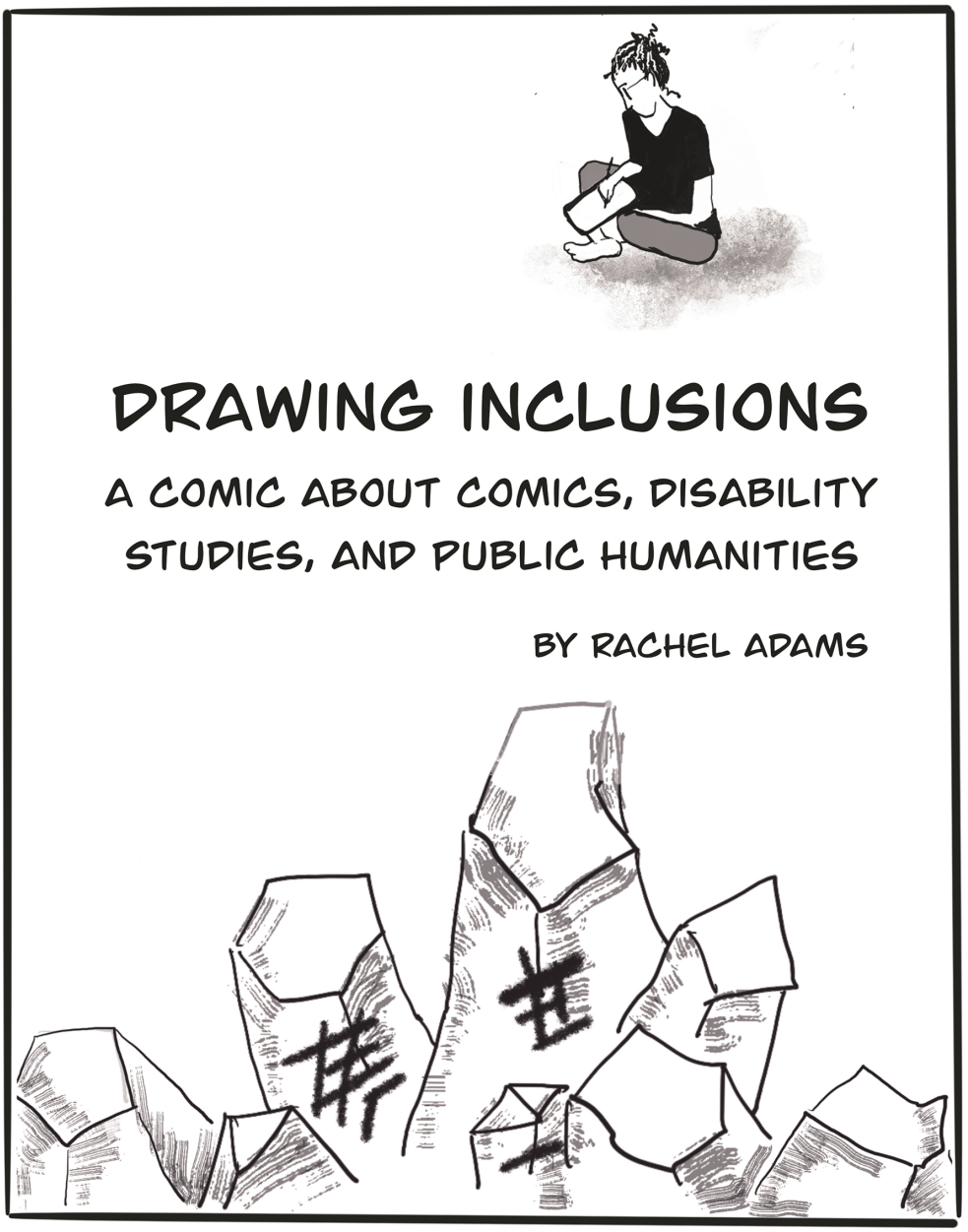
Public Humanities (2025), 1, e144, 1–18
doi:10.1017/pub.2025.32

