



Graphic Novel Study Group
Study Guides

Cruddy and One! Hundred! Demons! **by Lynda Barry**

Study guide by Colleen Frakes

1. "One of the most economical means of sketching a character is simply to show the readers a personal space that the character has created"-Janet Burroway. In what ways does Barry make use of this "economical" device in each work? How do her character's surroundings reflect their personality?
2. In *Cruddy*, the main character has two identities- "Clyde", a boy who drinks, smokes, kills with a knife, and is "all Navy", and "Roberta", a self-described ugly, socially awkward girl. In *One! Hundred! Demons!*, one of the demons is "Girlness". Discuss each character's struggle with gender identity and the role that their parent or parents play in it.
3. Authors write about their obsessions. *Cruddy* is written as Roberta's diary, she is the author of her own story. *One! Hundred! Demons!* is written as Barry's fictional autobiography. What are some of Roberta and Barry's obsessions?
4. In *Cruddy* there is so much violence that the flies on dead bodies soon become a character, and often speak for Roberta as an invisible friend might for a child. At what point do they become her friends? At what point do they betray her?
5. The images in *One! Hundred! Demons!* are all rather simply drawn and brightly colored, different than much of Barry's earlier work. Why do you think she chose this style? What, if anything, do you think it adds to the narrative? Is the seriousness of (some) of the stories diminished by the images or the comic book form itself?
6. The illustrations in *Cruddy* are supposed to be taken from Roberta's diary. What, if anything, do you think the illustrations add to the narrative? Why do you think Barry chose to include them? What do they tell you about the main character?
7. Which of the stories/chapters in each of the works do you find most effective? Why?
8. Compare the chapters "Dogs" and "Magic Lantern" in *One! Hundred! Demons!* with Roberta's relationship to the dog, Cookie, and her stuffed monkey, Trina. What are the similarities between Roberta and Lynda's behaviors? What are the differences?
9. In both *Cruddy* and *One! Hundred! Demons!* the narrators make frequent use of flashbacks and the chapters do not follow a linear progression. Is this form of storytelling effective? Why do you think the author chooses to employ it?
10. Did you enjoy the works? Why or why not?