

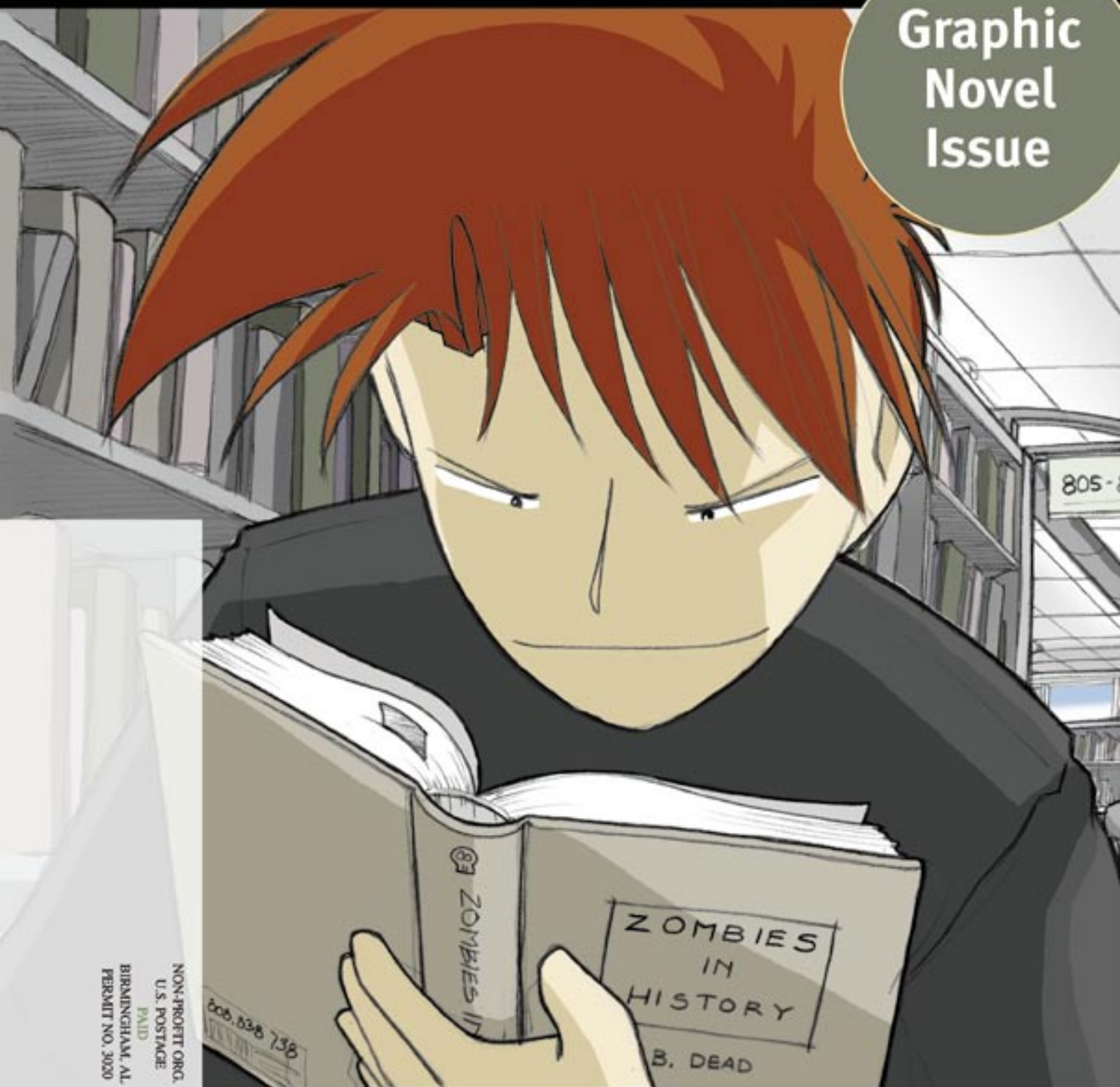
# YOUNG ADULT

## LIBRARY SERVICES

The official journal of  
the Young Adult Library  
Services Association

Volume 3  
Number 4  
Summer 2005  
ISSN 1541-4302

Graphic  
Novel  
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The other day, I was in my teen room sitting at the service desk. A young woman entered, cautiously looking around trying to scope out something specific. Sadly, she turned and was about to leave when I asked if I could help. She looked down and mumbled something about manga. I walked her over to the graphic novel section (kept only in the teen room) and asked if this was what she was interested in. Well, it was as if the sun suddenly rose in the sky, complete with birds singing and flowers blooming. She turned to me and as if in a wonderful dream, she whispered, "Oh, yes!" She spent about thirty minutes or so perusing our collection and finally decided on about twenty manga and anime titles. I have never seen a more contented look in a teen's face than that young girl's when she left. It brought to mind my recollections of adolescence. Having a crush on Scotty from *Star Trek* (the original series), wearing dresses made from paper (a fad that didn't last too long!), and watching and listening to the Beatles (Paul was my favorite at the time) have been indelibly etched in my brain. And reading comics such as Archie, Superman, and the Fantastic Four (I really liked and connected to the Thing). It's interesting to note that that young woman and I will share a common memory—reading comics.



As you peruse the many and fascinating articles on graphic novels and their rise in popularity, think back to what you might have read as a 'tween. I think that we all can connect to that moment in time when our visual landscapes included precursors of graphic novels. And that is our bridge to our teen clientele. From traditional comics to specialized manga titles, the wealth of graphic novels in many forms is a constant for today's youth. And it seems that, as quirky as this may sound, graphic novels seem to embody the basic elements of YALSA's strategic plan—advocacy, marketing, and research. Advocacy—because librarians purchase and defend their place on the stacks. Marketing—many librarians plan programs and lesson plans around anime and manga. Research—public and school staff formulate questions for their teen clientele and students in an effort to find out what kind of graphic novels they want.

This issue is devoted to the graphic novel—in all of its varieties, as well as two new columns: Perspectives on YA Practice by Mary K. Chelton and a research column by YALSA's Research Committee.

I hope you have enjoyed the beginning voyage we have undertaken together in establishing YALS as the official journal of YALSA. I have enjoyed my editorship immensely. But as of this issue, I will take my leave and let another capable captain steer the ship into exciting new areas of YA librarianship. Thank you all for your support and friendship throughout my tenure. I look forward to seeing everyone at Annual Conference as well as working with our talented members on new projects and activities.

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(performing referee duties and providing advisory input for the journal)

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## Statement of Purpose

*Young Adult Library Services* is the official journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association. YALS primarily serves as a vehicle for continuing education for librarians serving young adults, ages 12 through 18. It will include articles of current interest to the profession, act as a showcase for best practices, provide news from related fields, and will spotlight significant events of the organization and offer in-depth reviews of professional literature. YALS will also serve as the official record of the organization.

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# Perspectives on YA Practice

## Common YA Models of Service in Public Libraries: Advantages and Disadvantages

Mary K. Chelton

It would be wonderful to have a separate YA space and a YA librarian, but we haven't the space or the personnel budget. And so we function in the library that we have, rather than the library that we would like to have . . . —Recent post on YALSA-BK

**H**aving worked at a variety of levels in several individual libraries and library systems, I have come to the conclusion that there is no one perfect way to deliver services to the young adult group in public libraries, only options to be chosen on the basis of a specific library's service provision history; the library's size in terms of budget, staff, or user visits; the staff's attitude toward service, particularly YA services; and the library director's susceptibility to local or national trends. Obviously the library's mission, local young adults' preferences, and national guidelines such as YALSA's *Young Adults*

*Deserve the Best* should influence the choices, but they often only come into play later when initial choices are reexamined or reconfigured.<sup>1</sup> For this article, "service model" refers to the unique local configuration of staff, position titles, service delivery area, collection, and services set up for young adults.

I don't expect to solve arguments over the choices here, only to make the pros and cons evident so the choices can be better informed. I find the current intense interest in YA space planning fascinating because I rarely see any attention to service model choices in those articles or pictures; yet, it would seem logical that the service model adopted should naturally influence planning for teen spaces. Basically, the choices among various service models need to address three questions: (1) What kind of staff will do the work in what organizational category? (2) What kind of services will be offered? (3) Assuming that reading promotion and adolescent literacy are among the services offered, what kind of collection are you developing, and where and how will it be housed or accessed?

### Staff

When service models were last surveyed nationally, position titles of librarians serving youth were distributed among the categories and percentages shown in table 1.<sup>2</sup>

This distribution is very similar to the same survey conducted in 1988; however, it should be noted that more than half of the libraries responding to the survey had only one or two librarians on staff. Eleven percent of all public libraries had the specific young adult specialist

title, which, in turn, was related to the size of those libraries as measured by the number of patrons per week. The largest libraries, those with one thousand or more patrons a week, in other words, had specialist YA positions, but most public libraries are not large, and the lack of a YA specialist position is more normal than not. Unfortunately, while there have been more recent surveys, there has been nothing specific enough in its breakdown of position titles to see if anything has changed since 1988. This distribution of position titles may still be the same, and whether it should be considered ideal in terms of the goals of YA services overall, or just inevitable because of library size, is debatable. If one assumes, however, that this distribution is stable, it is obvious that some choices should be what to call and where to place the librarian most responsible for YA services, and how that person's time should be allocated among various service activities, such as planning and budgeting; collection development and promotion; direct service to teens and parents; services promotion; outreach to schools, community youth workers, and youth-serving organizations; and professional development. If the person's time is split among age groups or functions—for example, reference and YA, or audiovisual services and YA, or youth services for both children and adolescents—time allocation will have to be even more finely planned. In the absence of such planning, the designated person can become the public library analog to a substitute in schools, pulled onto some other service desk or activity whenever there is a position vacancy emergency or a perceived need.

Table 2 summarizes some pros and cons of various staffing configuration

**Mary K. Chelton**, a cofounder of VOYA, is a professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, Queens College, City University of New York. Her dissertation on YA services is entitled *Adult-Adolescent Service Encounters: The Library Context* (1997). She is the editor of three editions of *Excellence in Library Services for Young Adults* for the Young Adult Library Services Association of ALA. Among her many articles on library and YA Services is "The Problem Patron That Public Libraries Created: The Normal Adolescent," *The Reference Librarian*, nos. 75 and 76 (June 2002): 23–33.

choices.<sup>3</sup> The implications of what the YA-serving librarian is called have most to do with the degree of focused attention on the primary young adult clientele, the depth of professional knowledge about this clientele, and the time allocated toward various other clienteles or activities. If the distributions of the 1994 national survey are still true, this may well be a discussion needed in all public libraries because specialized YA positions are so rare and are related to library size, but it is a discussion that should be informed and part of YA services planning.

## Space

### Service Desk

A succession of YA space planning models have appeared in the column "YA Spaces of Your Dreams" in *Voice of Youth Advocates* for several years now, and *Teen Spaces: The Step-by-Step Library Makeover* by Kimberly Bolan Taney is available from ALA Editions for help in planning. One of the issues I rarely see covered in any depth, though, is the configuration of the service desk. A desk is important because it symbolizes the place where service may be expected on site. Table 3 gives a list of pros and cons for different desk configurations common in public libraries.

None of the cons of these desk configurations are inevitable, given good administrative oversight, training, interpersonal communication, and respect among staff, but they are common.

### Collection

The access-versus-ownership debate about information materials, with all its attendant problems, such as which format and whether to purchase materials or access them on the Web, applies to the information-seeking collection in YA services too. Licensed, full-text online databases accessible in the library or at home are obviously preferable to young adults than print resources for imposed school-related queries. It is not accidental that Teen Central (TC) in the Phoenix Public Library has twenty com-

puter terminals exclusively for users of that space and links to those resources on the TC Web site.<sup>4</sup> While the evaluation, licensing, and management of online databases is an ongoing decision-making and budgeting issue in terms of public service space, it also means space planning for terminals in the library and for off-site access policies.

The physical, more personal interest collection may present problems because of the way it is acquired and housed. Current wisdom would suggest buying as many graphic novels, paperbacks, and

magazines and displaying them face-out to maximize cover appeal, given their enormous popularity with teenagers. Even if there is a separate YA specialist and department, though, problems can arise such as those discussed regularly on GNLIB-L concerning where to place potentially controversial graphic novels within the library to avoid political problems.<sup>5</sup> If the YA-serving librarian is part of a Youth Services Department encompassing young children, nobody will be happy intershelving real YA-interest titles. Intershelving can lead to

**Table 1. Percentage by Position Title In Public Libraries, 1994**

% Public Service Librarian	% Children's Librarian	% Young Adult Librarian	% Youth Services Librarian
25	40	11	24

**Table 2. Models of Service for Young Adults by Organizational Departmentalization: Pros and Cons**

Models	Pros	Cons
Separate position/department.	<p>Better ability to focus on primary clientele.</p> <p>Better advocacy for primary clientele.</p> <p>More intervention and interpersonal concern for YAs.</p> <p>Better understanding of YA interests and materials.</p>	<p>Marginalization from other staff.</p> <p>Stigma of clientele attached.</p> <p>No responsibility for YAs taken in other departments.</p> <p>Less interest in reference, especially information literacy instruction.</p>
Part of Youth Services	<p>Developmental cohesion and flexibility.</p> <p>More intervention and interpersonal concern for YAs.</p> <p>Better understanding of YA interests and materials.</p>	<p>Marginalization from other staff.</p> <p>Stigma of clientele attached.</p> <p>No responsibility for YAs taken in other departments.</p> <p>Less interest in reference, especially information literacy instruction.</p> <p>Time split with young children.</p>
Part of Adult Services	<p>More status.</p> <p>More interest in reference.</p>	<p>Ignorance of YA interests and materials.</p> <p>Competition with children's over YA materials.</p> <p>Loss of interpersonal emphasis.</p> <p>Competition with other adult services priorities.</p>

libraries with Junior High collections in the children's or youth services space and YA collections outside that space, a distinction that may well be lost on the public regardless of the controversies the librarians feel they are avoiding.

The pros and cons of various collection housing configurations appears in table 4.

Interfiling YA-interest titles in the adult collection can render them invisible to the public and staff unless there is a major readers advisory effort to list, display, and booktalk these titles. Some public libraries avoid this by having a separate YA collection, usually limited to fiction, even though they do not have a separate specialist staff. Without attention though, such collections quickly become unattended organizational anomalies, and all the research on boys and reading and their attraction to nonfiction makes this approach extremely discriminatory and feminized.<sup>6</sup>

Ideally there would be a lively separate popular interest multimedia collection for young adults, but many public libraries do not have money for heavy duplication, they are print-biased by tradition, or they only budget by format rather than audience, so that the persons in charge of buying audio books or magazines may not be those buying paperbacks and graphic novels. This way of purchasing leads to philosophical and coordination problems about who should get what, when, and under whose authority.

## Conclusion

None of these service models makes good services for young adults insurmountable, given leadership, patience, and communication, although some simply may not be affordable. They do imply choices that may not be immediately visible, however, so this article has been just a small attempt to make the effects of such choices visible. No choice has to be irrevocable, though, and the variety of models available offers many possibilities if chosen wisely with the interests of young adults as the main objective. The comfort of individual library staff and a particular library's

**Table 3. Models of Service by Service Desk Configuration: Pros and Cons**

Models	Pros	Cons
Separate age-level service desk	Better focus and attention on primary clientele.  More consistent service expertises.	YA users bounced from desk to desk with bad referrals.  Understaffing to cover other desks.  Marginalization from other staff.
Single service desk/library with specialists on staff	Everyone expected to serve all age groups.  Acknowledged in-house expertise of specialists available.  Better interaction with rest of public service staff.	Specialist often drawn away from helping YAs to help other ages and needs.  Non-YA specialists have no incentive to learn about YA needs and interests.  Resistance from colleagues to specialist advice.  Less consistent service expertise.
Single service desk/library with only generalists on staff	Everyone expected to serve all age groups	Specialty knowledge only gained by personal preference in absence of other incentives.  Young adults may not be the age group given priority.  Less consistent service expertise.

**Table 4. Pros and Cons of Various Print Collection Housing Options**

Models	Pros	Cons
Interfiled in youth services	Near designated service specialist.  Takes wide developmental range of early adolescents into account.	Political problems because of accessibility by young children.  Purchasing authority and budgets may need excessive coordination.
Interfiled in adult	Fewer political problems because of location.  Easily available to others as well as to YAs.	Materials become invisible if not promoted outside housing.  Purchasing authority and budgets may need excessive coordination.
Separate young adult with specialist	Focused on interests of YAs.	Cost of duplication, if any.  Political problems if controversial materials included.

history of how things are done should always take a back seat to the information needs of young adults. One thing we do know, though, is that when libraries do dedicate resources, staff

in particular, toward young adults, as many big city libraries such as those in Houston, Salt Lake City, Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati have recently

**continued on page 11**



# The Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant

## Planting, Nurturing, and Growing the Field of Young Adult Research

Bridgid Fennell

Library service to teens is a flourishing organic movement sprouting up in libraries across the country. Research on teens and library use enriches the scholarship of the profession and reinforces the critical need for young adult services. The Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant enables YALSA members to engage in action research and formulate new models of service to teens.

The teen population in the United States is experiencing a boom. As public and school libraries respond with emerging and evolving service plans, the research into the information needs and use patterns of teens guides planning. Regrettably, teens continue to be overlooked by most library systems, and many school districts weaken media centers and library instruction due to cost-cutting measures. Carol Doll, past recipient of the Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant, reinforces the necessity for research in this field. "Young adult services in libraries have not received the respect they deserve. There is an acceptance of the need and value of children's library services, but the same is not true for young adult services. Research is one way to document the value of those services."<sup>1</sup> Better understanding of contemporary teens and their relationship with libraries informs best practices and sets benchmarks for quality service. Furthermore, research identifies deficiencies and suggests remedies, demonstrating the need for increased support through funding and specialized staffing. Our colleagues, administrators,

community, deans, and other funding providers are reminded of the necessity of teen services by a comprehensive body of literature. Lastly, research stimulates dialogue within the profession and poses new questions, challenges assumptions, and illuminates new directions.

### The Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant: Planting the Seed

Scholars have experienced challenges finding funding and interest for their work in youth services among general library scholars. In her early foray into academia, Mary K. Chelton lamented, "We need to buy ourselves an academic if we want anything done."<sup>2</sup> Dorothy Broderick, with whom she cofounded VOYA, suggested the creation of a modest research grant "to give seed money for small projects."<sup>3</sup> The Young Adult Services Division (YASD) was approached to administer the grant of five hundred dollars, and in 1982 the YASD board approved the grant and requested of the YASD Research Committee to design application criteria and administer the grant.<sup>4</sup> The Research Committee defined the purpose of the grant "to provide seed money for small scale projects which will encourage significant research that will have an influence on library service to young adults."<sup>5</sup> YASD membership was an eligibility requirement, and the grant was originally available only to qualified researchers. Consequently, the early recipients were library scholars. However, practitioners soon took advantage of the

grant, and in 1998 the guidelines were revised to include student members conducting research leading to a degree.<sup>6</sup> Following the death of Frances Henne, a leading scholar of youth library services, Dorothy Broderick lobbied the YASD board to rename the grant in her honor at the 1986 Midwinter Meeting.<sup>7</sup>

### Befitting Tribute to Henne

A native of Springfield, Illinois, Frances Henne (1906–1985) earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in English at the University of Illinois in 1929 and 1936, respectively. Henne's relationship with Columbia University began in 1935 when she enrolled in the bachelor's program in librarianship. She was an instructor and school librarian at the New York State College for Teachers from 1937 to 1939 but returned to Illinois when she became an instructor at the University of Chicago Graduate Library School (GLS) and head of the University High School Library. She was an assistant professor from 1946–1950 and the acting dean from 1951–1952. Her legacy to GLS included being the first woman faculty member and founding the Center for Children's Books and *The Bulletin*, a review journal for children's and young adult materials. It was during this

**Bridgid Fennell** has been the teen and reference librarian at the Glendale Public Library in Southern California since Fall 2003. She is currently a member of the YALSA Research and YALSA Selected DVDs and Videos committees, and an SUS Trainer.

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period that Henne co-authored with Ruth Ersted and Alice Lohrer *A Planning Guide for the High School Library Program*, a document that outlined the need for planning and evaluation of services and materials in the school library.<sup>8</sup>

In 1954, Henne returned to New York and joined the faculty of Columbia

University. Her work *Standards for School Library Programs*, published in 1960 by ALA, advocated for the restructuring of school media programs to student-centered facilities that attended to the learning needs of individuals.<sup>9</sup> Henne was awarded the Lippincott Award for this seminal work in 1963.

She continued to lead the development of school library guidelines for the next twenty-five years and lectured on children's and young adult services at Columbia until 1975 when she retired as professor emeritus.

### Research Taking Root

VOYA and YALSA pay no better tribute to Henne than sponsoring research projects in her honor. The Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant recipients probe young adult services with an array of research questions and topics, and their findings are often reported in *Young Adult Library Services* (formerly the *Journal of Youth Services*). These research projects challenge assumptions of teen library use and break the mold of traditional library services. Indeed, some of the grant recipients have reported findings in articles that have grown into fundamental works of the profession (see figure 1).

The grant money has funded research ingenuity by supporting data analysis, travel expenses, materials support, and employing youth participation in the research process.

### Future Directions

YALSA members are encouraged to apply for the Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant to conduct and share their own action research. The deadline for proposals for the next grant cycle is December 1, 2005, and the winner will be selected at Midwinter 2006. Currently funds of up to five hundred dollars support the winning research proposal. Interested applicants should refer to the grant website for application procedures at [www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/awardsandgrants/franceshenne.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/awardsandgrants/franceshenne.htm).

In the growing field of research of young adult library services, many questions remain unanswered. The *YALSA Research Agenda* identifies access, demographics, evaluation, information seeking, interdisciplinary issues, technology and history as key areas of young adult research.<sup>10</sup> Some possible research agendas might include:

- 1985 Shirley Fitzgibbons—"An Investigation of Reference and Information Service for Young Adults and Children in Public Libraries"
- 1987 Patsy Perritt—"An Investigation to Learn Information Sources of Pregnant Teens before They became Pregnant"
- 1990 Lesley Farmer—"Research Strategies of Young Adults"  
Marilyn K. Maynard—ILLINET (Illinois School Library Media Association) Project Survey
- 1992 Joan Lynn Atkinson—"Censorship in Young Adult Fiction"
- 1994 Kathy Latrobe and W. Michael Havener—"Information Seeking Behavior of High School Honors Students"
- 1996 Evie Wilson-Lingbloom, Carol Doll and Barbara Carmody—"Storytelling Teenage Folklore, an experiment in building self-esteem with American oral-tradition"
- 1999 Sheila Anderson and John Bradford—"State-Level Commitment to Young Adult Services"
- 2000 K. Bishop and Patricia K. Bauer—"Attracting Young Adults to Public Libraries"
- 2001 Patrick Jones—"Buyer Beware: Investigating the Quality of Customer Service to Young Adults in a Major Urban Public Library"
- 2002 Teri Lesesne—"Project H.E.A.R: Help Encourage At-Risk Readers"
- 2003 Kelley McDaniel—"Giving Them What They Want: A Browser-Friendly Fiction Collection Organized by Genre"
- 2004 Amy Alessio and Nick Buron—"Measuring the Impact of New and Long Term Young Adult Services"

Figure 1. Grant Recipients

- developing models to evaluate outcomes-based services and highlighting successful programs;
- evaluating how various factors such as library and information studies master's programs, current events, societal attitudes, and local communities impact the ethics and practices of young adult library services;
- surveying young adult spaces that are developmentally sensitive to teens' needs;
- understanding how emerging technologies such as the Internet, virtual chat reference, and personal computing devices impact YA library services;
- evaluating the impact of youth participation in the cultivation of library services and youth development;
- documenting the history of young adult services;
- exploring diversity issues and young adult library services; and
- looking at how youth consumer culture and marketing informs the design and promotion of library services to teens.