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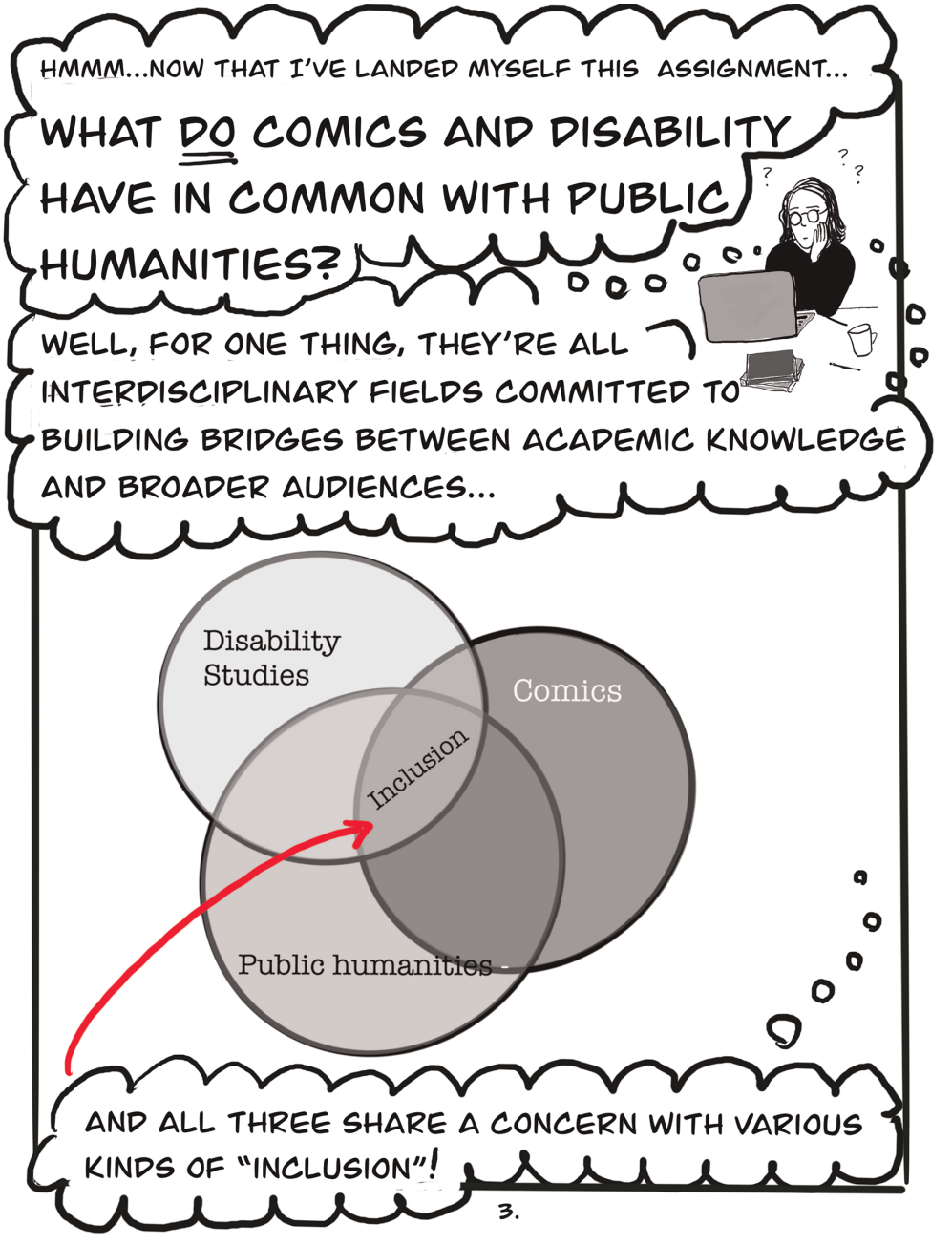
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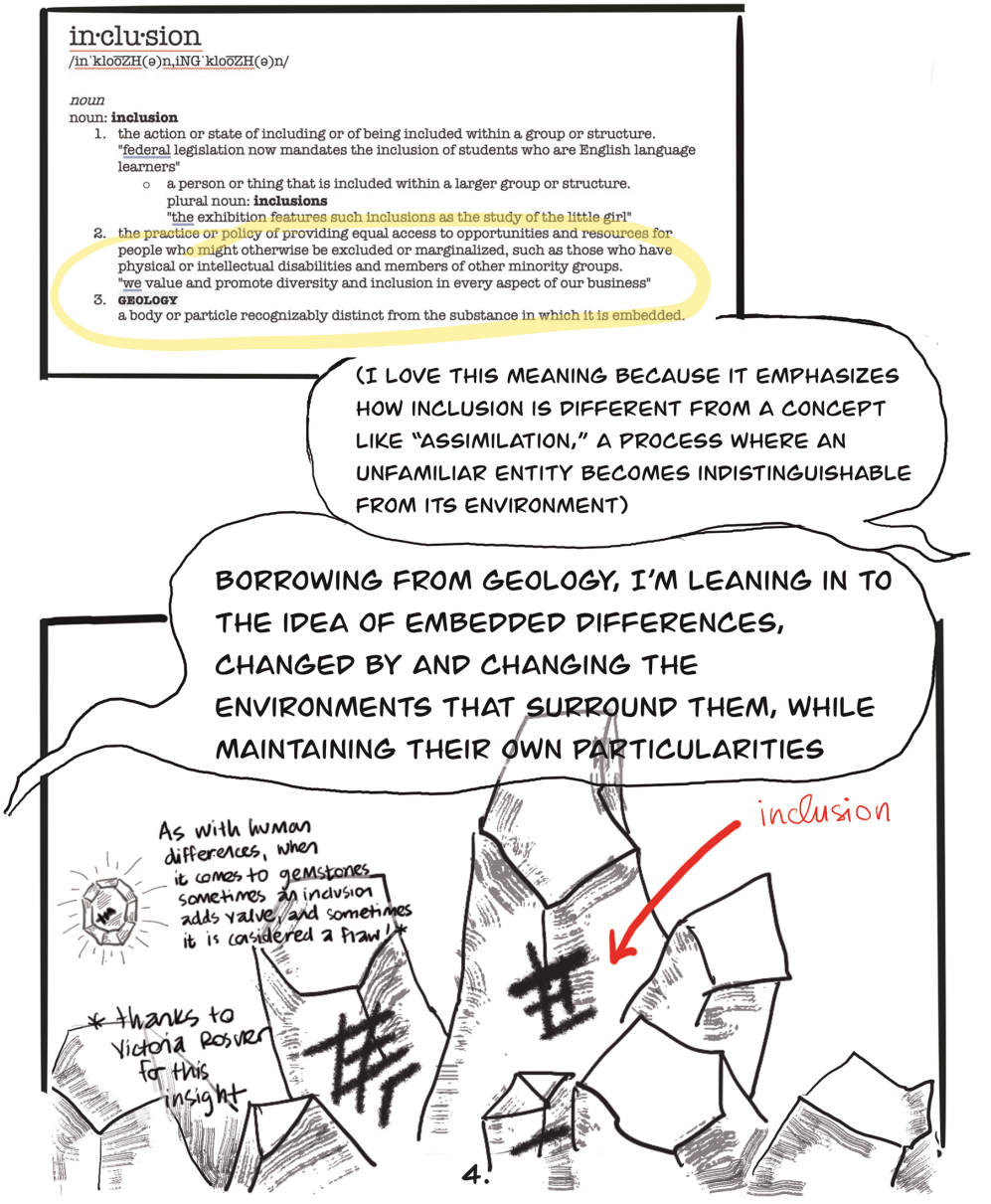


