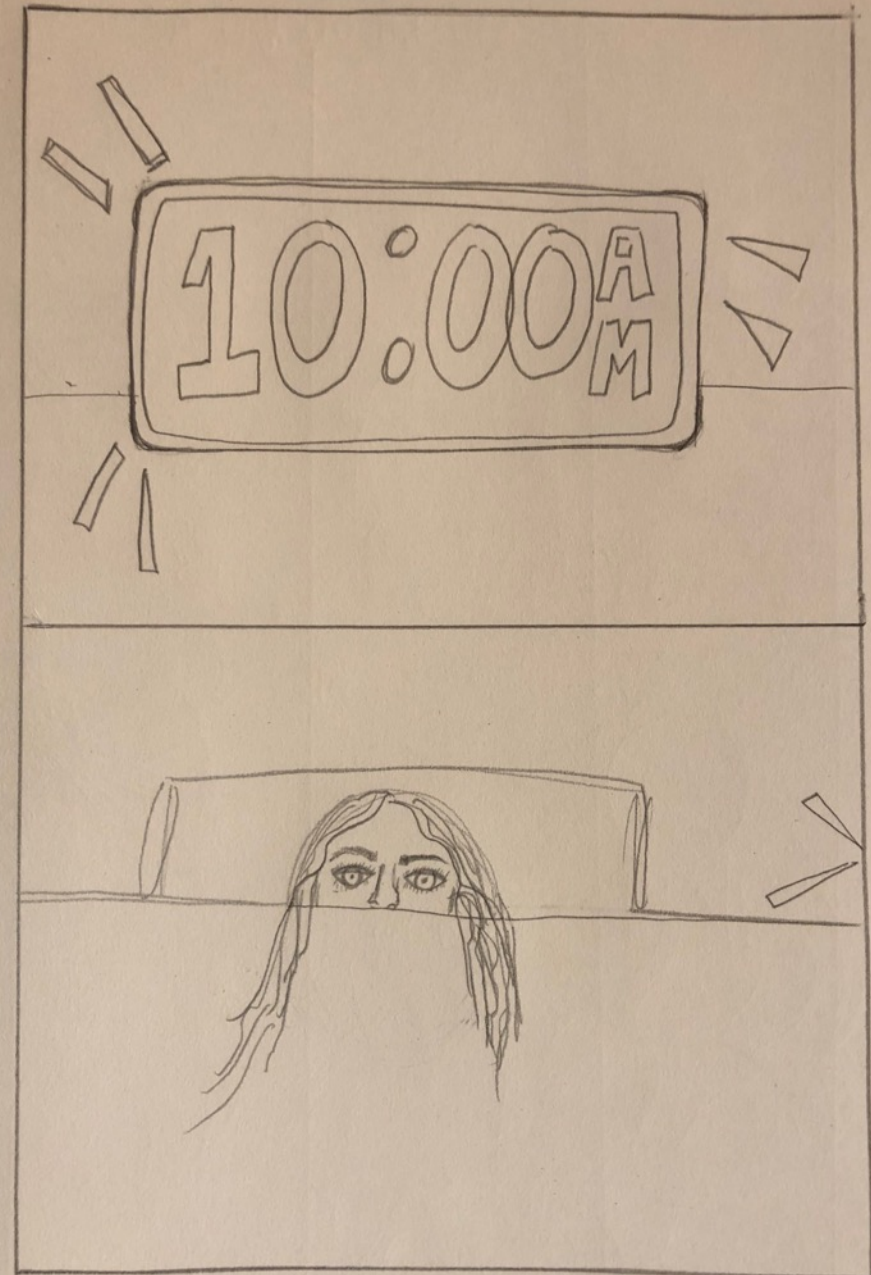
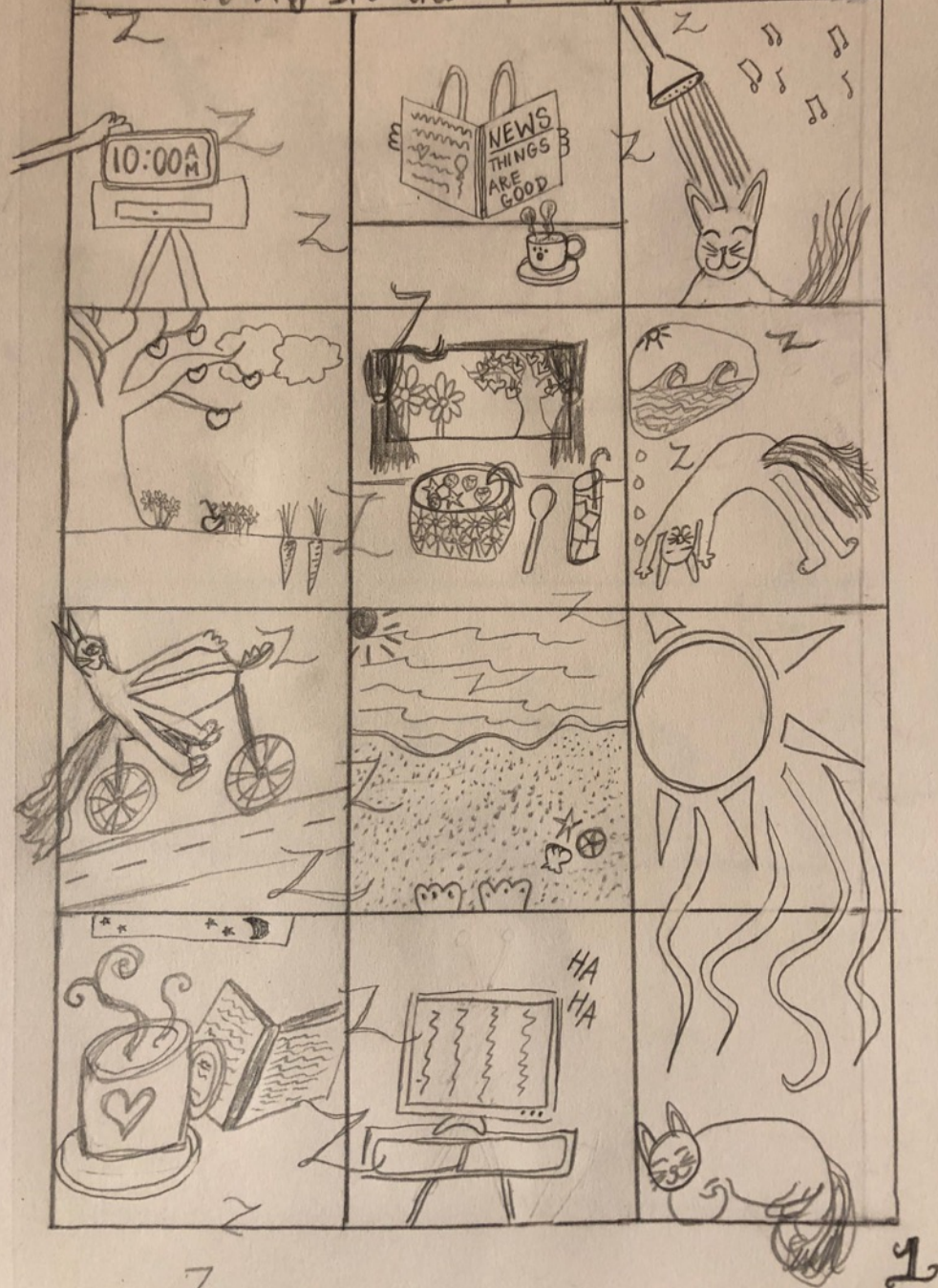




Based on a fear I have. I tried to use color and borders to help convey meaning for the words I couldn't use.