What are your professional questions, and what ideas and findings can

you contribute to the field? How can the Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant support your inquiries into teens and library use? ●

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# Research Resources for Librarians

## Research Committee Column

Jami L. Jones

For many, it seems so arduous. We wonder if the Herculean effort necessary to pull off a good research study is worth it. You bet it is! Whether you are conducting it, reading about it, or applying its findings, research is an exciting way to invigorate your career while making a substantial contribution to the profession. It's an excellent way to improve library service for the patrons we cherish—children and young adults. The resources listed below will help librarians begin this journey.

### General Research Resources

The books in this section provide an overview of the research process, which includes identifying a researchable question, conducting a literature search, designing a research project and selecting a methodology, gathering data, analyzing results, and publishing findings.

Johnson, Burke, and Larry Christensen. *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Approaches*. 2nd ed. Boston: Pearson, 2004.

McEwan, Elaine E., and Patrick J. McEwan. *Making Sense of Research: What's Good, What's Not, and How To Tell the Difference*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin, 2003.

Mertler, Craig A., and C. M. Charles. *Introduction to Educational Research*. 5th ed. Boston: Pearson, 2005.

O'Leary, Zina. *The Essential Guide To Doing Research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004.

Powell, Ronald R., and Lynn Silipigni Connaway. *Basic Research Methods For Librarians*. 4th ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004.

Sanders, Susan. *How to Do Research in Your School*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2006.

Walliman, Nicholas S. R. *Your Research Project: A Step-by-Step Guide for the First-Time Researcher*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2005.

### The Literature Review

The literature review, an important part of the research process, helps the researcher understand the problem by learning how others have tried to answer similar research questions.

Fink, Arlene. *Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004.

Onwuegbuzie, Anthony, Qun G. Jiao, and Sharon L. Bostick. *Library Anxiety: Theory, Research, and Applications*. Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 2004.

### Writing the Proposal

A well-written proposal helps to articulate the research problem, its significance, and the research design. A research proposal is required to apply for the Frances Henne/YALSA/VOYA Research Grant, which provides funds to conduct research pertaining to young adult library services. To learn more about YALSA's research

agenda, go to [www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/awardsandgrants/franceshennne.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/awardsandgrants/franceshennne.htm).

Wong, Paul T. P. "How to Write a Research Proposal." [www.meaning.ca/articles/writing\\_research\\_proposal\\_may02.htm](http://www.meaning.ca/articles/writing_research_proposal_may02.htm).

### Research Design

The books in this section describe research designs that are quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research relies on the collection of numerical data, which is statistically analyzed. Qualitative research relies primarily on the collection of narrative data, which is analyzed verbally. Some research designs that combine the two are called mixed research methods. Action research is especially beneficial because it allows librarians to utilize research methods to reflect on and solve problems in their settings and communities.

Coghlan, David, and Teresa Brannick. *Doing Action Research in Your Own Organization*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge, 2004.

Coolidge, Frederick L. *Statistics: A Gentle Introduction*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2000.

Cox, James. *Your Opinion, Please! How To Build the Best Questionnaires in the Field of Education*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Corwin, 1996.

Czaja, Ron, and Johnny Blair. *Designing Surveys: A Guide to Decisions and Procedures*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2004.

Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln, editors. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2003.

Farmer, Lesley. *How to Conduct Action Research: A Guide for Library Media Specialists*. Chicago: ALA, 2003.

**Jami L. Jones** is assistant professor, Department of Library Science and Instructional Technology, East Carolina University, Greenville, N.C. Her interests are in the area of resiliency and ways libraries can strengthen youth. Jones is a member of YALSA's Research Committee.

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Yin, Robert K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 3d ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2003.

## Publishing Findings

Once research has been conducted, an important step is to make sure others know your findings. One of the best vehicles to do this is to write an article to be published in a professional journal. Below are resources and journals to consider.

*School Libraries Worldwide* at [www.iasl-slo.org/slw.html#information](http://www.iasl-slo.org/slw.html#information) is the official professional and research journal of the International Association of School Librarianship.

*School Library Media Research* at [www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsand-journals/slmrb/schoollibrary.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsand-journals/slmrb/schoollibrary.htm) is the research journal of the American Association of School Librarians.

*Knowledge Quest* at [www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/kqweb/aboutkq/aboutkq.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslpubsandjournals/kqweb/aboutkq/aboutkq.htm) is devoted to offering substantive information to assist building-level library media specialists, supervisors, educators, and other

decision makers concerned with the development of school library media programs and services.

*Voice of Youth Advocates* at [www.voya.com](http://www.voya.com) addresses topics of interest for librarians, educators, and other professionals who work with young adults.

*Public Libraries* at [www.ala.org/ala/pla/plapubs/publiclibraries/publiclibraries.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/pla/plapubs/publiclibraries/publiclibraries.htm) is the official journal of the Public Library Association. A priority objective is to report on the findings of applied research useful to library management and staff.

*Young Adult Library Services* at [www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsapubs/yals/youngadulthoodlibrary.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/yalsapubs/yals/youngadulthoodlibrary.htm) is the official journal of the Young Adult Library Services Association and presents best practices and current scholarly research relating to young adult library services.

*Children and Libraries* at [www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alscpubs/childrenlib/childrenlibraries.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/alsc/alscpubs/childrenlib/childrenlibraries.htm) is the official journal of the Association of Library Services to Children and presents current scholarly research pertaining to library service to children. ●

## continued from page 6

done, it works. Making YA work is the point of doing any of this, after all. ●

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# Bone and Scholastic Graphix

## An Interview with Jeff Smith and Jean Feiwel (with John Mason)

Katharine Kan

**S**cholastic's new imprint, Graphix, is publishing graphic novels for ages eight through eighteen, and their very first title is a full-color version of *Bone* by Jeff Smith. *Bone* #1: *Out from Boneville* was published in February 2005, and they are planning to release the subsequent volumes every six months. *Bone* #2: *The Great Cow Race* will be published in August 2005. I had the opportunity to speak with Jeff Smith, the creator of *Bone*, and Jean Feiwel, senior vice president and editor-in-chief of Scholastic, in a conference call, about *Bone* and Graphix.

Jeff had first published *Bone* with his own company Cartoon Books. The story first appeared in comic book form, and took fifty-five issues to tell the complete story. He collected them into nine volumes of trade paperbacks (and some hardcovers), then last year published a compendium volume of more than thirteen hundred pages—both in trade paperback and in a collector's edition hardcover. Except for a few issues in *Disney Adventure* magazine, which serialized the first few issues of the story, *Bone* has always been in black and white, until the Graphix editions, which are in full color. Jeff took twelve years to write the complete series of *Bone*. If there's

**Kat Kan** has been an avid reader since she was four years old. She worked in public libraries in Hawaii and Indiana as a children's librarian and as a young adult librarian for almost twenty years. Now she uses her experience and (sometimes obscure) knowledge as a freelance book selector and writer, specializing in YA literature and graphic novels.

anyone reading this who still doesn't know what *Bone* is, it's an epic adventure of three cousins who get lost in a lush valley that is threatened by a sinister hooded figure aided by a horde of huge rat creatures; it's been described as *Pogo* meets *The Lord of the Rings*, which is quite apt. Jeff has said that *Bone* stands alone, and there will be no sequels. He has collaborated with a couple of different creators to write books set in the world of *Bone*.

**Kat:** You've done *Stupid, Stupid Rat Tails* with Tom Sniegowski as the writer, and *Rose* with Charles Vess as the illustrator. Do you anticipate doing any more collaborations with other creators for *Bone* stories?

**Jeff:** I worked with these two because I wanted to work with them. I'd do another if I find someone I really want to work with. I'm thinking of maybe doing another *Rose* story with Charles.

**Kat:** Jeff and Jean, in your 2004 Comic-Con discussion panel, you mentioned there would be additional scenes in the Graphix editions of *Bone*. Many libraries already own the Cartoon Books editions. Should they feel the need to purchase the Graphix editions in order to get these additional pages of story?

**Jeff and Jean:** [Both] Yes! [laughter]

**Jeff:** Once I finished the story and started to talk with Jean about the new editions, I had the chance to read everything straight through. I saw ways to make it a stronger, more linear story. It won't be significantly different from the Cartoon Books editions, but there are at least one

hundred fifty pages that are different, and a number of other smaller changes. Also, the color makes it very different.

**Jean:** We're introducing the story to a new audience who may never have heard of *Bone* before.

**Jeff:** Also, some people will only buy color comics. At one of my signings, a man came up. He had refused to buy *Bone* in black and white, but he bought the color volume, had me sign it, and said he couldn't wait to get home and read it.

**Kat:** Jeff, in the interview you did with *Publishers Weekly*, you said that you didn't set out to write *Bone* for children. Who was the audience in your mind while you were writing it?

**Jeff:** First answer, I was just writing for myself. The second answer: When I was nine, I wanted to read a really long comic book story; I wanted Uncle Scrooge and Donald Duck in a *Moby Dick*-type long story, but there weren't any. The book as it exists now, at thirteen hundred pages, is what I wanted to read at age nine.

**Jean:** Some of the best books for children weren't originally written for children.

**Kat:** My sons both discovered *Bone* when they were about ten years old, and they each fell in love with the story. My own thoughts are that ten is about the perfect age to begin to appreciate *Bone*.

**Jeff:** Ten is the perfect age. Actually, at a lot of my signings predating Scholastic, I would see families bringing in their five-year-olds and seven-year-olds, and they loved the books. One seven-year-old had

the thirteen-hundred-page one-volume book, and he'd read it twice!

*Jean:* Ten is the sweet spot, the age of more independent readers. Our series mostly start for age ten. The ten-year-old in all of us loves books and movies like *Harry Potter*, *Star Wars*, and *Bone*. If a book or movie can appeal to ten-year-olds, it has broad appeal and will be a hit.

*Jeff:* Librarians caught me off-guard when I noticed they were supporting graphic novels. Vijaya [Jeff's wife and business partner] and I tried several years ago to get *Bone* into bookstores and distributors with no luck—they didn't want graphic novels. Then, a couple of years ago Ingram called and said librarians were asking them to get *Bone*, because kids were going into libraries and asking for it. A couple of years ago, I spoke at a YALSA preconference ["Get Graphic @ your library®," 2002] with Art Spiegelman, Neil Gaiman, and Colleen Doran. We were prepared to pitch comics, but the librarians were way ahead of us. They told us that circulation was going down, but circulation of graphic novels was up 300 percent.

*Jean:* Graphic novels always seemed forbidden by institutions and academics. Jeff and I are on a mission to tell everyone that graphic novels are for everyone. They are just stories with pictures, and some libraries have kind of ghettoized them, saying they're not for them. Graphic novels are hooks to reading; they are for a broad audience. It takes education to get that point across.

*Jeff:* Comics and graphic novels are different. Comics are endless serial adventures, the heroes always come back for more, but graphic novels are usually written by one person, maybe two, but with a unique creative vision and a beginning, middle, and end.

*Kat:* I've been pushing for graphic novels in libraries since 1984!

*Jeff:* At least one person at every signing says their son was a reluctant reader

until they gave him *Bone*. The pictures draw them into reading. From the kids' point of view, they want to know what the characters are saying in those word balloons. My father used to read the comics with me, and I wanted to know. I taught myself to read with Charlie Brown. Of course, I was also learning in school, but the comics were the apple, the fun reward.

*Kat:* Yes, I was stuck learning to read from *Dick and Jane*. I much preferred *Richie Rich*, *Baby Huey*, *Marge's Little Lulu*, *Nancy and Sluggo*.

*Jean:* There aren't as many kid-friendly titles out there right now.

*Kat:* Jean, in recent months more publishers have been bringing out kid-friendly comics, such as Top Shelf with *Owly* and Dark Horse reprinting *Marge's Little Lulu*. Did this have any influence on Scholastic coming out with Graphix?

*Jean:* No, actually. David Saylor [Scholastic's VP creative director] identified graphic novels as something he was interested in. Scholastic needs to be a groundbreaker in the field. I set out to educate myself about graphic novels, and I saw a real opportunity to do something because there aren't a lot of graphic novels for children. They're mostly for teens and adults; they're edgy, definitely not for kids. It's only fairly recently that more books for kids have been published. And since Scholastic announced Graphix, some other publishers have started graphic novel lines for children.

*Kat:* I'm excited to see creators such as Chynna Clugston-Major writing *Queen Bee* for Graphix. Do you have other creators lined up to write for your line?

*Jean:* We're working with Raina Telgemeier to adapt *The Babysitters Club* for us. We are being selective because we want quality work. *Bone* is the centerpiece of our imprint. *Romeo and Juliet* is definite. We're working with Tina Packer, the director of Shakespeare and Company;

they take Shakespeare into high schools. They use a version she wrote for high schools, and we're having her work with an artist to adapt her vision onto the page.

[Jean had to leave, so I asked John Mason, marketing director of Scholastic, who was sitting in on the interview, the next question.]

*Kat:* Will Scholastic be doing a study guide for the Graphix line, for *Bone*, for example?

*John:* Yes, we're working on a discussion/study guide which will be posted on the Web site.

*Kat:* Jeff, do you think it would ruin *Bone* as a fun read if it's studied in class? [laughter]

*Jeff:* I think there's enough fun stuff that the kids should still enjoy it. But there's also a lot of symbolism, I used *Moby Dick* as a symbol, so there's stuff to study, too, I guess.

*John:* I have a question. Jeff, when you started coloring, did you know what colors to use right away, or did you have to make it up with the colorist?

*Jeff:* I pictured the story in color when I first started working on *Bone*. I have no skills to color, so I have to describe everything to Steve [Hamaker, colorist]. It takes six months to color each volume.

*Kat:* Jeff, can you tell me anything about your new science fiction adventure story you're planning?

*Jeff:* Well, first I'm working on *Captain Marvel*, so I won't even start writing the new story until next year. It will be for general audiences, not kids, and it's not very science fictional. It will be set in modern-day New York City, a romance at the speed of light.

*Kat:* Thank you very much, Jeff and Jean, and John for taking the time to talk with me. This was a real treat. ●

# OUCH!

## An Interview with PaperCutz Publisher Terry Nantier

Jana Fine

**F**ounded in 1976, Flying Buttress Publications, now Nantier Beall Minoustchine Publishing Inc. (NBM), was the dream of Terry Nantier, then a student of Syracuse University's Newhouse School of Communications. His vision of bringing comic *albums* to America was slow to take off, but during the 1980s, NBM finally found its niche and steadily grew from there. Today, it is the second largest independent comic press and has recently established a new imprint called PaperCutz. PaperCutz is aimed at the adolescent or 'tween (age eight to fourteen) market and has collaborated with Simon and Schuster to introduce Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys as graphic novels.

*Fine:* I understand you started NBM with friends in 1976 and began to import European graphic novels into the U.S. What was that time period like for you and the company?

*Nantier:* Graphic novels didn't even have a name yet! We were very much ahead of our time. People looked at us google-eyed: you want to put WHAT in the bookstores? And they looked threatened! We were the enemy. There was a lot to be done to educate on the quality of comic art, and slowly but surely we did so with what we published, which illustrated clearly how intelligent comics can be.

*Fine:* When did NBM become "America's First Graphic Novel Publisher," and what novels put your company into the forefront of the graphic novel industry?

*Nantier:* In 1977 we published our first: *Racket Rumba*, a spoof of noir thrillers. This was before anything else like this, including the start of *Heavy Metal*

magazine. From there on it was a slow build with such series over the years as Corto Maltese by one of the giants of comics Hugo Pratt and The Mercenary, a spectacularly fully painted fantasy series. We also made quite a name for ourselves in pioneering library-worthy hardcover collections of classic comic strips such as *Terry and the Pirates* and *Tarzan*.

*Fine:* I'm sure there are thousands of potential graphic novels that are waiting to be published. How do you choose what to publish? Is the process similar to a written manuscript?

*Nantier:* It is, in fact, for NBM anyway. We receive submissions all the time, have a process we ask of artists to submit, and take it from there (guidelines on our site, [www.nbmpub.com/home/subguidelines.html](http://www.nbmpub.com/home/subguidelines.html)). The choice is based on merit and whether it has a chance to find an audience, besides, of course, fitting well with our catalog.

As for PaperCutz, the line for kids, as we are concentrating on licensed properties, we just look for writers and artists with experience in such, and for the artists, ones who can do the manga style well.

*Fine:* How do you feel about the fairly sudden rise in popularity of graphic novels among the general population? What do you think has attributed to this growth of a distinctly visual medium?

*Nantier:* People are realizing how good comics can be! They have great art with very diverse styles and stories that can be very sophisticated and intelligent. For kids, the success of manga stems from the fact they grew up with Pokemon and other anime. It's a style they recognize plus a lot of the manga provides a good long read that's catchy and addictive. As



librarians have found, don't knock it, it makes them read and many go on to books!

*Fine:* On NBM's Web site ([www.nbmpub.com/history/about3.html](http://www.nbmpub.com/history/about3.html)), there is a statement that says "From the beginning, the view was to woo a general audience and that goal has never changed." Can you talk about what this means to you and has that goal changed at all since 1976?

*Nantier:* The whole point for NBM and now PaperCutz is to bring in a whole new audience for comics and get comics back out as the mass medium that it's always been. For years, we were floundering in an increasingly fan-based environment that was feeding on itself and only talking to itself. Superhero comics have been suffering and have lost the younger generation, regardless of the movies, due to increasingly arcane stories that make it hard for new readers to come in.



We've never made choices based on just a fan audience but always ones that we felt a general reader could understand, enjoy, and be attracted to. Specifically in fact noncomics readers.

*Fine:* How has the success and acceptance of graphic novels in everyday society affected you personally?

*Nantier:* Ah, gratification. Nothing sweeter than that. It's a cause I've been fighting for. It's been fun going from explaining what a graphic novel is to incredulous people visibly bringing me down many notches in their esteem as I explained, to now hearing "cool!" as soon as I mention the words.

*Fine:* I understand that you and Jim Salicrup (formerly editor at Marvel and founder of the Topps Comics line) created Papercutz. Can you tell us a little about it?

*Nantier:* It's all about getting more and more kids into reading comics (which then will get them into reading). It's about taking advantage of the fact that kids are embracing again, in increasing numbers, reading comics and are making graphic novels the fastest growing segment of publishing. It's about taking this exciting trend to the next level. After importing comics from Japan, Papercutz is now bringing well-known titles for 'tween kids to comics. Besides bringing Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys a

real blast of fresh excitement we've also got *Zorro* coming out this fall as the new movie with Antonio Banderas and Catherine Zeta-Jones comes out.

*Fine:* The 'tween market has always been there buying up as much as they can. Why have an imprint line marketed towards that age group?

*Nantier:* They've in fact NOT been there for comics for quite a few years now. Older fans were buying comics. The trend of manga being bought by 'twens is all-new, and what is particularly exciting is that at least half of them or maybe even a majority are girls! That hasn't been seen in ages. Comics had become known as a male geek thing. And that's all being rewritten as we speak!

*Fine:* How did you two come to a decision to publish Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys in a comics-album format?

*Nantier:* We are building on an already very successful trend: pocket-sized thick graphic novels with an affordable price. Our next dimension is full-color and with series and characters that are as American as apple pie.

*Fine:* Many public libraries and school media centers have incorporated graphic novels into their collections. What do you see, from a publishing perspective, as important for libraries to realize

about graphic novels and their impact on young people?

*Nantier:* I think the word is out on how GNs bring kids into libraries who probably wouldn't come in at all otherwise, many of whom go on to read regular books who wouldn't otherwise. However, there is a heck of a lot of material being thrown out there, much of which is of dubious quality and questionable entertainment value, if not downright questionable, period. You do have to filter. Just because something is in demand may not mean it's appropriate for the library to acquire. As a son of two generations of librarians, I know that they are altruistic people, second only to nurses (if that!). Steering kids to the good stuff is always a good thing. Suggesting more than the pandering, at times somewhat prurient, typical manga, can get kids to develop their tastes. As for any category, get a good cross-section, not just the best-sellers.

*Fine:* One last question—what would you like to say to all the staff who work with teens and 'twens in libraries?

*Nantier:* Steer them from the manga to things like Nancy Drew and Bone, then from the most popular to discovering, say, classics adapted into comics and then they just might be ready to read the actual classic! ●

## continued from page 2

The following passage kind of says it all for me:

I am standing upon the seashore.  
A ship at my side spreads her  
white sails to the morning breeze  
and starts for the blue ocean.  
She is an object of beauty and  
strength, and I stand and watch  
until at last she hangs like a

speck of white cloud just where  
the sea and sky come down to  
mingle with each other. Then  
someone at my side says, "There  
she goes!"

Gone where? Gone from my  
sight . . . that is all. She is just as  
large in mast and hull and spar  
as she was when she left my side  
and just as able to bear her load

of living freight to the place of  
destination. Her diminished size  
is in me, not in her. And just at  
the moment when someone at  
my side says, "There she goes!"  
there are other eyes watching her  
coming and their voices ready  
to take up the glad shouts "Here  
she comes!"—*Henry Van Dyke*,  
"*A Parable of Immortality*" ●

# Graphic Generation

Chris Fallis

**G**raphic novels—why is it they've consumed bookshelves, libraries, stores, and such a great percentage of teen homes? How is it that over the past few years these visual sources of entertainment have grown so immensely popular? What makes them so intriguing that the modern youth finds them to be such an absolute necessity? Perhaps it's the fact that graphic novels present epic anthologies of fantastical worlds, sci-fi, drama, and action that the imaginative teen mind craves. Over the past couple of years, graphic novels have grown from simple visual stories to entire story arcs defined in an artistic format. So what has the modern definition of graphic novel become?

