



That's Not Fair:

Comics & Social Justice

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That's Not Fair:

Comics & Social Justice

Description

That's Not Fair comic project is geared toward young women focusing on creating comics as a tool of empowerment. This 10 week program incorporates political literacy*, critical thinking, comic writing, and storytelling. Pulling from curated themes throughout the week, the program will culminate in an edited comic book containing all of the student's work.

*The ability to use prior knowledge to examine political phenomena. An engagement with dominant discourse and the subsequent ability to create counter discourses that challenge common sense notions of social ills.

Details

That's Not Fair Sessions

Jewish Community Center

334 Amsterdam Ave.

Thursdays 6-8:15 PM, 7th Floor Library

Arrive at 5:50 PM for dinner



Instructor Bio

The literacy programs' initial curriculum and program will be conducted by Juliana "Jewels" Smith. Smith is an educator, writer, organizer, and entrepreneur. She is also the creator and author of [\(H\)afrocentric](#), a comic book featuring four disgruntled undergrads of color and their adventures at Ronald Reagan University. She is passionate about facilitating political dialogue through storytelling.

For full bio, click [here](#) or go to [about.me/jewels.smith](#)

Course Objectives

- Motivate participant's to create comics
- Engage student's critical thinking ability
- Foster writing and storytelling development



Targets

Qualitative: Empower young women.

Quantitative: 10 + students. 10 weeks.

The Concept/Theory of Change:

That's Not Fair is an attempt to make political literacy and critical thinking tangible for young women. In creating a program that makes critical thinking and storytelling a top priority, I am engaging what scholar Frank Wilderson calls the libidinal economy. The libidinal economy is the system of exchange and valuation for fantasies, desires, fears, aversions and enjoyment. As such, art has the potential to define or largely contribute to the economy of our fears, desires, attraction, affection, and alliance. With this project, I want students to use their critical thinking skills to analyze social and political phenomena via comic storytelling. Students should come away knowing they have the power to change conversations in tangible ways.

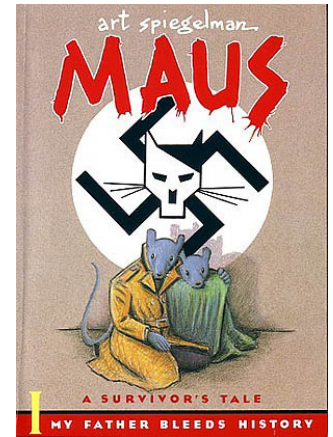
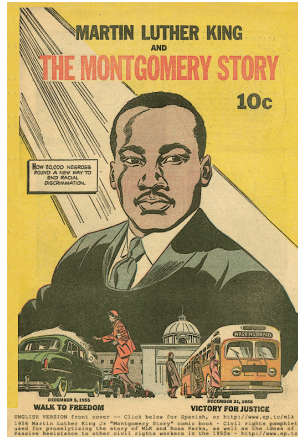


Course Outline

February 4th, 2016 Week 1:

Introduction to Comics as Political Literacy

This week will focus on how comics have been used to educate audiences on a particular political topic.



Readings: Student's comics, The Montgomery Story, March, The Izzat Project, Persepolis, Maus, and (H)afrocentric.

Objective: Identifying the role of comics outside of entertainment.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

- **Community Rules:** Come up with community rules together
- **Comic share:** Everyone brings in a comic book or strip that they like. In groups of 3ish, share:
 - o your name
 - o the title of the comic book and name of author and illustrator
 - o why you picked this comic book
 - o 1 story it reminds you of from your own life
- **SSR (10-15 min)** Read excerpts from each book.
- **Discussion Questions (30-40 min):** What is the subject of the comic? Who are the characters and how did they drive the story? Why did they use comics to tell this story? What was/wasn't communicated effectively? What prior knowledge do you need to understand the comic?
- **Draw the Story of What Brought You To this Class (15-20min)** Write and draw it on the provided piece of paper.



