

Exercises

Trevor Getz, with some help

Simple drawings

Follow the instructions below

1. Draw a happy line
 2. Next to it, draw an angry shape
 3. Next to it, draw a block
 4. Indicate that the block is moving
 5. Indicate that the block is shiny
 6. Draw a person on the ground next to the block
 7. Indicate that the person has hit her head
 8. Add another person nearby.
 9. This person is concerned.
 10. Indicate that the second person is asking the first person if she is okay
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Their First Creation

Writer's name _____

- 1) Identify an event of local, national, or world significance that happened in your lifetime, and which you remember (it can be very recent)

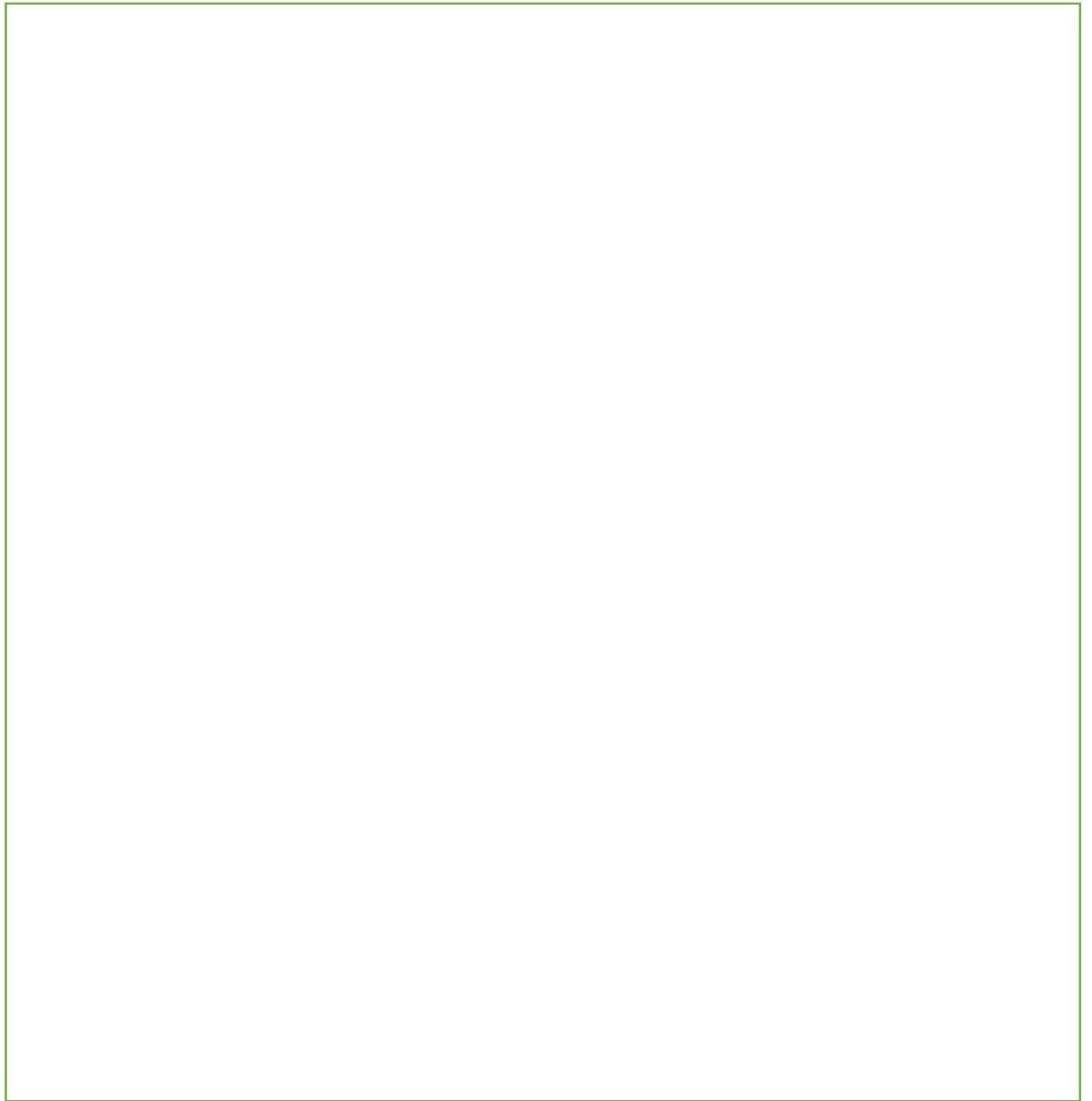
- 2) What were your thoughts about this event, or what encounter did you have around it, or did you personally witness it? Write a brief account here of your experiences or accounts.

