

**The Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A
comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions**

by

Donald Philip Cunningham

Submitted to the School of Information Management,
Victoria University of Wellington
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Information Studies

June 2012

Abstract

With the recent rise of pop culture, the graphic novel has sought its place in our public libraries. There have always been issues over where to place, and how to classify and shelve this often troublesome format. Although there has been much discussion, very little research has been done into this field, and the opinions of those who use graphic novel collections, as well as those who do not, have not been sought in the past. This project aimed to compare the opinions of three groups in regards to the placement and classification of graphic novels in public libraries; public librarians, graphic novel readers, and those who do not read graphic novels. In order to do this, a mixed method approach was taken. Four public librarians from around Otago and Southland were interviewed in order to learn their opinions, while a survey of library patrons was undertaken in order to discover how graphic novel readers and non-readers felt about this topic. This survey targeted users of the same libraries the interviewees worked at, and overall 41 useful responses were collected. The research found that librarian's opinions were not the major factor to effect how libraries dealt with graphic novel collections. They were more likely to be influenced by other factors, like space restrictions. Librarian's opinions also tended to align with those of graphic novel readers, rather than non- readers. The research also provides a strong mandate for public libraries to build separate graphic novel collections, with both readers and non-readers agreeing that public libraries should have graphic novel collections.

Keywords

Graphic novels,

Graphic non-fiction,

User perceptions,

Public Libraries,

Placement,

Classification.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr Chern Li Liew. The help she has given me throughout this research has been invaluable. I would also like to thank my loving wife, Michelle. It cannot be easy when your new husband is spending more time working on his research than he is with you. A special thank you to my mother as well, who has happily given her time to proof the numerous assignments I have completed during my three and a half years of the MIS course. Thank you to the management of the Invercargill Public library who have financially supported my study. Lastly I offer a huge thank you to all those who participated in this research, both the librarians and the members of the public who responded to the survey. Without your opinions there would be no project.

Contents

Abstract	2
Acknowledgements	3
Contents	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Literature review	8
2.1 Background	8
2.2 Shelving and placement	9
2.3 User perception studies	10
2.4 Graphic novels in Australasian Libraries	11
3. Theoretical framework	14
4. Research questions	16
5. Research design	17
5.1 Ethics	18
5.2 Phase 1: Librarian interviews	18
5.2.1 Methodology	18
5.2.2 Pilot study	19
5.2.3 Analysis	20
5.3 Phase 2: Public survey	20
5.3.1 Methodology	20
5.3.2 Pilot study	22
5.3.3 Data Collection	23
5.3.4 Analysis	24
6. Results	25
6.1 Phase 1: Librarian interviews	25
6.1.1 Librarian perceptions	26
6.1.2 Readership	28
6.1.3 Placement and shelving	30
6.1.4 Cataloguing	33
6.2 Phase 2: Public survey	35

6.2.1 Demographic profile of respondents	35
6.2.2 Who graphic novels are aimed at and who reads them	38
6.2.3 Opinions of graphic novels	43
6.2.4 Placement and shelving	44
6.2.5 Classification	46
7. Discussion	50
7.1 The acceptance of graphic novels in public libraries	50
7.2 The placement of graphic novels	51
7.3 Classification	52
7.4 The treatment of graphic non-fiction	54
7.5 How librarian perceptions affect graphic novel placement	55
8. Conclusions	57
Appendices	59
Appendix A: Email to library managers	59
Appendix B: Phase 1 information sheet	61
Appendix C: Phase 1 participation consent form	63
Appendix D: Phase 2 information sheet	64
Appendix E: Phase 1 interview guide	66
Appendix F: Phase 2 survey questions	68
Appendix G: Survey response frequencies	73
References	85

1. Introduction

In the last two to three years pop culture has become a prevalent influence in modern western society. One facet of this pop culture is the comic. Sequential art has been used for centuries, and by numerous cultures, to tell stories, but it is only in the last few decades that this form of literature has been taken seriously by the higher echelons of society. Under its modern name, the “graphic novel” has slowly taken its place in our storehouses of knowledge, our libraries.

While mainstream authors are embracing the graphic novel, Audrey Niffenegger (Niffenegger, 2010) and Diana Gabaldon (Gabaldon, 2010) to name just two, public libraries have been slow to adjust to the format. Little consistency can be found in how libraries catalogue and shelve their graphic novels. The Dewey decimal number 741.5 (cartoons, caricatures, and comics) is often used, although as the size of a collection grows, so does the number of fiction titles within it, and classifying fiction using the Dewey decimal system leads either to unwieldy long classification numbers, or a lack of precision. In other libraries, graphic novels are interfiled with text fiction, or given a collection of their own. Graphic non-fiction, such as Alison Bechal's autobiography (Bechal, 2006), is similarly treated inconsistently. Often it will be found either lumped in with the fiction graphic novel collections, or interfiled with non-fiction.

There is a strong tendency for public libraries to place, or interfile these collections in or around teen areas. Is it possible that the librarian's perceptions of graphic novels are leading them to place, organise and shelve graphic novel collections in ways that negatively impact on public perceptions of the format? This study compared the various opinions of librarians, graphic novel readers and graphic novel non-readers in regards to graphic novel collections. It focuses on the opinions of the three groups in regards to the shelving and placement of

graphic novel collections within the library. Libraries of the future will need to know if, and how these opinions will affect how the library is set out, and used. At present, most of the research on graphic novels in libraries deals with either collection development, or the graphic novel as an educational resource. Wagner (2010) is a good example of such research into graphic novels in academic libraries. There has been little written on user perceptions of graphic novel collections, or in regards to shelving and collection placement for graphic novels. What has been written is not research based.

