

ENGLISH LANGUAGE NOTES

46.2 FALL / WINTER 2008

**GRAPHIA: LITERARY CRITICISM
AND THE GRAPHIC NOVEL**

Special Issue Editor: William Kuskin

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Boulder, Colorado USA 80309-0226

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Issue 46.2

Fall / Winter 2008

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English Language Notes, under the sponsorship of the University of Colorado, is published twice per year, in Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. Institutional subscriptions are \$65.00 for the United States and Canada, \$75.00 for all other countries. Personal subscriptions are \$40.00 for the United States and Canada, \$48.00 for all other countries. Back numbers of *ELN* beginning with Vol. XX, Number 1 are available for \$24.00 each from *English Language Notes*, Hellems 101, University of Colorado at Boulder, 226 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309-0226. Periodicals postage is paid at Boulder, CO. Claims for undelivered subscription numbers will be honored if received within one year of the publication date. No refunds offered for cancellations.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *English Language Notes*, University of Colorado at Boulder, 226 UCB, Boulder, CO 80309-0226.

ISSN 00138282 USPS 176-720

English Language Notes is indexed in the MLA International Bibliography.

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<http://www.colorado.edu/English/eln/index.html>

Cover design: Karen Jacobs

"How to Kill a . . ." by Isabel Ruebens" by permission of Jamie Hernandez

Spine logo by Matthew Slade



Printed on recycled paper

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
PREFACE: TALKING ABOUT COMICS	3
Comics by <i>William Kuskin</i> <i>william.kuskin@colorado.edu</i> and <i>Matthew Slade</i> <i>fandangostudios@gmail.com</i>	
Introduction: Continuity in Literary Form and History <i>William Kuskin, University of Colorado at Boulder</i> <i>william.kuskin@colorado.edu</i>	5
INTO THE BOOK	17
“It’s a Magical World”: The Page in Comics and Medieval Manuscripts <i>Martha Rust, New York University</i> <i>martha.rust@nyu.edu</i>	23
What is Graphic about Graphic Novels? <i>Johanna Drucker, UCLA</i> <i>drucker@gseis.ucla.edu</i>	39
Batman in the Trash: Canon Construction and Bibliography <i>William Kuskin, University of Colorado at Boulder</i> <i>william.kuskin@colorado.edu</i>	57
PILGRIMAGE TO THE MLA	73
Graphic Novels: Literature without Text? <i>Jan Baetens, University of Leuven</i> <i>jan.baetens@arts.kuleuven.be</i>	77
Beyond Language: Metaphor and Metonymy in Comics Storytelling <i>Karin Kukkonen, University of Mainz/Tampere</i> <i>karin.kukkonen@uta.fi</i>	89

Sequencing and Contingent Individualism in the Graphic, Postcolonial Spaces of Satrapi's <i>Persepolis</i> and Okubo's <i>Citizen 13660</i> <i>Monica Chiu, University of New Hampshire</i> <i>monica.chiu@unh.edu</i>	99
Art That Goes BOOM: Genre and Aesthetics in Frank Miller's <i>Sin City</i> <i>Christopher Pizzino, University of Georgia</i> <i>cpizzino@uga.edu</i>	115
How to Read a . . . <i>Charles Hatfield, California State University, Northridge</i> <i>charles.hatfield@csun.edu</i>	129
SLUGGING IT OUT WITH THE MAINSTREAM SERIAL	153
From Social Consciousness to Cosmic Awareness: Superhero Comic Books and the Culture of Self-Interrogation, 1968–1974 <i>Bradford Wright, Imperial Valley College</i> <i>bradford.wright@imperial.edu</i>	155
Amazing Fantasies: Trauma, Affect, and Superheroes <i>Philip Sandifer, University of Florida</i> <i>philsand@ufl.edu</i>	175
The Ear of the Eye, or, Do Drawings Make Sounds? <i>Sean Carney, McGill University</i> <i>sean.carney@mcgill.ca</i>	193
EPILOGUE	211
Contributors	215

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

One fact about looking carefully into books—whether they are very, very old or very, very new—is that they continually remind the reader that they take a lot of work to put together. It takes many hands to make a comic book, and many hands to make a book about comic books. Often these hands are credited on the masthead; often they are not.

I would like to give thanks to the people who made this book. First, I thank *ELN's* managing editor, Karen Jacobs, and its editorial board. These scholars endorsed the project early on and gave me energy and guidance throughout. Without them, *Graphia* would not exist. I thank my contributors, as well. Editorial work is often a species of management, bland in general and specifically involving a good bit of nagging. Working with this team was more like driving fast down a mountain road: thrilling, engaging, inspiring, and refreshing. Thank you.

Comics and graphic novels are still vibrantly commercial, and I thank the artists and publishing houses for generously allowing us to reprint images for this issue. Austin Trunick of DC Comics fielded so many e-mails that he deserves special thanks.

I also thank the people who worked on the issue in material ways. The production team at the University of Colorado and at the press—Denise Munn, Barbara Diehl, Linda Besen, and Robin Powers—understood its spirit almost intuitively and so went about making that spirit tangible. Tim Riggs and Dave Underwood of the University of Colorado's Digital Media Service Center stepped in at the eleventh hour to solve a tricky design problem. Comics has had its share of sneering mistreatment. Here it was treated as art.

I save my last, and strongest, thanks for Sara Smilko. Operating under the license of "Editorial Assistant," Sara not only polices *ELN* by keeping it on schedule, within its margins, and generally grammatical, but exceeds her job description to act as general counsel for the prosecution. She does it all, and does so with grace, intelligence, and care. Thank you, Sara.

Books of essays shouldn't carry a single dedication. Still, I think it fair to say that the reading of comics and graphic novels—of illustrated literature in general—brings us all back to our earliest memories of book culture. So, in a final acknowledgement, I dedicate this book to those who read to us when we were too young to read to ourselves.

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