This week will focus on breaking down the concepts of power and privilege. Who has it? When and where? Why? What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality-the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Readings: Power Chart, Privilege Definition, [Everyday Feminism-White Privilege Explained](#), Male privilege checklist (HW)

Power Chart

Group with Power	Group Denied Power	EX: Institutional	EX: Interpersonal	EX: Internalized	Name for the System
White people	People of color				Racism/White supremacy
Rich people	Poor people				Classism
Straight people	Queer people				Heterosexism/Homophobia
Men	Women and genderqueer people				Sexism/Transphobia
Christians	People of other religious backgrounds				Anti-Semitism/ Islamophobia/ Christian hegemony

TEACHER'S NOTES:

- **Share examples** from my own life. (Ex: Traveling to other countries I realize my privilege as an American. Powerlessness of experiencing and watching racial trauma everyday via social media & news outlets.)



Exercises: Fill out Power Chart together.

Introduce: Concept of Intersectionality



Watch Video: Sometimes You're a Caterpillar (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hRiWgx4sHGg>) Reactions?



- **Read comic** about White Privilege (10-15 min).
(<http://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/white-privilege-explained/>)
(<http://www.upworthy.com/a-short-comic-gives-the-simplest-most-perfect-explanation-of-privilege-ive-ever-seen?g=2&c=ufb1>)
- **Exercise 2:** Unpacking White Privilege
- **Draw a comic** on the ways you experience privilege. Draw another comic on the ways you do not experience privilege.
- **Homework:** Male privilege check list



Political Literacy: What is gender? Masculinity and Femininity.

This week will focus on defining gender and sex. Masculinity and Femininity are examined as students come up with their own definitions of what it means to be a man/woman and girl/boy.

Objective: Students will be able to discuss gender roles in our society.



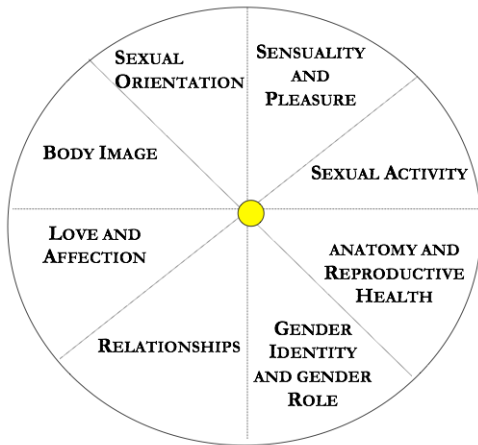
****Watch these videos** about [gender fluidity](#) and read this comic about [Policing Women's Clothing](#).

TEACHER'S NOTES:

- **Define: Gender vs. Sexuality**
- **Read this article.** <http://tvblogs.nationalgeographic.com/2012/09/28/when-gender-is-not-binary/> (<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/taboo/videos/engendering-peace/>) For examples of genders that are not binary.
- **Watch** these videos about [gender fluidity](#) and this comic about [Policing Women's Clothing](#).
- **Exercises:** Femininity Box and Masculinity Box. Create a box labeled FEMININITY & MASCULINITY. Put post it notes on the behaviors associated with femininity and masculinity. What does it mean to be a man/woman? Blank bodies brainstorm: what makes someone male? What makes someone female? Are those things always true for male and female? Sex vs. gender ... What's the difference?



Sexuality Pie



Sexuality is more than sex. It is a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual journey from birth until death.

Sexuality

Is a significant part of who we are and it is reflected in how we express ourselves to the world.

Sexuality is more than sex. It is a physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual journey from birth until death.

Sexuality includes:

- **Anatomy and Reproductive Health** - biological sex, puberty, contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), HIV, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause, hygiene, and general health care.
- **Gender Identity and Gender Role** - how we see ourselves as male or female, feelings about what it means to be and act like a male or female.
- **Relationships** - behaviors, expectations, satisfaction, and abuse.
- **Love and Affection** - how we express love and affection to friends, family and romantic partners.
- **Body Image** - how we feel about our bodies, how we treat our bodies, and how attractive we feel.
- **Sexual Orientation** - physical and emotional attraction to a man, woman, or both
- **Sensuality and Pleasure** - accepting and enjoying our own bodies and accepting and enjoying the bodies of our sexual partner(s)
- **Sexual activity** - acts of intimacy such as hugging, kissing, touching, and sexual intercourse

Read: Sexuality Pie and Discuss

Discussion Questions and Activity should be it's own bold category.