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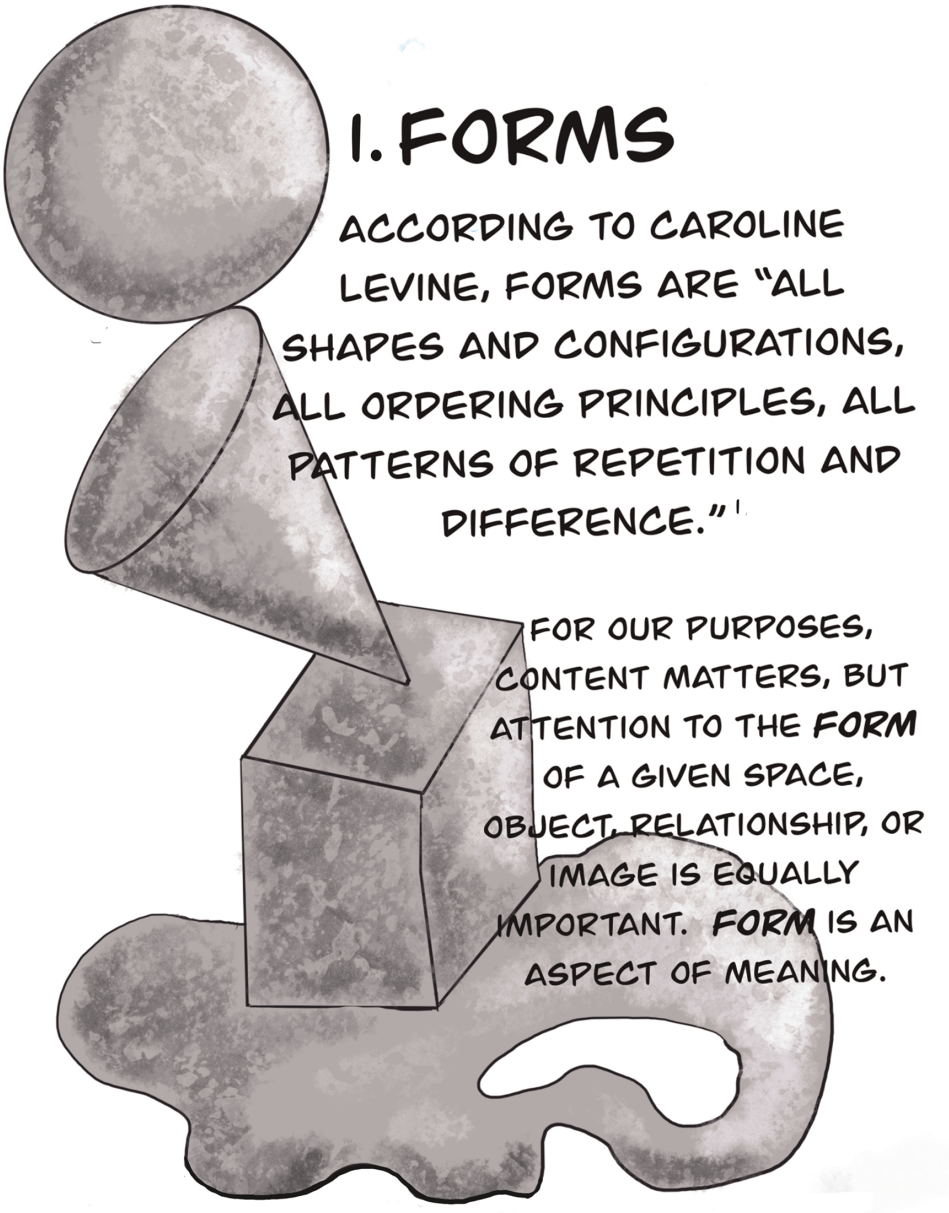