Artist's name: _____

Pass-around project

Instructions:

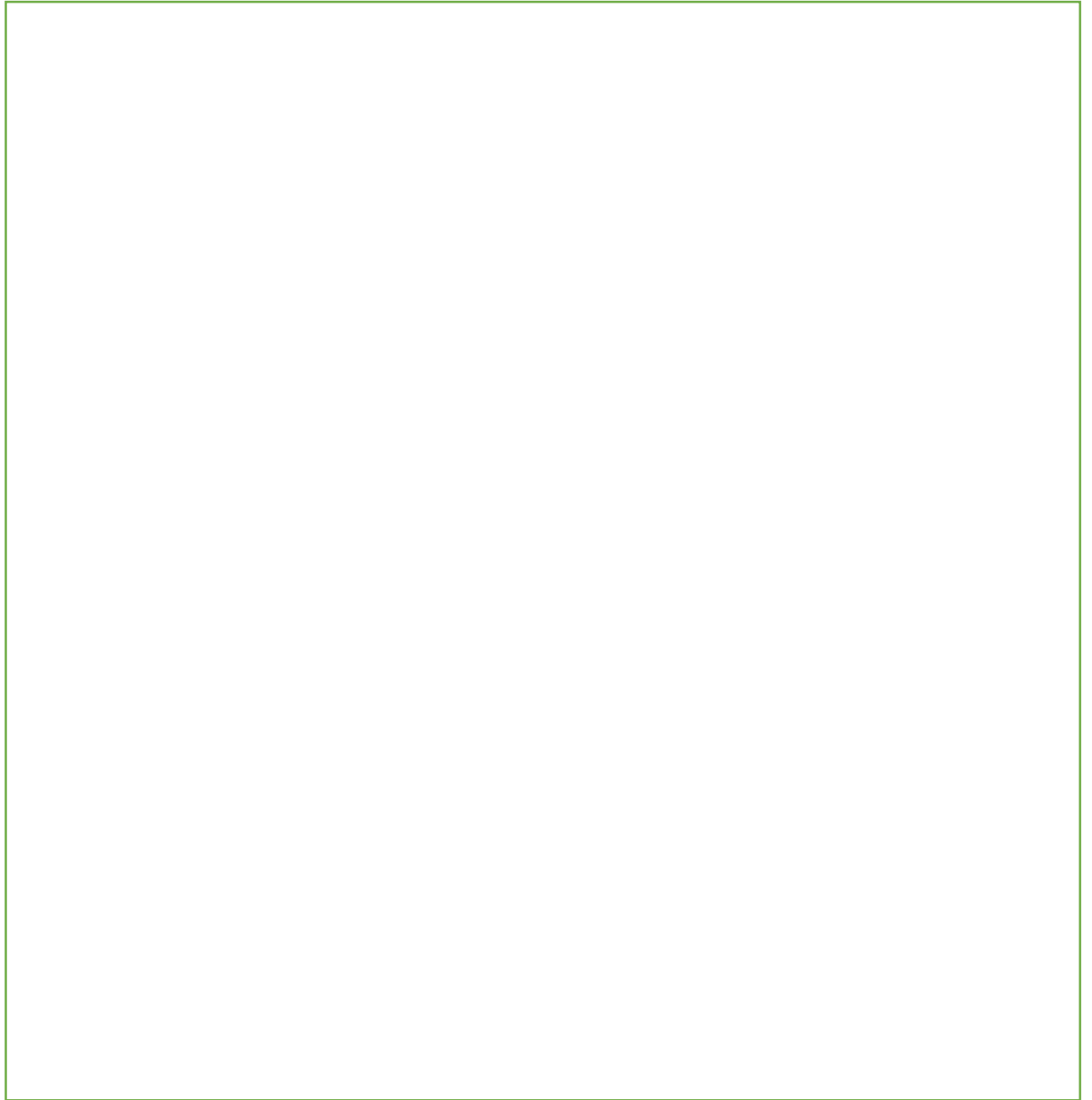
- Fold a piece of paper into four pieces
- Person one creates the panels
- Person two creates balloons
- Person three draws in the panels
- Person four writes text in the balloons