The term *graphic novel* refers to visual images presenting a story in a more self-contained, novel-like format as compared to the more juvenile, serial comic book, thus differentiating it from those appearing in the traditional comic book or magazine composition. Graphic novels are also used as a reference to the more popular term “manga,” a current phenomenon that has been developing in Japan since the early 1100s. Manga originated in Japan and is most easily characterized by the widely recognized feature of exaggerated eyes and simplistic features. Manga has grown astoundingly popular with the modern youth of Japan. In Japan such novels have long become a source of literary entertainment for both the young and old. Despite Japan's 98 percent literacy rate, manga has become immensely popular due to the sheer entertainment element. It has

also assisted teens in recognizing cultural differences brought by the reflection of modern Japanese life including history, culture, language, politics, economy, and education. This graphic novel form visually educates the reader with the reality of ordinary Japanese life while at the same time providing entertainment. Manga is most easily recognized by the fact that they've maintained a traditional Japanese reading format of right to left.

If manga can be classified under the term *graphic novel*, then why can't comic books? The term *graphic novel* alludes to

ment that is both simple and fun. This exact style was widely used in the early 1940s. During this time period, classic novels were transformed into comics in order to capture the attention of youth in an alluring format. That single factor has assisted in explaining why graphic novels have become so popular among youth.

But what aspects of graphic novels have made them so attractive? Manga has grown substantially more popular among the teen population within the past couple of years, mostly due to the cultural appeal and diversity presented

Though graphic novels have broadly been used as a source of entertainment, they may also assist those who learn more visually as compared with those who prefer a more traditional literary source.

comics bound together not only to formulate a story, but also to build an entire structure. They are more or less a collection of stories initially published sequentially in a comic book format. Some are standalone novels published on a strict time basis. Others are simply anthologies of various series. Overall, the term *graphic novel* is widely used to cover an extensive range of visual entertainment.

Though graphic novels have broadly been used as a source of entertainment, they may also assist those who learn more visually as compared with those who prefer a more traditional literary source. Currently, it seems as though teens prefer a more visual source of education. With Internet access and programs such as instant messaging (both visual references), teens seem to prefer the visual form over the printed word such as books. Graphic novels have long since provided a center of education in a more visual and comprehensible format by contributing both images and concepts in one format that the modern teen is more oriented to. In doing so, graphic novels have created a learning environ-

through black and white. By limiting color, the general genre of graphic novels allows teens to utilize their imagination and thereby formulate a hero similar to their ethnicity, culture, standards, moral codes, and overall self. The second most appealing characteristic would be manga's cross-cultural appeal. Manga tends to focus on specific groups and sexes. Some even go as far as to classify the specification on the novel's cover, generalized by shojo (female) or shonen (male). In doing so, manga has become fairly balanced with regard to sexes. Some manga such as *Kare Kano* have targeted the teenage female population by basing the plot and story around teen relationships as compared with males who seem to prefer a more action-based manga such as *Rurouni Kenshin*, a manga that provides both Japanese history and detailed action. The appeal of graphic novels can be defined in numerous ways. In my personal opinion, the sheer diversity, cost, entertainment, and cultural catechism are all factors that form an alluring option for both education and amusement. ●

**Chris Fallis** is a freshman at Niskayuna (N.Y.) High School and is planning to attend an art college in order to pursue a career in Japan as a manga-ka. He is a longtime reader of *Shonen Jump* magazine and *Viz* graphic novels.

# The Otaku's View on Manga

Christina Cuchinotta

**M**anga. Literally translated, it means “whimsical pictures.” If you know what manga is, and the styles that it can take on, it kind of fits, doesn't it? Graphic novels are another, western form of manga. The description still works. Even though there are many teens who think that anime is synonymous with “cartoon,” and manga or graphic novels are something to be avoided for sake of looking cool or mature, that's not particularly true. Manga has become a form of art, as well as entertainment, and both manga and western graphic novels provide a new way to look at the issues that many teens—not just those of Japanese nationality—face today.

I'll say it upfront, right now: manga and American graphic novels do not require the highest grade level to read. It's (mostly) meant for people of all ages and intelligences to read and understand, and if there's a hidden connotation that may require one to be a bit savvier to pick up on, that's cool. But you'll never lose anything from the story. Regardless, it is entertaining. Just like when someone picks up the new romance or fantasy novel off the bookshelf, picking up a just-released volume of a favorite manga or the latest *Shonen Jump* promises a few hours of well-spent reading. [As a side, *Shonen Jump* is a popular magazine translated into English that is dedicated to publishing manga (in *Shonen Jump*'s case, boy's manga). Magazines are where all manga starts.] And depending on the storyline, a good laugh, something to ponder, or even a reason to shed a tear or so is always present.

The manga-ka, or the artists or authors of the manga, are ingenious in setting up their plotlines as well as any professional author of a text-based story would. The only difference is that their details are not given in words but in pictures. Any action, expression, or reaction is given to you in an image instead of described in text. And usually, these images are very amusing. A character's extremely shocked reaction to a surprising statement is something that someone should see at least once. The expression can be so outrageous, yet sometimes

ing and fun to draw, and it doesn't take a very long time, unlike some true-to-life styles. With exaggerated poses, big hair and clothing, and chibi eyes (to name a very few examples), one's imagination can take off and make anything they want as long as they confine to a few basics of the style. And if there's anything else that comes to mind? It's there for the taking and molding into whatever form the artist so wishes.

Manga and graphic novels are like any other story, really. The only difference is that they're told through pic-

I feel that it's so cool that libraries carry them.

you kind of wish it was humanly possible to re-create that kind of face, if and when faced with similar circumstances. And almost nine times out of ten, the usual teen (about which these stories are usually based) has (or has had) a similar experience, give or take a little bit: a love triangle, for instance, or a young boy that tries to rise out of the low circumstances he's surrounded by after being beaten down countless times, but eventually winds up on top. Even if the characters seem glorified, or the plotlines outrageous, the messages are usually universal (even if they vary to the extremes), and are able to be applied to almost any teen. And even if there's an adult reading the book, the message is easily picked up on, and it gives everyone something to think about.

There are many people who enjoy reading manga and drawing manga as well. The style that manga has started is something that is easy to notice and copy, though it takes a long time to truly master. But it is something that is reward-

tures, not words. That's why I feel that it's so cool that libraries carry them. And even though it's not important to a majority of a library's clientele, or even necessary to be carried, it's certainly appreciated. Manga is expensive to teens on a limited budget, and usually libraries who carry graphic novels and manga carry the most popular (and sometimes the slightly more expensive) titles. It gives those who might not have the money to spend on the books something completely different from a text-styled book. And possibly more entertaining. At least, that's how I feel. ●

**Christina Cuchinotta** is a junior at Niskayuna (N.Y.) High School. She is a self-proclaimed manga and anime okatu (extreme fan girl) and has read more volumes than she can count. She hopes to study in Japan for a year when she reaches college and eventually wants to become a chemist, though how she will ever connect the two she has yet to figure out.

# Manga Madness in the Library

Angie Espelage

**S**tep aside Marvel, and make way for the newest graphic novel craze from Japan: manga! Manga is the Japanese term for comic, and its style is very unique. Big, bright eyes adorn the faces of men and women alike. Magical worlds come alive as a character stumbles into another universe or is faced with a situation that is very real in our own world. No matter what the manga, there is such a wide variety to choose from that everyone can find one to enjoy. Since its arrival at the library, more and more people are able to enjoy the stunningly beautiful art and watch fascinating sagas unfold!

I, personally, was very excited to see the new arrival of manga in the library. This was back when the selection consisted of a few volumes of *Dragon Ball* and *Saint Tail*, but I checked them all out. This was my chance to read manga for free, and anyone else who buys manga knows what I mean. It can get pretty expensive! What attracted me to them was the art, which I found to be intriguing. Somehow they were able to make a person, whose eyes were half the size of their head, look beautiful! I decided to try my hand at drawing with the same style; it's too bad I didn't keep them since they're pretty humorous! With manga available at the library, I was able to check out as many comics as I wanted, with no fear that I was wasting my money. It allowed me to study the different styles of the manga artists and gave me an opportunity to broaden my knowledge of the manga style. Of all the artists, I particularly love CLAMP since it was their *Cardcaptor Sakura* who brought me to love anime (Japanese animation) and manga.

Eighteen-year-old **Angie Espelage** is majoring in art education at the College of Mount St. Joseph, Cincinnati, Ohio. She enjoys drawing anime and dragons or losing herself in a good book.

It was that summer that the teen librarian Paige told me her plans on creating an anime night. I was enthusiastic about the idea, and it turned out so were many other teens in the area. Anime night was such a success that it was turned into Harrison's Anime Club, which still meets monthly. More than forty teens show up for this event, all sharing the same love of anime. It was through library programs such as this that I was able to meet other anime and manga fans like me, and I made many friends in the process! Who would have thought there were so many fans of this growing craze just in Harrison? Sadly, as I entered into my freshman year in college, I no longer had the time to go to the club meetings. I not only left the anime club but also my own Teen Writing Club, where I had been president for two years.

It was very recently that I was asked to return to my writing club and speak at a meeting. The theme of the month was about creating comics! Of course I wanted to see my friends again, but this was a chance to talk about something I really loved. Over the past years I had practiced my technique and even tried to make my own comic. Word of advice: It's a lot harder than it looks! I only got three pages done in three months, but I was very happy to present the pages at the Teen Writing Club's meeting on March 19. The looks of amazement on their faces made me feel incredibly relieved and pleased. Like any artist, I didn't think my work would go over very well and could stand some improvement. Surprised with their compliments, I proceeded with confidence to give them advice about comicking.

If any readers are curious about the art of manga, here are a few suggestions. First, I believe that research is the key to learning about what you love. If manga is your passion, as it is mine, go to the library and read as much of it as



Sample of Espelage's artwork.

you can! There's no better way to learn the anime style than by looking to the experts. Be daring! Try a manga or two that you wouldn't normally read. The more you read, the broader your experience will be. The last and best tip I can give anyone is to practice drawing. Every time you draw you learn something new, so even doodling helps! If you find the most gorgeous illustration, go ahead and try to copy it. Tracing is considered cheating! By copying pictures you love from artists you love, you develop a style of your own and can also learn a thing or two. Just don't go calling the artwork your own, as you would be breaking copyright laws. The art that I submitted for this article is all original, yet I didn't just obtain the talent immediately. I've been drawing anime for over four years, and I have decades to go before I can call myself a pro.

Ever since that year manga came to the library, my admiration for books and the library has grown. I continue to read manga to this day, and I encourage others to read it, too. There are so many worlds to explore in these comics, and I'm not the only one who loves discovering them. ●

# Holy Reading Revolution, Batman!

## Developing a Graphic Novel Collection for Young Adults

Alison Ching

**O**K, let's get one thing out in the open right away: I am a comic book geek. It's true. It all started in high school when my guy friends got me hooked on the X-Men. That band of merry mutants turned out to be my gateway drug, plunging me into the strange and mysterious world of sequential art. For years, I haunted comic shops, scoured the Internet for information on my favorite books and characters, and, at one point, even collaborated with my friends to write our very own superhero comic, the sole issue of which is thankfully lost to posterity. But then, in the late nineties, I entered a period of fangirl ennui, during which I was enjoying comics less and less, until I read only one or two books sporadically and then went for extended periods without picking up a comic at all.

That all changed in fall 2002. At that point, I was still a pretty green librarian, only one year removed from a stint in the classroom teaching English. When we discovered that the theme for Teen Read Week that year would be "Get Graphic @ your library®!" my far more experienced librarian partner suggested we start a graphic novel collection. Since I knew a little something about comics, I got to work on the first order. Soon, the graphic novel collection was my baby, and my flame for comics was reignited. Lately, my zeal has been largely directed into proselytizing to the uninitiated, so strap in, folks—here we go.

### Why Collect Graphic Novels? Because Kids Really Like Them

If this argument seems oversimplified, it is only because it does not reflect the full

magnitude of the passion many kids have for these books. Let me illustrate. Our library serves a student population of about 2,300 in grades 9–12. Currently, we have 372 graphic novels, which account for 1.5 percent of our total collection. As of late March, we have had 3,158 graphic novel circulations during the 2004–2005 school year, accounting for a whopping 17.7 percent of our total circs during that time. In terms of percentage, this makes graphic novels our top circulating section, coming out far ahead of the next 3 runners-up (the 300s: 15.7 percent of circs, 8.6 percent of collection; fiction: 15.6 percent of circs, 23 percent of collection; and the 800s: 10.2 percent of circs, 8.6 percent of collection). This does not reflect the large number of students who read graphic novels in the library without checking them out.

I confess that when we started this collection, I thought our students would like the graphic novels, but I had no idea they would be so outrageously popular. One particular concern I had was with manga, the ubiquitous comics from Japan. Even after being translated into English, many of these books are meant to be read from right to left, in accordance with the original Japanese. Having spent three years in an English classroom with some less-than-strong readers, I was concerned these books would be too difficult for some students to follow. My fears were completely unfounded. Perhaps because of the increasingly visual nature of the culture around them, most students can and do read manga with ease, and as a result, they probably know more about Japanese culture than most adults. While I think it would be unfortunate for kids to read only manga and other graphic novels, just as it would be

unfortunate for them to read only mysteries or fantasy or romance, I believe graphic novels represent an excellent opportunity to get students hooked on the written word, which can only be a good thing in the end.

### Nuts and Bolts

Graphic novels generally range in price from \$9.95 to \$19.95. In terms of format, the best choice is paperback. Many graphic novels only come in paperback editions, which makes choosing a format a moot point, but even if a hardcover is available, a paperback is still usually a better choice. When we started the graphic novel collection, I ordered mostly paperbacks in accordance with the literature I'd read on graphic novel collection development, and if the spines are reinforced with book tape, the books actually hold up pretty well. In the past, we have experimented with prebinds and laminated covers, but these types of bindings have fallen apart even more quickly than the paperbacks. The basic truth is that, eventually, you will probably have to replace some books, but at that point the original copies will have circulated well enough to justify the cost.

In terms of shelving, there are a couple of options. One is to shelve all graphic novels under 741.5, which is the Dewey designation for cartoons and drawings, regardless of the subject.

**Alison Ching** is a librarian at North Garland High School in Garland, Texas, the school she attended as a student. She is waiting for volume two of *Astonishing X-Men* with bated breath.

Another is to intershelve graphic novel titles with other books based on their subjects, such as shelving fictional stories under fiction, Art Spiegelman's Holocaust story *Maus* under 940, Judd Winnick's *Pedro and Me: Friendship, Loss, and What I Learned* under 364.1, and so on. A third option, which is the one we use, is to create a separate section for graphic novels within the library. Our graphic novels are shelved in the front of our library, near the magazines, which makes them very browser-friendly. They all are assigned the designation 741.5, but this number is preceded by a "GN" designator to let patrons, aides, and librarians know at a glance that the book is a graphic novel and should be shelved in its special section rather than in the general nonfiction area.

## Major Publishers

When you're just getting started in the development of a graphic novel collection, the choices can be kind of overwhelming. One of the best ways to become an informed consumer is to learn about some of the major publishers and the titles they offer. This will enable you to zero in on the sources most likely to provide you with the types of books you want, while also helping you to make informed decisions about individual titles: These are a few of the names you will see most frequently:

- **DC**—DC is one of the oldest and best-established publishers in the market, particularly when it comes to superhero titles. DC's roster of characters includes some of the most enduring figures in our popular culture: Batman, Wonder Woman, and, perhaps most iconic, Superman. Most DC titles are suitable for YA collections, the one major exception being titles published under the Vertigo imprint. While there are exceptions, such as the Neil Gaiman-penned *The Books of Magic*, most Vertigo titles are solidly adult in content and should be treated as such.
- **Marvel**—Marvel is another well-established publisher with popular superhero characters. Marvel

titles may be particularly appealing because movies based on Marvel characters have recently been or will soon be released. These include Spider-Man, X-Men, The Incredible Hulk, Daredevil, and The Fantastic Four. It bears noting here that when dealing with characters and storylines that extend back forty years or more, as DC and Marvel do, many series can exist based on the same characters, and various series can be geared toward different audiences. For example, *X-Men Evolution* is a good book for middle-schoolers, while *Astonishing X-Men* is more of an older teen book. Along with reviews, publishers' Web sites can help librarians keep series straight and make informed collection development decisions.

- **Dark Horse**—While Dark Horse does publish original work, much of what they offer is based on licensed properties such as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Star Wars*. Local interest should factor into the titles you select. In our library, the Buffy titles circulate fairly well, while the Star Wars titles don't; in another library, the exact opposite might be true.
- **TokyoPop**—TokyoPop is perhaps the largest and most popular purveyor of manga in the U.S. Conveniently, all of TokyoPop's titles have a code on the back cover providing the recommended age group for that title. In my experience, most books rated Teen (13+) or lower would be fine for most YA collections; books with codes of Older Teen (16+) and higher should be considered carefully. Of course, to paraphrase *Pirates of the Caribbean*, these are more guidelines than what you'd call actual rules.
- **Viz Communications**—Viz is the publisher of some very popular manga titles: Dragon Ball, Dragon Ball Z, and Yu-Gi-Oh!. Also, Viz is the publisher of the manga magazine *Shonen Jump*. In Japan, before manga titles are released in book form, they are usually serialized in magazines. *Shonen Jump* is one of

the few English-language magazines of this type available in the U.S. Our library has a subscription, and when the more-than-two-hundred-page issues come in, they are catalogued and circulated like other manga. The magazine is enormously popular among our students, and I have a sneaking suspicion it would disappear if it were not available for circulation.

These are by no means the only sources of graphic novels. There are many excellent smaller publishers, such as Top Shelf Productions and Oni Press, which distribute works that would be good for YA collection. Keep an eye out for publishers when reading reviews or the graphic novels themselves and make notes for future reference.

## Resources

In 2002, graphic novel reviews and selection tools were still very hard to come by. Fortunately, this is no longer the case. Major professional publications including VOYA, *School Library Journal*, and *Booklist* now regularly feature reviews of graphic novels. Even so, there are some very valuable electronic resources that can be very helpful for collection development. One of these is the GNLIB-L distribution list, which is devoted entirely to discussion of graphic novels in libraries. You can subscribe at [www.topica.com/lists/GNLIB-L](http://www.topica.com/lists/GNLIB-L). Another fantastic resource is the Web site "No Flying, No Tights" ([www.noflyingnotights.com](http://www.noflyingnotights.com)). Webmistress Robin Brenner is a young adult librarian and provides lots of great information for both young adults and the librarians who serve them, including a breakdown of recommended titles by age-appropriateness. While most librarians are at least marginally familiar with superheroes, manga can still present some special challenges. *A Librarian's Guide to Anime and Manga* ([www.koyagi.com/Libguide.html](http://www.koyagi.com/Libguide.html)) is a good introduction for the uninitiated. Finally, the archived Web page for the Get Graphic! @ your library Teen Read Week promotion can be found at <http://archive.ala.org/teenread/trw>.

This page has a lot of good information and some helpful links.

## Recommended Titles

The following are some specific titles I would recommend to librarians just starting out with graphic novel collections. Some are standalone volumes, while others are first volumes in series. The annotations explain which is which (number of available volumes is based on status as of late March 2005).

- Ashihara, Hinako. *Forbidden Dance, Volume 1*. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003. ISBN 1591823455.  
Series comprised of four volumes
- Bendis, Brian Michael. *Ultimate Spider-Man: Power and Responsibility*. New York: Marvel, 2001. ISBN 078510786X.  
Ongoing series—currently twelve volumes
- Johns, Geoff. *Teen Titans: A Kid's Game*. New York: DC Comics, 2004. ISBN 1401203086.  
Ongoing series—currently two volumes

- Mashima, Hiro. *Rave Master, Volume 1*. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003. ISBN 1591820642. Ongoing series—currently sixteen volumes
- Miller, Frank. *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns*. New York: DC Comics, 2002. ISBN 156389341X.  
Standalone title—this is the tenth-anniversary edition. There is one sequel, *Batman: The Dark Knight Strikes Again*.
- Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis*. New York: Pantheon, 2003. ISBN 0375422307.  
Standalone title with one sequel, *Persepolis 2*.
- Smith, Jeff. *Bone: Out from Boneville*. Columbus: Cartoon Books, 1996. ISBN 0963660942.  
Series comprised of nine main volumes, plus a couple of spin-off volumes.
- Soryo, Fuyumi. *Mars, Volume 1*. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2002. ISBN 1931514585.  
Series comprised of fifteen volumes, plus the bonus volume *A Horse with No Name*.
- Van Meter, Jen. *Hopeless Savages*. Portland: Oni Press, 2002. ISBN

1929998759.

Ongoing series—currently three volumes

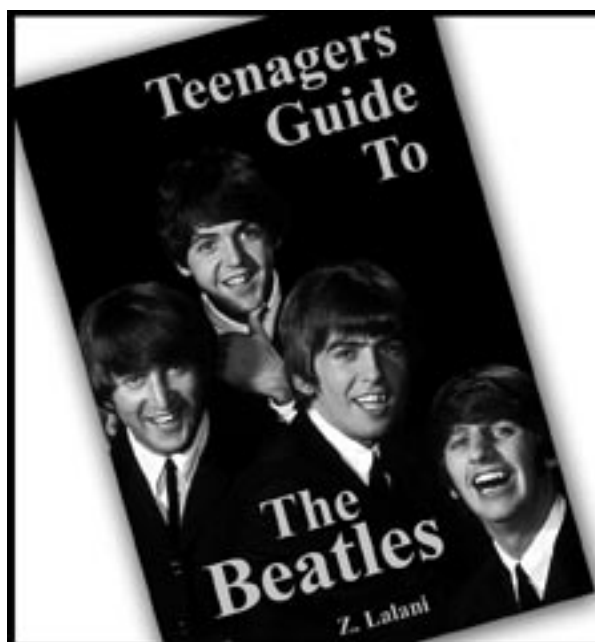
Whedon, Joss. *Astonishing X-Men: Gifted*. New York: Marvel, 2005. ISBN 0785115315.

Ongoing series—currently one volume

Whedon, Joss. *Fray*. Milwaukee: Dark Horse, 2003. ISBN 1569717516.  
Standalone title

Yoshizumi, Wataru. *Marmalade Boy, Volume 1*. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2002. ISBN 1931514542.  
Series comprised of eight volumes.

Our goal for the library has always been to create a fun and welcoming place for our students. The graphic novel collection has gone a long way towards helping us accomplish that goal. Even if you don't catch the fever for discussing the finer points of Wolverine's healing factor or Superboy's genealogy, providing graphic novels to your teen patrons can give them a sense of ownership in the library and you a warm fuzzy feeling derived from helping them develop a lifelong relationship with books. ●



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# Y Archive?

## The Rapid Rise of Graphic Novels and Their Place in the Cleveland Public Library

Rollie Welch and Julianne Brown

**A**s young adult librarians, we're sure that you, our fellow comrades in the trenches, are absolutely sold, from top-to-toe, on the artistic and literary merit, the cultural significance, and the outright . . . *funacity* of comics, graphic novels, and manga. So there's no place here for dry, philosophical discussions on the nature of (as Eisner describes it) "sequential art," nor is there room for any Derridian deconstruction of the visual/textual plane—"Dude! I did all that in undergrad!" We're with you there—but the ghost of these and other lofty (though largely academic, and thus impractical) ideas inform our policy and practice as librarians, and we cannot escape their mighty influence.