By gathering data using both quantitative and qualitative methods, this study aimed to provide some insight into user's perceptions of graphic novel collections.

While there is some debate on what counts as a graphic novel, for the purposes of this research, graphic novel will be defined as "any trade paperback or hardcover book consisting of work in comic-book form" (Raiteri as cited in Snowball, 2007, p 1). This means strip comics such as Footroot Flats or Garfield therefore, will not be included. In order to avoid confusion, what could be referred to as regular books i.e. books that are not graphic novels, will be referred to throughout the research as 'text' fiction or non-fiction. Throughout the report graphic novel readers will often be referred to simply as 'reader' and in a similar fashion those who do not read graphic novels will simply be referred to as 'non-readers'.

2. Literature review

2.1 Background

The comic, as described by Scott McCloud as a form of storytelling, using sequential art, (McCloud, 1994, p5) has been in existence for centuries. In the literature, though, the definition used to describe such works has changed over time. The first modern comics were created in the 1930's (Holston, 2010, p10) although under this name the format has never been considered of literary merit. Nyberg (2010) suggests this may be due to the ease of access young people had to comics (Nyberg, 2010, p28). Comics may, therefore, have caused a feeling among adults that they were losing control of what their children were reading. This fear culminated in the senate subcommittee on juvenile delinquency, and the introduction by the comic book industry of a code of conduct limiting depictions of violence and horror in comics (Holston, 2010, p10).

The advent of the comic's most recent incarnation, comes with Will Eisner's *A Contract with God and other tenement stories*. Although there is some debate as to whether Eisner coined the phrase 'graphic novel', he did use the term in order to avoid the stigma associated with the term 'comic' (O'English, Matthews & Lindsay, 2006, p173). It is after this point in the late 1970's that graphic novels took on more adult and literary tones, (Behler, 2006, p17) culminating in 1986 with DC comics release of Alan Moore's *Watchmen* and *Batman: The dark knight returns* (O'English, Matthews & Lindsay, 2006, p173).

With an acceptance of the literary merits of graphic novels, the format is now taken seriously by many academic institutions (O'English, Matthews & Lindsay, 2006, p174). Cassie Wagner's research into graphic novel collections in academic libraries highlights this. Wagner (2010) created a core list of graphic novels using

comic industry awards and relevant works on graphic novels as a basis, and then compared the holdings of academic libraries to this list. While her findings suggest that academic libraries need to better develop their collections, she concludes, "Comics are a vital and growing medium, with importance to scholars investigating both popular culture, and culture in a larger sense." (Wagner, 2010, p47). Both school libraries and public libraries began collecting graphic novels as a tool to encourage literacy skills in teenagers. It is commonly felt that "graphic novels cater to young people's growing affinity for the visual rather than written media" (Behler, 2006, p17). Because of this, much of the modern literature focuses on the use of graphic novels as educational tools. See Walker (2009) as an example of this. As Nyberg (2010, p33) points out, the other main focus on library literature on graphic novels tends to deal with the practical issues regarding building graphic novel collections.

2.2 Shelving and placement

Although there is a wealth of literature dealing with the problem of how and where to shelve graphic novels, at present little of this literature has a sound academic basis. Dickinson, (2007) like much of the current literature, is essentially an opinion piece with little research behind it.

The problem is, according to Tarulli (2010, p213), graphic novels defy traditional cataloguing procedures, making them difficult to catalogue, and therefore access. According to OCLC graphic novels should continue to be shelved at 741.5 (OCLC, n.d.). This, however, leads to problems once a graphic novel collection reaches a certain size. Hartman (2010) tells us the readers would prefer graphic novels in a single separate section, but she also informs us that graphic novels will need to be clearly separated by age to avoid complaints.

It appears, however, that front line staff often do not want to deal with this problem. Tarulli (2010) noticed staff want graphic novels shelved intuitively, while Hartman (2010) noted some staff suggest placement is not important, as comic fans will find the graphic novels wherever they are.

Altogether the literature agrees on nothing, except the existence of a problem.

Tarulli puts it well when she says “our current practices are not sufficient to maintain a growing, thriving collection.” (Tarulli, 2010, pp220 – 221)

It is interesting to note that Black & Highby (2005) investigated using examples from the retail sector, to inform the display and layout of serials. They noted that consumer perceptions are affected by the range, assortment and space allocated to a product, and concluded that "a deeper understanding of the varieties of patron response toward the collection can improve our librarianship." (Black & Highby, 2005, p334). This highlights the need for further investigation into patron perceptions of how libraries shelve and display their collections, including graphic novels.

2.3 User perception studies

There have been very few studies into user perceptions of graphic novels internationally, and none of note in New Zealand or Australia. Most international literature dealing with user perceptions focuses on either user perceptions of some aspect of technology in libraries, or user perceptions of library services as a whole. Maceli, Wiedenbeck, & Abels, (2011) is an example of the first focus, while Ho & Crowley (2003) provides an example of the latter.

In the early 2000s Olivier Charbonneau did however attempt a user satisfaction survey of graphic novel readers in Montreal (Charbonneau, 2005). It is important to note, however, that Charbonneau’s survey was based on the Recent-Frequent-

Money (RFM) model used in the retail industry, and thus was not academic in nature. While Charbonneau gathered a great deal of data in regards to users of graphic novel collections, his results as to what users thought of the collections are a little more limited. He does note that the majority of users were happy with their graphic novel collections, but his findings lack more detail, and he admits that surveys like his tend to attract those who are enthusiastic about the collection (Charbonneau, 2005, p40).