# A DAY IN the life by: daylan buchanan





Persepolis analysis pages and sketchnotes of  
readings related to the book

11 in. x 14 in.  
27.9 x 35.6  
27.9 x 35.6

Strathmore Artist Papers  
A Division of Peconic Corporation  
Neenah, WI 54956  
www.strathmore.com



457-11

Made in the U.S.A.  
Fabriqué aux États-Unis  
Hecho en E.E.U.U.

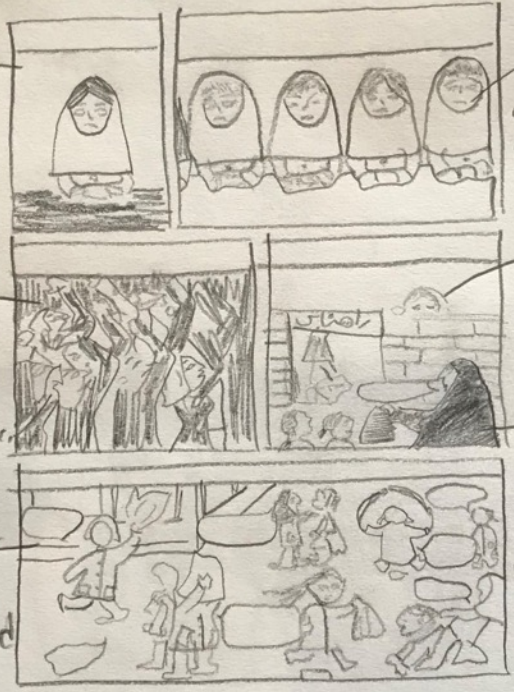


# THE VEIL

she is isolated in her own box. you can tell at the start of the comic she is different from the others.

The Revolution was a very tense one therefore this box is colored black, to show the mood as being dark and intense.

Due to lack of understanding of the reason why women wear the veil. It is treated as a toy or any other object. It isn't seen as important.

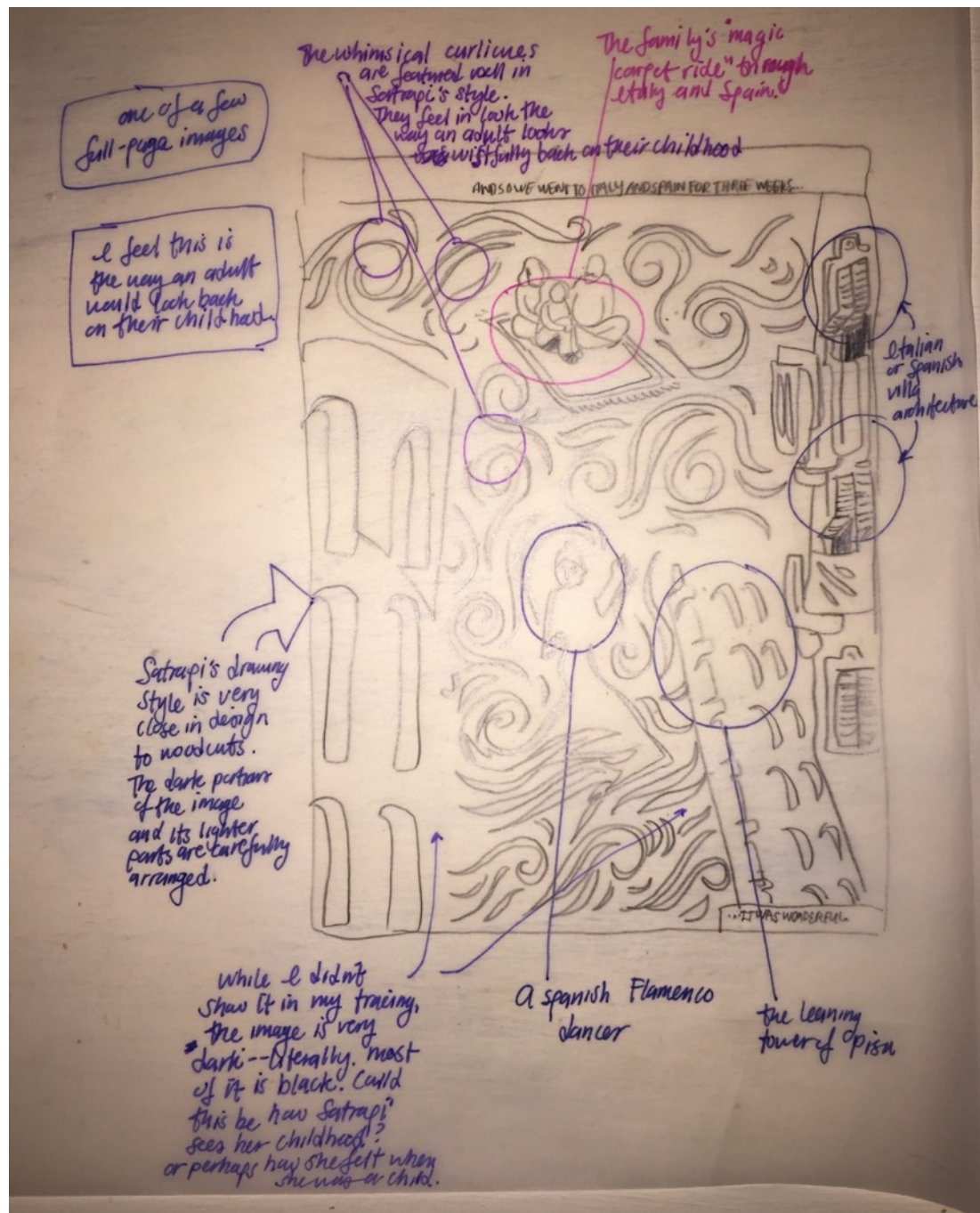


None of the girls are smiling or seem to be happy. In my opinion it is due to all the strictness and rules

curiosity of the outside world isn't where the veil is being worn

you can see the nun handing out veils to small girls but it's something free of course they will take it without even realizing what comes w/ the veil







Interesting how the creator decided to show passage of time by leaving one character the same every panel.