So here's a tale about the Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library (CPL) and the humble graphic novel. Laugh and cry with us as we describe how comics, graphic novels, and manga made the journey from marginalia to mainstream, from the back shelves to crowning glory as archival material. Even, dare we say, from pulp to priceless.

Now in his twenty-fourth year as a librarian, **Rollie Welch** is employed as a young adult librarian at the Cleveland Public Library and is a member of YALSA's Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers Committee. He serves as chair of VOYA's Top Shelf for Middle School Fiction Committee. **Julianne Brown** is a recent graduate from Kent State, Kent, Ohio. She is an avid comic and manga fan, and looks forward to a long and happy career serving young adults, whilst gaining as much fame (or infamy) as Melvil Dewey or Michele Gorman.

(You know, a how-we-did-it, ain't-we-great, and don't-you-envy-us, though-you've-probably-done-the-same-or-mean-to, report.)

So, on with the boasting!

### Rollie

Entering Cleveland Public Library's Main Building on December 1, 2003 as a newly hired young adult librarian, thoughts of the daunting task of ordering new young adult books for the entire system of twenty-eight branches and the main building were foremost on my mind. Of course I was expected to provide outreach services for teens by offering programs, and conducting school visits, as well as increase circulation of young adult materials—you know, the routine aspects of any YA librarian. I had ideas about programs to implement and felt confident that I knew my stuff about current books and popular materials . . . but how to target teens across the city and put in place books that would circulate, and circulate well, was a big problem.

In my former position, graphic novels were just beginning to catch on but weren't the hottest item in the teen collection. When I came on board at CPL, my predecessor had really got the ball rolling with graphic novels by ordering a core collection of titles, both manga and comics.

It was pretty solid, featuring renowned writers such as Will Eisner, Frank Miller, and Craig Thompson. But there were the staples, too: Spider-Man, Batman, Superman, and other superhero types gazed at me from their covers as I first browsed the collection. I was pleased to see, but at the same time wary of, the

manga titles sitting on the shelves. My experience with this type of comic was limited, and I was determined to expand my knowledge . . . *if* there was a demand for manga in the City of Cleveland.

Like many other YA librarians, I sat in on workshop presentations about graphic novels and quickly became overwhelmed by the *enormous* volume of titles and series. Very few authentic manga titles had circulated in my former library, so I just wasn't familiar with them. But I knew from lurking on discussion boards posted on YALSA-BK that in many areas of the country, manga *rules*, so again, I was prompted to start Manga 101.

Prowling the ten floors of public access areas in the main building, I located quite extensive graphic novel collections tucked away in our literature and popular library departments. But the series were incomplete, and it seemed that they were purchased randomly or selected from positive reviews, without input from our patrons.

I mentioned my desire to increase young adult circulation by building a more extensive graphic novel collection to some of my coworkers. My Spidey-sense started tingling when I heard comments such as, "What literary value do they have?" or "We really can't have them with those types of pictures on the covers." Was it possible that there was a prevailing negative attitude to these types of books and possibly to YA material overall?

The spring of 2004 brought some hot movie releases adapted from graphic novels, including *Hellboy* and *Spider-Man 2*, further affirming my resolve to provide more current material for our teen patrons. And the final push came from the patrons themselves with passing com-



ments such as, "Hey, you gonna get any *Hellboy* books in here?"

I was further frustrated, no, make that *embarrassed*, when a teen patron asked me about the series *Vagabond*, of which he held our only title of the series, volume 8. I pleaded ignorance and tried my best to conduct a quality reader's advisory interview. I asked, "So, is that a good series?"

To his credit, he did not scoff. Instead, he gave me a lesson in manga and how this series in particular is based on the Japanese warrior Miyamoto Mushashi, an actual figure from the feudal society of seventeenth-century Japan. He said that we really should have the complete series rather than just the one random title he had in his hand.

Dazzling him with my customer service skills (and mining this fall-into-my-lap information source) I asked, "Is there a big interest in Cleveland for manga books?"

His answer? "Dude, it's huge. You gotta get this stuff."

Well, yeah, but why stop at just *Hellboy*, *Spider-Man*, or *Vagabond*? The problem now was: how can I get a large number and an extensive variety into the collection in the shortest amount of time?

Trusted friends in the young adult world told me it was simple. Just go to the local comic book store and write down titles you like, go back to your cubicle and order them! No offense, but I was ordering for the City of Cleveland, twenty-eight branches, and the main library. That's a potential outbreak of arthritis from jotting down hundreds of ISBNs.

I chatted up some of our daily after-school walk-ins who each day rushed to the computers to spend hours with their eyes glued to the monitors. What were they watching? *Anime*. They told me how the series are cool, romantic, and scary (Hey, this sounds just like hardcover books!). And further enlightened me with this nugget of information: anime are made into manga and vice versa. Was I the last YA librarian to know this?

Enter BWI (formerly known as Book Wholesalers, Inc.), our library's preferred vendor for ordering new books. During a scheduled meeting with the sales rep about navigating the TitleTales database,

the conversation steered to graphic novels. Like a cat, she sprung on the topic saying, "Oh sure, we can get you those through SNAP."

"Like snapping your fingers?" I asked, showing my dexterity by clicking off a few sounds.

SNAP stands for Selection, Notification, and Acquisition Plan, (I quickly learned) and a library could order graphic novels on preview, limiting them by publisher, patron age, author, or illustrator. Like many librarians, I was immediately leery of preview plans. I mean, who needs to battle with the accounting department on a weekly basis? Who needs trash that the vendor just wants to unload?

Those fears aside, BWI's program fit my immediate needs and fortunately our collections manager felt that our library needed to take a leadership role in the region for providing a wide variety of graphic novels.

We were on our way.

The books arrive weekly and CPL's youth services librarians view them at a monthly meeting, selecting titles they want in their collection. This enables us to pinpoint what they're getting rather than a blind central order offering them limited input. Through this system, CPL is now adding about seventy-five new graphic novels a month.

The first shipment sent twenty-two new titles, and you can imagine my joy when I activated them electronically and discovered *fifteen* holds by teens viewing our catalog. It was great knowing that I had finally got them what they wanted and placed it in their hands.

A year later, we have an active anime mania club that meets biweekly and recently sponsored an anime film festival that drew over one hundred teens to the library for the day! Through the club I've found that popular series are *Hellsing*, *Hot Gimmick*, *Model*, *Inu Yasha*, *Fruits Basket*, *Tuxedo Gin*, *Sgt. Frog*, and *Boys Over Flowers* (though the list is potentially endless). The collection is fluid, and the anticipated shelving space problem *never* materialized. The books are immediately checked out upon return, and teens take out over a dozen titles at a time. *Wonderful*.

But wait! It gets *better*.

I was asked to present information on graphic novels to the serials committee about this "new" format of book and explain why it attracts teens. I entered the meeting armed with a variety of graphic novels and manga, ready to explain what authentic manga is, how they're different from American graphic novels and how *many* (such as Craig Thompson's *Blanket*) have won prestigious awards. I was interrupted in my enthusiastic presentation with the question: "Why are they all so pornographic?"

Uh oh.

Well, my powers of persuasion must have been high, for two hours after that query, I was given the directive by the committee to begin a collection that would be *archived*, so that future generations could visit CPL and view a sampling of twenty-first-century pop culture.

We are proud to be a major urban library that (in a relatively short time) has taken steps to increase its commitment to graphic novels and manga, and to provide a wide variety of these titles to teens and other patrons. With the archive project, we have the beginnings of a graphic novel collection that will stand the test of time and truly represent a fascinating (and oft neglected) segment of current pop culture.

## Julie

Okay, so now you know how it happened at CPL, and you might consider developing your own special collection or mini-archive. If you're anything like me, then you're interested in a practical sort of guide to the best.

Let I step on any toes here, I'm just a newly graduated, naïve little imp, after all, and it would behoove me to acknowledge one of the leading gurus in the field, (though he's just a *business* librarian, imagine!) our own Michael R. Lavin. He has published several highly informative articles on the selection and development of a comics collection for public libraries, many of which are available at his Web site: <http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/units/lml/comics/pages>.

Yet, excellent though his work is, he isn't snooty enough to recommend only award winners. That's where I step in. Here is a short list of comics awards separated by region:

- United States
  - **Rueben.** Named for Reuben "Rube" Goldberg, the National Cartoonists Society's first president and designer of the award statuette, it was first awarded in 1946 for *Milton Caniff's Steve Canyon*. Its most recent recipient (2002) is Matt Groening, creator of the Simpsons.
  - **Eisner.** This award was named in honor of Will Eisner, creator of *The Spirit* and *Contract with God*, begun in 1988. Its most recent recipient (2004) in one of its many genres is Neil Gaiman's *Sandman: Endless Nights*. This award is huge, ladies and gentlemen. Do not neglect any Eisner award winner—they're like the Academy Awards of the comic industry.
  - **Harvey.** Ever read *Mad* magazine? This award was named for Harvey Kurtzman, creator of *Mad*. It was first awarded in 1988 and has honored comic writers as diverse as Alan Moore (*Watchmen*), Craig Thompson (*Blankets*), and Alex Ross (*Astro City*).
  - **Ignatz.** You'd have to be a hard-core fan of comics and graphic novels to get this one. Named for George Herriman's brick-wielding mouse, Ignatz, in the surrealist comic, *Krazy Kat*, the award began in 1997 and has seen an on-again, off-again popularity. As its name and heritage suggest, this award highlights alternative, eclectic comic artists such as Rich Koslowski (*Three Fingers*) and Jason Shiga (*Fleep*).
- United Kingdom
  - **National Comics Awards.** The National Comics Awards are the premier comic industry awards of Great Britain. Begun in 1997,

they have awards for Best Comic Character, including Rodger the Dodger (weekly comic strip by Robert Nixon), and Nikolai Dante (Robbie Morrison and Simon Fraser).

- France
    - **Alph-Art.** Originally, named the Alfred Awards, after a penguin from Alain Saint-Ogan's series *Zig et Puce*. In 1989, the name was changed to the Alph'art. Recipients include native French artists as well as American comic writers like Brian Michael Bendis (*Torso, Fortune and Glory*).
  - Germany
    - **Max and Moritz Prize.** Though awarded exclusively to materials published in Germany, the award began in 1984 and recognizes quality artwork and story on an international scale.
- Now for *manga*! Only the hottest cultural import and the most beloved component of many YA collections, so be sure to look for these nominations and recognitions:
- Japan:
    - Nippon (Manga Artist Association Award)
    - Osamu Tezuka Bunka Shô (Named for legendary manga artist, Osamu Tezuka)
    - Kodansha (Kodansha Cultural Award)
    - Shogakukan Manga Shô (Shogakukan Publishers Award)

These should guide you right when making selections for your archives, but nothing beats personal recommendations from experts. Plenty of useful information on these and other awards are compiled by Joel Hahn on his "Comics Award Almanac," available at <http://users.rcn.com/aardy/comics/awards>.

Hahn and Lavin have collaborated in the past, and their work is an excellent resource if you're on shaky ground when it comes to comics, graphic novels, or manga.

And because I just *can't* resist, this upstart new LIS graduate will recommend a few of her favorite titles in this little

manual o' selection. They are must-haves for any serious comics archive collection:

### *Adolf*

Osamu Tezuka  
VIZ LLC, 1996  
ISBN: 1569310580 (volume one)

This is a five-volume series, and the entire set is a must. Tezuka is the manga god of Japan, and this ground-breaking series explores the lives of three individuals named Adolf: a Jewish boy living in Japan; a half-Japanese, half-German boy; and the leader of Nazi Germany. This is a wonderfully fresh perspective on the events of World War II.

### *Bone* (complete edition)

Jeff Smith  
Cartoon Books, 2004  
ISBN: 188896314X

Three modern cartoon cousins get lost in a pretechnological valley, spending a year there making new friends and out-running dangerous enemies. Their many adventures include *The Great Cow Race*, and a giant mountain lion called *RockJaw: Master of the Eastern Border*. They learn about sacrifice and hardship in a climactic journey to *The Crown of Horns*.

### *Maus* (box set)

Art Spiegelman  
Pantheon Books, 1993  
ISBN: 0679748407

All volumes in one complete set. If you haven't heard of *Maus*, then you've been living under a rock. It's the story of the narrator, Artie, and his father Vladek, a Holocaust survivor.

### *Sandman*

Neil Gaiman  
DC Comics, 1993  
ISBN: 1563890119 (Volume One)

This is a ten-volume series, and I recommend the whole set. Gaiman draws from European and world mythology to spectacular effect in one of the most original fantasy series ever. The main characters are Dream, a Morpheus-like protagonist, and his complex siblings, Destiny, Death, Delirium, Despair, and Desire.

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# Who Is Reading Manga?

## One High School's Story

Melissa Bergin

**T**heir hair is long and short, light and dark, and occasionally a shocking purple. They wear short skirts, long flowing coats, and all-black outfits. And a couple of them have the biggest, most beautiful eyes you have ever seen. Am I talking about the characters in manga? I could be, but in this case I am talking about my students who read them.

As librarians we are always wondering who exactly is reading the books we buy. Sure, we see some readers as we do readers advisory, but others slip to the shelves and back out without ever tripping our radar. I know manga is big with my students. I know I have to hide half-processed books, or they will try to take them out. If I process them while students are around, I need to keep sticky notes at hand to create impromptu reserve lists as the students see them. The manga I have make up less than 1 percent of my collection but is creating between 25 and 30 percent of our circulation most months.

I've known for a long time that the paraprofessionals in my library who handle the reserves and interlibrary loans often know more about a particular student's reading habits than I know. I knew our school had an active anime group who often suggested new titles for our collection and that a significant number of titles were being loaned to our local middle school. But who was reading them here at our high school library?

My casual observation showed three types of readers. The first type was a reader who was interested in anime and Japanese culture and was reading manga in light of its popularity. The second type was an avid reader who would read anything that wouldn't walk away. And the third type was a reluctant reader who was attracted to titles recognizable from current anime on television. But why this

group of readers? What did they have in common? What was the appeal?

I set out to do some research. I created a one-page survey, and, with the help of two wonderful paraprofessionals who spend much more time with the students and the graphic novel collection than I do, I set about surveying students. Between students who came in to borrow manga and those taking the survey to the school's Anime Club, I soon had thirty-three responses.

So what did I find out? Well, first of all, I wasn't finding out who these students were. Their self-descriptions, particularly of their own reader type, differed from others' descriptions of them. I surveyed thirty-three students ages fourteen through eighteen. Of those students, twenty-three were female, and ten were male. This gender difference did not surprise me. Our anime club was started by girls, and my collection is heavily weighted to shojo (girl) manga, since that is what has been requested. Like many other areas of buying, I also have to fight my own "appeal" criterion to buy what I think is cool. Just because *Yu Yu Hakusho* doesn't appeal to me doesn't, in fact, mean it will not circulate well.

I tried through the survey to see what types of students were reading the manga. The majority almost evenly split (fifteen to sixteen) between being a "good" student and an "average" student, with only two considering themselves "poor" students. Favorite classes were most likely to be English, art, or math, while at the same time the least favorite class was overwhelmingly likely to be math. Is there something about how the mind processes the information in graphic novels that is more or less compatible with a learning style needed for math?

From my sample, manga seems to embrace both readers and nonreaders.

Almost half the sample, fifteen students, reported reading at least twenty books a year, not including manga and required schoolbooks. Within that sample, six reported more than fifty books a year! (And I am embarrassed to say I can only name three of them!) Many reported a preference for fantasy and adventure, echoed by the fact that *Inu-Yasha* is our number one circulating title in the collection. Several reported romance as their favorite, also supported by the constant circulation of shojo series like *Kare Kano* and *Mars*. All but one student reported that reading was easy for them. Considering that the sample included students who are identified as special education students, it says that students are feeling successful reading manga—even if they have to read it backward. I've wondered for some of these students if the challenge of reading a book forward is so great that the challenge of reading a book backwards is no greater. ("Authentic manga," the most popular of the manga forms being printed currently, is printed in the original Japanese format with the reader starting at what we would consider the back of the book and reads right to left to the front of the book.)

These are also social students. While a few were self-reported bookworms or athletes, a majority of students reported their favorite activity as "hanging out with friends." One of the other teachers in my building brought it to my attention that

**Melissa Bergin** is one of a team of two library media specialists at Niskayuna (N.Y.) High School. She recently spent part of February and March in Japan as a volunteer with Special Olympics for the 2005 World Winter Games. She is currently working on an additional degree in educational administration.

you rarely see a student reading manga alone. They often can be seen reading in groups and discussing what they have read. Perhaps the short length of the books allows for more shared experiences to discuss, but their reading has a sense of camaraderie about it. While many teachers look down at graphic novels, I'm not sure we can dismiss something that has our students critically and enthusiastically discussing what they are reading.

But perhaps where it got most interesting was when I asked students for their favorite three manga series. Of the top fifteen titles suggested we only had nine of them in the school media center. When you went further out on the list even more titles I had never heard of appeared. I knew there was an elaborate network of manga-sharing going on of which the library was only part, but obviously many of the students were getting books from outside sources. Some of the titles suggested were the shojo titles in our collection, while others reflected a more shonen (young boys) preference such as *Naruto* or *Yu Yu Hakusho*. What I had not expected though was the interest in shonen-ai (boy love) series. Shonen-ai are characterized by a fairly innocent, romantic male-male relationship and are targeted to appeal to girls. Two of the most popular for my students are *Gravitation* and *Only the Ring Finger Knows*. The term *yaoi* is sometimes also used in the United States to describe these titles. Though the *yaoi* moniker has traditionally applied to a more mature audience

and more graphic images, the terms are used interchangeably by today's teens.

I have learned several things from this small survey. One of the lessons should have been obvious—be aware of building a balanced collection reflecting the interests of all your users and potential users. Just because the girls were the most vocal does not mean they were the only ones reading. I had the evidence in my circulation reports as well that the boys books were moving too, and they were underrepresented.

I also learned that my instinct was right. There are three basic groups reading them, and I had pretty accurately pegged those groups. One question I could have asked is if there had been any change in their other library habits since they began coming in for manga. Did the manga lead them to other library resources? I know several of them have built wonderful relationships with Linda, one of our paraprofessionals, who has become extremely well read in manga. For those students, I know they have one more adult in the school they feel they can talk to.

I still have a nagging suspicion that there is more here to be researched. I suspect there is something in how these students learn that makes graphic novels appeal to them. If as educators we can tap into that, we have another way to reach these students. Unfortunately I know I did not ask the right questions. While the students overwhelmingly told me that they learned "by doing" over "listening" or "reading," I doubt that they are truly

### Favorite Manga of Niskayuna High School students

- *Naruto*—Masashi Kishimoto
- *Inu-Yasha*—Rumiko Takahashi
- *Rurouni Kenshin*—Nokuhiro Watsuki
- *Only the Ring Finger Knows*—Satoru Kannagi, Hotaru Odagiri
- *Mars*—Fuyumi Soryo
- *Gravitation*—Maki Murakami
- *Fruits Basket*—Natuki Takaya
- *Ceres, Celestial Legend*—Yu Watase
- *Pretear*—Junichi Satou, Kaori Naruse

(Note: not all of these series are held by the high school or would be appropriate for a high school library.)

kinetic learners, more likely some type of visual or spatial learners. Considering the number that said that they did not like math and that none reported any affinity for music, two known learning connections, maybe there is another area of literacy to be explored here. I currently have more copies of the survey at our two middle schools to gather more information, which will hopefully allow me to refine my survey tool and maybe try to ask the right questions. While manga may be recognized as barely more than a fad, it is leaving a mark on a significant part of a generation. ●

### continued from page 24

*Watchmen*

Allan Moore, Dave Gibbons.

DC Comics, 1995.

ISBN: 0930289234

The central story in *Watchmen*: apparently someone is killing off or discrediting the former Crimebusters.

The remaining members end up coming together to discover the who and the why behind it all, and the payoff to the mystery is *most* satisfactory.

We hope you find this anecdote/guide helpful and entertaining. Good luck with all your endeavors! ●

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# Japan Comes to Elizabeth, New Jersey

## A Week of Japanese Entertainment for Teens

Kimberly Paone

**A**t a Teen Advisory Council meeting in late fall 2004, the discussion came around to spring break 2005. At the time, the library's auditorium was being remodeled, and the teens were getting tired of having their programs in a makeshift public space in the library. They were looking forward to when we could return to the fourth floor, spread out, make noise, and watch movies with the volume turned up loud. That's when the idea started to form. Someone suggested we show some anime. Someone else said we should talk about manga. A third mentioned karaoke. Our spring break loaded with Japanese entertainment was born.

The preparations began soon after. One teen in particular, sixteen-year-old Kamil, a longtime program participant and huge anime and manga fan, was extremely excited and began lending me anime features and previews from his own collection. He was practically counting down the days until March. We decided that we would have one program per day during the week of spring break (six days total since we're closed on Sundays): four evenings of anime, one manga swap and discussion and "An Afternoon in Tokyo" featuring Japanese snacks and karaoke. "Karaoke machine" was added to the top of my Christmas list.

After the holidays, the pressure was on to choose the anime that would be featured. Everyone had his or her favorites, and although I am an anime fan, I was worrying about the previewing time that this decision was going to take. Luckily, I remembered to check the Web site of our movie licensing com-

pany to see what would be available to show under our contract. There were five anime films listed: *Cowboy Bebop*, *Millennium Actress*, *Princess Mononoke*, *Spirited Away*, and *Tokyo Godfathers*. Because *Cowboy Bebop* is rated R, we had our four selections. Fortunately, the four titles were approved by the hardcore anime watchers, and I could breathe a sigh of relief. Our library already owned *Spirited Away*, so I ordered the remaining titles that would be added to our collection after the showings.

The manga swap and discussion was nothing that had to be carefully planned out. On any given day in the Teen Department, manga swapping and discussing could be witnessed, so I knew that this program would take care of itself. I have been purchasing huge quantities of manga for the teen collection for several years, so I really just needed to make sure that we were up to date with the latest releases.

As March drew nearer, I started to become concerned about the Japanese snacks I had promised. The wonderful salad bar at the Korean deli down the street featured California rolls, so I spoke to the owner and arranged for a special order of bite-size pieces with a side of wasabi and packages of soy sauce. I went to an Asian market near home and found a huge package of chopsticks for next to nothing (the kids ended up taking home the extras as souvenirs). Then I made a special trip to Manhattan to a little second-floor Japanese supermarket called Sunrise Mart. I quickly found the snack aisle and filled my basket with all kinds of brightly colored, unidentifiable candies. Some were marked with pictures of Hello Kitty and others had drawings

of fruit or chocolate, but otherwise, I figured we'd just have fun being surprised! Thirty or so dollars later, I had a bulging bag of goodies that also included shrimp and soybean-flavored chips and wasabi peas. A quick trip to Sam's Club for a case of green tea, and I was ready to feed the masses.