- **Exercise:** Examine a time when you did not fit into the box of your chosen gender identity. Or a time someone assumed something about you because of your gender. (i.e. What you liked? What you should wear? How you should act? Based on your gender identity) Write a short comic about it.
- **Materials needed:** Post it notes





AMANI ARIEL • 7 mins • June 29, 2015

AN OPEN LETTER TO EVERYONE WHO THINKS HAVING A BLACK FAMILY MEMBER EXEMPTS THEM FROM RACISM

Share on Facebook

Tweet on Twitter



This week will focus on the connection on Readings: [An Open Letter to Everyone Who Thinks Having a Black Family Member Exempts them From Racism](#),

Discussion: What does it mean to be Jewish?

TEACHER'S NOTES:

- **Exercises:** Write a 1 page dialogue about the first time you realized you were Jewish. If this is difficult, are holidays that your culture celebrates given time off? Considered holidays? Most Americans are not Jewish, when did you realize this?
- **Personal example:** Knowing I'm Jewish and Black. (Ex: Going to synagogue and being the only Black person besides my brother. Outside of this context I knew no one would know I'm Jewish.)
- **Read this article:** <http://blavity.com/an-open-letter-to-everyone-who-thinks-having-a-black-family-member-exempts-them-from-racism/>
- **Discussion Questions:** What did you think of the article? Initial thoughts?



What does it mean to be Jewish? What have you been told it mean (i.e. Religion, culture, etc.)? What does it mean to “look Jewish?” What are the taken for granted assumptions about being Jewish? What does it mean to be Black and Jewish (invisible)?

- **Draw a comic** based on your identity as a Jewish person.
- **Introduce Small Groups (2-3 people)**

April 14th, 2016 Week 5:

Guest Speaker: Drawing Techniques for Beginning Illustrations.

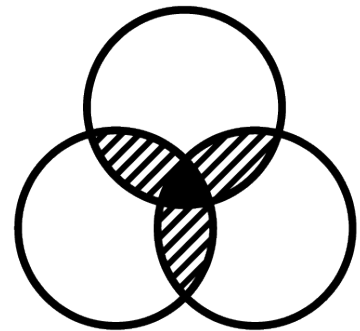
April 21st, 2016 Week 6:

Examine Counter Narrative and Dominant Narratives

Definitions

- **Counter narratives-** An argument or story that disputes a commonly held belief or truth.
- **Dominant Narratives-** Stories that are told repeatedly, usually by dominant culture (CNN, History textbooks, New York Times, etc.); that define our reality—how to act, think, what acceptable to wear, what to consume, etc.—and become invisible as they are the norm. While these stories and beliefs that fuel them change, they reflect dominant culture/those in positions of power.
- **Exercise 1:** Examine terms. Place terms on the board: Family, Immigration, Masculinity, Femininity, and Feminism. Ask students to tell them what comes to mind when they hear the terms. Use their answers as a site to understand counter and dominant discourse. Do their answers reflect dominant discourse?
- **Lesson:** Dominant narratives exist around us all the time, and without questioning or different stories, become taken for granted assumptions about a certain topic, reinforcing the status quo.
Telling stories is so important because it changes the way we think, what we value, who we identify with, etc.

Watch: [Children's March](#)





- **Exercise 2:** Write/draw a comic that exhibits a counter narrative.
 - A. Choose from a hat of situations.
 - B. Students come up with their own counter narrative.

May 12, 2016, Week 7:

Black Lives Matter: Why Do We Even Have to Say That?!

