



Course Name: History of Comic Art
Course Number: AH 3657 01
Class Meets: R, 6:30 PM - 9:00 PM, 01/16/18 - 05/08/18
Classroom Location: 432

Faculty Name: Pistelli, John
MCAD Email Address: jpistelli@mcad.edu
MCAD Telephone Number, Academic Affairs: 612-874-3694
Office Hours: Thursday 5:30-6:30
Office Location: 308

Faculty Biography:

John Pistelli holds a PhD in English literature from the University of Minnesota. His academic interests include modern and contemporary fiction, literary modernism, literary theory and aesthetics, comics, and creative writing. His fiction, criticism, and poetry have appeared in *Rain Taxi*, *The Millions*, *Revolver*, *The Stockholm Review of Literature*, *Atomic*, *Five2One*, *The Amaranth Review*, and elsewhere. He is also the author of *The Ecstasy of Michaela: a novella* (Valhalla Press).

Course Description:

Although comics now include a vast collection of different articulations of image and text, their shared history reflects the movement from strictly pulp publications on cheap paper created by assembly-line artists to complex stories with provocative images. This course follows the history of comic art from The Yellow Kid to global manifestations of the art form, such as Japanese manga and French BD. The development and range of image and textual forms, styles, and structures that differentiate the vast compendium of such work inform the discourse in class. Classes are primarily lecture with some discussion. Prerequisite: Introduction to Art and Design History 2 (may be taken concurrently) or instructor permission

Outcomes:

Demonstrate a familiarity with key styles, themes, and trends in the history of comic art.

Identify the role historical, technical, cultural, and social change played in the development of comic art.

Explain the relationships between image and text in comic art.

Explain recent developments and current trends in comic art.

Methodologies:

Lecture, Discussion, Readings, Research/Analysis, Screenings, In-class Exercises, Group Projects, Quizzes/Tests/Exams

Required Textbooks, Readings and Websites:

Art Spiegelman, *The Complete Maus*

Library Reserve Information:

2-hr reserve

Materials and Tools list:

Textbook; a laptop or tablet for online texts and for crafting presentations; materials for note-taking

Blackboard:**Assignments/Deliverables:**

One research-based presentation, two in-class exams

Miscellaneous:**Course Calendar:**

[The schedule is subject to alteration or expansion based on the pace of the class and student interest. With the exception of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*—which I urge you to buy at the Art Cellar—all readings can be found on Blackboard. More texts and images than are listed may appear on Blackboard, and I may also designate some readings as *required* and some as *optional*; please be sure to check the site regularly and to pay attention to directions given in class. Unless I specify otherwise, I expect you to read online selections with the care and attention you devote to print textbooks and to bring all readings to class, in print or onscreen, on the appropriate day.]

01/18 – INTRODUCTION

- Introduction to the course

01/25 – COMICS THEORY / EARLY PICTURE NOVELS

- Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics* chapters 1 and 2
- Sousanis, from *Unflattering*
- Töpffer, *The Adventures of Mr. Obadiah Oldbuck*
- Ward, *Gods' Man*

02/01 – COMIC STRIPS

- McCay, *Little Nemo*
- Herriman, *Krazy Kat*
- cummings, "A Foreword to Krazy"
- Bellot, "The Gender Fluidity of Krazy Kat"
- Ormes, *Torchy Brown*
- PRESENTATION: Comic strips

02/08 – THE GOLDEN AGE

- Siegel and Shuster, *Action Comics* #1
- Finger and Kane, *Detective Comics* #27
- Morrison, from *Supergods*
- Lepore, "The Surprising Origin Story of Wonder Woman"
- Quinlan, "A Real-Life Comic-Book Superhero"
- Eisner, *The Spirit*
- PRESENTATION: Golden Age of Comics (1930s-1940s)

02/15 – EC COMICS AND MIDCENTURY GENRES

- Chamberlain, "Matt Baker"
- Wood, "Mars Is Heaven"
- Kurtzman, war comics
- Kurtzman and Wood, "Superduperman"
- Krigstein, "Master Race"
- Stanley, *Little Lulu*
- Barks, *Donald Duck*
- PRESENTATION: EC Comics or other 1950s U.S. comics

02/22 – THE SILVER AND BRONZE AGES

- Infantino, *Showcase* #4
- Lee and Ditko, *Amazing Fantasy* #15
- Lee and Kirby, *Fantastic Four* #50

- O’Neil and Adams, *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* #1
- Claremont and Byrne, *Uncanny X-Men* #138
- PRESENTATION: Silver and Bronze Ages of Comics (1950s-1970s)

03/01 – UNDERGROUND COMIX

- Crumb, “I Remember the Sixties”
- Shelton and Mavrides, “The Death of Fat Freddy”
- Deitch, “Karla in Kommiland”
- Spain, “Down at the Kitty Kat”
- Green, “Sweet Void of Youth”
- Gebbie, “My Three Swans”
- Seda, “The Do-Nothing Decade”
- Wolk, *Reading Comics* chapter 2
- PRESENTATION: Undergrounds