A little research was necessary where the karaoke was concerned. I had seen *Lost in Translation*, but I needed something more. A trip to a Japanese karaoke bar in New York taught me the protocol: would-be singers visit the bar to obtain a menu of the song titles available and fill out a slip of paper with their request. (Songs were two dollars each!) Singers would then be summoned when it was their turn. The fancy leather-bound menus and the two-dollar charge would have to be forfeited, but a photocopied title list and the sign-up papers were easy enough to do.

Karaoke CD+Gs can be purchased for about the price of a regular CD at Toys 'R' Us, and stores like Best Buy. One drawback is that music being played on the radio right now is not yet available

**Kimberly Paone** is a 2000 graduate of the School of Information, Communication and Library Science at Rutgers University and has been working at the Elizabeth (N.J.) Public Library for nearly five years. Kimberly is very involved with the New Jersey Library Association's YA Section and YALSA. She has served on YALSA's Best Books for Young Adults Committee and Outreach for Young Adults with Special Needs Committee and is currently a member of the Michael L. Printz Award Committee.

on CD+G, so the teens have to content themselves with music from last summer and fall. The karaoke machine I got for Christmas is the MTV STVG-988. It has two microphones (for duets!) and a seven-inch black and white screen for reading the lyrics. It has a pretty strong speaker but a very weak camera.

The preparations were complete, the word was spread among the anime and manga-loving teens, and the time had finally come. So did the rain. About half of the week was plagued with horrible, flood-inducing storms, and because 95 percent of our teens rely on their own two feet to get them to programs, our attendance was certainly affected.

The fourteen teens who showed up to see *Tokyo Godfathers* on Monday evening were early, and I could tell that nothing (not even torrential rain) was going to keep them away. These were anime devotees. Some had seen the film, some hadn't. All were riveted to the screen. *Tokyo Godfathers* (Rated PG-13) is the story of three homeless people (a middle-aged man, a washed-up drag queen, and a teenaged girl) who find an abandoned baby on Christmas Eve. The three don't exactly get along but decide to find the baby's parents, and they set off on quite an adventure. The film is in Japanese, subtitled in English, and is at times humorous, at other times, poignant. As they filed out at the end of the movie, I heard only positive comments, and plans being made to attend the next night.

*Spirited Away* (Rated PG) was a movie that more of the eighteen teens in attendance on Tuesday had seen previously. It is the story of a ten-year-old girl whose parents upset the gods by eating their food, and she has to enter a very strange world to try to rescue them. This film was dubbed in English, but in my opinion, the creepiness factor alone should give it a PG-13 rating. The floating, slime-spewing monsters, the giant baby and his wart-laden mother, the disembodied, rolling heads were almost too much for me—but the teens sat wide-eyed and rapt through every scene.

Most surprising was *Millennium Actress* (Rated PG), a film within a film where a reporter and cameraman inter-

view an aging actress who takes them on an amazingly cinematographic journey through her life. The interview chronicles her lifelong search for a man she met and aided when she was a girl. Many of the teens were disappointed with this film's ending but were impressed with the uniqueness of its art and design. One teen pointed out that he was glad that this one was subtitled, not dubbed.

*Princess Mononoke* (Rated PG-13) is a film I had shown previously at the library, yet some of the fifteen students in attendance had never seen it. This movie's dubbing boasts a long list of Hollywood stars including Billy Crudup, Billy Bob Thornton, Claire Danes, and Minnie Driver, but something seems to have been lost in the translation. The story is somewhat difficult to follow but features a tough girl princess who has been raised by wolves, a brave young man, some talking animals, and lots of crazy, creepy creatures. The teens were already talking about karaoke as they left this movie.

The rainy Friday afternoon of spring break turned out not to be the best time for our manga swap and discussion. Only nine students attended, but that did not slow down the debates over what are the best manga and what are the worst! I emptied a few shelves of the books onto a cart, we spread them out on the floor inside our circle of chairs, and several students brought their own stash from home. No one was willing to trade, as I had feared but expected, but they were certainly willing to show off their collections. Kamil passed around a copy of *Mars* in Polish that he picked up while he was visiting family in Europe the previous summer. He shared with us some interesting anecdotes about manga in Poland—according to Kamil, the books are not available in comic book stores, only gaming stores, and pretty much all of the titles that are available here in English are available there in Polish. Another student mentioned that one could purchase manga in other languages on TokyoPop.com.

The members of the group seemed to like *Hana-Kimi*, *Love Hina*, *Chronicles of the Cursed Sword*, *Ranma 1/2*, and *Silent Mobius* the most. They liked *Pretear*, *Wedding Peach*, and *Ragnarok* the

least. *Gravitation* made both the best and worst lists. There was a very interesting discussion regarding the gay relationship in *Gravitation*, and seventeen-year-old Steve made a very passionate case for the series stating: "It's about love and stalking. It doesn't matter who he is or that he's a guy." He seemed to convince sixteen-year-old Brandon (who had only read the first one or two books) to give it another try.

After about an hour, as the discussion waned, we watched a couple of anime previews to finish out the afternoon, but not before I gathered a nice long list of soon-to-be-released manga titles to order for the collection and an even longer list of anime to purchase (everything from *Castle in the Sky* to *Full Metal Panic*).

Finally the big day had arrived and with it, more rain. But the karaoke machine was hooked up to project the lyrics on the big screen and blast music out of our sound system, the snacks were out, ready to be devoured—and twenty-five slightly soggy teenagers came through the door. We had a blast! Only nine of the teens could get up the courage to actually sing, but the others had just as much fun being audience members. They all enjoyed trying out the Japanese snacks and learning how to use chopsticks. We had a drawing for an authentic Japanese manga, and we were even serenaded in Japanese by Brandon who has started learning the language.

About the week's activities, sixteen-year-old Ruth said, "I loved it, but I wish that we explored a wider spectrum of Japanese culture—not just mainstream." They've already started planning the next week of events like this one (and there will certainly be a repeat performance in the summer) which could include origami, a martial arts demonstration and maybe a tutorial on how to make a Japanese food dish. Hopefully we won't have any rain.

For your own week of Japanese entertainment, here's what you'll need:

- Anime films (approximately twenty to thirty dollars each unless you can borrow them from a teen)

- Viewing rights (price varies)
- Snacks and drinks for each program [I couldn't afford Japanese snacks for every day of the week so we had chips or cookies and juice during the week and saved all the Japanese food for Saturday. I spent about fifty dollars on the American snacks.]
- Manga from your shelves for the discussion (free)
- Karaoke machine (free if you put it on your Christmas list, otherwise one hundred eighty-nine dollars for the model I mentioned)
- Karaoke CD+Gs (ten to twenty dollars each)
- Printed title lists
- Slips of paper for song requests
- Pens
- Japanese snacks (thirty dollars for

candy and chips at Sunrise Mart, fifteen dollars for California rolls, twelve dollars for green tea)

- Chopsticks (two dollars)
- Napkins, plates, cups
- Japanese manga prize (five dollars—purchased at Sunrise Mart)

HAVE FUN! ●

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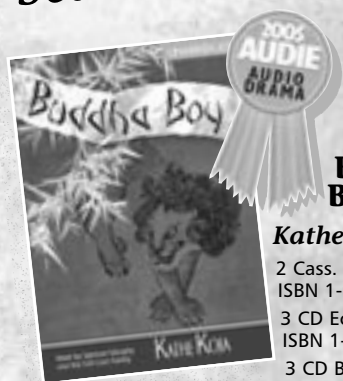
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# I Got Graphic!

## Using Visual Literature Works!

Jodi Leckbee

In mere moments, my students are transported to Poland in the 1930s, and they, like the main character Vladek, are witnessing the horror of the Holocaust. They watch helplessly as German soldiers hang a group of men on the street; they experience the fear these family members felt because they are there with them and can see it on the expressions of their faces. I repeat they can see it themselves. This is the power of the graphic novel, compelling visuals that move literature beyond just a simple collection of words into a form of visual literature. My students are reading a graphic novel called *Maus* by Art Spiegelman. The image and the text work together on the page, bringing the complicated story of a man and his father, one comic strip frame at a time, to life.

I discovered the power of using graphic novels in my classroom, not to replace, but rather to enhance the learning of literary analysis for my students. Some educators assume that the art of great writing is diminished by using visual images to convey what authors so successfully accomplish with words. Thematic structure, the use of metaphor, simile, exaggeration, and other literary tools, are not abandoned within a graphic novel, but rather enhanced by the ethical underpinning and multicultural perspective the artist brings to the table. In many of these novels, students connect visually and can relate personally to the archetypes found within the pages.

**Jodi Leckbee** has been teaching for ten years. She is a graduate of Texas Tech University. After teaching Theatre Arts for seven years, she is now an English teacher at Atkins High School in Austin, Texas.

### Vladek Spiegelman Time Line

- Vladek meets Anja and they get married
- Vladek moves to Poland to live with Anja's family and work in the factory
- Vladek and Anja have a son Richieu
- The Germans invade Poland
- Anja has a breakdown and Vladek takes her to the hospital for a rest
- The Germans take over Vladek's business
- Vladek is drafted into the Polish army
- Vladek is captured by the Germans
- Vladek escapes to Poland
- He and Anja go into hiding
- They try to escape to America
- They are discovered and sent to Auschwitz

### Did you know?

*Maus: My Father Bleeds History* is the name of a Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel by Art Spiegelman which recounts his father's struggle to survive the Holocaust as a Polish Jew, while also following the author's troubled relationship with his father, and the way the effects of war reverberate through generations of a family.

The authorialist portrays different groups of people anthropomorphically as different species of animals: Jews are portrayed as mice (German: *Maus*), Germans as cats, French as frogs, Poles as Pigs, Americans as dogs, and so on.



### Vladek's Personal Journey

14 (Book 1)



MAUS I

Janet's Review 2nd Period

### Sample timeline brochure for *Maus*.

Graphic novels, already popular with teen readers, act as a bridge allowing them to transcend the apathy usually felt toward reading assignments. Because many students are not excited by reading, and peer pressure punishes many of those who are, graphic novels have a "cool" factor, and a teen is rarely embarrassed to be seen reading one. In fact, many teens possess expertise in the area of graphic novels, especially manga, and are willing to share their own personal library and knowledge. Letting students teach me about the reading they love has helped me transfer that same enthusiasm to reading response assignments and class discussions. I have also found great success by pairing a graphic novel with other forms of literature to support a thematic unit.

When I teach *Maus*, I am incorporating the novel into a larger unit on the Holocaust. I like using literature and

film to connect with my students. Most students feel this subject matter is far removed from them. Using *Maus* brings them closer to understanding the idea that this kind of crime toward humanity could happen again. After interacting with the graphic novel, the students will present what they have learned in the form of a brochure. The brochure assignment on *Maus* requests that the students write about their own lives, thereby bringing the experience of Holocaust participants directly to them. My intention is to have my students interact with the experiences that the characters in the novel survive in an emotional powerful way. The art of the graphic novel makes this experience visceral and far more intense. The brochure assignment asks them to follow one character as they move throughout the novel as well as compare and contrast themselves to the character. Students will create diary



**PERSONAL JOURNEY BROCHURE MAUS!**

*Follow one character through the novel.  
What happens to them? How do they feel? How is their journey connected to you?*

**STEP 1:**  
Choose a Character  
(Old Vladek, Young Vladek, Artie,  
Mala, Anja)

**STEP 2:**  
Choose 3 places in the novel to have  
the character create a diary entry. Be  
specific use details from the book. Date  
each entry.

**STEP 3:**  
Think about how this character and their life  
might be compared or contrasted to your  
own life.  
  
Follow the rubric as you create your  
brochure.

**STEP 4:**  
Create your brochure. Be Neat and  
**CREATIVE!**  
  
I must be able to read your writing.

**Personal Journey Brochure  
Rubric**

*Please note how many points you will receive for each section of the rubric!*

1. ____/ 5	Brochure has a title with graphic
2. ____/ 5	Cover includes name of student and class period
3. ____/ 15	Back page includes reflection on your own life
4. ____/ 15	Brochure includes a factual time line following that character through the novel
5. ____/ 15	* includes 3 Diary entries concerning 3 <u>important</u> moments in the book
6. ____/ 5	* includes a quote from the novel that "best" describes that character
7. ____/ 10	* incorporates graphics and art throughout the brochure
8. ____/ 10	* is easy to read and interesting to look at artistically
9. ____/ 10	* has been edited for spelling and grammar mistakes
10. ____/ 10	Overall quality of the work
<b>TOTAL: ____ / 100</b>	

### *Maus* brochure assignment.

entries for their character based on events that occur in the novel. This task requires them to put themselves in the story and give a voice to the pictures they are seeing. The combination of the images in *Maus* and the video I use in class, *Night and Fog*, force my students to visually face the horror of the Holocaust. I stand by the old adage, "Seeing is believing."

When I teach my unit on compassion I use the graphic novel *Family Matter* written by Will Eisner. I like to partner this reading with the novel *Of Mice and Men* by Steinbeck. Eisner, who is considered the father of the graphic novel, coining the term, writes and illustrates honest human stories that can easily win over skeptics that believe that all graphic novels are based on fantasy and superhero formulas. I don't want to diminish the use of superhero comics in an English class; however, what better way to teach the Hero Cycle than by using

actually superheroes? Using superheroes also gives me the opportunity to discuss genre and subgenre with my students. Anyone who believes that all superhero comics are alike just has not read enough comics. There are traditional superheroes, modern superheroes, teen superheroes, teams of superheroes, parodies of superheroes, anti-hero superheroes, and even feminist superheroes. The world of the graphic novel is just as varied as other forms of literature. As English teachers we should read as much of this genre as possible before we can make educated decisions about what is appropriate for our students and our classrooms.

I started down the road of graphic novels by teaching an entire unit using comic books. I set up a gallery of comic book and graphic novel covers around the room. The number of distinct genres found today surprised my students. Just like fiction, graphic novels have many dif-

ferent categories; super hero, fantasy, horror/supernatural, science fiction, humor, crime, real life, historical fiction, myth/legends, non-fiction, educational and manga. Some of these genres are further divided up into subgenres, illustrating the range of material available. But there is more. I haven't even fully opened the door to the world of manga. The manga form of the graphic novel is a phenomenon in well-educated Japanese society, outselling any other form of literature. They have become quite popular in the United States as well and allow a unique opportunity for students to gain a multicultural perspective. Manga requires students to read from the bottom right side of the page to upper left creating opportunities for them to experience reading in a new way. After asking my students to spend time reading several different graphic novel titles, they were given a Multiple Intelligences project to complete on the novel of their choice. With this assignment, I was able to have students think about how graphic novels are written, the art involved in the process and the thought behind the author's intent.

With many standardized tests introducing a visual component to assessment and the overload of visual mediums in their everyday lives, the graphic novel is uniquely poised to tap student's enthusiasm and further their learning. Why shouldn't educators use the power of the graphic novel to help students become better readers and writers? The multidimensional nature of comics and graphic novels allows teachers to think about literature in a new creative way. Exploring the visual world of graphic novels will heighten your students' interest in reading and expand intellectual possibilities rather than contract them. A literary piece, like a graphic novel, is calling on students to use both their analyzing and synthesizing skills, actually requiring more involvement and focus in their reading. Therefore, teaching graphic novels provides educators another way to engage the minds of our students. Not unlike the use of film and music in English classrooms, graphic novels should be acknowledged as a valuable learning tool. Sometimes you just have to see it to believe it. ●

# Get Animated @ your library®

Kristin Fletcher-Spear and Merideth Jenson-Benjamin

**T**he Glendale (Ariz.) Public Library (GPL) has had a summer reading program (SRP) specifically for teens for the past seventeen years. The past three years, the individual teen library councils (TLC) from our three branches met in January to discuss the teen summer reading program. The teens recommended the theme of the program and the format. Although our TLCs are notorious for making outlandish or unworkable suggestions, most of the time we are able to accommodate our teens' requests. But for the first time, this year the teens planned it all.

Prior to the three TLCs meeting together, each council met individually to brainstorm ideas for themes and prizes. Past joint meetings of the three councils have been held on a Saturday afternoon, and fortified with snacks and an icebreaker that the teens groaned at, but enjoyed immensely, the kids would hammer out a program theme and make suggestions about the format and administration of the program. Although the snacks were popular, neither the teens nor the librarians looked forward to this

meeting, as it was usually a multihour ordeal, boring for the kids, and rather like herding cats for the adults.

In order to liven things up, this year the teen librarians in charge of the Teen Library Councils, Greg Kinder, Kristin Fletcher-Spear, and Merideth Jenson-Benjamin, decided to have an after-hours party held at our centrally located Main branch. Our party was by invitation only for TLC members, each of whom could bring one guest. In order to cut down on uninvited participants, we held the event on a Saturday night after the library had locked its doors to everyone else. We mixed business with pleasure, taking turns singing karaoke, eating pizza and ice cream, and discussing the reading program. After a rather horrifying group rendition of "Summer Nights" from *Grease* and some pizza, the librarians showcased the goals of a summer reading program and of the night using a handy dandy three-part PowerPoint presentation that covered the goals of an SRP, theme ideas, and program format ideas. We emphasized to the teens that the program had to appeal to a wide age range (twelve through eighteen) and needed to be simple for the staff to administer.

After the PowerPoint on SRP themes, the councils broke down into groups to brainstorm new theme ideas. Of course, the librarians had to provide parameters and had veto power over the teens' suggestions. Otherwise, we would have inappropriate themes with cuss words or that were sexual in nature. Our personal favorite suggestions that were vetoed this year were: "Is that a book in your pocket or are you happy to see me?" and "Books Gone Wild." We enjoyed imagining the SRP art for that suggestion. An image of a book, its title pixilated out, the book jacket slipping off or an animated image online of a book flashing its pages at the viewer were both suggested by the teens. After three voting turns, the teens finally chose "Get Animated! @ Glendale Public

Library! Teen Summer Reading Program 2005" as this summer's theme.

Our teens really got into karaoke, even though it gave Kristin a massive headache. The quietest girl of all three councils belted out a JoJo song. One teen boy entered someone else's name for karaoke so they both sang a duet of "Sugar, Sugar." An extremely off-key falsetto rendition of "I Believe in a Thing Called Love" by a group of male TLC members drove both teens and librarians from the room.

But soon we had to reel them back in to discuss the program setup. In the past, the teens only suggested the format, and the teen staff made the final decision in the matter. Again, the handy dandy PowerPoint was very useful for working our way through the six plans we were suggesting to the teens. The plans we discussed were the following: Reading Records, Review System, Auction Method, Genre Method (also known as Book Bingo), Prize/Drawing Method, and the Combo Platter, a combination of the previous five methods. Each plan had the positives and negatives noted. It was particularly important to impress upon the teens the benefits of simplicity. When working with our councils in a large group setting, they have the tendency to take a straightforward idea and then build upon it until it becomes completely unworkable. We had to make it clear to the teens that any ideas involving elaborate equipment setups such as giant prize wheels, slot machines, or living chess games were not viable; nor were complicated registration and tracking methods involving databases, tally sheets, or anything else requiring special training for staff.

The teens surprised us by picking the Combo Platter and being inventive in their setup. They chose to keep the Reading Record-style program, which GPL has used for the last several years. This type of program entails teens getting

**Kristin Fletcher-Spear** is the teen librarian at the Foothills Branch Library in Glendale, Arizona. She received both her BA and MLS degrees from Indiana University (IU). She was introduced to graphic novels at IU by reading *Maus* for a literature class. Now she's able to use her love of graphic novels, particularly manga, every day at work with the teens. One day, **Merideth Jenson-Benjamin**—librarian, mother, and super-goddess—woke up and discovered she was a rampaging comics geek. She has no idea how this came to be since it was never a goal or even a dimly realized ambition. Merideth holds two degrees from the University of Arizona, an MLS and a BA in women's studies. She is employed as head chaos generator (teen librarian) at Glendale (Ariz.) Public Library.

a reading log that has X number of pages and hours of reading on it broken down into blocks. As teens work through the log, they receive prizes. It is a very basic reading program that many libraries use. However, our teens added an innovative twist. They liked the idea of the genre method, but instead of being forced to read specific genres in order to receive prizes, they wanted to make it a bonus part of the program.

Once a teen finished a book, the teen's name was entered in a raffle for the appropriate genre prize. At each library, we had gift bags correlating to different genres: historical fiction, horror/thriller, fantasy, science fiction, mystery, romance, comics, and free-for-all good-reads. So, for example, a teen reading the science fiction manga *Planetes* could enter in the drawing either for the science fiction prize or the comics prize. At the end of the summer, a drawing was held for each of the genre bags. Through this raffle system, teens could continue to read throughout the summer for chances at genre specific prizes and were encouraged to explore different genres. Each teen staff member took on the task of creating a gift bag using a budget of fifty dollars with a little extra from the book budget for books. For example, historical fiction could be things from different decades. The fantasy gift bag could include a gift certificate to a popular role playing game (RPG) and miniatures gaming store, and the romance bag could include chocolate and candles. A comics and manga gift bag was enthusiastically endorsed by the TLC members, since like many teens, most are rabid manga and graphic novel fans. The combination of reading record and genre drawings made the librarians excited about the reading program and proud of the teens for their hard work. So we celebrated with ice cream bars and more karaoke. Kristin's headache was eventually relieved by medication but flared up again around the time the group sang along to "Without Me."

Last year's SRP theme "PH34R M% L337 R34D1N 5K1LL5!"—"Fear my leet [elite] reading skills," per MegaTokyo speak—was popular because no one could read it or explain it, but it looked

fantastic on a t-shirt. This year's theme "Get Animated" will be popular with our graphic novel and anime enthusiasts, and it can be expanded in different directions. The nonteen librarians were thrilled because it was a theme they could read and pronounce easily. We, the teen librarians, were thrilled for an entirely different reason, as we are in the process of writing a book on graphic novels for VOYA. Our knowledge of the format, combined with contacts within the comics and anime industry, made the possibility of partnering with publishers and distributors both attractive and possible.

With the theme, we easily saw the connection to graphic novel and anime companies. We could envision cool art permissions and great prizes for the teens. In reality, it took a lot more work than imagined. First we wrote a letter requesting donations to several companies with whom we had built relationships through years of going to comic and anime conventions, writing and publishing about graphic novels, attending focus groups with publishers, being active on anime and comics electronic distribution lists and Web sites and being truly geeky fans of the format. While these working relationships made us comfortable approaching these companies about being sponsors, it still took time to make a letter professional and to the point. We sent the letter to several companies and had a good response. ADV Films, DC Comics, Broccoli International, FUNimation, Viz, Dark Horse Comics, Slave Labor Graphics and Oni Press all agreed to act as sponsors for "Get Animated," in addition to local sponsors including restaurants, movie theatres, and comic book stores. The response to our inquiries was truly amazing! These partnerships provided both the library and the sponsoring companies with great opportunities. We were able to receive prizes we could never have afforded for our teens, and the sponsoring companies got their names in the hands of teens through SRP handouts at area schools and at our library. Also of benefit to our sponsors was the library's not-for-profit status, which allowed them to use any donation to us as a tax write-off. While our connections in the indus-

try made these partnerships possible, we would not have thought to contact these companies without the input of our teens. If we learned anything from working with our teen library councils on this program, it was to think creatively and always consider who you can partner with in order to make the event or program the best one possible.