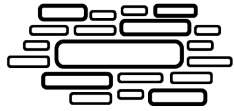
Black Lives Matter Movement

Read: [A Herstory of #Blacklivesmatters](#)

Exercise and Concept: Choosing the Frame: Dominant Discourse vs. Counter Discourse

Objective: Students will be able to examine the current social movement through different frameworks.





Choosing the Frame: White Supremacy vs. Antiracism

	White Supremacy Framework	Antiracism Framework
What are the processes that marginalize black people?	Exploitation & alienation - same as other broke folks.	Accumulation and fungibility - totally different than other broke folks.
How does racism against black people relate to racism against NBPOC?	They are varying degrees of the same powerlessness.	It doesn't - black people [and indigenous people] experience a fundamentally different kind of racial difference than NBPOC.
Relationship to the State	Make the state democratic, redistributive and representative.	The state is founded on the theft of black humanity and cannot co-exist with freedom.
Stance on Multiracial Coalition	Positive - All people of color face racism!	Ambivalent - NBPOC (non-black people of color) often centralize black civil right narratives as strategies to generate empathy and momentum while marginalizing black people.
What is the basis of citizenship/humanity?	Whiteness.	Non-blackness.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

- **Define** Counter narratives vs. Dominant Narratives (Example: Meme of Rosa Parks and Black Lives Matters) Colonialism vs. Genocide. Helping/Civilizing vs. Intruding. What is family. Immigration. Peace.
- **Lesson:** Examine the narratives surrounding Black Lives Matter. How & why did the movement start? Why now? What prior knowledge do you need to know to understand this movement? What is a White Supremacy vs. Anti Blackness Framework?
- **Exercise:** Think of a dominant narrative of Black Lives Matters movement. How does it reinforce dominant narrative?
- **Draw a comic that introduces a Counter Narrative.**
- **Examine Counter Narrative and Dominant Narratives**
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Exercises: work on comics

Students Comics DUE! It's time to get in FORMATION! Bios, group comics and individual comics all DUE! Final Assignment.

That's Not Fair Final Project:

Create a short comic story (4-6 pages) that addresses at least one of the concepts from class, to write about a time when you experienced injustice, witnessed an injustice, or were on the receiving end of privilege. Using an intersectional approach, respond to the privilege or injustice via the comic story.*

*Intersectional—Takes into consideration all the identities (gender, race, etc.) that grant access to power.

Storytelling Archetypes

Coming of age, overcoming obstacles, constant evolution, true as it ever was, rebirth or quest, provide helpful roadmaps for telling stories. Remember, in all of these archetypes, conflict is imperative. Focus on conflict! In order for a character/hero to emerge, there must be conflict! Encourage conflict to ensure there are awful things that show the reader who your character really is!



Voice	Strategy/Use
1 st Person Narrative	Examine yourself, personal journey, vulnerabilities, observations—how do you perceive injustice?
2 nd Person Narrative	This point of view of a narrative onlooker who is writing about you, the reader. ("You saw the surveillance cam footage over and over on the news."). You, the author, is telling a story about the reader.
3 rd Person Narrative	Observational stance, explore ideas, etc. Indicates a narrator of the story.
Inanimate Object	Personifies the perspective of an object, which would otherwise be invisible. May highlight a perspective the audience has never imagined.



Concepts	Strategy/Use
Dominant & Counter Narratives	Use this concept to explore stories that are marginalized by dominant narratives.
Gender—Masculinity/ Femininity	Recall our masculinity and femininity box. Examine through story, how people do not fit into those boxes.
Black Lives Matter	Recognize the origins of the Black Lives Matter and the theft/cultural appropriation of a legacy of struggle for dignity on the part of Black folks.
Power Chart	Use this to explain everything in your life. No, seriously.
Intersectionality	How does this injustice affect those who are denied power? <u>Good rule of thumb</u> : Be in solidarity with those that have the least access to power.

TEACHER'S NOTES:

June 2nd, 2016 Week 10:

Prep for Final Presentation

Practice Presentations: How do we want to present what we've learned throughout the course?

TEACHER'S NOTES:



TEACHER'S NOTES:



