

# NACAE

National Association of Comics Art Educators

## Form and Chaos

Everyone stands in front of a 24 x 36 sheet of newsprint taped to the wall. All the students should have compressed charcoal to draw with.

Draw a really bad car wreck with your eyes closed. Try to use all the paper space. Of course what you come up with will more than likely be a bunch of unique scribbles, which is the point.

1. Move one person to the right. Make a humanoid (head, arms, legs) character out of that drawing.

2. Move one person to the right. Take away something from that character (with supplied erasers), then add something to that character.

3. Sit down and redraw the character made from your original car wreck drawing on a 14 x 17 sheet of paper, using the same compressed charcoal. This way you will not get too caught up in detail. Keep these points in mind: Find the basic, simple shapes to describe the character. Find distinctive features that will make the character unique. Simplify it so that you could redraw it without too much trouble.

4. Put the work up next to the originals.

5. Discuss what has been gained and what has been lost in the transition from the "scribble" character drawing to the more basic character drawing. In many cases, the original character has more unique qualities that make it truly distinctive. The second character drawings are stronger structurally and easier to understand, but tend to look more regularized, streamlined and, well, normal.

The point is to be aware of the surprising shapes, lines and proportions that can occur spontaneously which can make a character more distinctive, but also be aware of making the dimensions of that character understandable, by finding basic shapes within it.