In an especially nice piece of synergy, the "Get Animated" theme allowed us to further tap into the creativity of our teen library councils. Many of the council members are not only anime and manga fans but also enthusiastic amateur manga artists. One of these artists created our mascot for the Get Animated program, "Danii" named after her creator, Danielle Seidner. Danielle provided the line art for our smiling representative, and a digital paint job brought her to life. Working with our teens on the artwork for the summer program added another chance for teens to have input into the program and created a new layer of involvement.

As we do every year, we will be passing out our program flyer at local schools, and where we are able, doing a brief presentation about our SRP. Our program flyer includes information about the teen SRP, our events and programming information, and a booklist of graphic novels, an expanded version of which we have included at the end of this article. This summer we expect to have over eighteen hundred teens sign up for the reading program, and approximately six hundred teens finish the program. We want to thank our program sponsors for supporting our teens and library. Without them, we would be unable to do the program the teens envisioned.

Planning a reading program with teens can be a challenging and chaotic experience. Mix in karaoke, some devoted manga, anime and comics fans, and librarians willing to try anything once, and you have a recipe for disaster or a chance to try something completely new and innovative. With a little luck, some creative networking, and the hard work of both the teen staff and the teen library councils at Glendale Public Library, we were able to plan and produce a teen summer reading program that met the request of teens and

satisfied the goals of the library. It will be hard to top this for next summer, but we are sure we will manage.

## Recommended Reading

Those titles marked with an asterisk (\*) are intended for older teens.

### Action

Anzai, Nobuyuki. *Flame of Recca* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2003—.

Recca has a dream—to be a ninja, not a very realistic dream for someone living in contemporary Tokyo. But one day unexpectedly he discovers that he has powers of his own! *Flame of Recca* is a ninja action story that focuses on friendships and elemental powers. Another ninja graphic novel series to check out is *Naruto* by Masashi Kishimoto.

Jae-Won, Lim. *The Boss* (series).

Houston: ADV Manga, 2004.

Sang Tae, a sophomore and powerful fighter who only fights when necessary, is respected despite his youth. Guk Do, a thug who has recently returned to school, attempts to regain control. Sang Tae is placed in the middle of things right away in this kung-fu title.

Oda, Eiichiro. *One Piece* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2003—.

This hilarious action series focuses on Monkey D. Luffy, and his pirate crew on their search for the treasure One Piece. Since Luffy ate the cursed Gum-Gum Fruit, he has special rubbery powers, but now he can't swim! And how can you be a pirate without swimming! The crew and their belief in Luffy keep this ship of a graphic novel series floating along.

\*Rucka, Greg. *Queen and Country* (series). Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2002—.

Featuring the burnt out and amoral "minder" Tara Chase, this surprisingly topical series offers a warts-and-all view of international espionage. Artwork aping the European style of realistic backgrounds and cartoony characters gives this series a distinctive look.

Togashi, Yoshihiro. *Yu Yu Hakusho* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2003—. When Yusuke dies while performing a selfless act, the afterlife doesn't know what to do with him. So they offer him a chance to come back to life and become a spiritual detective investigating supernatural or spiritual issues on earth for the king of hell; which usually means Yusuke will end up fighting more than just humans.

### Comedy

Azuma, Kiyohiko. *Azumanga Daioh*

Vol. 1–4. Houston: ADV Manga, 2003–2004.

The story of a group of high school girls and their hilarious day-to-day school life are told through a series of four panel comic strips. While thoroughly entertaining and humorous, the story also is heartwarming in showing the friendships one makes during the school years.

Baker, Kyle. *Plastic Man: On the Lam*.

New York: DC Comics, 2004.

Well-known artist Baker's reinvention of the 1940s hero is relentlessly silly and packed with endless sight gags. Baker's idiosyncratic artwork style works wonders here, as this trade paperback (TPB) is a treasure chest of visual humor.

Clugston-Major, Chynna. *Blue Monday* (series). Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2000.

Northern California teens mix it up in this late '80s set series. A parody of the raunchy teen sex comedies of the era, *Blue Monday* boasts strong female protagonists, clean manga-inspired artwork, and the added bonus of soundtrack suggestions for each scene.

Kobayashi, Makoto. *Club Nine* (series). Milwaukee, Wis.: Dark Horse Comics, 2003.

Harou is a lovable, klutzy country bumpkin, who has left everything and everybody she knows to attend college in Tokyo. She works at a bar called Club 9 as a hostess to pay for her apartment. In Japan, hostesses sit

with the customers and provide conversation while continually filling the glasses. Her hostess job leads to some very amusing situations.

Lash, Bratton. *Supernatural Law* (series).

San Diego, Calif: Exhibit A Pr., 2000—.

Where do the things that go bump in the night go for legal representation? To Wolfram and Hart, Counselors of the Macabre, the stars of this fantastically funny small press gem. Full of pop-culture references and some really bad puns, this series might require pushing but will find a loyal audience.

Takaya, Natsuki. *Fruits Basket* (series).

Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2004—.

After Tohru Honda is discovered living in a tent on their property, the Sohma family invites her to live with them. She's happy to cook and clean for them, but things get hilariously sticky when she accidentally discovers their family secret—when hugged by members of the opposite sex they transform into their Chinese zodiac animal.

### Drama and Realistic Fiction

Adachi, Misturu. *Short Program* Vol. 1 and 2. San Francisco: VIZ, 2004.

Adachi proves his mastery of short stories in these volumes. While the black and white art is an older, simplistic style, the stories told are international and timeless. Whether it is a repairman fixing a stereo for the girl he likes or the supertall student who celebrates his track star friend's success, Adachi captures the characters' emotions at major moments in their lives. The stories will warm the readers' hearts with their dramatic touches of human life and relationships.

\*Clowes, Daniel. *Ghost World*. Seattle, Wash.: Fantagraphics, 2001.

A series of short vignettes detailing the end of a friendship between two alienated and foul-mouthed teen girls, this book received a lot of attention when the eponymous movie debuted. The graphic novel is equally worth checking out as it features solid writing and interesting three-toned art.

Ikezawa, Satomi. *Othello* (series). New York: Del Ray, 2004—.

Split personalities come to life in this manga series. Yaya is a sweet high school girl who secretly loves to costume play or “cosplay.” (Cosplay refers to fans who dress up as anime, manga, or video game characters. Often, they will re-enact scenes during masquerade competitions at anime conventions.) Yaya’s friends are cruel and abusive. Whenever Yaya gets angry and sees her reflection, she becomes Nana, the tough and confident personality.

Thompson, Craig. *Blankets*. Marietta, Ga.: Top Shelf, 2003.

The story of an introverted young man’s first love and his voyage of self-discovery, this quiet TPB touches everyone who reads it. Soft-edged black and white artwork contributes to the lyrical and sad story.

\*Kim, Derek Kirk. *Same Difference and Other Stories*. Marietta, Ga.: Top Shelf, 2004.

Simon and his friend Nancy, two Korean-American, San Francisco-area twenty-somethings, return to Simon’s hometown of Pacifica, and Simon ends up reminiscing about his high school days. Not much happens in this quiet graphic novel, but the unique perspective and clean artwork will win you over.

\*Yoshida, Akimi. *Banana Fish* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2004—.

New York, 1985: Youth gang leader Ash Lynx receives an address and drug samples from a dying man whose last words are “Banana Fish.” Behind this mysterious drug is a violent conspiracy that involves not only the mafia and the Chinese Triad, but begins with the U.S. Government. One of the most well-known and beloved shojo titles of the 80s, with shonen-ai undertones, it has cross-over appeal for both sexes.

## Fantasy

CLAMP. *Tsubasa: RESERVoIR CHRoNICLE* (series). New York: Del Ray, 2004—.

In this new series using many old and familiar characters, CLAMP uses a method typically only seen in the superhero genre of American comics—the crossover. Sakura and Syaoran from *Cardcaptor Sakura* are back but not as cardcaptors. Sakura is the Princess of Clow and Syaoran is her childhood friend. When Sakura enters an archeological dig site, a mystical occurrence causes all of Sakura’s memories and thus her life force to leave her body and be flung through multiple dimensions. With the help of Yuko, the space-time witch, Syaoran, Sakura, and two other adventurers, Fai and Kurogane, travel through the dimensions to retrieve Sakura’s memories one by one. This series is recommended for collections that already have CLAMP material.

\*Gaiman, Neil. *Sandman: Endless Nights*. New York: Vertigo Comics, 2003.

Acting as both a coda and introduction to the Sandman series, *Endless Nights* tells one story for each of eight siblings: Endless, Destiny, Death, Dream, Desire, Despair, Destruction, and Delirium. Illustrated by a who’s-who of comic artists, this mature readers’ title will whet your appetite for the rest of the Sandman series.

Irwin, Jane. *Vögelein: Clockwork Faerie*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Fiery Studios, 2003.

This lyrically drawn, well-written comic is about an automaton who has become more than the sum of her parts, and her search for a new life mate is a small press gem. Difficult to find, this TPB’s rich tapestry of urban fantasy and historical fiction is worth seeking out.

Tamura, Yumi. *Basara* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2003—.

Set in the distant future, Sarasa must lead her people and become the Child of Destiny after the Red King’s army kills her twin brother Tarata. Now masquerading as Tarata, Sarasa must find the strength to protect her people and take revenge upon the Red King. Since this is a manga writ-

ten for girls, a romance blossoms during a chance meeting at a hot spring introducing a man named Shuri to Sarasa. Little do they know that they are meeting the one person that they would do anything to destroy—Tarata and the Red King.

Watase, Yu. *Alice 19th* Vol. 1–7. San Francisco: VIZ, 2003–2004.

In this fantasy set in modern-day Tokyo, Alice learns that words have power. When she says that she wishes her sister would disappear, her sister does just that. Mayura disappears into her soul that has become corrupted with hatred. Now Alice and her friends must become Lotus masters, those who control the power of words, to save Mayura from her corrupted soul.

\*Willingham, Bill. *Fables* (series). New York: DC Comics, 2002—.

Having been driven from their homes by a nameless Adversary, the residents of the fairytale lands have taken up residence in an apartment building in New York City. Focusing mostly on Vice-Mayor Snow White and house detective Bigby Wolf, this TPB series manages to both mock and honor fairytale conventions.

## Historical Fiction

\*Cruse, Howard. *Stuck Rubber Baby*. New York: DC Comics, 2001.

The racial tensions of the 1960s come to life in this overlooked graphic crime novel. As one young man joins the fight for racial equality, he comes to terms with his own sexuality. Gorgeous, evocative artwork brings the period and the characters to life.

Eisner, Will. *A Contract with God and other Tenement Stories*. New York: DC Comics, 1996.

It could be argued that Will Eisner invented modern comics, and this collection of short stories set in a Jewish tenement in the 1930s shows the master at the top of his game. Semi-autobiographical and beautifully drawn, this book belongs in all public library collections.

Gaiman, Neil. *1602*. New York: Marvel Comics, 2004.

Yes, it has superheroes. But it also has an incredibly realistic Elizabethan setting, an intricate, yet comprehensible plot, and some of the most textured and realistic comic art to be found today. To tell too much would ruin the experience of this surprising and engaging title.

Kobayashi, Motofumi. *Apocalypse Meow* Vol. 1–3. Houston: ADV Manga, 2004.

This series follows an American reconnaissance team in Vietnam. Using anthropomorphic characters, the Americans are rabbits, and the Vietnamese are portrayed as cats. Ranging from scouting for an ammunition dump to the Tet Offensive to the team's R & R in Saigon, each one-shot chapter focuses on the missions and wartime issues the team faces together. The black and white art is phenomenally realistic. It's a war film come to life, if war films had rabbits and cats fighting.

Tezuka, Osamu. *Buddha* Vol. 1–4. New York: Vertical, 2003–.

Fictionalized characters and stories are intertwined with the biography of Siddhartha, the prince who becomes Buddha. One of Tezuka's more mature masterpieces, the series brings the world of long ago India to life with action and humor. There is nontitillating imagery of slaves and pariahs without clothing, but it is realistic to the times portrayed. Although this series was published for adults, teens interested in Buddhism will want to pick it up.

Watsuki, Nobuhiro. *Rurouni Kenshin* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2003–.

Once known as Hitokiri Battosai, an assassin during the Bakumatsu period, Kenshin is a wandering swordsman who now protects others with his reverse blade sword and will not kill. Kenshin soon meets up with the other characters of this long-standing manga, Kaoru—a swordswoman; Yahiko—a young boy filled with the Samurai Pride; and Sanosuke—a rough and tough

fighter. Together they have many adventures fighting those who want to bring back the samurai and the feudal lord system.

## Horror

Hirano, Kohta. *Hellsing* (series).

Milwaukee, Wis.: Dark Horse Comics, 2002–.

Hellsing, England's secret organization for fighting of the monsters of the world has an ultimate weapon against the things that go bump in the night—Alucard, a loyal vampire. A visually stunning graphic novel that is fun, violent, and not too scary.

\*Hyung, Min-Woo. *Priest* Vol. 1–15. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2002–.

Ivan, an ex-priest who sold his soul to a devil called Belial, is the only thing standing in the way of the dark lord Temozarella's resurrection. Starting in the American Wild West but truly encompassing the Inquisition through contemporary times, Ivan fights for humanity's survival with silver bullets while fighting Belial for control over his own soul. Due to the ultra-violent nature of the series, this title is recommended for high school and up.

Ito, Junji. *Uzumaki: Spiral into Horror* Vol. 1–3. San Francisco: Viz, 2001–2002.

Recently Kurozu-cho, a small town on the coast of Japan, has become a weird Mecca for spiral-obsessed and possessed individuals. The stories are interconnected, each one depicting yet another incident of spiral-induced madness, which ends giving readers chills down their spine. With the characters drawn like realistic Japanese teens, the setting in everyday places, and the usage of black, white and grays, this trilogy brings Twilight Zone creepiness to life.

Mignola, Michael. *Hellboy* (series).

Milwaukee, Ore.: Dark Horse Comics, 1997.

While it may require a willing suspension of disbelief (reanimated Nazis! Rasputin! Frog-men!), this Lovecraft-inspired series is pure gold

for horror fans. Mignola uses clean and spare art to illustrate a world where the supernatural is not only possible, but also expected.

Niles, Steve. *30 Days of Night*. San Diego, Calif.: Idea & Design Works, LLC, 2003.

A unique Alaskan setting and some refreshingly angst-free, nonromantic vampires give a classic horror setup—a small town invaded by vampires with slim hope of human survival—new life. Gory artwork, which perfectly matches the blood-stained story, earmarks this one for the strong of stomach.

Whedon, Joss. *Fray*. Milwaukee, Ore.: Dark Horse Comics, 2003.

Melinka, a young girl with unusual strength and speed, is told she is the Chosen One who will fight the blood sucking Lurks. Even nonfans of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* will find much to like about this future slayer tale.

## Mystery

Aoyama, Gosho. *Case Closed* (series). San Francisco: VIZ, 2004–.

Jimmy Kudo, top-rate teen detective trailing after some men in black, is captured and given an experimental poison that instead of killing him shrinks him to a first grader's body! Now using the pseudonym Conan Edogawa, Jimmy is tracking the men in black one case at a time in search for an antidote.

\*Bendis, Brian Michael. *Powers* (series). Fullerton, Calif.: Image Comics, 2000–.

In a world where superbeings fight climactic battles in the sky, two everyday detectives do their jobs, patrolling the world of the Powers. A germinal crimes and capes story, Powers is notable not only for its powerful writing, but also for being the first mature readers comic to employ a distinctive style of animated art.

\*Rucka, Greg. *Whiteout: Melt*. Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2000.

Federal Marshall Connie Stetko was banished to Antarctica for past

screw-ups. Now, she is offered a chance to get off the ice, but only if she's willing to betray those who trust her. A tightly plotted, well-written international mystery, this follow-up to the first *Whiteout* TPB features some of the best synergy between art and text to be found in comics.

**Kanari, Yozaburo.** *Kindaichi Case Files* Vol. 1–12. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003–2004.

Hajime Kindaichi is a cocky amateur sleuth with amazing deductive skills. Each volume is a conclusive murder mystery and can be read in any order. The well-designed mysteries cause readers to use both visual clues in the black and white art and textual clues in the writing to solve the murder mystery. Readers who like traditional whodunits will fall hard for this mystery series.

## Romance

**Mizuki, Hakase.** *Demon Ororon* Vol. 1–4. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2004.

One rainy day, Chiaki brings home the injured Ororon, who turns out to be the King of Hell. They quickly fall in love despite their cosmic differences: he—a demon who kills, she—a half-angel pacifist. While everything isn't always happy, it is always beautiful with the hip art. A slightly different love story that isn't all hearts, love, and happiness, there are slayings, political intrigue, and demons that eat angels.

**\*Murakami, Maki.** *Gravitation* (series). Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003–.

When famous romance novelist Eiri Yuki criticizes Shuichi's lyrics for a new song for his band, Shuichi is determined to prove him wrong. Shuichi pushes his way into Yuki's life and soon their lives entwine together, leaving this series as one of the most popular shonen-ai titles available.

**Tsuda, Masami.** *Kare Kano* (series). Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003–.

Yukino lives for praise. Seriously, she works day and night to get it. She's

not really this nice girl; she'd much rather be reading get-rich schemes than a classic, but she's great at putting on airs. Now in high school, she is all ready to be in the spotlight until Arima gets there first! She sees him as her archrival and when he finds out her real personality, she'd do anything to destroy him. That is until he confesses his love to her.

**Van Meeter, Jen.** *Hopeless Savages* (series). Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2002.

Punk icons Dirk Savage and Nikki Hopeless settle down in the 'burbs to have a family. Now Rat Bastard, Arsenal Fierce, Twitch, and Skank Zero are grown, with trials and tribulations of their own. A series that is truly about love—love between parents and children, between brothers and sisters, between boys and girls, between boys and boys—uses punk imagery and language to hide a warm and fuzzy core.

**Watson, Andi.** *Love Fights* (series). Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2004.

It's a story as old as time: comic artist boy meets superhero-obsessed girl tabloid reporter, boy's cat gets superpowers, boy and girl fall in love, boy and girl torn apart by superhero paternity scandal. Watson invigorates the romance comic genre with the addition of sly superhero elements and his distinctive angular art.

**Yoshizumi, Wataru.** *Marmalade Boy* Vol. 1–8. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2002–2003.

All Miki wants is a normal family, but that's not going to happen with her parents divorcing, swapping partners with another couple, and all four living under the same roof! But then she meets Yui, her new step-brother, and maybe, just maybe, he can ease her pain.

## Science Fiction

**\*CLAMP.** *Chobits* Vol. 1–8. Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003.

Hideki is a student who finds a persocom, a humanoid computer, in the trash. After turning her on and naming her Chi, he discovers that

her operating system has been wiped clean and Chi has strong firewalls protecting her from anybody trying to learn about her. Hideki quickly realizes that beneath her childlike behavior lies something more powerful than persocoms should have.

**Gatou, Shouji.** *Full Metal Panic* (series). Houston: A.D. Vision, 2003–.

MITHRIL, an antiterrorist organization, has assigned Sosuke to protect Chidori, a kidnapping target for various terrorist organizations. His job is to infiltrate her high school and pretend to be a normal high school guy while protecting her, but that turns out to be too difficult for Sosuke, the gun-toting, war-crazed, teenage mercenary! While he protects Chidori from various minor attacks such as guys trying to ask her out, Chidori tries to keep peace at her school and to keep Sosuke from blowing anything else up!

**TenAppel, Doug.** *Creature Tech*. Marietta, Ga.: Top Shelf, 2002.

A scientist who long ago traded faith for facts is confronted with the genuine shroud of Turin, a big blue bug alien, a giant space eel, and a reanimated mad scientist circa 1900. A silly story that masks a mature discussion of theology and acceptance, complemented by dynamic, cartoony artwork.

**Vaughn, Brian K.** *Y the Last Man* (series). New York: DC Comics, 2003–.

After everything else with a Y chromosome dies, the last surviving male Yorrick Brown must embark on a terrifying journey to discover the cause of the holocaust and to find his true love. This series lives or dies depending on your willingness to accept its premise, and rewards readers with unconventional plots and a disturbingly believable dystopic setting.

**Watson, Andi.** *The Complete Geisha*. Portland, Ore.: Oni Pr., 2003.

Jomi is an android, raised as part of a human family, who wants to be an artist. When anti-android prejudice keeps her from making a living with her paintings, she joins the family

bodyguard business. Art forgery, family relationships, supermodels and giant mechanicals or “mecha” are just a few elements included in this beautifully illustrated title. Mecha refers to giant robots or piloted armor suits found in anime or manga.

**Yukimura, Makoto.** *Planetes* (series). Los Angeles: TokyoPop, 2003–.

Hachimaki's dream is to be an astronaut exploring the outer limits of space. However, instead of exploring, he's an intergalactic garbage man. He and his teammates pick up the space trash mankind has left behind in their foray into space exploration. The storyline follows these three teammates and their ruminations about space.

## Superheroes

**Busiek, Kurt.** *Astro City* (series). La Jolla, Calif.: Homage Comics, 1996–.

If you've ever wondered what superheroes are like behind the mask then

this beautifully illustrated series is for you. Busiek and his collaborators bring an amazing amount of thoughtful planning to the sometimes-slapdash superhero genre.

**Punkett, Kelly.** *Batgirl* (series). New York: DC Comics, 2001–.

A mute teenager raised to be the perfect assassin must face up to her past and embrace an uncertain future in this relaunch of the Batgirl series. Pitch-perfect characterizations, some of the most expressively rendered faces in comics, and a very believable teenage heroine make these TPB a treat.

**\*Moore, Alan.** *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, vol. 1, 1898. La Jolla, Calif: America's Best Comics, c2000.

Don't be fooled by the god-awful film adaptation. Moore's team of Victorian crime-fighters, all lifted from fiction of the period, is worth a second look in its original comics form. Staying true to the roots of the

characters, Moore and artist Benedict Dimagmaliw present Victorian London in all its squalor, as well as presenting a new twist on a stereotypical superhero team.

**Rucka, Greg.** *Wolverine* (series.) New York: Marvel Comics, 2004–.

Fanboy favorite and best-known X-Man Logan is given a thoughtful and thought-provoking makeover in this TPB series. Lighter on action than most Wolverine titles, Rucka looks at what makes this enigmatic character tick, while creating some strong and appealing female characters.

