



FOR HEAVEN'S  
SAKE, WHAT'S  
ALL THIS?



# Reading Graphic Novels

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Course URL: <http://users.rcn.com/rhino88/comics2006/>

Wednesday Nights, 5:45PM-7:45PM

March 29 – April 19, 2006

## Short Description

Graphic novels have seen a recent resurgence in popularity with adults due to a renewed commitment from bookstores, adaptations into film and other media and an increased openness to the art form. In this four-week course we will read and discuss seminal graphic novels by Will Eisner, Art Spiegelman, Dan Clowes and Marjane

Satrapı among others. Along the way we will discuss each artist's unique approach to visual storytelling and find out how this unique melding of words and pictures differs from poetry, literature and film. We'll also touch on the history of the medium from newspaper strips through comic books to underground comix.

For the first class, please read Will Eisner's *A Life Force* (see below).

## Books

### Required Books

- **Read For Week One:** *The Contract With God Trilogy: Life on Dropsie Avenue*. Will Eisner. 2005, W. W. Norton. ISBN: 0393061051 (Note: This large book collects three of Eisner's graphic novels. We will be reading one novel in this book, "A Life Force".)
- **Read For Week Two:** *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. Marjane Satrapı. 2003, Pantheon. ISBN: 0375422307
- **Read For Week Three:** *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. Frank Miller. 1986, DC Universe. ISBN: 1563893428
- **Read For Week Four:** *Maus, A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*. Art Spiegelman. 1986, Pantheon. ISBN: 0394747232

### Optional Books

The following optional books cover the language and history of comics and expand on many of the ideas we will cover in class. They are not required, but you may want to read or consult these books as you take the course.

- *Comics and Sequential Art*. Will Eisner. 1985, Poorhouse Press. ISBN: 0961472812
- *Understanding Comics*. Scott McCloud. 1994, Perennial Currents. ISBN: 006097625X