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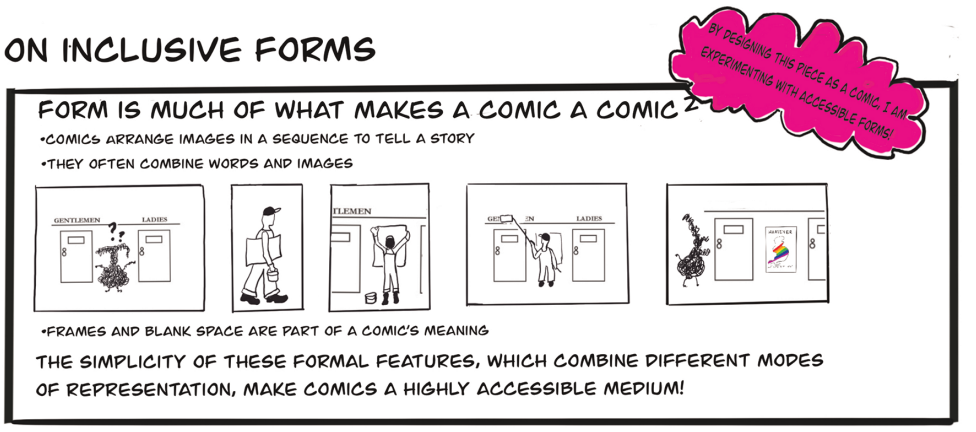
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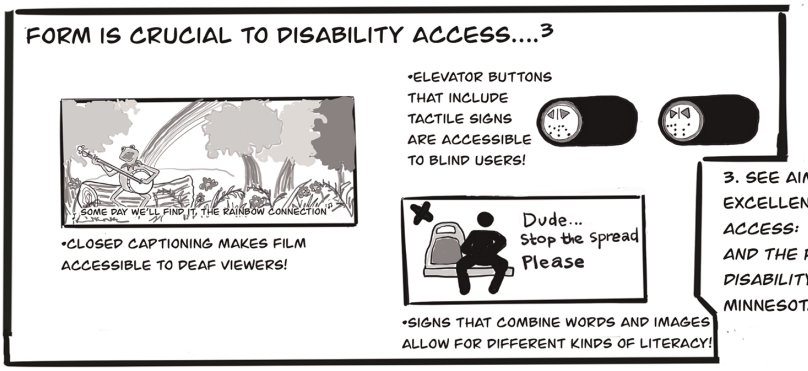
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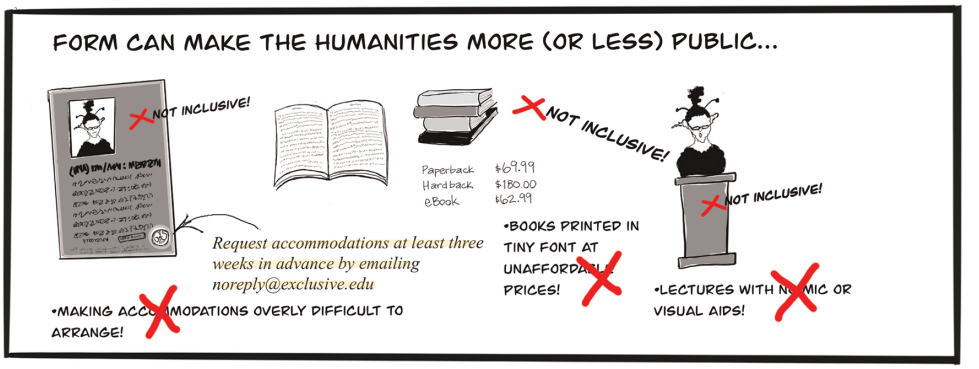


