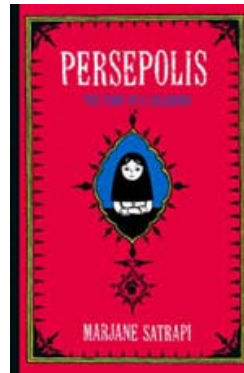


Carleton College Common Reading Fall 2006

On Thursday, September 8, 2006 you will participate in the eighteenth annual Common Reading Convocation and discussion at Carleton. Faculty, staff, students and alumni members of the community will come together to engage in meaningful dialogue about this year's selection, Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and *Persepolis 2*.

To help you prepare for this experience, we offer the following questions for your consideration. In addition, we invite you to think about what questions you may wish to bring to the discussion.



- 1) What difference does it make that this story is told in black and white, in graphic novel (comic strip) format?
- 2) Marji's father says, "As long as there is oil in the Middle East, we will never have peace." Do you think he is right? What would one need to know in order to have an informed opinion about this?
- 3) One of Satrapi's goals in writing *Persepolis* is to show that there is more to the country than "fundamentalism, fanaticism, and terrorism." Does Satrapi accomplish her goal? What do you learn about Iran that you didn't know?
- 4) How is *Persepolis* a typical coming of age story? How, if at all, are Marji's experiences with drugs, depression and homelessness in Austria critical to her becoming the "liberated woman" she sets out to become?
- 5) How do you cope when there is conflict between what you have been taught by parents, religion and/or society and what you know, internally, to be the truth? To what extent is the framing of this question peculiarly "western" (and how, if at all, does that matter)?
- 6) Why does Satrapi title her work *Persepolis*?
- 7) Revolution is an important theme of this work. How, on the basis of *Persepolis*, would you distinguish a good revolutionary from a bad revolutionary?
- 8) *Persepolis* is a story filled with stories. What roles do stories play in Marji's life? In your life?
- 9) Marji has a complicated, shifting relationship with her parents. What are their expectations for her and how - if at all - do these expectations shape her? How about you? Does your family have expectations that seem to shape you?
- 10) How does Marji seek meaning in her life? What links are there, if any, between education and finding meaning in life for her? For you? What sustains her spiritually? What sustains you?