

Graphic Medicine in Academic Health Sciences Libraries

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Background

- My experience is based on working first at Lamar Soutter Library (UMMS) and now at Countway Library (Harvard Med)
 - In addition: developing the NNLM NER Graphic Medicine book club kits
- At both institutions I had strong library administration support
- I have dedicated research time for graphic medicine – a scoping review and the weekly blog



What

Why

How



What

GRAPHIC MEDICINE

“Graphic Medicine is the intersection
of the medium of comics and the
discourse of healthcare.”

Ian Williams, MD

Things We'll Keep Coming Back To...

Medium of
Comics...?

Discourse of
healthcare...?



Why



Illustration by Kelly Lund



How

Before Even Starting...

- Consider your community first!
 - What are the attitudes around comics where you are?
 - What research is going on?
 - How can you tie graphic medicine to the library and institution mission?
- Purpose of your collection
 - Browsing? Research? Patient education? Encouraging cartooning?
- Cataloging and Space considerations

Graphic Medicine Collections Statement

“Graphic Medicine, or the use of comics medicine, provides opportunities for participants in healthcare to engage with the experience(s) of health in unique ways. Example areas in the field include instructional and educational comics, graphic memoirs (or pathographies), fictionalized medical encounters, comic pamphlets and posters, comics creation guides, monographs on comic studies, and more.

The newly developed Graphic Medicine collection at Countway Library aims to be a comprehensive, multipurpose resource for Harvard community members and beyond.” (2018)

Two examples



Finding Graphic Medicine Titles

- Helpful tools
 - List by health topic (from 2017): <http://bit.ly/GMList2017>
 - Database by Alice Jagers: <http://bit.ly/GMDatabaseAJ>
 - Graphic Medicine: www.graphicmedicine.org
- Pull from existing collections
 - Countway: <http://bit.ly/HarvardGM>
 - LSL: <http://bit.ly/LSLGM>
- Ask the community!
 - @GraphicMedicine / #GraphicMedicine
 - GM Group on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/graphicmedicine
 - ALA Graphic Novels & Comics Round Table: www.facebook.com/groups/ALAGNCRT
 - NNLM NER: <https://nnlm.gov/ner/graphic-medicine>

Some Lingering Issues

- Medicine – or healthcare. What boundaries are there?
 - For example: does veterinary medicine count? What about considering social determinants of health?
 - If considering social determinants – how do you approach political content?
- Small print, zine, and webcomics
 - This is where much of the most exciting work in graphic medicine is – how do we collect and encourage their use?
- Superheroes. Manga. Books that blur the lines of comics.
- Whose voices are missing?

Thank You!

Let's keep the conversation going!

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