1. *FORMS: WHOLE, RHYTHM, HIERARCHY, NETWORK* (PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015) P. 3

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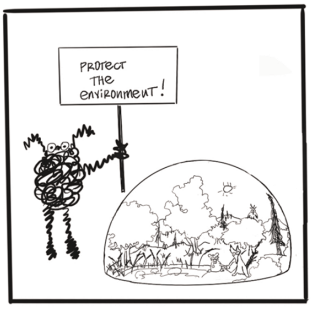


2. SOME GOOD SOURCES ON COMICS AND FORM: HILLARY CHUTE AND MARIANNE DEKOVEN, "INTRODUCTION: GRAPHIC NARRATIVE," *MFS MODERN FICTION STUDIES* 52.4 (WINTER 2006): 767–782; AND SCOTT MCCLOUD, *UNDERSTANDING COMICS: THE INVISIBLE ART* (HARPER PERENNIAL, 1993).

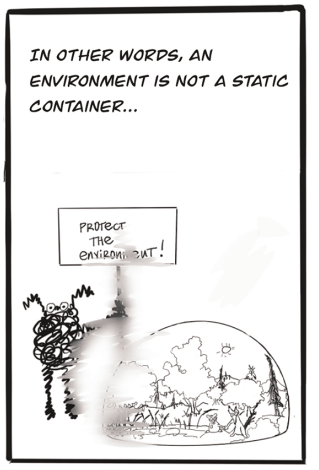
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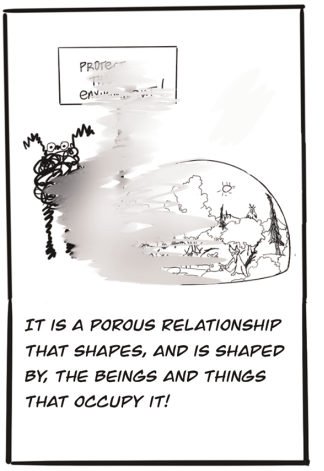
II. ENVIRONMENTS

"ENVIRONMENT" CAN MEAN MANY DIFFERENT THINGS!

