Annotating *Unflattening* with Snagit

https://www.techsmith.com/snagit.html

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*The lesson was originally published as “Annotating Unflattening” and is reprinted with permission.*

**Step the First**

Thou shalt scan the panel in a "fair use" manner.

Here is the scanned version using a very old program, MP Navigator X 1.0, on my all-in-one Canon MX310, a venerable, crappy, workhorse. Here is the 600 dpi result (black and white photo setting). I also use this simple program to crop the photo as best I can. There are better tools than these but I try to keep as frictionless a workflow as I can manage. Part of that low friction philosophy is to use what ya got and find what works best for your unique environment. YMMV.
Step the Second

Stop using fake, high-toned language.

Step Three

Import into SnagIt or some other useful image manipulation tool. I like SnagIt because it is easy to use and easy to export from the desktop to Google Drive and elsewhere. I scan, crop, and save the image into a jpg version of the original scanned version saved as a png. This is not technically necessary, but SnagIt default saves everything as a png. Not enough of an image wonk to know. You tell me. In fact at any point if you want to add to these directions or otherwise improve the workflow knock yourself out by adding a new pad to this page.

Step Four

Pull out some side panels so that you have room to annotate.

I need room to annotate, to stretch outside of the bounds of the panel. SnagIt is really good for doing this as you just grab in the middle of outer edges of the photo and pull things out. Easy. It is hard to see in this image below but there are now two panels. See marked panels below this image.
I have marked the left and right annotation spaces below as well as the tabs for pulling out the space from the picture.

Step Five

Annotate like a person possessed.

Below are some of my annotations for this panel. I chose a very busy panel, but the beauty of Nick's work is that the less busy panels have depths that are also worth annotating. There are lots of marking tools in SnagIt. I suggest the spirit of play in your annotation at first, then become more serious in your close reading. Or better yet, get seriously playful. Below you will find me using various callouts in what I consider to be a first draft annotation. It will be a last draft should I not have sufficient time to carry on. I know there is way more to see in here. I haven't even situated this interlude into context with the opening of Unflattening.
The panes of the cave we are enveloped by our vision. We can only see the shadows on the wall. Those shadows are our homs. This is the end of the floor. We turn from the darkness actually but on the winged light.

Also not a hard task quoting out the story the first line because it translated into the three times of the crock schema blocking another.

Reprinted from Scholarly Voices
http://scholarlyvoices.org/unflattening/mini/annotate-snagit.html
Last updated on 20 April 2015
Photo Credit: Images from Nick Sousanis’ Unflattening (Harvard University Press, 2015)
Step Six

Where you begin to look at the panel from different stances.

I am going to suggest that you use several different approaches to annotating this panel, but these are ways of looking that are my familiars, not necessarily yours. So try mine or try yours, but try more than one way of looking/annotating. As the great Jedi Master Yogi Berra once said, "You can observe a lot by watching."

Method the....OK, I won't do that again.

Method One: The Political Cartoon I suggest that you take the original png with lots of room and begin to look at it from the idea of text, context, subtext, pretext, and intertext. Here is one method; others can be suggested and added later.

Some Political Cartoon Inspired Questions:

1. **Text:** What is here in the text? The words themselves, the images, the situation of the images.

2. **Context:** How does this panel fit with the other both before and after? How do the panels and callouts within the panel fit each other?

3. **Subtext:** What is there outside the panel for situating what is happening in there? Comic allusions, mythic references, contemporary events. If the text is the inside, the subtext is the outside.

4. **Pretext:** Why did Sousanis do this particular panel this particular way?

5. **Intertext:** “No text is an island entire of itself.”
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