Upload a page project

Instructions:

- Find a page of a graphic novel or comic
- Upload it to _____
- Be prepared to discuss in class



A Guide to Critical Reading: Graphic Histories

Observe

1. Begin by reading the text. Focus on understanding - reading comprehension and plot.
2. In what order/direction/sequence do you read the text in the panels? Draw your line of sight.
3. Notice/Mark
 - a. Who is in the panels? Assign each person/group a number and place that number next to them in each panel they are present.
 - b. What is in the panels? (objects, symbols, icons). Circle the items.
 - c. Where is the setting of the panel?
 - d. How are the panels constructed? (open/closed/shapes used)
 - e. The passage of time between panels
4. Write in the assumptions you make between panels (gutter).

Analyze

1. Think about the shapes of text boxes and the size/location of text. What does each of these cues signify?
2. What perspective(s) is the text trying to communicate? Whose worldview/point of view is being represented?
3. What style is being used in the visuals? Is it abstract or realistic? What is the impact of the style?
4. How is the panel being framed? Is it zoomed in (focused on one element) or out (a whole scene)? Does it change panel to panel? What is the impact of this?
5. Look back on the progression of the panels. What information did you "fill-in" the gutter? Are other interpretations possible?

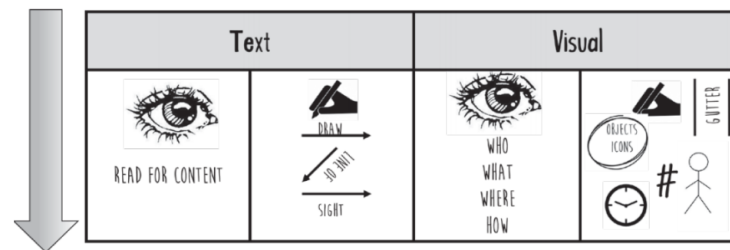
Synthesize

1. Think about the intertextuality of the panels. How do the text and visuals work together to create meaning? How do the panels work together to create meaning?
2. What is the impact of the sequential and simultaneous reading of panels?
3. Bring in your outside knowledge. Place the panel into historical context.

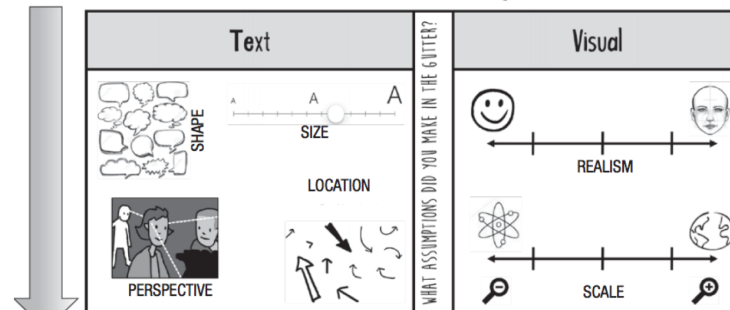
Citation: Kim Young, *A Guide to Critical Reading: Graphic Novels* (May 2015).

A Guide to Critical Reading: Graphic History

OBSERVE



ANALYZE

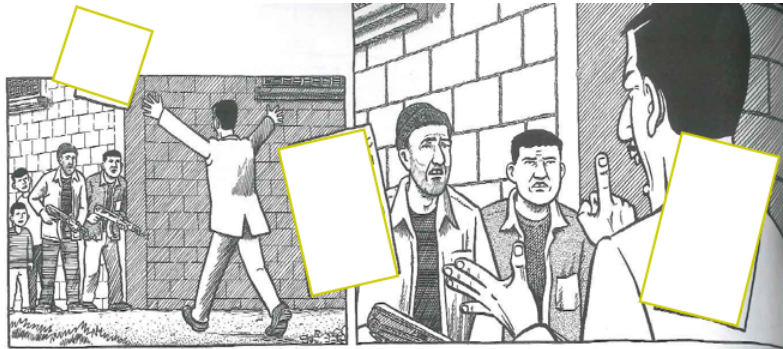


SYNTHESIZE



Citation: Kim Young, *A Guide to Critical Reading: Graphic Novels* (May 2015).