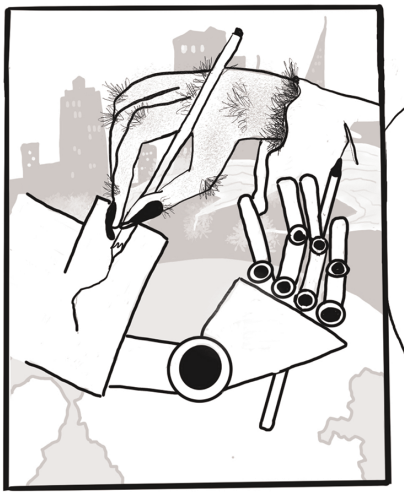


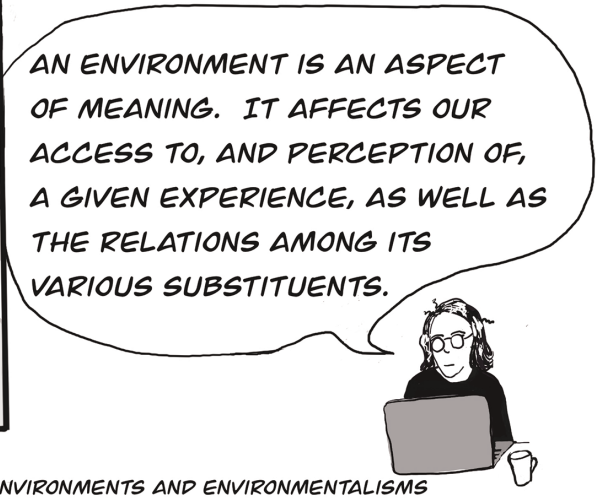
ETIENNE S. BENSON WRITES, AT ITS MOST BASIC, AN "ENVIRONMENT" REFERS TO "A MUTUALLY CONSTITUTIVE RELATION BETWEEN AN ENTITY AND THAT WHICH SURROUNDS IT." [4]





IT IS A POROUS RELATIONSHIP THAT SHAPES, AND IS SHAPED BY, THE BEINGS AND THINGS THAT OCCUPY IT!

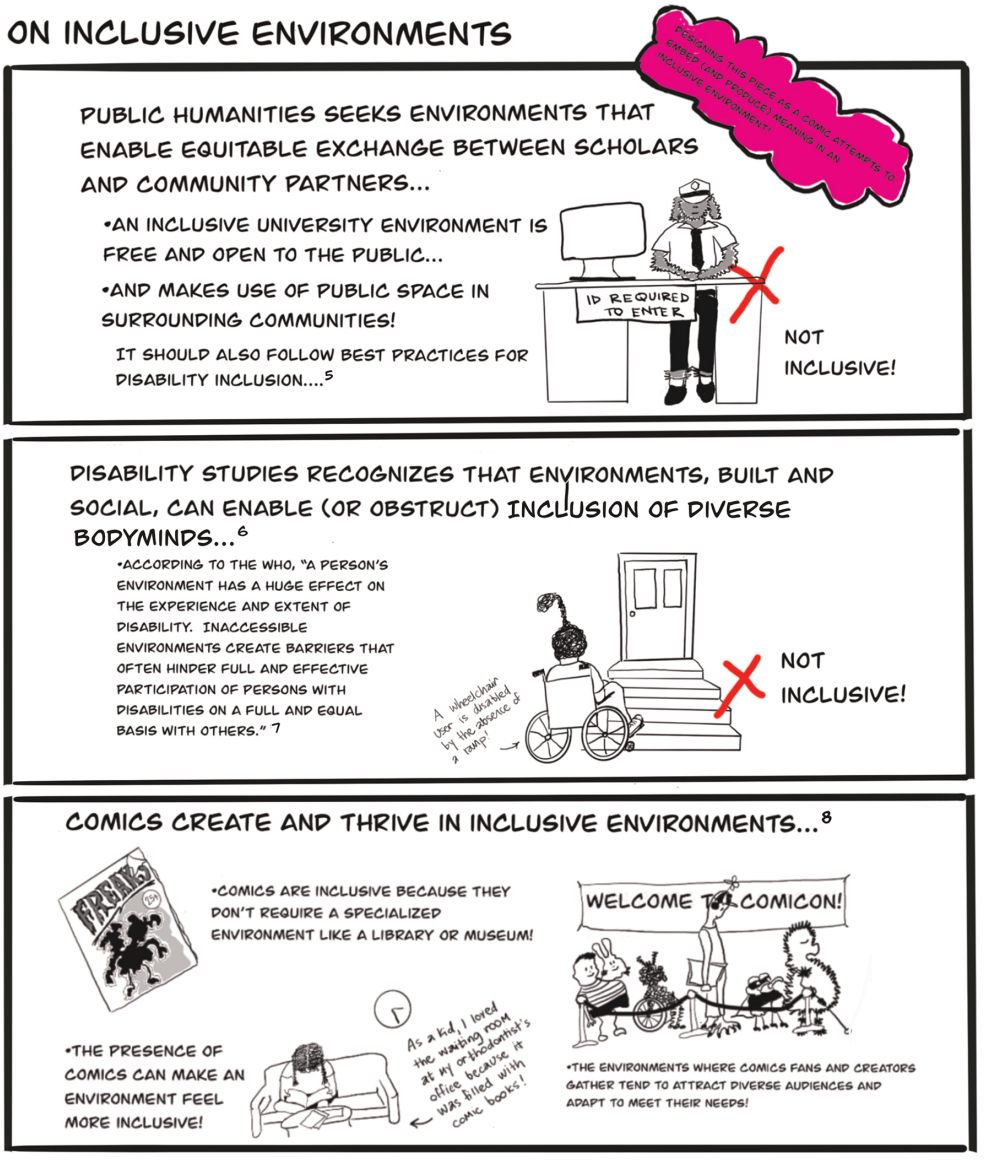




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4. SURROUNDINGS: A HISTORY OF ENVIRONMENTS AND ENVIRONMENTALISMS (CHICAGO: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 2020) P. 12.

