Citation Style for Graphic Narrative Criticism

Inline citation template:

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([Author] [short form of title[,]] [page] [, illustration location]
[[.]frame location])
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Explanatory notes:

- All citations should be based on MLA Citation Style, meaning parenthetical inline citation referring to a Works Cited list. For course journal writing, if the edition used of the cited work is part of the course syllabus, inline citation does not require mention in a Works Cited section. For all other journal citations and for all other critical writing, a Works Cited section is needed.
- Citations for ordinary text should follow MLA Citation Style.
- Citations for whole illustrations on pages that have no other illustrations should use page citations only, e.g., (159) or (Sabin 159).
- Citations for frames within illustrations should be made using a RowNumberColumnLetter notation (like a spreadsheet but with the row number coming first to parallel ordinary English-language reading conventions), e.g., (2C) is second row, third column.
  —Frame citations should be combined with MLA Citation Style and ordinary language when needed, e.g., (Sabin 30.2A) or (Sabin 138, bottom, 1B) or (Sabin 139, top, 35.3B) or (Moore *V*, 50.3B).
  — Within inline citations, author and page numbers should not be separated from each other because separation unnecessarily slows reading.
  —Titles, if used, should be separated from whatever further information may follow in the inline citation in order to avoid confusion arising from the fact that the short form of some titles (e.g., *13: The Story of the World's Most Popular Superstition*) may be numbers only.
  — Frame citations that are not directly joined to a page citation (e.g., Sabin 138, bottom, 1B) should be separated from whatever may precede them in order to avoid confusion arising from the fact that some frame citations (e.g., 2 for all of the second row) are only numbers.
  —Separations within inline citations are made with commas.
  — Frame citations joined to a page citation (e.g., Sabin 30.2A) should be joined to the page citation with a period in order to expedite reading.
  —In making inline citations, no more options should be used than the minimum necessary to precisely identify the material cited within the citation context. Thus "Sabin writes (90) that American women were the last demographic group to get their own comic books" and "One historian notes that American women were the last demographic group to get their own comic books (Sabin 90)" are both correct but "Sabin writes (Sabin 90) that American women were the last demographic group to get their own comic books" is incorrect because it carries an unnecessary citation of the author's last name.
  —Inline citations should always be made parenthetically.
  —In the template that follows, square brackets are used to indicate options but the brackets themselves should not be included in an actual citation.

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  ([Author] [short form of title[,]] [page] [, illustration location]
  [[.]frame location]).
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  —The inline citation to (Sabin 139, top, 35.3B) indicates the single book by Sabin in the Works Cited list or on the course syllabus. 139 indicates the page in Sabin. The first comma separates the page citation from the following information. Top indicates that there is more than one illustration on Sabin 139 and this citation is to the top illustration. 35 indicates that the top illustration shows visibly paginated material and that this citation is to the page 35 section in that top illustration. The period joins the location of the illustration on the cited page to the frame cited within the cited illustration. 3B indicates that this frame is in the third row, second column position of that illustration. (For checking, note that the cited frame [in Sabin, Roger. *Comics, Comix & Graphic Novels*. New York: Phaidon, 1996] shows a Gothic arch.) (Moore *V*, 50.3B) cites a work with Moore as an author. *V* indicates that there is more than one work in the Works Cited list or on the syllabus with Moore as an author and that this citation is to one for which *V* is a shortened form of the title. The comma separates the work from the page citation. 50 indicates the page number. The period joins the frame citation to the page citation. 3B indicates that the cited frame is in the third row, second column. (For checking, note that this citation [to Moore, Alan and David Lloyd. *V for Vendetta*. New York: DC Comics, 1989] is to the book publication of the same frame as that referenced in the Sabin citation just above.)
- Standard terms for illustration location on a page are *top*, *right*, *bottom*, *left*, and *center* and combinations of them (e.g., *center-right*) but such terms should be used only when RowNumberColumnLetter notation is unclear because unneeded location words slow down reading.
- For works using a two-page compositional format (that is, using a so called spread as the information space), if they are paginated, use page numbers whenever needed in inline citations. If they are unpaginated, identify the page as well as possible (e.g., front endpapers) and use right-hand or left-hand to indicate the actual page. If the cited graphic crosses the spine, list both page numbers when the text is paginated, indicate location with ordinary language when not (e.g., crossing spine at center of spread).
- To paginate unpaginated works, remember that all right-hand pages take odd numbers. Thus, the left-hand front endpaper can be assigned 0 and the rest of the pages numbered consecutively thereafter. If the endpapers are blank, one may choose to start with another page, e.g., the title page as 1. A footnote should explain the page numbering system assigned.