**Winnick, Judd.** *Green Arrow: Straight Shooter*. NY: DC Comics, 2004.

Green Arrow, a Silver Age character revised by author Kevin Smith, comes into his own in this TPB by Winnick. Sharply written, tightly plotted, and clearly drawn, this is a good standalone title for those interested in the Emerald Archer. ●

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# Adult Graphic Novels Readers

## A Survey in a Montréal Library

Olivier Charbonneau

**G**raphic novels have taken the library world by storm. This new format for sequential or narrative art is closer to a book and thus resolves many problems public libraries had with comic books, those flimsy booklets teenagers love so much. Traditional superhero comic book editors have jumped on the bandwagon, and new publishers are heralding a modern, more mature age for comics. For example, the Montréal-based Drawn & Quarterly offers many titles for adult readers (NOT sexually explicit). These new narrative approaches, coupled with a more practical format, have made graphic novels a sure hit in public libraries.

Having been raised in Québec, I was fascinated at how English-language librarians saw the comic book and later reacted to the graphic novel phenomenon. In fact, "*la bande dessinée*" (literally: illustrated strips) are as much a part of Québec public libraries as encyclopaedias or novels. These are full-color, usually glossy-paged hard-bound books called "albums" (think Tintin, Astérix, the Smurfs—originally Belgian—and friends). Some institutions even boast collections of more than ten thousand bandes dessinées for children *and* adults. It was certainly the main reason I started using my local library as a teenager, a move that eventually lead me to librarianship.

As my MLIS at the Université de Montréal called for an internship in my final semester, I instantly thought of studying a bandes dessinée collection. Keeping in mind its role in francophone culture, finding an interested library was rather simple. In fact, the Octogone Library, in the LaSalle borough of Montréal, boasts one of the largest collections on the island.

The 73,000 LaSalle residents, of which 25,113 were active users of the library in 2002, accounted for 262,457 visits and 542,289 loans in that same year. At the time of my internship in winter 2003, the adult collection had more than 5,500 titles from French Europe, 600 French, and 75 English manga titles (sequential art from Japan) as well as 650 English-language graphic novels. As the library holds multiple copies of some popular titles, a total of 9,232 documents are available in the adult collection. The adult sequential art collection represents about 5 percent of the overall adult collection, but as a component of our circulation, it accounts for 13 percent of the adult and 11 percent of the overall (adult and children) borrowing.

You might have noticed that I focus on the *adult* bande dessinée collection. There is a separate collection for youth, but initial meetings with the library's management allowed us to zone in on their particular needs. After all, I only had thirty-six working days over four months for my internship, so we had to determine precise goals. We opted to survey the collection's users. The purpose was to identify these patrons' demographic characteristics and to determine their satisfaction with regard to this subcollection.

### Survey Format

After much discussion, thought, and preparation, the final survey had twenty-seven questions and fit on two double-sided legal size pages folded in half, to produce an eight-page booklet (each one manually prepared by this humble ex-intern).<sup>1</sup> Banking on my experience in the direct marketing industry from my past life, I used the Recent-Frequent-Money (RFM) model to build my survey. In a

nutshell, it asks the three main questions retailers have found to best describe customers: How recent was your last visit? How frequently do you visit us? How much money do you usually spend? (This last point I adapted to "How many bandes dessinées do you borrow?") Both French and English versions of the survey were produced, and the latter was reproduced in the appendix of this article.

A large, colorful display filled with questionnaires was left near the collection, and smaller but still colorful displays were strategically placed near the computer lab, reference, and circulation desks. Staff were asked to hand one out when users borrowed a bande dessinée. The survey ran for five weeks (February 13 to March 19, 2003, limited by the internship) and we distributed 450 and received 108 valid forms. Statistical validity is not confirmed, and some subgroups are rather small, but it provides interesting views into the minds of patrons.<sup>2</sup>

### The Results

**More men and all ages**—Sixty-two percent of respondents are men, whereas they account for 40 percent of all library

**Olivier Charbonneau** is a business librarian at Concordia University. As a tenure track faculty member, he is interested in the entertainment industry, primarily digital copyright concerns, as well as comic books, graphic novels and French *bande dessinée*. He is a member of CLA's and ASTED's copyright committees and is in the midst of coursework for a master's in law. Also, he is the vice president of the Arts on Paper Society, a nonprofit organization based in Montréal that promotes graphic and narrative art.

users. It is largely known that men love sequential art, but it shows that we must not discount female users as well, with a respectable 38 percent of respondents. For both sexes, 38 percent are aged fifteen years and younger; 22 percent are sixteen to twenty-one; 21 percent are twenty-two to thirty-nine; and 19 percent are forty and older! It clearly shows that all ages indulge in sequential art.

**Draws motivated users**—Fifty-nine percent of those who responded stated that bande dessinée is the main reason they visit the library, while 85 percent of the sample disclose that they use other library services (novels and computer labs being the most popular). So this collection attracts users that fully participate in the institution. On the other hand, 11 percent of those who replied are male users aged twenty-one or younger who would not have otherwise visited the library. In this case, this collection attracts reluctant users that may eventually use other library services.

**Stable users**—About 75 percent of those who responded have been using the collection for three years or more, while 80 percent visit the library at least every four weeks. Of course, satisfaction surveys usually attract the most motivated cases, so this point is often a fallacy—but it is still interesting to note.

**Give them what they want**—Users were asked to rank their favorite genres. Here are their preferences, in order: humor, adventure, science fiction, police/spy/political, and fantasy. Other choices were available, but they didn't do nearly as well. In order: superhero, historical, erotic, horror, western, drama/romance, and alternative/underground. This is quite use-

ful for collection building and reference.

**Youths love manga**—Nineteen percent of responders stated that they ONLY read manga (Japanese comics such as Pokémon and Dragon Ball), and they are all younger than thirty! Only about 6 percent of those responding were aged thirty or older and admitted reading both bande dessinée and mangas. This is an important trend: the western world is only now waking up to the manga

If you are considering creating a graphic novel collection in your library, build it and they will come!

phenomenon. In 1995, 40 percent of all books and magazines sold in Japan were manga!<sup>3</sup> Expect more and more manga in English and French in years to come.

**Activities for all**—Sixty percent would be interested or very interested in participating in a club, in conferences, or other activities. About half would read more if they were recommended documents based on their genre. There seems to be unanswered demand at this level.

**Satisfaction**—Eighty-nine percent of responders—spanning all demographic characteristics—are either satisfied or very satisfied with the Octogone Library's collection. (Those dissatisfied are unhappy with the size of the English collection.)

## Conclusion

Despite major cultural differences between francophone and anglophone sequential art, they both benefit from a devoted fan base. Furthermore, the introduction of the graphic novel format

is a clear departure from the classical superhero comic book dogma. This will probably lead to a shift in readership, and public libraries should have the foresight to benefit from this trend.

The data collected from this satisfaction survey provide key indications of the wants of a Québec client base, comfortable with the Franco-Belgian bande dessinée tradition. It clearly shows that this collection is a desired and vibrant

part of the Octogone Library. This tool is a definite boon to librarians from all over North America, especially as it attests to the future popularity of English-language graphic novels. In a nutshell, if you are considering creating a graphic novel collection in your library, build it and they will come! ●

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2. Jacques Ferron, *Comprendre, interpréter et évaluer les sondages* (Montréal: Info-Éditique Ferron, 1994), vi, 218.
3. Paul Gravett, "Telling Tales Through Visuals," *Library Association Record* 99, no. 3 (Mar. 1997): 141.

## Appendix: Survey Questions

### For a Better Comic Book and Manga Collection

Did you know that your library has one of the most extensive collections of manga, comic books, and graphic novels (bandes dessinées) on the Island of Montréal? It's true, and we're always trying to touch it up for you. Actually, you might have noticed the improved display cases for the manga collection. (Mangas are comic books from Japan, on the rotating display cases)

In keeping with this desire to offer you better service, we ask you to take a few moments of your time to answer this short survey. Be assured that all the details you provide us will be used for statistical purposes and that this survey will remain confidential. Please fill out this survey only once.

Thank you in advance for your time!

### Validation

Have you ever borrowed from the Octogone Library . . .

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| • mangas in French?                      | yes | no |
| • mangas in English ?                    | yes | no |
| • comic books/graphic novels in French?  | yes | no |
| • comic books/graphic novels in English? | yes | no |

If you have answered YES to any of the previous questions, please fill out this survey.

### Your Use of the Collection

- Are the comic book/graphic novel and manga collections the main reason you visit the library?  
(Yes, I visit the library primarily for the comic book/graphic novel and manga collections; No, I visit the library primarily for the other services or collections)
- How long have you been using the manga or comic book/graphic novel collection?  
(Less than 6 months, 6 months to 1 year, 1–2 years, 3–4 years, 5–9 years, 10 years or more)
- How long ago was the last time you visited the library to use the comic book/graphic novel or manga collection?  
(this is my first time, less than a week ago, 1–2 weeks ago, 3 weeks ago, 4–6 weeks ago, 7–9 weeks ago, 10–12 weeks ago, 13 weeks or more)
- On average, how often do you visit the library for the comic book/graphic novel or manga collection?  
(more than once a week, once a week, twice a month, once a month; once every two months; once every three months; once every six months, I don't know)
- How many comic books/graphic novels or mangas did you borrow when you last visited the library  
(estimate if you are not sure)? (1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, 9–10; I never borrow comic books/graphic novels or mangas, I read them at the library)
- Once at the library, do you use its other documents or services?  
(Yes, I use its other documents or services, specify \_\_\_\_\_; No, I visit the library only for its comic books/graphic novels or mangas)
- Do you use the computer system to find comic books/graphic novels or mangas you want to read?  
(Yes, No, specify \_\_\_\_\_).

### Your Preferences

- Do you prefer mangas or comic books/graphic novels?  
(mangas; comic books/graphic novels; both)
- Order the following genre from 1 to 12, where 12 is your favorite genre and 1, the one you like the least.  
(alternative/underground; adventure; drama/romance; erotic; fantasy; historical; horror; humour; police/spy/political; science-fiction; superhero; Western)
- Do you prefer stories that span many volumes (series) or stories contained in one volume (graphic novels, one-shots)?  
(series, graphic novels, one-shots; both)
- In which language do you prefer to read comic books/graphic novels or mangas?  
(French; English; both)
- How interested are you in works detailing artists' lives (biographies, making-of) as well as essays or books about comic book/graphic novel or manga (history of, analysis, papers)?  
(very interested; interested; uninterested; very uninterested)
- How interested are you in encyclopedias or dictionaries about comic books/graphic novels or mangas?  
(very interested; interested; uninterested; very uninterested)
- How interested are you in events involving comic books/graphic novels or mangas  
(lectures, conferences, book club)? (very interested; interested; uninterested; very uninterested)
- Do you buy your own comic books/graphic novels or mangas?  
(Yes, specify the number of books purchased each year: \_\_\_\_; No)
- Do you receive comic books/graphic novels or mangas as gifts?  
(Yes, specify the number of books received each year: \_\_\_\_; No)

## Your Appreciation of the Collection

17. Regarding the comic book/graphic novel and manga collection in general, are you . . .  
(very satisfied; satisfied; unsatisfied; very unsatisfied)?

For the following points, please read the statement and show if it's true or false for French or English mangas as well as for French or English comic books/graphic novels. Specify your choice by circling:

T, if the statement is TRUE;

F, if the statement is FALSE ;

?, if the statement does not apply or if you do not know.

IN GENERAL,	Mangas			Comic books/graphic novels		
	French		English	French		English
18. The books I want to read are never there	T	F	?	T	F	?
119. I've almost read everything that interests me	T	F	?	T	F	?
20. I feel like all the books are alike	T	F	?	T	F	?
21. I have a hard time finding what I want to read	T	F	?	T	F	?
22. I would read more if I knew which books are good	T	F	?	T	F	?
23. I would read more books if I knew which ones are in the genre I like	T	F	?	T	F	?

## In Closing

24. What is your age group?  
(Less than 12 years old; 13–15 years old; 16–17 years old; 18–21 years old; 22–25 years old; 26–29 years old; 30–39 years old; 40–49 years old; 50–59 years old; 60 years old and older)
25. What is your gender?  
(Female; Male)
26. Do you live in the LaSalle borough (old city of LaSalle)?  
(Yes; No, specify \_\_\_\_\_)
27. Do you have suggestions or comments to improve the manga or comic book/graphic novel collection?

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS SURVEY ONLY ONCE

PLEASE HAND IN THIS SURVEY TO ANY LIBRARY EMPLOYEE

Thank you. By answering this survey, you have partaken in the collection's improvement!

# Teenage Reluctant Readers and Graphic Novels

Clare Snowball

Research has shown that recreational reading decreases as students progress through school.<sup>1</sup> Brown has found that children stop going to the public library between the ages of fourteen and twenty, which quite likely correlates with their not reading.<sup>2</sup> In a discussion between some ninth grade boys they said reading was “boring, it was too difficult, it took too long . . . reading was hard work.” They didn’t get instant gratification from it.<sup>3</sup> Australian author Agnes Nieuwenhuizen has found teenagers “don’t want to read, they’re bored, they don’t think books have anything to say to them.”<sup>4</sup>

As librarians, we all know how important reading is. But why is it so important that teenagers read?

John Marsden, an Australian author of young adult books, notes that a common assumption is that reading is good. “This ignores the fact that some of the most successful and envied people in our society are apparently nonreaders,” for example, sports people.<sup>5</sup> This is not as incongruous as it first seems because he qualifies this with his belief that books are one of the few ways available to help teenagers understand the great passions and dramas.<sup>6</sup>

Krashen has studied the benefits of reading for many years. He has found that children who read for pleasure show improvement in reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary, and they acquire these skills “involuntarily and without conscious effort.” He also notes that people who are well read rarely have serious problems with writing, grammar or spelling.<sup>7</sup> Reeves provides an example of what can happen when a student stops reading for pleasure. Joel was an excellent reader in his first years of school. In seventh grade, he stopped reading because he was

too busy with other activities. On entering high school, he couldn’t understand what he read anymore, and he couldn’t understand why reading had become so hard. His problems with reading came from his lack of reading practice.<sup>8</sup>

Reading can offer a “wealth of experience . . . on both an emotional level and an intellectual level.”<sup>9</sup> If teenagers don’t read, “they are missing out on so much.” There is no getting away from the printed word in everyday life, whether at home, school, or work. You have to read wherever you go—in books, in newspapers, in magazines, on signs, on television, or when surfing the Internet. Reading allows more understanding of a whole range of issues and improves the ability to argue a point.<sup>10</sup>

ALA says reluctant readers are those who, for whatever reason, choose not to read.<sup>11</sup> Teenagers in particular often can read but hate to do it.<sup>12</sup> Stringer and Mollineaux define reluctant readers as those who are able to but “do not possess the desire or the inclination to read.” They note the reasons for this lack of reading are diverse.<sup>13</sup> For example, some young people who hate to read find it difficult and still have bad memories of learning to read.<sup>14</sup>

People will read, if and when they are interested.<sup>15</sup> Reluctant readers will not read just for the sake of reading. They tend to be highly selective when choosing what to read, but they are willing to read when they find something they connect with.<sup>16</sup>

So to get teenage reluctant readers reading, we need to find the elusive reading material that provides interest. Many writers agree that graphic novels could be that special something that provides interest and that a teenager connects with.

Jones notes the overwhelming evidence for the value of comics. He says

the library that carries comic books will “create raving fans of its collections.”<sup>17</sup> Teenage reluctant readers are especially attracted to comics.<sup>18</sup> Crawford says comics are an “invaluable tool for motivating reluctant readers.”<sup>19</sup> Gorman thinks the cover art pulls in those who are “otherwise disinclined to pick up a book.”<sup>20</sup> Mackey and Johnston believe graphic novels appeal to “readers who would reject more traditional fare.”<sup>21</sup> Research undertaken on sixth graders in Austin, Texas in 1999 found the most popular reading choices for all children, regardless of reading ability or gender, were scary books and comic books.<sup>22</sup>

Comics have “low readability levels” and are thus easier for less proficient readers.<sup>23</sup> Crawford mentions the reading level of graphic novels being about that of *Time* magazine, young adult novels, and many adult best sellers.<sup>24</sup> This could be the reason graphic novels are less likely to intimidate a reluctant reader.<sup>25</sup>

The UK Reading Agency had a promotion in February called Manga Mania, which was aimed at teenagers from thirteen to sixteen. It was publicized as a way for libraries to reach those who didn’t think of themselves as readers.<sup>26</sup>

Why are comics so popular with teenagers?

Teenagers today have so much to keep them occupied and are “surrounded by diverse and increasingly complex media.”<sup>27</sup> Correspondingly

**Clare Snowball** has been a young peoples’ services librarian in Perth, Western Australia for the past three years. This year she stopped working to begin Ph.D. work at Curtin University of Technology on teenagers’ use of graphic novels. Right now she is working towards her candidacy.

their expectations for entertainment are high.<sup>28</sup> They have been raised in a very visual world, with wide-screen television, electronic games, and the Internet.<sup>29</sup> Those ninth grade boys I mentioned earlier find television, videos, and computers far more interesting than reading a book.<sup>30</sup> These are all highly visual activities and necessitate visual literacy.<sup>31</sup> Tony Panaccio was the senior vice president of product development for a reading program developed by the former comic publisher CrossGen. He believes comics are a "natural tool" for reaching this generation.<sup>32</sup>

Steve Kleckner is the vice president of sales and distribution for manga publisher TokyoPop. He likens reading comics to experiencing entertainment on many different levels. "You are reading and watching a story unravel at the same time."<sup>33</sup> Kan believes it is the "visual aspect" of graphic novels that attracts reluctant readers.<sup>34</sup> It could also be the smaller amount of text combined with the "picture activity."<sup>35</sup>

Teenagers who choose not to read because they find it difficult may prefer comics, whose pictures can provide contextual clues to the meaning of the words.<sup>36</sup> The blending of words and pictures in comics allows readers to "see the characters through the illustrations."<sup>37</sup> Stringer and Mollineaux discuss the importance of the pictures in helping readers who "have difficulty in entering the story."<sup>38</sup> Paxton studied a class of eighth graders and found the students could not visualize the scenes, characters, or action based on what they read. The books did not have extensive illustrations and thus "held little meaning for them."<sup>39</sup> Comics could have helped these students with their reading and understanding, "pictures are not only engaging, but also an aid to learning and meaning making."<sup>40</sup>

Are graphic novels a stepping stone to other reading materials, or is it enough that teenagers are reading something? There is some disagreement on this question.

Just getting reluctant readers to read something can help in their discovery of the joy of reading.<sup>41</sup> Carrie Edwards, a

seventh grade teacher in Oklahoma, uses manga in her classes and says, "Even my students who weren't interested in reading readily picked up the books." She encourages other teachers to use them in their classes and although hesitant at first "once they finally pick them up and read them, they realise their value."<sup>42</sup>

Another teacher, Sister John Delaney, says parents would complain their children only liked to read comic books. She would reply, "At least he is reading." Delaney believes comics "are merely a good introduction to books, not an end."<sup>43</sup> Librarian Sandra Rockett believes graphic novels are stepping stones to reading materials at "the next level."<sup>44</sup> Teacher Diane Roy says a graphic novel can become a "bridge to other things."<sup>45</sup> Lebrun agrees, as teenagers get older and their tastes mature, these readers may be drawn to "more sophisticated genres."<sup>46</sup> Krashen has found considerable evidence that comic books do lead to more "serious" reading.<sup>47</sup> Graphic novels specialist of the United Kingdom bookseller Ottakar, George Walkley, says that comics are not just "books for kids who don't read." He emphasizes that they are "proper" books.<sup>48</sup>

A mother of three boys who were all very reluctant to read and had difficulty in learning to read said, "The first thing my eldest boy read because he wanted to was a comic book." A year or two after this, he progressed to reading other books.<sup>49</sup>

With all this evidence as to the importance of graphic novels in motivating teenage reluctant readers to pick up a book, let's hope every library starts or expands their graphic novel collection. ●

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# ¿Es Un Pájaro? ¿Es Un Avión? . . . ¡Es Superman!

## Spanish Comics for American Libraries

Lucia Cedeira Serantes

Since Art Spiegelman's *Maus* won the Pulitzer in 1992, comic art seems to be winning respect and taking the place it deserves in the cultural world, including libraries. Graphic novels and comic books have proven helpful in bringing young patrons to libraries and keeping them inside! Comic books serve two different types of readers:

- **Reluctant readers**—The combination of image and text (visual language) and themes such as action, superheroes, and adventure are very attractive to readers. Jim Trelease, a specialist in reading promotion, explains that when reading a comic, for example *Tintin*, you are reading eight thousand words. The best thing is that the kids do not realize that they are actually reading so many words.<sup>1</sup>
- **Gifted and adult readers**—Graphic novels present important themes, especially social and historical. Works like *Persepolis*, *Maus*, or *Pedro and Me* are perfect examples. Comic books also promote creativity and new ways of expression, create new mythologies, and mix old topics in literature and new formats, like Neil Gaiman's *Sandman*.

University of Salamanca graduate and MLIS at the University of Pittsburgh, **Lucia Cedeira Serantes** currently works at the Young Adult Library and the Research Center part of the Center for Children's and Young Adults' Literature (Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez) at Salamanca, Spain.

In Spain, discovering this positive influence is taking longer despite the country's talented comic authors and quality production. Librarians and bookstore owners are starting to discover the potential and importance of this medium, especially to young adult users—a group always difficult to attract to libraries and bookstores. Some institutions are trying to improve their comic collections and develop programs that work with comics. The following are three such projects:

- *Comicteca de la Biblioteca Regional de Murcia* ([www.bibliotecaregional.carm.es/comicteca](http://www.bibliotecaregional.carm.es/comicteca)): More than twenty-five hundred comics and graphic novels have their special place at the library. Comicteca is a word that is a combination of the Spanish words for comic and library.
- *Biblioteca Tecla* ([www.l-h.es/biblioteques/teclasala/comic.shtml](http://www.l-h.es/biblioteques/teclasala/comic.shtml)): A free bimonthly bulletin covering different topics related to the comic book world; new acquisitions, reviews, and articles featuring authors or works. It is free and available through electronic subscription.
- *Entre Viñetas* ([www.fundaciongsr.es/exposiciones](http://www.fundaciongsr.es/exposiciones)): An itinerant exhibition created and coordinated by the International Center of Children's and Young Adults' Literature. This exhibition tries to show the different styles in comics—American, French/Belgian, and Spanish, among others, as well as important works and authors.

### Comics in Spanish: Why?

The U.S. Census 2000 shows that Hispanics are the fastest growing ethnic

group in the United States, becoming the largest minority in the country. This fact supports the increasing attention that this population is receiving from different institutions. Libraries are also addressing the issue of serving this burgeoning group of patrons. Materials in Spanish are being bought, Web pages in Spanish built, and activities and services developed to reach out and answer the needs of the Hispanic population.