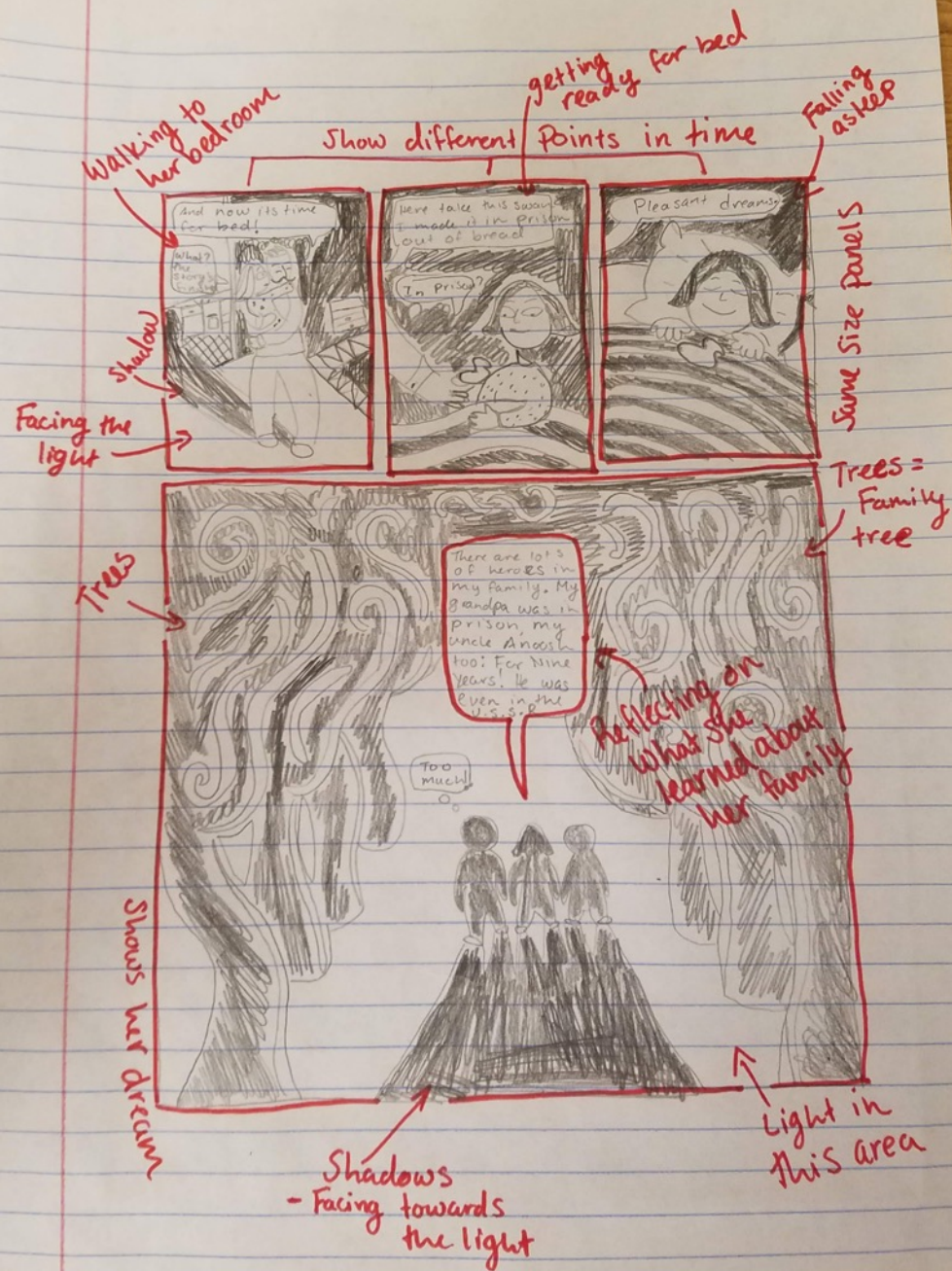


In these first four panels Mary is positioned below the lady, demonstrating the ladies power over her.

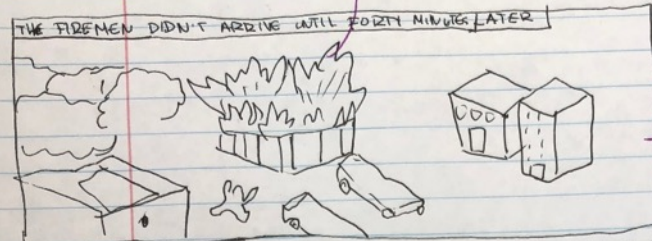
Mary's eyes also demonstrate time as in each panel her eyes are positioned differently. This also shows her "emotional" state, which really helps the reader understand the situation.

Both her and Radio connected to same balloon. Shows how significant her relationship with metal is.

Supports the emphasis of music. By choosing to have two panels with the stereo and only 1 with her mother.







→ The fire trucks present after fire already started

THE BBC SAID THERE WERE 400 VICTIMS. THE SHAH SAID A GROUP OF RELIGIOUS FANATICS PERPETRATED THE MASSACRE.



A lot of Black space

There's more ghosts than people

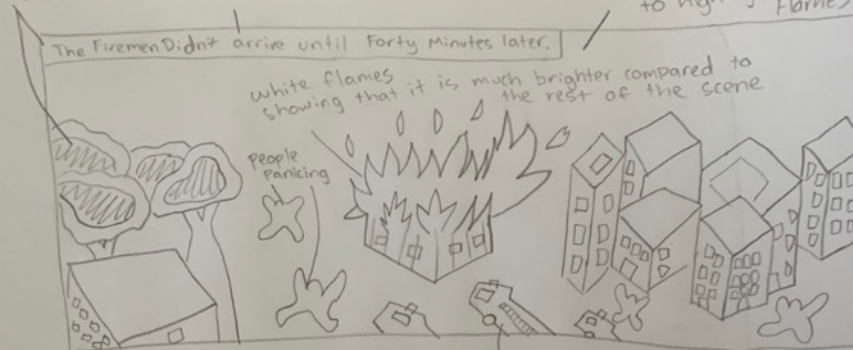
→ Ghosts shaped similar to people

→ Ghosts kind of in the shape of flames

Black and white coloring to show contrast

Textbox describing the scene

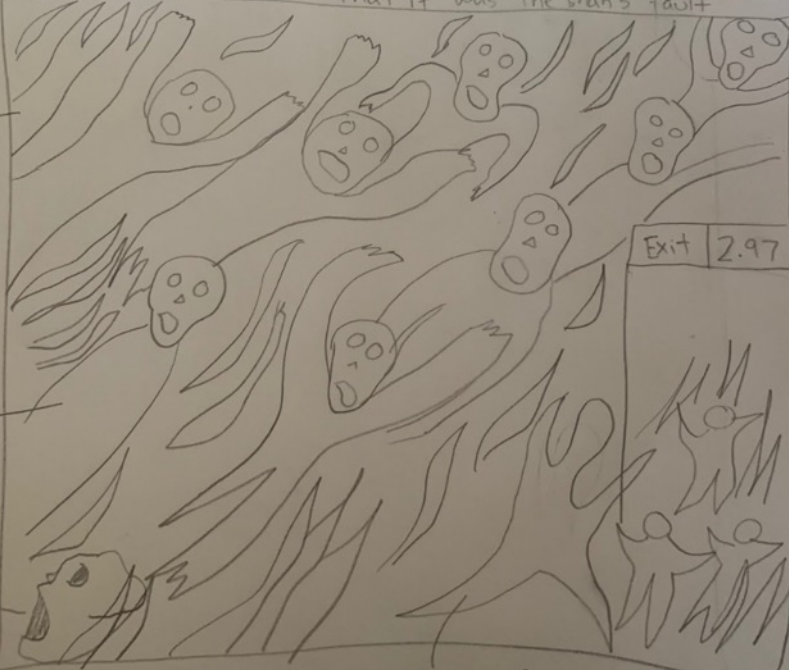
Black Background to highlight the flames