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5. FOR ONE EXAMPLE, "ACCESSIBLE EVENTS GUIDE," WWW.OPWDD.NY.GOV/ACCESSIBLE-EVENTS-GUIDE

6. MARGARET PRICE FIRST USED THIS EXCELLENT TERM IN "THE BODYMIND PROBLEM AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF PAIN," *HYPATIA* 30.1 (WINTER 2015): 268–284.

7. WWW.WHO.INT/TEAMS/NONCOMMUNICABLE-DISEASES/SENSORY-FUNCTIONS-DISABILITY-AND-REHABILITATION/WORLD-REPORT-ON-DISABILITY

8. JEREMY DAUBER, *AMERICAN COMICS* (NORTON, 2021) AND JARED GARDNER, *COMICS AND THE HISTORY OF TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY STORYTELLING* (STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2012). 9.

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ON INCLUSIVE POLITICS

SUSAN SMULYAN WRITES, " COLLABORATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE NEED TO BE AT THE CENTER" OF ALL PUBLIC HUMANITIES ENDEAVORS.[9]

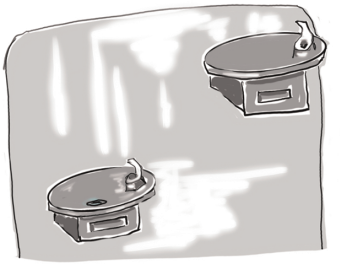
THIS COMIC IS INSPIRED BY THE POLITICS OF INCLUSION!

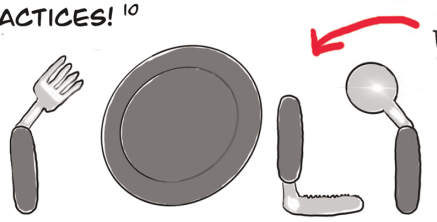
9. "WHY PUBLIC HUMANITIES?" *DAEDALUS* 151.3 (2022): 124.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IS ALSO CENTRAL TO DISABILITY POLITICS THAT SEEK MORE THAN LEGALLY-MANDATED REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION...

...TAKING THE CHALLENGE OF INCLUDING DISABLED BODYMINDS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETHINK ENVIRONMENTS, PRODUCTS, AND CULTURAL PRACTICES![10]

Separate water fountains are ADA-compliant, but they have a notorious history...





Fork Cutlery set by Hop Design Studio in Sydney, Australia can be custom 3D printed for individual users

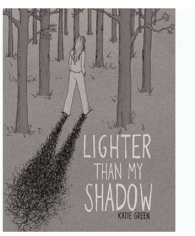
10. FOR MORE SEE SARA HENDREN, *WHAT CAN A BODY DO? HOW WE MEET THE BUILT WORLD* (NEW YORK, PENGUIN, 2020).

COMICS HAVE NO INHERENT POLITICS, BUT CAN BE READILY ADAPTED TO THE POLITICS OF INCLUSION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE![11]





Some of my favorites!



11. HILLARY CHUTE, *WHY COMICS?* (HARPER COLLIN'S, 2017); FREDERIK BYRN KOHLERT, "COMICS, FORM, AND ANARCHY," *SUBSTANCE* 46.2 (2017(: 11–32; QIANA WHITTED, *EC COMICS: RACE, SHOCK, AND SOCIAL PROTEST* (RUTGERS UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2019).

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SO WHAT'S TO BE LEARNED FROM THIS INTERSECTION OF PUBLIC HUMANITIES WITH COMICS AND DISABILITY STUDIES?

I HAVE A FEW IDEAS:

THE HUMANITIES ARE UNIQUELY POSITIONED TO THINK CRITICALLY ABOUT THE FORMS AND ENVIRONMENTS WE CURRENTLY INHABIT, GENERATE IDEAS FOR CHANGE, AND COME UP WITH CREATIVE WAYS TO GET THERE.