Words and art

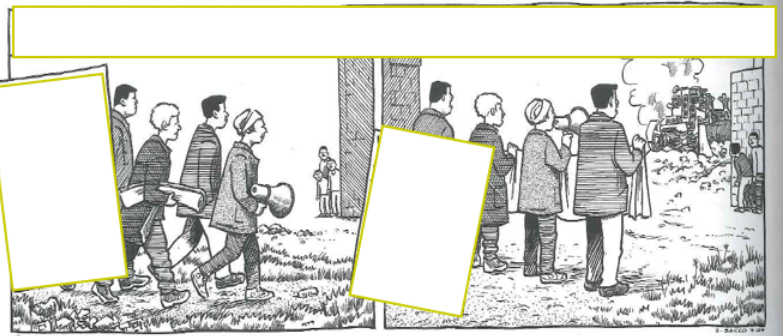


He yells at them!

He doesn't want them shooting at the Israelis from anywhere close to his house.

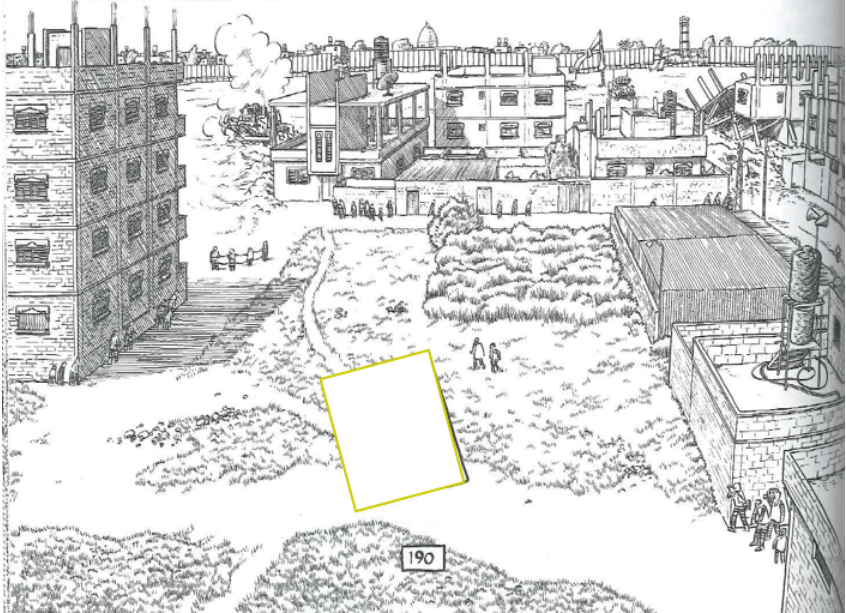
(The Israeli policy, remember, is to flatten any home from where they say they've taken fire.)

And now the party is joined by a new group, foreign activists with the International Solidarity Movement.