The BBC said there were 400 victims. The Shah said that a group of Religious Fanatics Perpetrated the Massacre. But the people knew that it was the Shah's fault

Flames of the fire burning the souls

Souls of the fallen victims



showing some people trying to escape while others in the fire perished



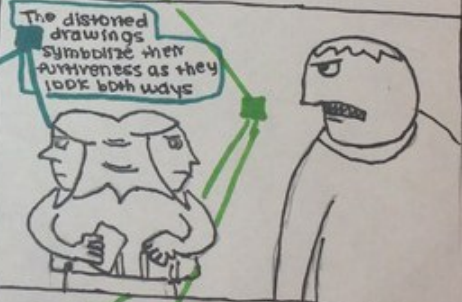
not shown in my drawing; these are places that are black and seem to coincide with dangerous and more foreboding situations

displayed in a way to show the passing of time in a linear fashion. the sellers aren't actually all speaking at once. we just see her progression along Gandhi Avenue

For a year now, the food shortage had been relieved by the growth of the black market. However, finding tapes was a little more complicated. On Gandhi Avenue...



I bought two tapes: Kim Wilde and Cameo



The distorted drawings symbolize their awareness as they look both ways



Dark road but light background forebodes the danger to come

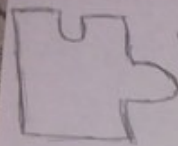
ironic song lyrics that contrast with the situation behind her  
oblivious to surroundings



literally tall dark looming figures over her. obviously dangerous

They were Guardians of the Revolution, the woman's Branch. This group had been added in 1982, to arrest women who were improperly veiled (like me, for example).





at the heart of  
Persepolis, Marjaneh  
trying to piece together  
a divided identity



mirrors are used to  
represent the problems  
of identity formation; in  
Persepolis mirrors are  
used to show the true  
self - not a flattering, self-  
deceptive version of the self



Because her art style  
is more cartoonish than  
realistic, the readers  
can relate more to the  
character and relate their own  
subjective experiences. Readers  
are also more drawn into the  
thoughts and theories that underlie  
the text

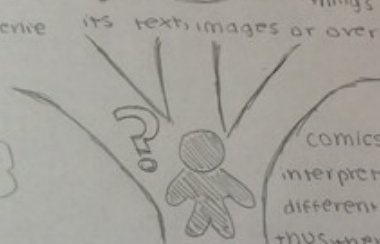


this is called

"AMPLIFICATION THROUGH  
SIMPLIFICATION"



like Persepolis  
comics have  
frequently been the  
target of  
censorship for  
things such as  
its text, images or overall theme



comics can be  
interpreted in many  
different ways and  
thus there's no one  
indisputable message



according to McCloud,  
comic book readers are the  
'silent accomplice' or 'partner  
in crime' of the author because  
reader participation is required for  
narrative interpretation



as such, reading  
comics can be  
more of an  
EXPERIENCE



because comics can  
show multiple perspectives  
at the same time in the same  
frame, you can see the past  
and present simultaneously

this makes comics  
function similar to  
how we recall  
memories (it's not  
always very clear  
cut). Persepolis  
utilizes this  
well

Frames & Mirrors by Babak Elahi

How does Framing work within the comic space?

Focused of the real life of the people

Satrapis "reframes" Iranis people as individuals

How does Satrapis challenge Framing nations?

Humanizing people

MIRROR IDEOLOGY: Within comics what does it create?

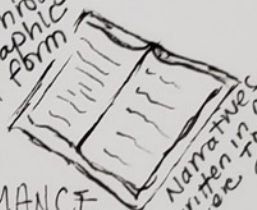
with Satrapis "Simple" drawings, she makes her story and people iconic.

performance also connects to framing

For Satrapis, the comic form allowed her to engage in a performance that was otherwise not afforded to her

And within the persepolis construct, enables the woman's performance to hold a public presence

This "performance" however is taken further through the graphic novel form



Narratives written in novels, more step.

A SOLO PERFORMANCE



Unveiling persepolis as embodied performance by Jennifer Worth

personal narratives that become an embodied performance

Freedom to Teach by Sarah McNicol

COMIC BOOKS VS. Schools & Academics

How does one define what is & what is not academic? permitted as academics?

what is "literature"?

why are comics targetted?

THE READER HAS THE POWER

How does censorship connect to Framing & performance of a comic?

With Comics the reader has more control over the: - narrative - content - understanding







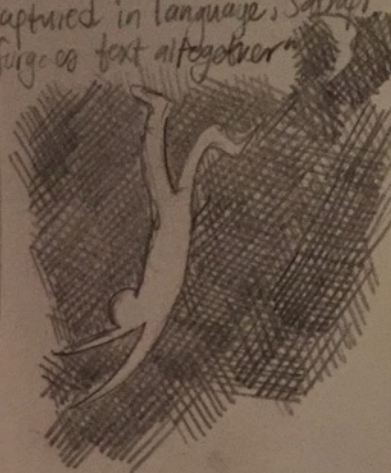
"Satrapi recognizes that the body has both personal and political dimension"

Jennifer Worth's article, "Persepolis as Embodied Performance"

"human experiences cannot be captured in language, Satrapi forges text altogether"

Worth argues Persepolis features the body

# Body



my mental transformation was followed by my physical metamorphosis



"In Persepolis there is scarcely a panel that does not prominently feature the human form."





October 18, 2018

SKETCHNOTES!

**FREEDOM TO TEACH:**  
implications of the removal  
of PERSEPOLIS from  
Chicago schools.

Sarah McNicol

Adapted from  
McClard  
Greenstein  
Beyner  
ISR

Comics are a valuable  
teaching tool

not only for literature  
↳ business/history/sociology/science

**PERSEPOLIS**  
vs  
Chicago School Board

**FRAMES AND MIRRORS**  
in Marjane Satrapi's  
**PERSEPOLIS**  
- Babak Elahi

Marjane Satrapi:  
"you are completely reduced to an  
abstract notion"  
"Individuals with life, love, hopes..."

Literature of the colonizer  
"Will to power in public,  
tell it what it wants to hear"

Persepolis challenges  
this through its  
own framing

Persepolis:  
Frames within frames  
doubly framed images  
(photo w/in panel)

functions as  
a mirror

Colonizers framing  
People of Middle  
East  
Reagan  
Bush etc.  
"Axis of evil"  
How they framed  
war in Afghanistan

RE-HISTORICIZING  
of what ideological frames  
would take out of the  
flow of history

complex individual in search of I.D.  
+ w/ identity w/ her through the frame

March 2013  
Public schools in  
Chicago are told  
to no longer teach  
Persepolis and  
that is should  
be removed from  
classrooms and libraries...

