

Assignment: Memoirs Project

Length: 2-4 pages, depending on project selection

This assignment asks you to explore the storytelling capacities of a particular medium and to draw connections between personal experience and social context.

Assignment:

Option 1: Create a visual or audio memoir; write a 2 page justification and analysis of your work.

Option 2: Write a 3-4 page essay analyzing *Persepolis*. This essay should engage strategically with scholarly sources and propose a compelling argument.

For extra credit, consider making your project “public” — this could include submitting it somewhere for “publication,” teaching it to a selected audience, presenting it at a symposium, etc.. Please run any public presentation/submission ideas by me and plan on meeting with me over Zoom or before/after class to discuss your project idea.

Please note:

1. The assignments are described with intentional ambiguity to allow flexibility. A visual memoir could be a zine, a comic book (handmade or digitally constructed), a photographic memoir, a video, etc.. An audio memoir could be an original song, a playlist with interruptions for storytelling, an audio essay, etc.
2. **Any option will require some amount of research to contextualize**, and I would recommend citing 2-3 relevant sources. You may bring in headlines from primary sources and/or data sets from secondary sources relating to a specific time period and topic.
3. If you encounter competing claims as you work on your contextualization, you do not need to resolve them, just point them out— but a more ambitious interpretive description might try to synthesize the two views to reach a more complex and satisfying conclusion.
4. As we have seen in our analysis of *Persepolis*, analyzing a static image requires contextualization. Images are carefully framed or crafted. They capture a particular moment from a particular angle at a particular time. They reveal, they conceal, they create meaning. Photographers use lenses to capture spaces, events, people from a subjective angle. Graphic artists manipulate compositional elements to disturb, inspire, confuse, or communicate with viewers. Advertisers combine image and language to sell products, build a brand, or profit from a cultural moment. Regardless of what project option you choose, thinking critically about positionality, context, intention, audience, and reception will be important to making your work meaningful.