03/08 – MIDTERM

- In-class exam

03/15 – SPRING BREAK

- No class

03/22 – BANDES-DESSINÉES

- Hergé, *Tintin in America* and *The Blue Lotus*
- Moebius and O’Bannon, “The Long Tomorrow”
- Sfar, *The Rabbi’s Cat*
- PRESENTATION: Franco-Belgian comics

03/29 – MANGA

- Tezuka, *Buddha*
- Nakazawa, *Barefoot Gen*
- Hagio, *Heart of Thomas*
- Urushibara, *Mushishi*
- Schodt, from *Dreamland Japan: Writings on Modern Manga*
- PRESENTATION: Manga

04/05 – RISE OF THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

- Spiegelman, *Maus*
- PRESENTATION: U.S. literary/alternative graphic novels (1980s-1990s)

04/12 – THE DARK AGE

- Miller, *The Dark Knight Returns*
- McDuffie and Bright, *Icon* #1
- Gaiman et al. *Sandman* #1
- PRESENTATION: Dark Age of Comics and after (1980s-2010s)

04/19 – VARIETIES OF CONTEMPORARY LITERARY COMICS

- Clowes, “Caricature”
- Barry, “San Francisco”
- McGuire, “Here”
- Tomine, “Translated, from the Japanese”
- Batuman, “Into the Eisenshpritz”
- PRESENTATION: US literary/alternative graphic novels (2000s-2010s)

04/26 – AROUND THE WORLD AND AROUND THE WEB

- Satrapi, *Persepolis*
- Modan, “Jamiliti”
- Moon and Bá, *Daytripper* #1

- Wimberly, “Lighten Up”
- Walden, *On a Sunbeam*
- PRESENTATION: Contemporary global graphic novels or webcomics

05/03 – FINAL

- In-class exam

Email Usage: Email is used at MCAD as the official means of communicating with the student body. Official college announcements regarding policy, classes, registration, deadlines, etc. are delivered via email. Students are expected to check their MCAD email frequently and are held responsible for all official information communicated to them via the email system. Misuse or misrepresentation of official communications by students will result in disciplinary action.

Attendance: MCAD students are expected to attend and participate in all enrolled courses in order to complete the courses successfully. To uphold this expectation, there are no unexcused absences. Students have a responsibility to the group and for their own learning. Participation and performance are factored into the course grade. Absences and repeated tardiness has consequences that will result in lowered or failing grades. Students are responsible for obtaining class materials. Faculty are not obligated to reteach a class a student has missed. Faculty may drop a student from a course who does not attend the first class meeting. Therefore, students risk losing their spot to another student. In the case of extended illness or other legitimate absences that may keep the student from attending class, students must contact their faculty member. Faculty members will alert their department chair.

Grading Policy: Grades consider student performance of assignments listed on each course syllabus, participation in class, magnitude of improvement, attendance, level of project difficulty, timeliness of project completion, compliance with class policies, and effort/dedication. + or - may be added to letter grades at the discretion of the faculty member.

A = Excellent work, progress far beyond expectations of effort and outcomes, full participation

B = Good work, course requirements completed, preparedness for more advanced study

C = Average work, course requirements completed, preparedness for more advanced study

D = Passing but below average work, some promise of improvement

F = Work not acceptable, or course requirements not completed

Grading Procedure / Criteria:

There will be four grading criteria, weighted as follows: 20% class participation (this includes being prepared for class, speaking in class, attending office hours, participating in online activities, and completing all other assignments); 30% presentation (each student will, in a group of two, present on a comic or creator not assigned in the course but related to the week's topic; the group's choice must have my approval, and the presentation must be supplemented by a bibliography detailing the research involved); 50% exams (there will be in-class midterm and final exams, involving identifications, short answers, and essay responses). More detail will be provided about assignments as the course progresses.

Academic Deficiencies: MCAD notifies students of deficiencies in academic performance throughout the semester. Notices are placed in student mailboxes. Students are encouraged to contact the faculty member immediately and take steps to remedy the deficiency. If a student has two or more deficiencies at the mid-semester the student will be contacted by the Dean of Student Affairs. A subsequent meeting will be scheduled to help the student analyze the problem and make realistic plans to remedy the situation and succeed in school.

Midterm Grade Notification: All students will receive from their faculty member notification of current standing at the midpoint of the semester.

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This information is taken from the Student Handbook. You are expected to adhere to college policy.

A. THE LEARNING CENTER: The Learning Center provides interdisciplinary support for all MCAD students, including face-to-face and online tutoring, an online writing and learning lab (OWLL), small and large group workshops and in-class presentations, as well as academic accommodation services for students with disabilities. The Learning Center works with students to make them better learners and prioritizes equal access and opportunity for all students. Tutoring areas include writing, software and technical skills, time management, and study skills. For more information on the Learning Center's Hours, instructions for how to make an appointment, and access to the MCAD OWLL, visit learningcenter.mcad.edu or call (612) 874-3671.