1. WE NEED ***FORMS*** THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO DIVERSE BODYMINDS. COMICS IS MY STARTING PLACE, BUT THERE ARE OTHER ARTS AND MEDIA THAT TAKE ACCESS AS AN OCCASION TO ENGAGE MULTIPLE SENSORIA--TACTILE, AUDITORY, GUSTATORY, OLFACTORY--AND NEURODIVERSE COGNITIVE STYLES.

2. WE ALSO NEED ***ENVIRONMENTS*** THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE AND WELCOMING TO VARIED AUDIENCES. DISABILITY INCLUSION CAN BE A STARTING POINT FOR COMMITMENT TO UNIVERSAL ACCESS.

3. ***FORMS*** AND ***ENVIRONMENTS*** BECOME ***POLITICAL*** WHEN WE RECOGNIZE THEM AS ARENAS OF STRUGGLE OVER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.

WE'RE NOT THERE YET! COMMITTING TO INCLUSION--THE VERSION THAT VALUES UNASSIMILABLE DIFFERENCE--IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMAGINE MORE CREATIVE, JUST, AND SUSTAINABLE ALTERNATIVES.

12.

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11. SEE TRICIA HERSEY, *REST IS RESISTANCE: A MANIFESTO* (LITTLE BROWN, 2022).

13.

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THIS ISN'T WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED, BUT I'VE EDITED FOR NARRATIVE EFFECT. IN TRUTH, MY FRIEND, THE DISABILITY STUDIES SCHOLAR JULIA MIELE RODAS, READ A DRAFT OF THIS ESSAY AND POINTED OUT THE PROBLEM. LUCKILY, SHE COULD ALSO DIRECT ME TO SOME WRITING ON THIS VERY TOPIC...

14.

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MY WORK IN DISABILITY STUDIES HAS TAUGHT ME TO TAKE THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESS AS A CHANCE TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW...

I STARTED TO READ UP ON RECENT DISCUSSIONS ABOUT COMICS AND ACCESS FOR BLIND READERS.

IT TURNS OUT THERE ARE NO EASY ANSWERS. AS A VISUAL MEDIUM, COMICS PRESENTS INHERENT OBSTACLES TO READERS WITH LOW VISION. BUT THOSE CHALLENGES ARE ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO THINK CREATIVELY ABOUT ACCESS.



MY SOLUTION WAS TO PROVIDE ALT-TEXT TO DESCRIBE THE IMAGES I HAD CREATED FOR BLIND READERS.

15.

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BY WRITING MY OWN ALT-TEXT, I CAN IDENTIFY THE ASPECTS OF AN IMAGE THAT ARE MOST IMPORTANT TO WHAT I WANT TO COMMUNICATE.



I ALSO ADDED THIS CODA TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE CHALLENGES OF ACCESS TO THE FORM I'VE CHOSEN.

READERS WHO WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ADAPTING COMICS FOR BLIND READERS CAN START WITH THE LIST BELOW.

A FEW SOURCES ON COMICS AND BLIND READERS:

* YUE-TING SIU, NICK SOUSANIS, EMILY BETIKS, AND CHANCEY FLEET, "ACCESSIBLE COMICS FOR BLIND AND LOW VISION READERS," *JOURNAL OF LITERARY & CULTURAL DISABILITY STUDIES*, 18.3 (2024):309-329.

* NICK SOUSANIS AND EMILY BETIKS, "COMICS BEYOND SIGHT: A HIGHLY VISUAL CASE FOR BLIND ACCESS," *MIT TECHNOLOGY REVIEW* JULY/AUGUST 2023.

* RACHEL SARAH OSOLEN AND LEAH BROCHU, "CREATING AN AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE: A STUDY IN COMIC BOOKS, ACCESSIBILITY, AND THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED READER," *THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INFORMATION, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION* 4.1 (JANUARY 2020).

16.

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IN THE SPIRIT OF INCLUSION...



art by Henry

THIS COMIC IS DEDICATED TO MY SON, HENRY, WHOSE UNUSUAL HABITS OF BODY AND MIND INSPIRE MY THINKING ABOUT DISABILITY JUSTICE

RACHEL ADAMS



17.

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THANKS TO JULIA MIELE RODAS, VICTORIA ROSNER, SUSAN SQUIER, AND JEFF WILSON FOR HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT WHILE WRITING THIS COMIC.

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