So, what do comics and graphic novels have to do with all this? As we established before, graphic novels and comic books collections have the potential to entice young adults into the library. Is this also true when librarians work with Hispanic young adults? "Yes" would be the right answer, and Spanish comic books can be helpful to libraries in creating new and exciting ways of further reaching out to Hispanic youth.

There are four important facts about the Hispanic population that librarians should have in mind:<sup>2</sup>

- **Youthfulness**—While 35.0 percent of Hispanics are younger than eighteen, just 25.7 percent of the total United States population is younger than eighteen; the median age of Hispanics is 25.9, almost ten years younger than the entire United States population.
- **Language use**—75 percent of Hispanics speak a language other than English at home, and 99 percent of the time that language is Spanish.
- **Education**—Compared with the rest of the population, Hispanics are less likely to have completed at least high school or college, although this situ-



ation is changing with second- and third-generation immigrants and native-born Hispanics.

- Future—In 2020, 24 percent of the five-to-nineteen-year-old population will be Hispanic: around sixteen million. In the same period of time, the second largest minority group of youth, African-Americans, is not projected to grow, maintaining its numbers at around ten million.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, the Hispanic population is large, young, and bilingual. So comic books can become an important player on enticing Hispanic young adults to the library, as well as supporting literacy and addressing some of their reading tastes.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, not only Hispanics will benefit from Spanish comics purchased; English-speaking patrons can also use these same resources to explore and learn the Spanish language.

## Activities and Marketing Strategies

### Theatre Inspired by Comic Stories

Some recommended works to base the theatre activity on are *Mujeres Alteradas*, *Mafalda*, or *La Parejita*, comic books inspired by daily life situations that also look at these actions with a sense of humor. Encouraging youth organizations and schools to participate and help organize and coordinate this activity will help to establish relationships with those who work with the targeted audience.

### Superheroes with a Spanish Flavor Exhibit

There are many Spanish comic authors that had to immigrate to the USA to develop their career. Most of them are working in classic superhero series, like *Fantastic Four* or *Robin*. Some authors have had the opportunity to develop their own series. Some examples that would be appropriate for this exhibit are:

- David López: *Batman: Legends of the Dark Night* (DC Comics #190, #191), *Fallen Angel* (DC Comics)

- Marcos Martín: *Batgirl: Year One* (DC Comics) and *Breach* (DC Comics)
- Carlos Pacheco: *Fantastic Four* (Marvel, #35–#41, #44, #46, #47, and #49), *JLA/JSA: Virtue and Vice* (DC Comics), *Arrowsmith* (DC Comics), *Superman/Batman: Absolute Power, vol 3*. (DC Comics)
- Javier Pulido: *Human Target: Final Cut* (DC-Vertigo), *Catwoman* (DC Comics, #17–#19), *Hellblazer: Setting Sun* (DC Comics), *Robin: Year One* (DC Comics)

## Same Art, Different Language Exhibit

Over the years some Spanish comics have been translated into English and also many well-known American comics can be found in Spanish through publishers in Spain. Libraries can create exhibits that display the same issue in both Spanish and English. Patrons can choose the language they are most comfortable reading, or they can check both out together to compare the original to the translation or challenge their comprehension skills in another language. This activity can be helpful to encourage bilingual readers to read in English.

## Core Collection

When we refer to comics in Spanish, two other words can be used: *tebeo* and *historieta*. *Historieta* is a generic term for any kind of comic creation. *Tebeo* is a word that was coined in 1968 when it became part of the dictionary of the Real Academia Española de la Lengua. *Tebeo* comes from a children's magazine named *TBO*, which began publication in 1917 and became a best seller, with 200,000 issues sold in 1935, just before the Spanish Civil War. *Tebeo* is used to refer to comics created just for children. In the '70s, *cómic* was introduced to refer to creations for adults.<sup>5</sup> Nowadays, in daily conversation, these three words are used as synonyms with some connotations: *Tebeo* usually refers to Spanish creations, and *cómic* is a generic term to refer to foreign publications.

Spain has several established publishers of comic books and graphic novels: Norma Editorial, Ediciones B, Planeta de Agostini, Ediciones La Cúpula, Ediciones Glénat España. There are also some newcomers like Astiberri, De Ponent, Sins Entido. American buyers now have easier access to some of these works through Public Square Books, the exclusive United States distributor of Spanish-language comics published by Norma Editorial, by far the largest comic publisher in Spain.

While Spanish graphic novel and comic book publication has a long history that, by most accounts, started around the end of the nineteenth century, the following is a selective list whose purpose is to represent the best works in Spanish from the last fifteen years. The list includes not only classic authors but also those whose stories and styles might appeal to Hispanic American audiences as well as a wider group of library users.

Altuna, Horacio. *Hot L.A.* Barcelona: Norma, 2000.

This work was originally written as two stories for the magazine *Top Comics*. It is presented in black and white, something that helps to highlight the plot about racism and violence based on the riots that happened in Los Angeles in 1992. It is expected to be published in USA by Public Square in April 2005.

Breccia, Alberto. *Mort Cinder*. Barcelona: Planeta De Agostini, 2002.

This volume is considered a masterpiece of Argentinean comic production and Breccia's masterwork. The main character is a prisoner that is supposed to be dead but is immortal, and has lived through several historic time periods. He meets an antique dealer who is amazed and intrigued with the prisoner's stories. The Ediciones Colihue edition is available through Amazon.

Díaz Canales, Juan. *Blacksad: Un Lugar Entre Las Sombras*. Illus. Juanjo Guarnido. Barcelona: Norma, 2004.

Awarded Best Work at the 2000 Salón del Comic de Barcelona, this comic book takes place in an American city in the '40s. Detective John Blacksad

is investigating the death of an actress he used to date. This seems to be a typical detective story until you see that the characters are anthropomorphized animals. I Books published an edition in English that is available through Amazon.

**Díaz Canales, Juan.** *Blacksad: Artíc Nation*. Illus. Juanjo Guarnido. Barcelona: Norma, 2003.

This time John Blacksad has to find a young girl that has been kidnapped by a white supremacist group: Artíc Nation. This volume won the Best Art Award at the 2004 Angoulême International Comic Festival. An English language edition was published by I Books and is available through Amazon.

**Durán, Luis.** *Caminando por las Colinas de Arena*. Bilbao: Astiberri, 2004. Playing with westerns topics, Luis Durán tells the story of Caballo Loco and his search for bravery and courage during the war against the new invaders: the white man.

**Fontdevila, Manel.** *La Parejita S.A.* Barcelona: Ediciones El Jueves, 2004. This comic book is a collection of stories that depict contemporary daily life of a young couple living in a Spanish city. Always with a great sense of humor and clean lines in his drawing, Fontdevila presents typical stories like Christmas Eve dinners and fights over who will take the garbage out.

**Giménez, Carlos.** *Los Profesionales*. Barcelona: Ediciones Glénat España, 2000.

Giménez uses the beginning of his career and the careers of other comic artists as inspiration for this work. The stories are set in the '80s, the period where democracy was being established again in Spain.

**Giménez, Carlos.** *Paracuellos*. Barcelona: Ediciones Glénat España, 2000. Considered Giménez's masterwork, *Paracuellos* presents the story of a group of kids in an orphanage after the Spanish Civil War. The story is based on memories of the author, who lived in one of these institutions. This comic book was available in

English through Eclipse Books, but this edition seems to be out of print.

**Ibáñez, Francisco.** *El Sulfato Atómico*. Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2003.

This volume is considered by the critics to be the best story of Mortadelo and Filemón, the classic characters of the Spanish comic production. These funny secret agents have to take from evil hands a spray that makes insects grow to gigantic proportions.

**Jan.** *Monster Chapapote*. Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2004.

Superlópez, the protagonist of this story, was born in 1973 as a parody of Superman. This story mixes humor with social critique as when Superlópez tries to stop a monster representing the oil spill that happened in the Northwestern Spanish coast in 2002.

**Maitena.** *Mujeres Alteradas 1*. Barcelona: Lumen, 2003.

Women, daily life situations, family, and love are the main themes in the stories of this Argentinean comic author. Her stories were originally published as comic strips in newspapers around the world. An English edition of the first issue has been published by Riverhead Trade. The Argentinean edition by Sudamericana is available through Amazon.

**Prado, Miguelanxo.** *Trazo de Tiza*. Barcelona: Norma, 2003.

Diverse characters meet on an island in the middle of the ocean, a simple story that obtained the Alph Art Award at Angoulême and Best Work at the Salón del Còmic de Barcelona in 1994, and was nominated as Best Painter at the Will Eisner Awards and Best Foreign Work at the Harvey Awards in 1995. An edition in English has been published by Nantier Beall Minoustchine Publishing and Graphic No Edition, and it is available through Amazon.

**Quino.** *Todo Mafalda*. Barcelona: Lumen, 2003.

This is a collection of stories about Mafalda, a little girl with a special sense of humor, hates soup and has a

curious group of friends. It was written in the '60s and '70s, but many of the social issues presented here are still relevant. The Argentinean edition from Ediciones de la Flor is available through Amazon.

**Torres, Daniel.** *Roco Vargas*. Barcelona: Norma, 2004.

Roco Vargas is a futuristic private investigator who fights crime—a classic plot reinvented with the brilliant and original style of Torres. An edition in English was published by Dark Horse, and a limited number are available through Amazon. However, other Roco Vargas comics are available. ●

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# The Update

## YALSA Announces 2005 Alex Awards

YALSA has selected ten adult books that will appeal to teen readers to receive the 2005 Alex Awards. The Alex Awards were announced by YALSA and *Booklist* as part of National Library Week, April 10–16, 2005. The 2005 Alex Awards are:

- Almond, Steve. *Candyfreak: A Journey through the Chocolate Underbelly of America*. Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, \$21.95 (1-56512-412-9).
- Cox, Lynn. *Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer*. Knopf, \$24.95 (0-375-41507-6).
- Halpin, Brendan. *Donorboy*. Random House, \$12.95 (1-4000-6277-2).
- Kurson, Robert. *Shadow Divers*. Random House, \$26.95 (0-375-50858-9).
- Meyers, Kent. *Work of Wolves*. Harcourt, \$24 (0-15-101057-9).
- Patchett, Ann. *Truth and Beauty: A Friendship*. HarperCollins, \$23.95 (0-06-057214-0).
- Picoult, Jodi. *My Sister's Keeper*. Atria, \$25 (0-7434-5452-9).
- Reed, Kit. *Thinner Than Thou*. Tom Doherty Associates, \$24 (0-765-30762-6).
- Shepard, Jim. *Project X*. Knopf, \$20 (1-4000-4071-X).
- Sullivan, Robert. *Rats: Observations on the History and Habitat of the City's Most Unwanted Inhabitants*. Bloomsbury, \$23.95 (1-58234-385-3).

"The list created by the 2005 Alex Awards Committee is a diverse group of both fiction and nonfiction titles that will entertain, captivate, and challenge many teens," said Kimberley Hrivnak, chair of the 2005 Alex Awards committee. "These titles speak to realities that affect all of us: unconditional friendship and love, pushing or being pushed beyond one's limits, learning about society's norms and mores, dealing with

adversity, and exploring the world that surrounds us."

The Alex Awards were created to recognize that many teens enjoy and often prefer books written for adults and to assist librarians in recommending adult books that appeal to teens. The award is named in honor of the late Margaret Alexander Edwards, fondly called Alex by her closest friends, a young adult specialist at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. She used adult books extensively with young adults to broaden their experience and enrich their understanding of themselves and their world.

In addition to selecting titles for the Alex Awards, the Alex Committee presents a program at the ALA Annual Conference. This year's program highlighted how to booktalk the Alex winners to young adults.

An annotated list of the Alex Award winners is available on the YALSA members-only Web site, in the April 1st issue of *Booklist*, and in the 2005 edition of *ALA's Guide to Best Reading*. The list without annotations is available on the YALSA Web site: [www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/alex](http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/alex).

The 2005 Alex Award Committee: Chair Kimberley Hrivnak, Allegheny County (Pa.) Library Association; Lauren Adams, Newton, Mass.; Terry Beck, Sno-Isle Libraries, Wash.; Peter Butts, Holland (Mich.) Public Schools; Angela Carstensen, Staten Island (N.Y.) Academy; Mary Hastler, Harford County (Md.) Public Library; Ellen Loughran, Pratt School of Library and Information Science, New York; Karlan Sick, New York Public Library; Ann Theis, Chesterfield County (Va.) Library; and administrative assistant David Hrivnak, Peoples Library, Pa.

## Teen Read Week's 2005 Web Site Launched

"Get Real! @ your library®," the theme for Teen Read Week (TRW) 2005, seeks

to encourage teens to read for the fun of it by promoting nonfiction, biographies, documentaries, realistic fiction, and more. The dates for this year's celebration are October 16–22, 2005. TRW is sponsored annually by the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA), a division of the American Library Association.

The TRW Web site, [www.ala.org/teenread](http://www.ala.org/teenread), includes lists of recommended reading for teens, tips for planning and promoting TRW events locally; TRW products available for purchase, links to the Teens' Top Ten; professional resources for librarians, teachers, and parents; and more. New this year, participants who officially register for TRW on the Web site can download the official Get Real! @ your library® logo.

Now in its eighth year, TRW is a national literacy initiative of YALSA. The number of school library media centers, public libraries, and bookstores that celebrate TRW has grown steadily since its inception. In 2004, more than thirteen hundred participants registered on the TRW Web site.

"By encouraging teens to become more avid readers, Teen Read Week seeks to stem the tide of falling test scores and lower graduation rates among today's teens," says YALSA president David Mowery. Mowery continued, "Programs and activities planned by past Teen Read Week participants have helped to spread the message that teens should 'Read for the Fun of It.'"

Kids Can Press, Scholastic, and Lerner Publishing Group are TRW sponsors. Orca Book Publishers and Pam Spencer Holley are official Friends of TRW. TRW's nonprofit supporting organizations include: American Association of School Administrators, American Booksellers Association, Cable in the Classroom, KIDSNET, Kids Care, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Council of Teachers of English, SmartGirl.org, National Education Association, National School

Board Association, PBS, Speak Up Press, International Reading Association, TeenInk, and The N/Noggin.

For more information, contact the YALSA office by e-mail at [yalisa@ala.org](mailto:yalisa@ala.org), or by phone at 1-800-545-2433, ext. 4387.

## YALSA's New Strategic Plan

The information below was taken from YALSA's new strategic plan, which was adopted by YALSA's Board of Directors at the 2005 Midwinter Meeting. The full strategic plan can be viewed in the "About YALSA" section of the YALSA Web site, [www.ala.org/yalisa](http://www.ala.org/yalisa). This plan identifies key goals and objectives that YALSA will be working towards over the next few years.

### Ten-to-Thirty-Year Planning Horizon: Core Ideology and Envisioned Future

**Core ideology** describes an association's consistent identity that transcends all changes related to its relevant environment. It consists of two elements: **core purpose**—the association's reason for being, and **core values**—essential and enduring principles that guide an association. **Envisioned future** conveys a concrete yet unrealized vision for the association. It consists of a **big audacious goal**—a clear and compelling catalyst that serves as a focal point for effort—and a **vivid description**—vibrant and engaging descriptions of what it will be like to achieve the big audacious goal.

#### Core Ideology

**Core Purpose:** To advocate for excellence in library services to the teen population.

**Core Values:**

- Visionary and passionate leadership.
- Commitment to member service.
- Absolute integrity.
- Open, inclusive, and collaborative environment.
- Excellence and innovation.
- Equity of access for young adults.

#### Envisioned Future

**Big Audacious Goal:** To be the driving force behind all excellent young adult services in every library serving teens.

**A Vivid Description of the Desired Future:**

**The Library**

- There will be a young adult librarian in every public and secondary school library.
- Every public library has a line item for teen services.
- Library staff will value teens as essential library users.
- Every public library has designated space set aside for teen activities.

**YALSA**

- YALSA is recognized as *the* expert in young adult library services.
- YALSA is recognized as the "networking hub" for all young adult librarians.
- YALSA is the largest division in ALA.
- YALSA has wide visibility in the media.
- YALSA provides advocacy training.
- YALSA has the best leadership training.
- ALA leadership consistently comes from YALSA.
- YALSA is more financially independent.

**Teens**

- Teens are the most active group in public libraries.
- All teens are library users and advocates.

**Communities**

- Communities recognize that young adult librarians are the go-to resource.
- Young adult librarians are movers and shakers in the community.

### Three-to-Five-Year Planning Horizon: Outcome-Oriented Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The following thinking represents goal areas for the next three to five years. They are areas in which YALSA will explicitly state the conditions or attributes it wants to achieve. These outcome statements

define "what will constitute future success." The achievement of each goal will move the organization toward realization of its vision. The goal areas are not in priority order.

Strategic Objectives and Strategies provide direction and actions on how the association will accomplish its articulated goals. Strategic Objectives are considered in the three-to-five-year planning horizon while Strategies are considered within the one-to-three-year planning horizon. Strategies are reviewed annually by the YALSA leadership.

#### Goal Area: Advocacy

The value of teen services within the library has increased as the result of YALSA member advocacy.

#### Strategic Objectives:

1. Increase advocacy tools for YALSA members.  
*Strategies:*
  - Create talking points for YALSA members to use in giving presentations. (FY05)
  - Develop online advocacy training materials. (FY06)
2. Increase association resources allocated to advocacy.  
*Strategies:*
  - Develop a plan outlining the additional staff, financial, and volunteer resources to create an effective advocacy program. (FY05)
  - Develop and offer a leadership institute for YALSA members. (FY07)
3. Increase advocacy within the local community.  
*Strategies:*
  - Refocus more resources on creating partnerships with strategic national organizations with local affiliations. (FY05)
  - Develop workshop materials for use within the local community to explain the value of library services for teens. (FY06)
4. Increase advocacy within the library institutions.

*Strategies:*

- Communicate to library schools the need for expanded course offerings in young adult services. (FY06).

**Goal Area: Marketing**

As a result of YALSA's marketing efforts, the profession of librarianship understands the value of the organization's products and services.

**Strategic Objectives:**

1. Increase member knowledge about YALSA's products and services.

*Strategies:*

- Conduct research to assess success of current marketing and communication activities and strategies. (FY06)
- Create and implement an integrated and strategic marketing plan to communicate to members about YALSA products and services. (FY07)

2. Increase awareness of YALSA to library decision-makers.

*Strategies:*

- Collect anecdotal evidence and success stories to support the value of young adult librarians. (FY05)
- Create boilerplate packages to use for PR. (FY05)

3. Increase communications to targeted YALSA member prospects.

**Goal Area: Research**

YALSA members and ALA recognize the organization as a clearinghouse for library relevant teen research.

**Strategic Objectives:**

1. Refocus YALSA's Research Committee to align with objectives and strategies of the strategic plan.

*Strategies:*

- Compile a bibliography of existing research relating to teen library issues. (FY05)
- Develop an annual research agenda. (FY06)



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- Identify gaps in existing research. (FY06)
- 2. Increase YALSA's ability to successfully pursue grants.  
*Strategies:*
  - Pursue appropriate grants for identified research projects. (FY06)
- 3. Increase consolidation of YALSA research data.  
*Strategies:*
  - Create centralized clearinghouse for association research projects. (FY07)
- 4. Increase communication and collaboration with other ALA research entities and activities.  
*Strategies:*
  - Identify board liaison to interact with other ALA divisions on research projects. (FY05)
  - Communicate with known data gatherers about our data needs. (FY05)

## Goal Area: Continuous Learning

YALSA's continuing education opportunities are more accessible to a wider audience of members.

### Strategic Objectives:

1. Increase participation in educational programs.  
*Strategies:*
  - Conduct member and member prospect research to determine education and information needs. (FY05)
  - Research and pursue appropriate collaborative opportunities with other CE providers. (FY05)
  - Develop regional institutes offered several times per year. (FY07)
2. Increase visibility of YALSA as a resource for continuing education.  
*Strategies:*
  - Investigate the opportunity to provide distance learning programs. (FY05)

## Goal Area: Association Sustainability

YALSA is self-sustaining as a result of revenue growth.

### Strategic Objectives:

1. Increase revenue from existing programs and services.  
*Strategies:*
  - Create new professional development opportunities that generate revenue over expenses. (FY05)
  - Add publications that will generate revenue over expenses. (FY06)
2. Increase revenue from new products and services.  
*Strategies:*
  - Create a "Friends of YALSA" donor opportunity to establish a permanent endowment for YALSA operations. (FY05)
  - Create program to obtain corporate sponsorships. (FY05)
3. Increase membership.  
*Strategies:*
  - Create a targeted strategy to increase member retention. (FY06)
  - Develop a targeted campaign to solicit new members. (FY07)
  - Create member-only products and services that will attract new members and retain existing members. (FY07)

Check the Update each issue for the New Member Honor Roll to see who has joined YALSA for the first time! YALSA would like to welcome the following new members who joined in February.

- Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis
- Lerner Publishing Group, Minneapolis
- Oakwood Friends School, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
- Delania Adkins, Pike County Public Library District, Pikeville, Ky.
- Melissa Artman, Springdale, Ariz.
- Lori Benton, Harcourt, New York

- Kerri Bottorff, Celebration, Fla.
- Lise Braden, San Francisco
- Stacy Cameron, Prosper, Tex.
- Lianne Carlson, Clarendon Hills, Ill.
- Jennifer Cook, Indianapolis
- Marjorie Corey, Seminole, Fla.
- Arystine Danner, Chicago
- Rose Dawson, Washington, D.C.
- Donna Fry, Canton, Ohio
- Linda Greenbaum, Old Bethpage, N.Y.
- Gina Harrington, Dayton, Ohio.
- Jennifer Huddler, Wilson, N.C.
- Elizabeth Kidnay, Littleton, Colo.
- Barbara Kiefer, Columbus, Ohio
- Melissa Lang, Fayetteville, N.C.
- Heather Lauer, Gainesville, Fla.
- Katherine Lester, Brighton, Mich.
- Rita Lipof, Hollywood, Fla.
- Carl Lund, Wichita, Kans.
- Linda Lundquist, Naperville, Ill.
- Cecilia McGowan, Bellevue (Wash.) Regional Library
- Karen McKibben, Lincoln Park, Mich.
- Dawn Mendel, Parker, Colo.
- Gail Miller, Tucson, Ariz.
- Catherine Mitchell, Saline, Mich.
- John Pace, Baltimore, Md.
- Deanna Rabago-Lechman, Concord, Calif.
- Lanell Rabner, Springville, Utah
- Cynde Reid, Philadelphia
- Cathy Rettberg, Menlo School, Atherton, Calif.
- Patricia Richardson, Riverhead, N.Y.
- Sarah Savage, Washington, Mich.
- Jennifer Schulz, FPO, AE
- Olivia Sparks, Chandler, Ariz.
- Valerie Sutte, APO, AP
- Terry Taylor, DePaul University, Chicago
- Kathy Washington, Stone Mountain, Ga.
- Virginia Weil, Chicago
- Sandy Wise, University of Georgia, Athens ●

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