Charbonneau (2005) gives the best picture of user perceptions in regards to graphic novel collections. Unfortunately, like Boyd, (2000) this study targeted only active users of graphic novel collections, so more research is still needed into the wider population.

Penny Guy is one of the few to have conducted recent research into user perceptions in New Zealand libraries (Guy, 2011). Guy's research focused on user perceptions of libraries which charge for their adult fiction collections. Guy's method used an online survey linked to several public library websites in order to gather data from a ranging geographic population of users, and a similar approach could be useful for this research.

2.4 Graphic novels in Australasian Libraries

At this time there have only been a handful of studies conducted on graphic novels in Australia and New Zealand. The most recent New Zealand study into graphic novels was conducted by Bryony Anne Walker (Walker, 2009). Like most of the international literature, Crawford (2004) for example, Walker's study focused on the use of graphic novels as an educational tool, and as a result has little to say on graphic novel collections in public libraries.

A more comprehensive study was undertaken at the end of the 1990s by J R W

Boyd. Boyd (2000) provides a snapshot of graphic novel collections in New Zealand public libraries at a time when many libraries were still feeling their way with this new genre. As well as providing a picture of graphic novel collections within New Zealand, Boyd undertook a survey to gather information about graphic novel readers in the Palmerston North area. His study therefore provides a little insight into the opinions of graphic novel readers.

A more recent study into graphic novels in Australia, however, provides more up to date information on graphic novel collections in this part of the world.

Snowball (2011) conducted research into the role graphic novels play in enticing teenagers into the library. As a part of this, she conducted a comprehensive study of graphic novel collections in Australia. Although her research focused on teenagers, the data she collected on graphic novel collections in public libraries is of great use.

Both Boyd (2000) and Snowball (2011) found that libraries and librarians have a strong belief that graphic novels are predominantly for teenagers. 66% of the libraries in Boyd's study held this opinion (Boyd, 2000, p85). Snowball put this opinion down to a historical linking of the two, spearheaded by YALSA's (The Young Adult Library Services Association) endorsement of graphic novels (Snowball, 2011, p136). This teenage focus is reflected in Snowball's results, which showed that while the majority of libraries in Australia had young adult graphic novel collections, only half collected graphic novels for children, and only just over a third collected for adults (Snowball, 2011, p136).

Snowball also goes into some detail about shelving and cataloguing of graphic novels in public libraries (Snowball, 2011, pp123 – 128). There was, however, very little consistency among the libraries surveyed. The majority had separate graphic novel collections, but others interfiled graphic novels with text fiction.

Some separated their graphic non-fiction out, while others filed it with graphic novels, and yet others interfiled it with their text non-fiction. Only one library admitted still placing their graphic novels under the Dewey Decimal number 741.5. Boyd (2000) found similar inconsistencies in his research. Where libraries in Snowball's study did have separate graphic novel collections, they differed on how graphic novels should be organised. Most used author surname, while 12% shelved by series title. Remarkably, 37% of libraries used no organisation at all in the graphic novel collections (Snowball, 2011, p127).

The research outlined above highlights a lack of consistency on the part of public libraries with regards to graphic novel collections. Here New Zealand and Australia do not differ from the rest of the world. There has been no research undertaken to date on how these inconsistencies affect the end user.

3. Theoretical Framework

This research will be based on the theory of Serious Leisure. Serious Leisure dates back to the early nineteen seventies and according to Stebbins (2009) provides a framework which discusses leisure in three forms; serious leisure, casual leisure and project-based leisure. He goes on to describe serious leisure, "Serious leisure: the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer core activity that people find so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that, in the typical case, they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centered on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience." (Stebbins, 2009, p 622)

The graphic novel or manga enthusiast comfortably fulfils all the criteria associated with serious literature, especially the need for special skills and knowledge, the social interaction aspects and the unique ethos (Stebbins, 2009, p627-627). The graphic novel culture however is uniquely placed, in that it straddles both serious leisure and casual leisure. It is also one of the few forms of serious leisure which often takes place partly within the library walls. Serious leisure provides us with the best avenue to study leisure in connection to the library industry, and this area focuses on information seeking behaviour and human interaction in seeking information (Stebbins, 2009, p630).

This study will look at the graphic novel collections, taking into account an historical view of the comic format. "We must be sure to understand leisure activities in relation to their larger personal, structural, cultural, and historical background." (Stebbins, 2009, p 619). The opinions of librarians, the public and even graphic novel enthusiasts cannot be viewed independently from the cultural and social setting which has developed since the 1930s.

We can assume, then, from this that the opinions of non-readers of graphic novels will be heavily influenced by the social history of the comic format, as outlined in

the background section of the literature review. This historical view of comics has for the most part been negative. Traditionally they have not been classed as worthwhile literature, and as the concerns of American senate in the late nineteen thirties suggests, reading comics was seen for a time as a form of delinquency. The opinions of graphic novel readers should give us insight into how this particular serious leisure grouping views its own world. Because of the reluctance to develop graphic novel collections in many libraries, it is assumed that librarians would tend to align with the non-reader's opinions more than graphic novel reader's opinions. It is possible that libraries could better serve serious leisure groups by gaining insight into how members of such groups search and locate information.

4. **Research questions**

How do public librarian's perceptions of graphic novel collections differ from those of library users, and how does this affect the placement and shelving of graphic novel collections and their overall use?

