

Visual Narratives of Survival: Analysing Gender Violence in Contemporary Graphic Novels

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This paper examines two graphic novels by women writers, *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi and *Becoming Unbecoming* by Una, which both address systematic violence against women. *Persepolis* begins during the Islamic Revolution in Iran, when Marjane Satrapi's coming-of-age drama unfolds inside a society that enforces gender segregation and demands the veil as a symbol of women's oppression. As Satrapi navigates the restrictive and often violent forces forming her identity, her graphic novel criticizes the greater gendered violence inherent in Iran's changing political and cultural context. In contrast, Una's *Becoming Unbecoming* concentrates on the psychological and physical abuse perpetrated against women in 1970s England, under the reign of the Yorkshire Ripper. The graphic novel's autobiographical style follows Una's pain and the societal silence around sexual abuse, shifting between personal introspection and the larger cultural background of fear, humiliation, and victim-blaming. This study investigates how Satrapi and Una use the graphic book form to critique and illustrate the prevalence of gender violence. These authors depict female agency and trauma in various ways, using visual symbolism, personal story, and historical context. Through a comparative examination of these works, the paper contends that the graphic novel, as a genre, provides a unique platform for women to face and recount their experiences with violence, giving not just a tool of resistance but also a call to societal change.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, graphic novel, visual narrative, sexual violence.