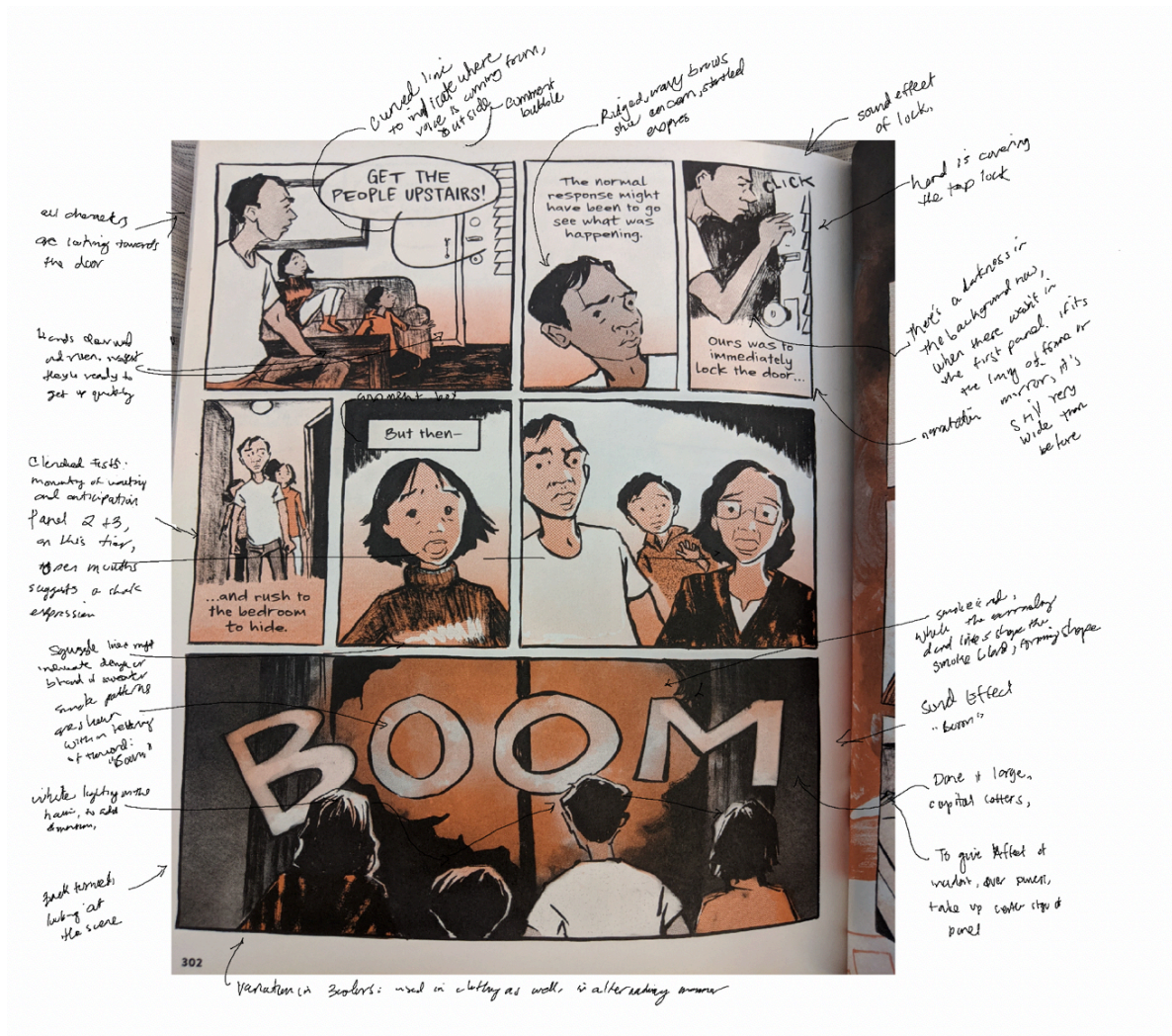
There are a handful in Rafah—Europeans and Americans—and they stay in those homes that seem most at risk of getting demolished.

While everyone else is taking cover, they stand in the open, unfurl a banner, and start shouting at the bulldozer.



When the coast seems clear, Abed and I cross the field to get closer to the action.

Visual Analysis Days



You may assign them certain pages, like Nick Sousanis does here (<http://spinweaveandcut.com/visual-analysis-unfurling>). I prefer to ask students to take photographs of pages they like in the books we are reading, and to email them to me. We then discuss them in class.

Some 'modern world history' graphic novels

Li Kunwu with Philip Otie, *A Chinese Life*
John Lewis et al, *March* (memoire: history)
Lockpez and Haspiel, *Cuba: My Revolution* (memoire)
Bogaert and O'Connor, *Journey Into Mohawk Country* (very much a primary source)
Jason 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)
Aboutet 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)

Additional resources:

- Molly Bang, *Picture This: How Pictures Work*
- Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*
- Nick Sousanis, *Unflattening:*
- *How To Design A Comic Book Page*, YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1dQEfL2BfUM&list=LLF5rU9Vt1McmDTc8UICynNg&t=0s&index=44>
- C. Hatfield, "The art of tensions" in Heer and Worcester, eds., *A Comics Studies Reader* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press): 132–148.
- Education and Comics links, *Spin, Weave, and Cut*: <http://spinweaveandcut.com/education-links/>