- What are librarian perceptions of graphic novel collections, and how do these affect placement and shelving of graphic novels in public libraries?
- What are the perceptions of readers of graphic novels toward graphic novel collections, and how are these shaped by the placement and shelving of collections?
- What are the perceptions of non-readers of graphic novels toward graphic novel collections, and how are these shaped by the placement and shelving of collections?

5. Research design

This research utilized a mixed method approach in order to develop a well rounded picture of the research problem. The two studies, Boyd (2000) and Snowball (2011), discussed in the literature review of this study, influenced the decision to use a mixed method approach in this project. Both researchers used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods, and successfully gathered a wealth of rich information about graphic novel collections and their users.

A small scale qualitative study (phase 1) of librarians was undertaken in order to establish public librarian's views of graphic novel collections, where and how librarians think graphic novels should be shelved, and how these views are reflected in the graphic novel collections of the libraries involved. A qualitative approach at this stage provided an opportunity to explore each library's reasoning behind how and where they display their graphic novel collections.

Along side phase 1 there was a larger quantitative study (phase 2) in the form of a survey of graphic novel readers and non-readers, in order to establish the public view of graphic novel collections. The aim of this second study was to receive responses from as wide a demographic in the user community as possible. This way useful data could be obtained about both graphic novel collection users and non-users. A qualitative study here would not have been able to reach as wide a range of participants.

For reasons of accessibility, the research focused public libraries in the south of New Zealand who have graphic novels in their collections. The researcher was based in Southland, and needed to be able to travel to, and interview participating librarians. The managers of four public libraries in Otago and Southland were approached by the researcher after a simple search of their online catalogues

revealed that they included graphic novels in their collections. Of the four libraries approached, two agreed to participate in both phases of the research, while a third could only commit to phase 1.

5.1 Ethics

The researcher gained ethics approval from Victoria University's School of Information Management Human Ethics Committee for each phase of this research prior to any data collection. Written permission was sought from each participating library manager (see Appendix A). The research was fully explained to all participants, (see Appendix B) and consent forms gathered from participants in phase 1 (see Appendix C). Participants in phase 2 were clearly informed, in an information form, (see Appendix D) that by submitting or returning surveys they were agreeing to participate in the research.

All collected data was stored in a password protected form, and only accessible by the researcher. Printed material was stored securely, and destroyed after the conclusion of the research.

Participating libraries and librarians were sent a summary of the findings at the conclusion of the project. Libraries were asked to disseminate the summary to interested parties in their user groups.

5.2 Phase 1, Librarian Interviews

5.2.1 Methodology

Library managers were asked to suggest possible staff members on their team who might be willing to give interviews as part of phase 1. The researcher then contacted each librarian gaining their consent for the research.

The researcher visited each of the participating librarians, and conducted a face to face semi-structured interview lasting roughly half an hour. The interviewer used open ended questioning with the help of an interview guide (see Appendix E). The interviews were recorded using a digital recorder and stored as WAV files. The interviews were then carefully transcribed by the interviewer, and interviewees were sent a copy of the transcription for their approval before any data analysis was conducted.

Due to the small scale nature of phase 1, great effort was made to ensure participant's responses are kept confidential. Participants would not be able to give honest opinions if they thought the manager who suggested them for the study would have access to their answers. For this reason, library managers were only given access to the final findings of the research as a whole.

Due to this phase's small scale, with only 3 to 4 participants, and the close geographical proximity of participating libraries, generalizations will not be able to be made from the data, although some of the findings may be useful to interested libraries. It is important to also note that the researcher is a librarian who works closely with graphic novels in his library. As Bryman (2008, p391) warns, qualitative research does involve a certain amount of subjective judgement.

5.2.2 Pilot study

Before interviewing started, a pilot interview was conducted in order to look for problems with the interview technique.

The pilot interview showed that while the questions on the interview guide kept the interview moving in the right direction, the interviewer would have to work

hard with follow up questions in order to elicit more personal stories and information from participants.

5.2.3 Analysis

Data gathered in phase 1 of this project was analysed using thematic analysis. After interviews, the researcher transcribed each interview, listening to it multiple times in order to avoid any errors. Once satisfied, the transcribed interview was sent to the interviewee for their approval. Any changes or adjustments wanted by the interviewee were made before data analysis proceeded. The researcher thoroughly read and reread each interview transcription, identifying themes using Ryan and Bernard's recommendations as a guide (Ryan and Bernard as cited in Bryman, 2008, p555). The researcher identified themes and subthemes where participant's opinions either strongly agreed or disagreed.

5.3 Phase 2, Public Survey

5.3.1 Methodology

Phase 2 aimed to collect data from as wide a range of people in the areas served by the participating libraries. A random sample of the population was sought by distributing surveys widely throughout the target area. Two similar surveys were employed; an electronic survey and a paper based survey. Each survey used the exact same questions in the same order (see Appendix F) and differed only in their mode of delivery. It was decided to use SurveyGizmo online survey software (www.surveygizmo.com) for online version of the survey.

SurveyGizmo was chosen as it offered a range of design ideas for survey building, allowed easy export of data, and included several reports to help with

analysis. SurveyGizmo offers all this to students for no charge, although more advanced features can be accessed for a price. The SurveyGizmo software also allowed the researcher to ensure anonymity for participants, as it can be set so that the only identifying information kept is the IP address of the computer used to access the survey. The research had neither the ability, nor inclination to link these to individual participants. The electronic survey was made accessible through each participating library's website in the hope of attracting a random sampling of visitors to the library's website. Links to the survey were placed on each website's home page. This ensured that the greatest number of participants would find the survey. It was important not to place links on or near pages that are typically associated with graphic novel users, as this might have scared off potential participants who do not read graphic novels. The paper surveys were placed in various locations around libraries, both near graphic novel collections and in other areas. It was hoped that by placing surveys in areas away from traditional graphic novel readers, higher response rates from non-readers would be achieved. In an effort to include non-library users in the population sample, the researcher aimed to place paper surveys in various comic and book shops around the participating libraries' communities. Unfortunately all of the stores which were approached, declined to participate in the project. This unfortunately meant that the researcher had to settle for a convenience sample taken from the two participating libraries, instead of a random sample taken from the wider communities serviced by the participating libraries.