**CENSORED**

Bias against comics:  
long history of  
censorship.  
low-brow, dangerous,  
obscene, objectionable  
Stigmatized

Complexity -  
interpretation  
text + image  
(this scares people)  
comics contain CODED  
information

dual narrative tracks

if this is bad...  
should we not renance  
all literature?

HOW TO BECOME  
AN "EXPERT COMICS"  
READER:  
I READ COMICS.

American Library Association  
Chicago Teachers Union  
Hello!  
Violates rights of students  
to access info.

questioning authority  
class structures  
race  
gender issues  
blocking access to edu.

Also: Marjane  
Satrapi was  
exposed to all these  
things at their age (7th grade/CPS)...

Why do teachers need special training to teach Persepolis?

leads to cultural war against  
the Arabs and Islam  
Fascist caricature  
Frameworks of acceptance  
Polarities of good and evil  
abstraction of identities

Pictorial framing of  
the comic art panel

Satrapi reframes  
Iran as re-constructs  
Iranian subjectivity  
through comics  
- individual life +  
Complex identity

challenges modes  
of political or  
aesthetic rep.

Conscious use of  
Pictorial panels  
can expose and thus  
deconstruct the  
ideological power.

TEMPORAL → SPATIAL

Continued...

the mechanism of  
framing, but  
EXPOSES it  
through picture  
frames and mirrors

interplaying  
individuals  
as subjects

idealizing  
interpellation

Persepolis:  
scene w/  
Islamic morality  
Police

(Interpellation:  
ideology, embodied in major  
social/political institutions  
constitutes the nature of individual  
subjects' identities  
through "hailing" them  
(social interactions))

how does this  
change shape us?  
Satrapi shows this  
in Persepolis

Shows Marjane's ID  
in context of  
Islamic ideological  
state apparatus

Marjane's  
"Punk" phase:  
Islamic ID →  
Western cultural +  
commercial ID

Satrapi divides  
panels to show  
literal divides  
Fragmented subjectivity

ME?

DICHOTOMY

creates dilemma in which  
the autobiographical  
persona must construct  
subjective wholeness  
out of abstract divisions  
and fragments of self.

Mirror frames  
(Marjane's drama)  
dualities, dichotomies  
of self  
↳ all the things that  
make us individuals  
goes against  
the black/white  
structures of  
societies/  
mirror structures

dialectical relationship  
blw images + frames  
w/ stereotypes + propaganda  
of Iran + Western cultures  
(US + Europe)

Personal experience → framed iconic  
image/  
universal

Re-framing herself w/in  
geopolitical history  
we insert our own  
subjective experience

**UNVEILING:  
PERSEPOLIS AS  
EMBODIED PERFORMANCE**  
- Jennifer Worth

Iranian female  
autobiographies  
written  
↳ written word  
as artistic  
output

Persepolis:  
complexity of  
interplay of political  
+ personal history  
construct formation  
of identity

"caught-  
between  
identity"

Comics allows her to  
explore this, along with  
visibility, sexuality, it  
identity

comics as  
performance  
showing + telling  
personal history

using language of theatre  
+ performance to describe comics  
- actor  
- speech  
"mise en page"

Focus on the body

"center stage"  
body of self, others,  
male/female, dead,  
victims of war/furanny  
joyous white bodies,  
active at rest  
every panel

Comics:  
intimate form  
of personal  
communication

"it is always  
now" in  
comics  
even when  
comic is in  
"past"

Performance idiom  
unspeakable violence  
transition into  
adulthood

the second sex,  
Smoking,  
Reins,  
Parties,  
violence  
young adulthood

hide  
conceal  
control  
woman

Comics frames (Western convention)  
double purpose: isolating moments

Marjane's frames  
Veils: Prophet  
Marxist revolutionary  
Punk  
girlfriend  
Sister

the veil → crucial metaphor  
how does for comics  
what time does to him?

creating necessary space for  
form to move forward



**Frames & Mirrors in Marjane Satrapi's Persepolis**

In response to the one-dimensional representations of Iran as a terrorist nation, by Rahab Elahi

COMICS: "austericizing ideological frame"

FRAME TIME: "to restore historical flow"

Axis of reading

political

normalize worldview by removing

**FRAME**

"Ideological apparatuses offer individuals normative identities within structures of power"

**Culture**

Competing claims

FAMILY / EDUCATION / RELIGION

Narrative - Iranian history/experience less abstract

Mirror of reflection

divided identity

fragmented

subjectivity

uncertainty

instability

SEX

visual style - Iconic characters, "an empty picture frame into which the reader can insert his/her subjective experience"

**Weiwei Persepolis** as Embodied Performance by Jennifer Worth

novel → Graphic novels → the theater

♀ written word to safely enter

In Islamic religion difficult for women to be publicly seen/heard

"Resonance between self-proclaimed liminal identity + the liminal form of the graphic novel itself"

Persepolis as a solo performance

1st person, autobiographical

**Mimetic**

mimesis - "the process through which humans make themselves similar to their environment through assimilation, and it is particularly through bodily mimesis that the distinction between self and other becomes permeable" (p. 146)

"Words are a poor substitute for some experiences"

Female bodies - power struggles

Modesty - respect due power of the body

Audience must fill in gaps → comics

**THE SELF**

Focus on body

Funny, sad, messy embodied experience she learns the importance of (p. 149)

**Persepolis: the lost capital of Persia, a lost land**

**SATRAPI**

Persian heritage

Iranian nationality

Western (French) education

try-ons

- would-be prophet
- young Marxist revolutionary
- punk
- girlfriend
- stoner
- drug dealer
- homeless
- student
- daughter
- wife
- Iranian

Hide + Control

Squarely in the middle of things

**ENDLESS BECOMING**

liminal: relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process

**Freedom to teach: implications of the removal of Persepolis from Chicago schools**

by Sarah McNicol

mixed messages

way of comics expressing subjective time

reflect memory itself

Louise Rosenblatt on reading

Not an object, but an experience shaped by the reader with guidance from author

Persepolis

"Dangerous... encourages young people to question existing structures and ideas" 35

NO SINGLE WAY TO READ IT

In teaching you want unbiased factual info.

Also might help to have historical background info

**CPS**

torture - Not appropriate

Graphic element not written

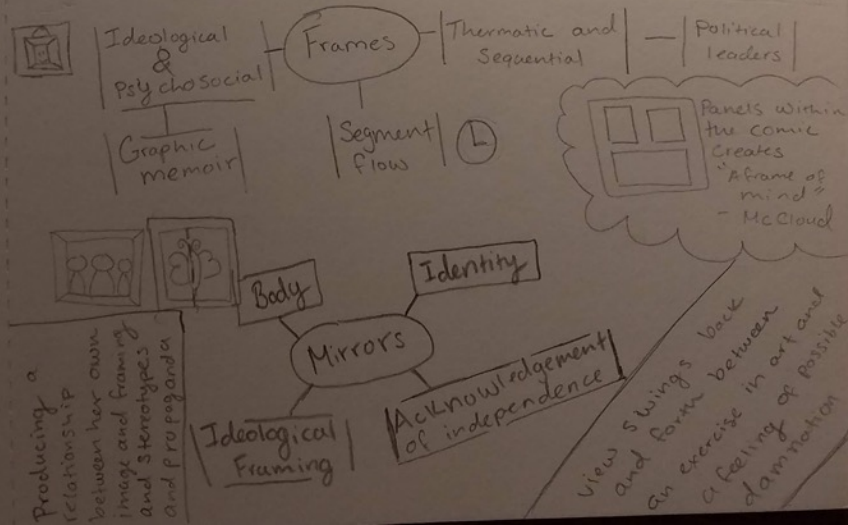
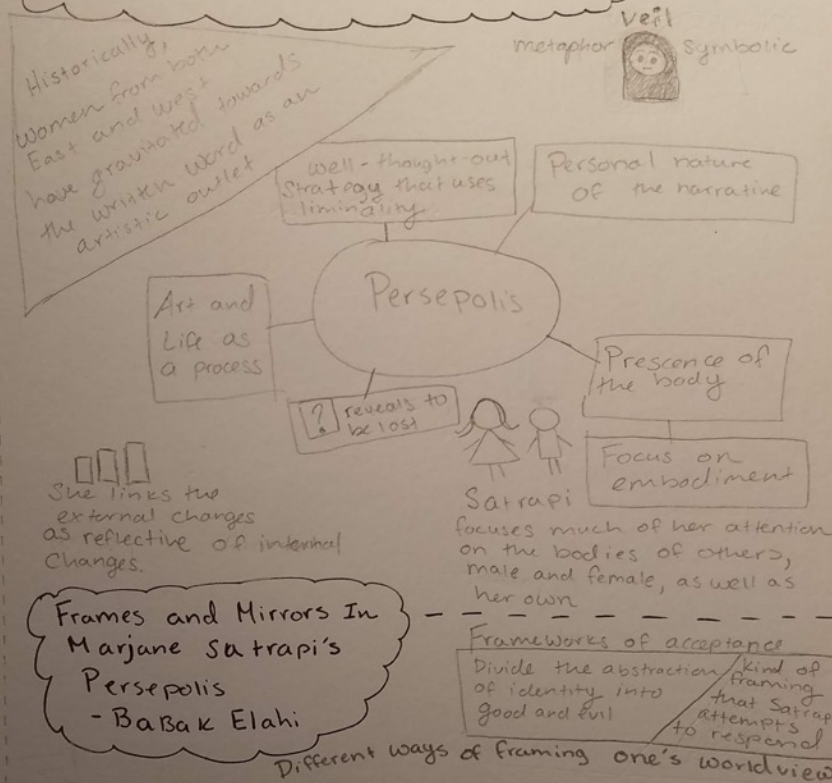
taken out of context



# Unveiling: Persepolis as Embodied Performance

- Jennifer Worth -

10/19/18



# Freedom to Teach - Sarah McNical

Chicago Schools - remove graphic novel from libraries and classrooms

Censorship

Comics & Graphic novels are frequently found within school curriculum

"Mixed Messages"

- Require the reader to develop a number of strategies
- Created through the interaction of reader, image and text
- Requires training and experience
- Need to develop visual literacy skill
- Meaning can be changed or modified

3 components:

- reader
- written text
- visual language

Comics can show multiple perspectives within the same frame

Persepolis

- Takes place within the less familiar context of Iranian history and culture
- Caused controversy in Iran

"CPS" removed due to graphic language and images not important for general use in 7th grade curriculum

District views the book as dangerous because it encourages young people to question existing structures and ideas

Students need guidance and support from teachers

- Have the background and maturity to appreciate the book
- Deals w/ complex political & social issues
- History is likely to be unfamiliar to both students and teachers

There is no single correct way to teach or study a comic

Comics encourages teachers and students to explore

Individual reader needs to fill the gaps

Resources must be politically neutral



10/22

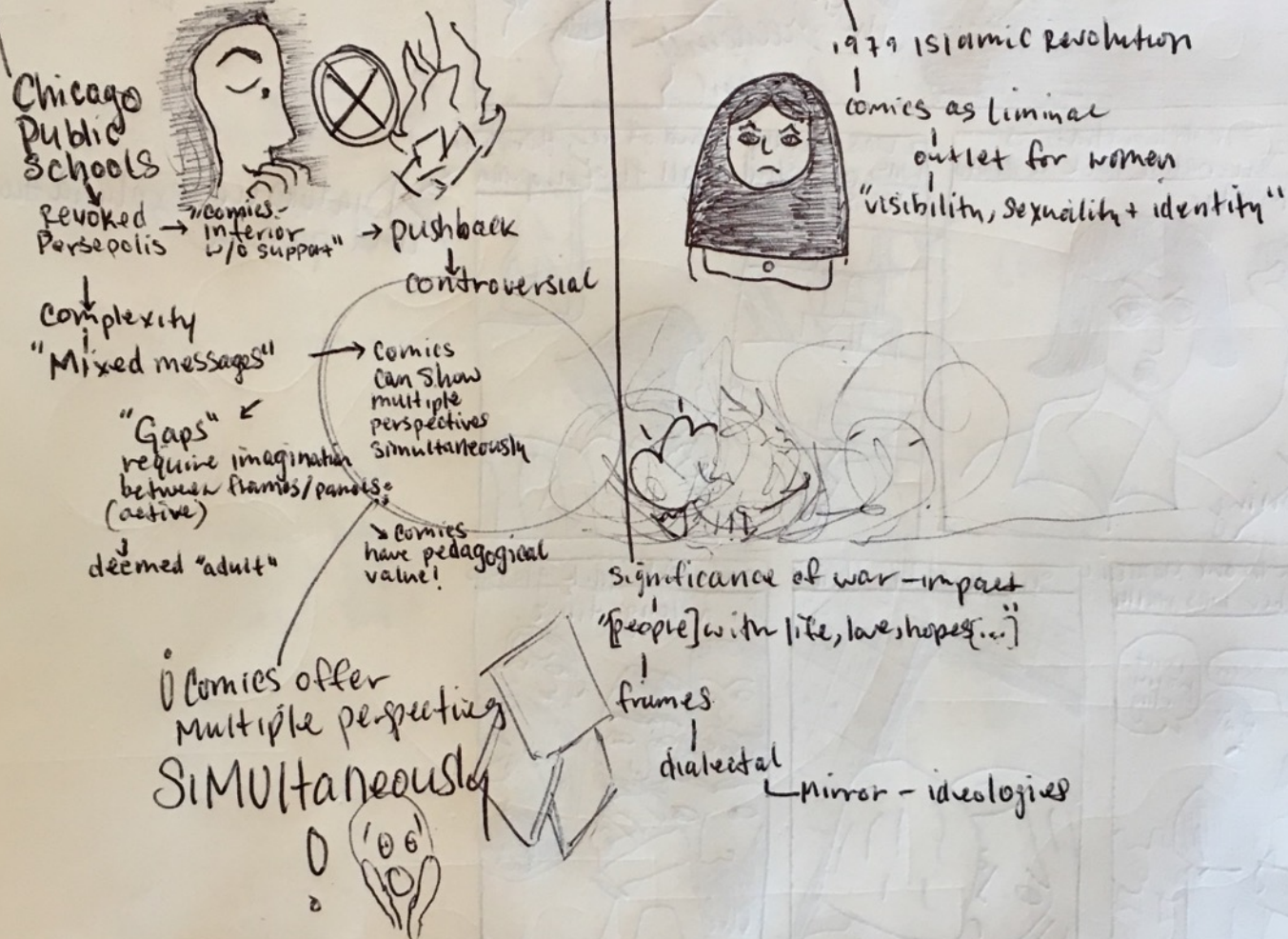
## Day 16: Persepolis 3

### Response Gallery 15: Sketchnote of our Readings

Freedom to Teach: Sarah McNeel

as...performance: Jennifer Worth

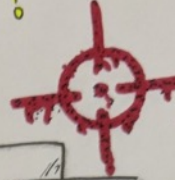
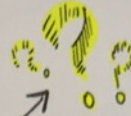
Frames and Mirrors: Babak Elahi



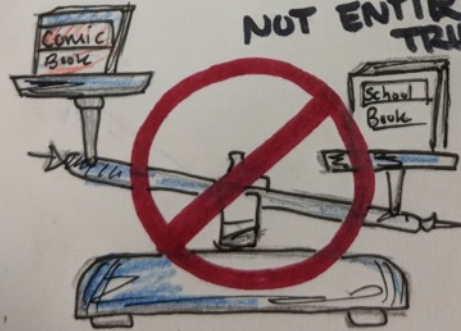
Censorship  
"suppression of ideas  
and information"

Schools + children's librarians

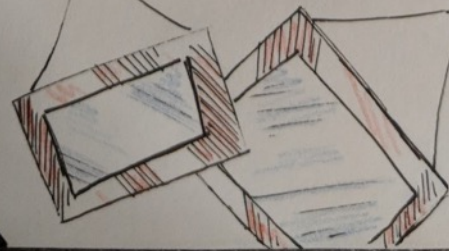
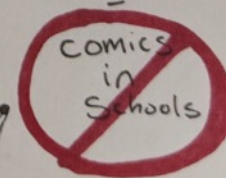
PERSEPOLIS  
v.s.  
Schools



NOT ENTIRELY  
TRUE...



Administration  
= Knowledge/belief



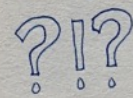


## FREEDOM 2 TEACH: PERSEPOLIS

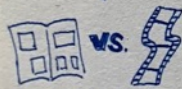
PERSEPOLIS  
VS.  
CHICAGO  
SCHOOL  
BOARD



Stigma: Comics are low value speech, and can be interpreted different ways



double coded narrative with mixed messages  
- Interpret the text and the images



story dictated by readers vs. Film dictated by director



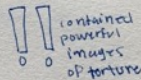
comics are a series of "visual fragments"  
Gaps between image and the text



lesser value than novels, but are found within the school curriculum.



won awards within comic book and literary world



contained powerful images of torture



The book was not only permitted in schools



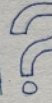
Persepolis deals with many complex political and social issues!!

## Unveiling: Persepolis\*

An outlet for women who were denied public presence



Visibility  
Sexuality  
Identity



Not about her past but more of ~~how~~ her quest for identity

Persepolis

Narrative

Embodiment

Art & life

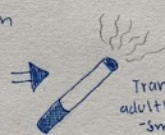
Body

\* victims of war

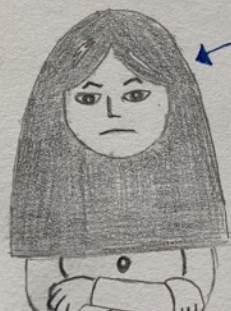
\* Mimesis: process through human which humans make themselves similar to their environment through assimilation



Witnessed unspeakable amount of violence



Transition to adulthood - smoking



The veil represents the means to hide and control women

The frames isolate important moments in the story



## FRAMES & MIRRORS



- Takes issue out of the flow of historical events  
- Comic art use frames as part of aesthetic, cognitive, and narrative form



\* Ideological framing filters information, news, identities, nationality & gender through templates and structures.



MIRRORS

\* To reflect and show contrast

\* Fragmentary subjects are made whole within the frame of the mirror



Political & sequential art framing aim at recognition

NOT ANALYSIS!!



The sense of not being whole is replaced by a sense of completeness



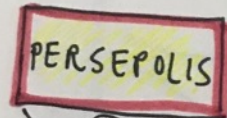
# PERSEPOLIS



- "too complex"
- = • lack of understanding (why?)  
ex: "graphic element" singled out - defeats purpose of COMICS/sequential art.
- "mixed messages"?

• pull for written word

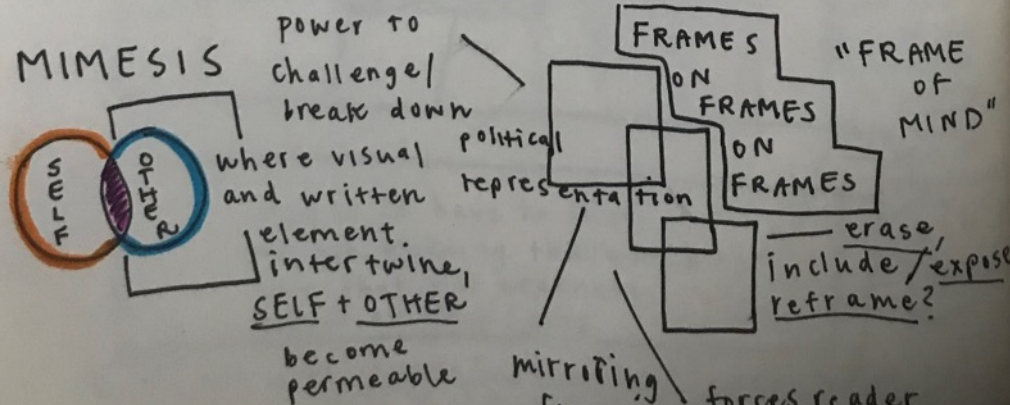
taken out of context!



