LOverman/Fall 2012

English 115

**PROGRESSION 2: *Persepolis: The Story of A Childhood***

**Seeing and Hearing Texts**

This progression’s essay requirement asks you to **create an idea of your own** with the aid of a visual object, an image of experience, and engage with a written text and the social/psychological/political issues pertaining to the text.

For this progression, you will read *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi, focusing on issues addressed in that book. These issues may include a social, political, psychological, or financial issue, a cultural attitude, or a conflict in the book. Below are several topics you can choose to develop, but these are not the only topics, these are merely suggestions:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Iranian Revolution | Nonconformity | Parenting Style | Comics | Public life/private life |
| Middle East politics | Poverty/Social Class | Coming of age | Graphic novel as memoir | Forbidden love |
| Teenage rebellion | Family rituals | Gender politics | Child Neglect | Nature vs. nurture |
| Repression | Heroism | Punk | Faith | War |

In the essay itself you will develop your idea in light of these questions:

* **What are the larger implications of your idea?**
* **What do the various pieces of evidence you have collected tell us about your idea?**
* **Why should a general reader care *about* your idea?**

*By the end of this progression, you should understand the following key terms:* ***word-picture*** *and* ***scene.*** *You should also understand some basic concepts of* ***structure****. You will be expected to follow* ***MLA documentation*** *and to perform both* ***surface editing*** *and* ***deep editing****.*

**EXERCISE 2.1:**

**The Ethnography**

Ethnography is a genre of writing that uses fieldwork to provide a descriptive study of human societies. 

**Task**: Choose a public space where there is ample human interactionThere are infinite spaces to choose from below are merely suggestions:

1. Have a meal with a family of another ethnicity and write about the scene, the interaction, and the food.
2. Visit a thrift store and a mall and discuss your observations of the differences/similarities between these scenes.
3. Visit an ethnic grocery store that is not part of your own culture—write about the scene, people, food, etc, and about how it feels to be “other.”

Write down your observations. Try to be objective as you look for manifestations of the idea with which you’ve been working. What do you hear, see, smell, feel, taste? *Under your objective observation, write an analysis* informed by the texts we've read thus far. The first part of your ethnography will be observation; the second half will be analysis.

* *describe its* ***location****: does it have buildings? in what kinds of places is it located?*
* *describe its* ***function:*** *what is its purpose?*
* *describe its* ***organization****: who is in charge? What roles do those involved in the institution play? are those involved there voluntarily? Is there an explicit hierarchy?*
* *describe its* ***rules:*** *those rules may be explicit, i.e. written, or they may be implicit, i.e. simply understood*
* *describe its* ***relation*** *to its individual members*

**Requirements:** Your ethnography should be no more than three double-spaced pages (950 words). Follow *MLA documentation* for the analysis section including a “Works Cited” list of texts. Post to blog.

**Due**: See Weekly Schedule

**EXERCISE 2.2:**

**The “Word-Picture”**

Your recent work in reading essays should have demonstrated to you the importance of a reading process that is *active*, and it should have reaffirmed the rigorous demands of good, clean writing. In this next writing sequence, you will extend the active reading process to a different kind of text – one which is either visual or aural.

**Task**: Create a ***word‑picture*** of a visual/aural object within the public space you studied. Your word-picture should enable your reader to “see” your chosen space by the power of your words and how it relates to *Persepolis*.

**Requirements:** Try to keep your ***word-picture*** as short as possible (100 words) without sacrificing precision. Post to blog.

**Due:** See Weekly Schedule

**EXERCISE 2.3:**

**The Scene**

Make use of your public space and how it relates to Persepolis in a ***scene***, a scene that puts you and the your idea in relation with one another. The scene may shed light on your attitude toward the *Persepolis* and public space.

**Task**: Write a ***scene*** that will help your readers begin to understand what ***idea*** Persepolis andyour public space has sparked in you.

Write a scene that will help your readers begin to understand what idea your visual object represents.

Readers may be drawn into the scene by a dramatic action, an interesting conversation, or by the sheer force of your creative language. Your scene does not need to focus on your visual object or image as long as the object plays some part of the scene.

**Requirements:** Your scene should be no more than three double-spaced pages (950 words). Post to blog.

**Due:** See Weekly Schedule

**ESSAY II**

Imagine a more general audience and widen your focus to suit it. Your ***evidence*** for this essay may consist of your scene and ethnography, but you need not confine yourself to this early work: there may be other visual objects, images of experience, or written texts that now seem more helpful to you in terms of developing your ***idea***. Feel free to use them.

**Task**: After considering the best way to use your ***evidence*** to present your ***idea***, inform your reader of the ***larger implications*** of your idea. What do the various pieces of evidence you have gathered tell us *about* your idea? Why should s/he *care* about your idea?

Your goal is to present evidence in such a way as to persuade your readers to agree with your idea (and if they can't agree, they should at least be able to acknowledge that you have good reasons for your idea).

As in your previous essay, keep in mind that though your ***evidence*** provides the foundation for your work, the purpose of your essay is to explore the meaning of your ***idea***. Keep your voice and your thinking front-and-center. The bottom line: give your readers something to think about!

**Requirements:** This essay should be 5-7 double-spaced pages and calls for ***MLA documentation***; you must include a “Works Cited” list at the end of your essay. When you quote key phrases or clauses from your written text(s), you must provide parenthetical documentation. Post to blog.

**Due**: See Weekly Schedule