B. LYND.COM: Students can access a wide variety of online tutorials at Lynda.com using their MCAD login information: <https://intranet.mcad.edu/modules/lynda/>

C. COURSE EVALUATIONS: Course evaluations are an integral part of MCAD curriculum development. Student feedback on courses are instrumental in creating a vibrant, informed, and robust learning community at MCAD. For these, and many other reasons, students are encouraged at the end of the semester to provide extensive feedback on course evaluations.

D. CELL PHONE POLICY (optional): Cell phones should be put on mute or vibrate during class. Calls can be made during breaks, as well as before or after class.

E. CREDIT HOUR DEFINITION: In lecture/discussion courses requiring outside preparation, 1 hour of credit represents 50 minutes contact time each week in class, and 2 hours of work outside of class. Therefore, a 3-credit lecture course requires 2.5 hours in class per week and approximately 6 hours outside of class.

In studio/laboratory courses, 1 hour of credit requires a minimum of 1.5 hours contact hours each week in class and approximately 1.5 hours of work outside of class. Therefore, a 3-credit studio course represents a minimum of 4.5 contact hours in class and approximately 4.5 hours of work outside of class per week.

In online courses, 1 hour of credit requires approximately 3 hours of work per week for all activities (i.e., reading, viewing, making, scanning, responding to discussion threads, collaborating, etc.). Therefore, a 3-credit online course requires approximately 9 hours per week to complete the necessary activities.

F. ATTENDANCE (ONLINE COURSES): Registration for an online course presupposes that the student will attend/fully participate in all online activities. Each student is responsible for meeting all course requirements.

G. CLASSROOM DEVICE USAGE POLICY: Participation in a classroom community has many benefits, but students will also find that along with those benefits come responsibilities:

- + Students are responsible for bringing laptops to class when scheduled to do so.
- + Student laptops should be in good working condition. If a student is experiencing problems with a laptop, it is the student's responsibility to go to Computer Support for help: <https://intranet.mcad.edu/modules/css/?css=1>. Technical difficulties such as problems printing, uploading, saving, or retrieving files do not excuse late or missing work.
- + During classroom discussion, demonstration, or lecture, students should not be connected to network resources unless students are specifically instructed to do so.
- + Chatting, using social media, or emailing is no more acceptable than talking on a cell phone during class time. Non-class related use of a laptop during class time, including working on homework for other courses, may result in restriction of laptop use or a grade penalty.
- + Unless otherwise indicated, students should never use headphones during class time.
- + Students should always store copies of files in two backup locations. Students should never store the only copy of a paper/project on the student server space in case the server is down, and students are unable to access the paper/project.
- + Recording by instructor permission only. See the MCAD Student Handbook for the full policy.

H. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY / SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY: Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in MCAD courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action.

The MCAD Student Handbook defines academic dishonesty as follows: Submission of false records of academic achievement; cheating on assignments or examinations; altering, forging or misusing a College academic record, document or funds; taking, acquiring or using test materials without faculty permission; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records to obtain grades, honors, awards or professional endorsement in a dishonest manner; plagiarizing.

- + Plagiarizing: Quoting uncited materials, visual or written; presenting the work of others as your own; using work of other MCAD students without their express permission.
- + Using the Same Work in Different Courses: Students may not submit the same work for more than one class without the knowledge and consent of all faculty.
- + Consequences for plagiarizing and double submissions may include failing the assignment or the course, or academic probation.

Within this course, a student who is responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to an including an "F" for the course. If students have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, they should consult with their professor.

Using the Same Assignment in Different Courses: Studio projects are assigned and assessed according to the specific learning objectives for each course. Occasionally students may be assigned a project in one course that shares many of the learning objectives of an assignment given in a different course. While turning in the same assignment for two courses is not encouraged, students who wish to do so are required to first notify the faculty member of each course and get permission. Faculty may assign additional requirements. Failure to notify faculty can result in failure of the assignments in both courses.

I. Accessibility and Equal Access: Persons with disabilities have a right to equal opportunity as prescribed by law. MCAD is responsible for creating a barrier-free environment while empowering students to grow toward independence and self-assertion. It is the individual student's responsibility to make their needs known and request accommodation. First-time disclosures must be made via appointment with the Learning Center or via our Disability Disclosure Form. For more information, visit learningcenter.mcad.edu or call (612) 874-3671.

J. ARCHIVING YOUR WORK: All students must turn in samples of their work to the class server for each class, every semester. Please follow this naming convention: **LastName_FirstName_ProjectTitle.ext**. Ex: oneill_co_DrawingA1.png

The media formats should follow MCAD archiving standards, which are found at: <http://kb.mcad.edu/index.php?category=64>

Samples should be accompanied by a Word document containing relevant information, found at:

<http://kb.mcad.edu/index.php?article=166> - Text Listing

Intranet.MCAD.edu

MCAD Knowledgebase

Computer support

Archiving Standards for Student work