- deeper, rewarding read
- = • an overlap of skills (why?) are practiced w/ comics
- expresses trauma really well (past/future)

• relates physical experiences to mental + emotional transformations

- individual voices still have a chance to be heard / "solo performance"

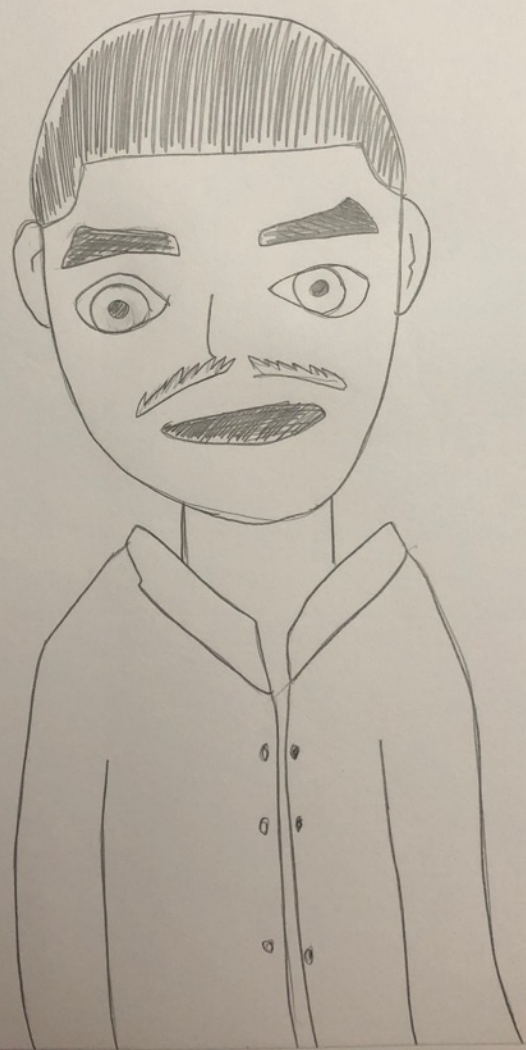


super-dodge - represent "actor"



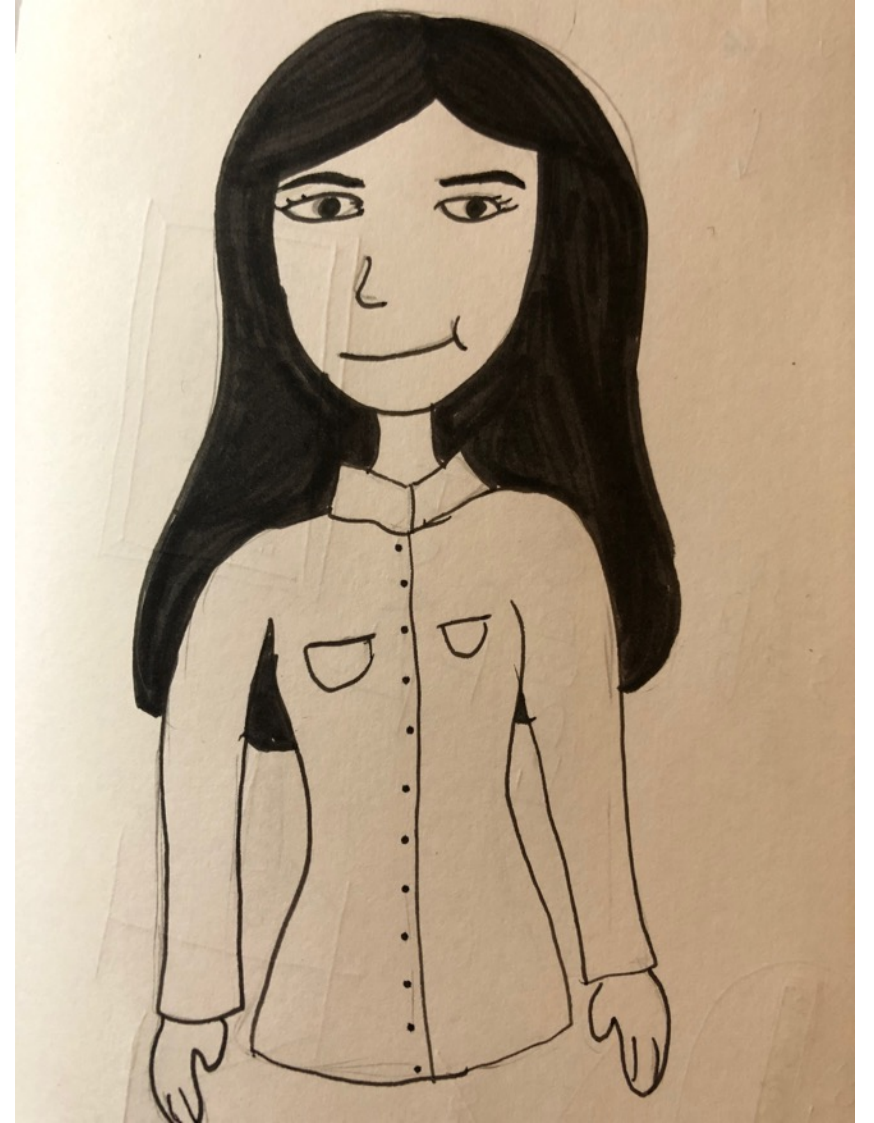
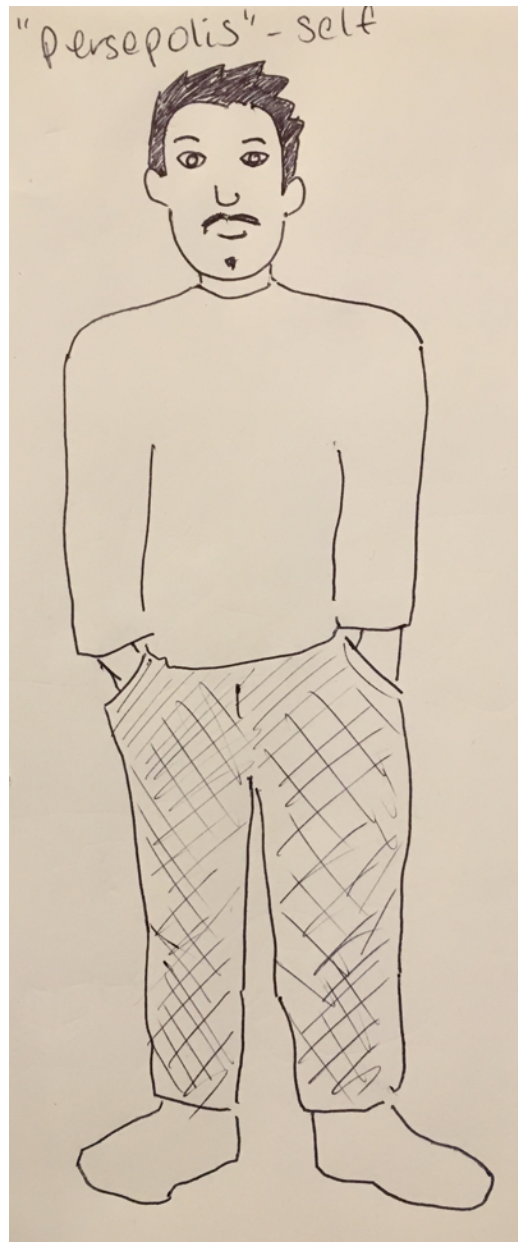
## **Satrapi-You**

They made a cartooned drawing of themselves in the style of Satrapi in class and posted that along with any reflections about the act of making it or your response to it.



Found it kinda hard to do it, but I feel like this is pretty good. I feel that having simple lines, contrast, and bold lines matched the style.









Dave Gibbons-ify Yourself





