



Graphic Novel Study Group  
Study Guides

## ***City of Glass***

**by Paul Auster, Paul Karasik and David Mazzucchelli**

Study guide by Adam Staffaroni

1. What do you think are the most challenging things about adapting a prose novel into a graphic novel? How do Karasik and Mazzucchelli address these unique issues? How and where are they particularly successful or not successful?
2. Perhaps the largest theme running throughout the book is the issue of identity. Explain the trio of Wilson/Quinn/Work and how this is explained through the ventriloquist/dummy/voice example. How does this relate to the trio of meanings for "I"; I, i(nvestigator) and "eye?"
3. Auster continues to touch on issues of identity throughout the book. Examples are in the notebook writings on page 37 and the theological explanation of naming on page 39. Take these examples, or choose an example of your own from the book and explain how the concept of identity is being questioned or challenged.
4. What is the significance of Quinn/Wilson being a mystery writer? How does this directly effect the narrative, and, in a broader sense, how is Auster playing with the genre?
5. In the Ganzfeld interview, Karasik talks about the layout as a jail cell door. How is this structure used symbolically, and how does this structure represent certain aspects of the characters' personalities?
6. Examine the different fonts throughout the book. How are they used and why are they important?
7. Pages 14-23 depict Peter Stillman's monologue to Quinn. How do Karasik and Mazzucchelli turn this monologue into a visually engaging passage? Why do the balloon tails go down Peter's throat and what narrative implications does this have? What impressions do you have about Stillman's manner of speech?
8. Explain the different symbols used in this passage and how they relate to the characters and the narrative.
9. How is the "Tower of Babel" theory supported and/or subverted throughout the course of the novel?
10. Certain names/characters continually reappear throughout the book, specifically Don Quixote and Mookie Wilson. Why are these names important, why do they keep coming up, and how do they relate to the characters?