The survey consisted of 20 to 30 predominantly Likert scale questions. A number of open ended questions were also included in an effort to elicit greater depth from respondents. Demographic information was also collected. The survey was designed to make participation as easy as possible. Filling in the survey would

take a participant roughly five minutes of their time, and by attaching a prepaid envelope to the paper, survey participants could easily return the completed survey without any cost and little effort.

Due to the nature of the sample population, there were concerns over a possible low response rate for phase 2. A random prize draw of a \$50 book voucher was held in order to encourage participation. In order to keep actual survey responses anonymous, it was decided that entry into this draw would be done by either email, if the participant filled in the survey online, or by mail, if the participant used the paper survey. In order not to disadvantage those using the paper method, a second pre-paid envelope was included with each survey. This ensured people would not have to pay in any way in order to participate in the project.

Unfortunately, because of the sampling method, there were no guarantees that sufficient numbers of both graphic novel readers and non-readers would fill in questionnaires. By the second week of the survey, however, it became clear that the survey strategy was working with a comfortable number of respondents indicating that they did not read graphic novels.

5.3.2 Pilot Study

A pilot study of eight surveys, using a convenience sample of the researcher's workmates, was completed before surveys were made available to the public. Four surveys were completed using the online format, while the other four pilot participants were given copies of the paper survey. Feedback was gained on the ease of use of each form of the survey as well as the wording and questions themselves. It was especially important to make sure that participants using the paper survey would understand the instructions, as the paper survey consisted of

three double sided pages, a cover/information sheet and two pre-paid envelopes. It was important that this did not scare potential participants off, or confuse them. The pilot lead to some small alterations in the wording of the survey, but the overall format was felt by the participants to work well.

5.3.4 Data Collection

Paper surveys were spread around both participating libraries on Monday, March 26 2012, with the aim of making the online survey available on the same date.

Only one of the two libraries was able to install the survey link on the correct day, however, with the second library adding the link to its website on Friday, March 30. Remaining paper surveys were removed from libraries on Monday, April 15, and the online survey was closed on Friday, April 20 2012. In this time 44 people visited the survey online. 13 responses were incomplete or abandoned, leaving 31 useable responses. 50 paper surveys were distributed to the two participating libraries, and of these 10 were completed and returned. Before closing the online survey, the researcher manually entered the data collected from the paper surveys into SurveyGizmo so that it would be included in the reports offered by the SurveyGizmo software.

Overall 41 useable responses were collected over the course of the project.

5.3.4 Analysis

Data collected from phase 2 was first analysed using descriptive statistics. The researcher then looked for significant relationships between participant demographics, and user perceptions of various means of organizing and displaying graphic novel collections using Spearman's rho (ρ) to test for possible relationships. Data was also separated into participants who referred to

themselves as graphic novel readers, and those who did not. The researcher then looked for significant relationships between the two groups, again using Spearman's rho to test for possible relationships.

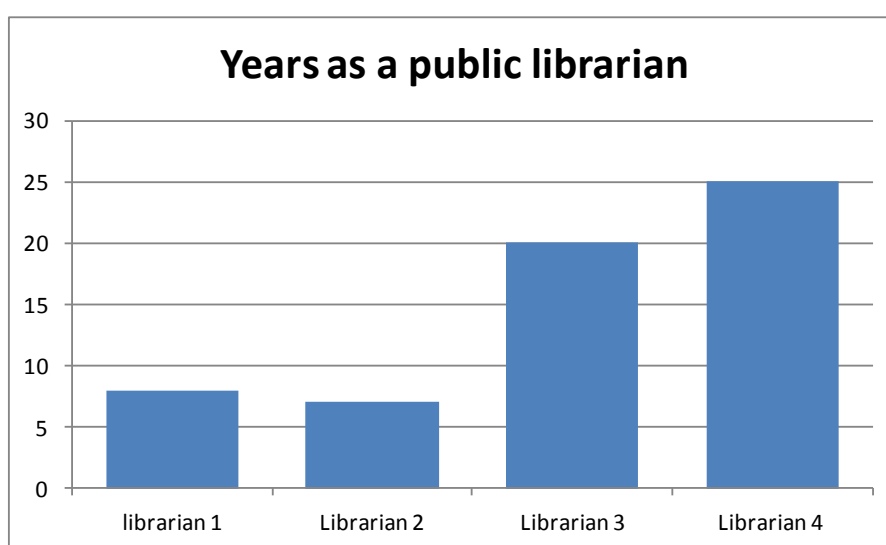
6. Results

6.1 Phase 1, Librarian Interviews

Data for phase 1 were collected during the month of April, 2012. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with four qualified librarians from public libraries in Otago and Southland; three children's and teen librarians and one cataloguer.

The participating librarians had all worked in public libraries for at least 7 years, with the most experienced having 25 years in a public library under her belt.

Figure 1.



Mean = 15 Median = 14

The mean number of years working in public libraries was 15 while the median was 14 years. This showed that the four librarians in question were in no way new comers to public libraries. Two of the four librarians also referred to previous experience in other types of library; one in a university library and the other in a high school library. The four held a variety of library qualifications with librarian 4, the most experienced, holding the older library certificate. Librarian 3 has a post graduate diploma, while the remaining two librarians both have the level 5 diploma in library and information studies. Of the four participants only librarian

1 admitted to reading graphic novels on a regular basis. Librarian 3 regarded herself as an occasional reader, while librarians 2 and 4 did not read graphic novels. Whether the librarians read graphic novels or not was considered important as their personal views of graphic novels might well colour their perceptions. Overall, the sample grouping could be described as reasonably well experienced librarians with a range of professional qualifications. The group was made up of a good cross section of graphic novel readers and non-readers.

6.1.1 Librarian Perceptions

All participants in this research had very similar opinions on how they thought public librarians and the library industry views graphic novels. There was a consensus that the graphic novel as a format has a place in our public libraries, and that graphic novels, as a format, are no longer considered alternative.

Librarian 1: Now that there is more known about them, and that it's not just a comic, and they do have a place, and they do have a value.

Librarian 4: In our particular library, they are just seen as another resource for the children.

Each librarian however acknowledged that this was not always the case. The study found that there had been a prejudice against graphic novels in the past.

Librarian 4: Professionally librarians felt that they were too 'comicy' and that comics were throw away items and so they weren't perceived as being literacy based. So I don't think we were as aware that any reading is good reading as what we are now.

Librarian 3 pointed that in the early days of the graphic novel collection in her library, librarians dealing with graphic novels often had to convince others of what they were doing.

Librarian 3: I think there was a feeling that they felt they had to justify what they were doing, and so there was a lot of, “It’s really good for kids who can’t read” and the need to justify all the time. A lot of conferences, Library conferences, focused on them trying to sell them (*graphic novels*) too, but I think they’ve become quite normalised now.

This research shows that this type of justification does not seem to have left the librarian’s subconscious, as all the participating librarians made reference to the educational benefits of graphic novels. Even public librarians are quick to come up with literacy based reason to include graphic novels in the library. Their appeal to those who have trouble reading, or are reluctant readers were often mentioned by participants.

Librarian 2: I had an example actually yesterday with a young nine year who is dyslexic, and he couldn’t wait to get his hands on them, and his mother says he interprets as much from the picture as he does from the text, and the pictures add to his understanding of the text. So it’s like a verbal cue.

Librarian 4: the boys are drawn more to the art side of it, and like reading that type of book, that’s more the reluctant readers I’m talking about, rather than going for the novels. So it’s a way in to getting them into reading.

Librarian 1: Children in schools are reading them a lot more. They are just becoming more widely known, I think, and that it’s just a different format that kids will read if they are more visual learners, or visual readers.

Librarian 3 was the only participant who did not feel the need to justify the graphic novel collection in her library, suggesting graphic novels had a value in and of themselves.

Librarian 3: it's part of our collection policy to select them specifically for their own nature.

Librarian 3 did however admit that some of the staff in her library still struggled to accept the format.

Librarian 3: Some library staff, particularly people who are cataloguing them or processing them, getting them shelf ready, struggle with the visual aspect of them. They pick up a book, and they would read perhaps something that's quite excessively violent, or has a sexual content in our teen things, and they don't have a problem with it, but because that violence and stuff can be quite visual (*in a graphic novel*) some people do have a problem with that, and I quite often have people wanting to censor stuff, because they are shocked by the visual aspect of it, where as if that were just a story written, and you had to visualise it, would you have a problem with it?

She adds that staff often only see a little of a graphic novel, and need to read the entire work, and put it into context rather than focus on the visual aspect that shocks them.

6.1.2 Readership

In regards to the readership of graphic novels, this research found that while librarians think graphic novels are aimed at all age groups, conversations about the readership of graphic novel collections still start with teenagers as their basis. It is important here to note that when the researcher first approached each library, he was directed to the library's teen or children's librarian in all three libraries. Of

the four participants suggested, only one was not a youth librarian, even though two of the three libraries involved in the research have adult graphic novel collections.

All participating librarians regarded graphic novels as aimed at anyone from young teenagers upward.

Librarian 2: They can be aimed at basically mid-primary up through to teen, going into adult. So they cover a fairly wide age span.

Librarian 3: I think people well beyond seventeen years read that collection as well, in their twenties and thirties. It is very heavily used so it's very very difficult to weed.

Librarian 4: I think they're aimed at all age groups. I think that all age groups do read them.

Librarian 1 noted however that while anyone can enjoy them, libraries tend to market graphic novels predominantly to the teenage market still.

Librarian 1: I think that anybody can enjoy them, but probably if we marketed them as a library, I presume, oh I think probably we would market to the teen group, but I think they can be enjoyed by anybody.

The librarians involved in this research were divided as to whether graphic novels really appealed to younger children, with librarian 4 stating that younger children did not read her library's collection, while librarian 3 suggested some comics did appeal to younger children.

Librarian 4: The littlies don't read them so much, but I think it's the confusion of the little words. They're just not into that format until they get a bit bigger, but I think that they are for everybody.

Librarian 3: Well I guess the only aim is for people between thirteen and seventeen but we have a few younger kids that will... stuff like the star wars and some of the super hero comics

Although the literature has often looked at differences in readership between male and female, only librarian 4 made comments on this aspect of readership in her graphic novel collection.

Librarian 4: it's not gender based which is what it was earlier in the collections history. It was mainly aimed at boys, but now we've got a good mix of both genders.

6.1.3 Placement and shelving

In regards to the placement of graphic novel collections, all participating librarians favoured having separate graphic novel collections instead of interfiling graphic novels with other materials. Librarian 2 noted that one of the professional list serves she followed had recently been talking about this issue.

Librarian 2: the consensus in the majority seems to be that they, even with the non-fiction graphic novels, they are pulling them out and having a special collection, separated and really the issues are going through the roof.

Librarian 4 admitted to giving serious thought to interfiling the graphic novels in her area, but in the end decided it was not in the interest of her user group.

Librarian 4: I did think about interfiling them into the main collection, but I think it would make them too hard for the children who just love reading them.

Despite this there is no consistency in placement between any of the libraries in the study. Librarian 2's library interfiles all their graphic novels as they do not have a large number of titles. Librarian 1 and Librarian 4's library has quite large

stand alone graphic novel collections for children, teenagers and adults. Librarian 3's library interfiles their children's graphic novels with the general fiction, have their teen graphic novels as a standalone collection and interfiles their adult collection in the non-fiction and fiction.

Librarian 3: I have spoken to one of the two selectors for adult GNs, who said that the adult material is split between fiction and non-fiction. Those with strong art work are in the adult non-fiction collection, in the 700s. Those with less art work, are interfiled in the fiction collection - with a spine label indicating that they are GNs.

When it comes to how they display their graphic novels, all participating librarians also agreed that displaying graphic novels face out was their preferred option.

Librarian 4: We try to have as much face out display as we could, because the covers are really catching..... So as much face out display as we can.

Again the reality of how each library operated did not always live up to what the librarians thought was ideal.

Librarian 1: Some of them are spine facing out, and some of them are covers facing out, and the overflow is in stack.

Librarian 3: Mostly they are outward facing, but when things tighten up, we put them on their edge.

The librarians mentioned several reasons for this disparity between how they would like to shelve graphic novels, and how they did shelve graphic novels. Librarian 1 pointed out that this was because of the varied formats included in

graphic novel collections. It is impractical to shelve manga, for example, in the same way as you shelve western graphic novels.

Librarian 1: because of their smaller format, we tend to shelve these with their spines out, and they're the ones that tend to have a longer series, so we put those in stack, all the books after (*volume*)¹⁰.

During the course of the research, it became clear that the most common issue affecting graphic novel placement was a lack of space for graphic novels in public libraries with librarians 1, 3 and 4 all making reference to space issues.

Librarian 1: They do take up a lot of room. Whether that's an issue, I don't know. Shelving is an issue I think. They're hard to display, just because of their nature.

Librarian 4: Because of our room limitations, we have decided to have a middle rung, a middle shelving line of stand ups, so we try to make it only the ones that have got a good spine and are quite big

Librarian 3 pointed out that the children's graphic novel collection in her library is only interfiled, because there is no room in the children's section for a standalone graphic novel collection.

Librarian 3: the children's collection, just by the fact in terms of space. The children's section in this library is tiny. It's one sixteenth a space of the whole lending area of this library, and one third of the issues and borrowing comes from it. It is tiny, and so just by need it's interfiled until something is done... I know the collection specialist who buys for the children's would love it to be on its own, but she's not actually able. It can't happen. It would be at the detriment of the whole collection, and it's as important as the rest of the collection, but not more important.

Until public libraries are able to sort out space issues like these, librarians will not be able to place and display collections in ways they think will benefit their users.

6.1.4 Cataloguing

As suggested by the literature, the participating libraries all catalogued their graphic novels in a variety of ways. The interviewed librarians favoured cataloguing graphic novels in a similar way to text fiction however. They all suggested using a call number based on the first three letters of the author's surname.

Librarian 1: Stand alone graphics, use the standard three letters of the author's surname.

Librarian 4 explained that the reason for cataloguing graphic novels this way comes down to making the collection easy to use.

Librarian 4: it follows the same sequence as our fiction, and we try to make sure children know early on how we set out our fiction. They are used to going and looking just under the alpha

Librarian 3's library, as mentioned above, still catalogues some of its graphic novels using the Dewey Decimal number 741.5, the official reference suggested by the Dewey Decimal guidelines (OCLC, n.d.). Librarian 3 did not agree that this was the best option however.

Librarian 3: which always seemed bizarre to a lot of us because it's not what the books are about.

Her library also catalogued using both the original author and the author of the graphic novel when books were adapted into graphic novel format.

Librarian 3: Author's surname, and quite often if it's, for example, a retelling of someone like Edgar Allen Poe, like a Horowitz or a star wars then, both the new author who's doing the text plus Horowitz.

In addition using the authors surname Librarian 1 also catalogued graphic novels according their series. As she explained, graphic novels series, especially one like Superman or Batman, are often written by different authors.

Librarian 1: If the series is written by different authors we use an alpha of 4 or 5 letters e.g. Spiderman SPID. To make it easier to access for patrons. It's to make the collection sit together.

Although none of the librarians interviewed thought they had much in the way of graphic non-fiction, Librarians 3 and 4 catalogued graphic non-fiction as if it were fiction. They were of the opinion that these items should be viewed as 'graphic novels' first, and then non-fiction second, placing the format ahead of the content.

Librarian 4: They're catalogued as fiction. So even the non-fiction titles, which we only have a couple, are still catalogued as fiction. That's to keep the format together.

Librarian 3: It would have to be extremely specialised to put it in the non-fiction.

This was the opposite view to that held by librarian 2, who thought graphic non-fiction should be classed as non-fiction first, leaving the format as secondary.

