English 10H

*Persepolis* essay topics: Due Tuesday, April 14

TOPIC A: In an Associated Press interview, Satrapi said, “The only thing I hope is that people will read my book and see that this abstract thing, this Axis of Evil, is made up of individuals with lives and hopes.” And in her introduction to *Persepolis*, she explains that she wrote this book to show that Iran is not, as it is perceived to be, only a country of “fundamentalism, fanaticism, and terrorism.” How does *Persepolis* dispel, confirm, or challenge commonly held assumptions regarding Iran?

TOPIC B: On p. 97, Satrapi writes, “Every situation has an opportunity for laughs.” Why does Satrapi include, often giving equal space to, descriptions in which characters make light of dire political situations? Why is *Persepolis*structured as a graphic narrative, rather than as non-fiction account, or even a more traditional novel or memoir? What advantages do graphic narratives have over purely verbal texts?  Ultimately, write a convincing and well-supported argument that addresses why Satrapi wrote *Persepolis* as a graphic narrative.

TOPIC C: Discuss the role of women in *Persepolis*. Compare and contrast the various women: Marji, her mother, her grandmother, her schoolteachers, the maid, the neighbors, the guardians of the revolution, etc., as well as the very young Marji, with the older Marjane, and with Marjane Satrapi, the author.  How are all of these women forced into prescribed roles, and how do some of them manage to rebel against these prescriptions?

TOPIC D: In what ways is *Persepolis* both telling a story and commenting on the importance of stories in one’s life? What does the book suggest about how stories shape and give meaning to experience? Discuss some of the stories in *Persepolis*—Uncle Anoosh’s story, the stories propagated by the media – both interior and exterior to the Iranian government – as well as the stories Marjane, tells. What is Satrapi suggesting about the relationship between the past and present? What does this have to do with memory? What is the relationship between national and personal history, and how do personal stories capture national problems?

TOPIC ??: Propose a different topic. Write it out and run it by me before you start writing.

All essays must open by introducing the text and the topic and present a clearly stated claim (should be an arguable assertion) at the end of the opening paragraph. Body paragraphs must include textual evidence (DQs) and analysis that illustrates and supports your claim. Your concluding paragraph must summarize your information, tie it back to your claim, and end with a statement that answers the “Who cares?” question.

The challenge in this paper is to craft meaningful and complex descriptions of the relationship between form (visual images) and meaning in this text. Do not treat it like you would treat a text only memoir.

Drafts due: start of class on Friday, April 10 – must be in your shared folder on google drive to receive credit.

Final paper due: Tuesday, April 14 – hard copy in class AND submitted to turnitin.com