Librarian 2: They're Dewey. Unless I think they would be better and easier found, in which case I'll shove them in a fiction collection, but classed as juvenile literature in the subject headings.

None of the participating libraries had considered alternatives to their present cataloguing arrangement. This may be because three of the four librarians felt that their users had no trouble finding graphic novels in their collections.

Librarian 3: we're talking about three shelves, plus some display shelves. It's very browseable.

Librarian 4: I think they are (*able to find things*) because of the way that we've got it laid out at the moment. It's not too large, and because it follows the same sequence as our fiction

The only librarian to differ from this opinion was librarian 2.

Librarian 3: I don't think the borrowers here, unless they're I'd say in their twenties possibly would know to ask us for graphic novels, unless they were a separate collection and prominently displayed.

This was because her library had the smallest collection in the project, and interfiles their graphic novels. She expressed interest in expanding their collection, and separating it out.

6.2 Phase 2, Public Survey

6.2.1 Demographic profile of respondents.

The 41 respondents who answered the survey appeared to cover a reasonable cross section of the library community. Although there was a good response rate from all age groups (the youngest respondent was age 11, while the eldest was 67) there was a higher response rate from those aged under 40 years (see table 1).

The mean respondent age was 34.1 years while the median age was 32. The majority of respondents were female, 63.4%, compared with 36.6 males.

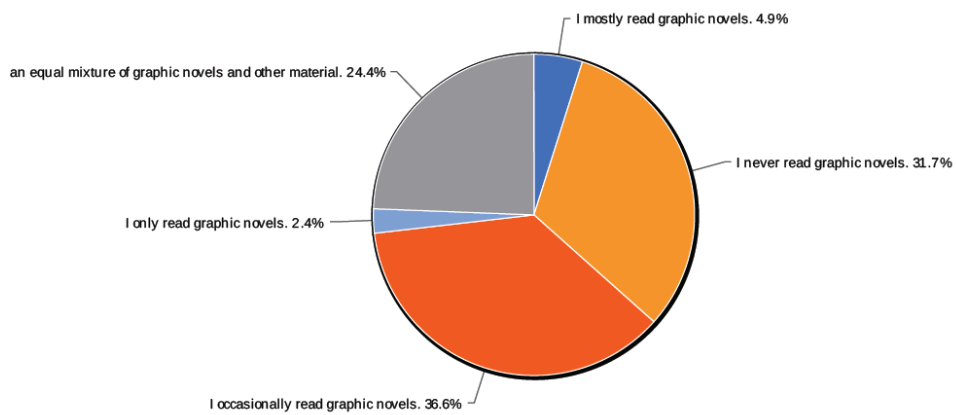
Table 1. Frequency table showing ages of respondents

Age	n	%
10 – 19	9	22
20 – 29	7	17
30 - 39	12	29
40 – 49	6	15
50 – 59	3	7
60 – 69	4	10
Total	41	100

Phase 2 was successful in capturing both graphic novel readers and non readers (see figure 2) with 31.7% of respondents claiming they never read graphic novels. 36.6% of respondents read graphic novels occasionally, while 24.4% read an equal mixture of graphic novels and other materials. A surprisingly low number of respondents said they read mostly graphic novels, or only graphic novels, with just 2 respondents answering mostly and 1 answering only. Just over two thirds of the respondents (68.3%) therefore could be said to be graphic novel readers.

When broken down by age group however, only the 20 – 29 and 30 – 39 year age groups came close to reflecting this almost 2/3 – 1/3 with 71% readers and 67% readers respectively (see table 2).

Figure 2. Graphic novel readership



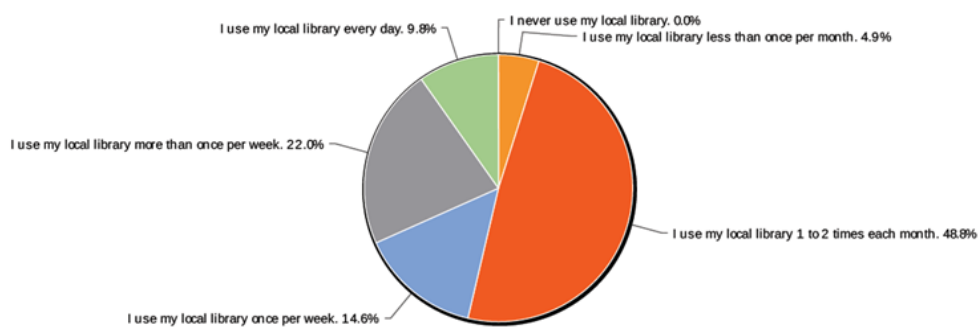
This relationship did not hold in the other age groups, with the 10 – 19 year age group including a disproportionately high number of graphic novel readers (89%), the 40 – 49 year group had only 33% readers while the 50 – 59 year bracket was all graphic novel readers. The eldest age group was split down the middle with 2 readers and 2 non-readers. There was a weak negative correlation ($\rho = -0.395$) between respondent’s ages, and the amount of graphic novels they read.

Table 2. Readership and non-readership by age.

How old are you?	I only read graphic novels.	I mostly read graphic novels.	I read an equal mixture of graphic novels and other material.	I occasionally read graphic novels.	I never read graphic novels.
10 - 19	0	1	4	3	1
20 - 29	0	1	1	3	2
30 - 39	1	0	3	4	4
40 - 49	0	0	0	2	4
50 - 59	0	0	1	2	0
60 - 69	0	0	1	1	2
TOTAL	1	2	10	15	13

As suspected, by not placing surveys away from library settings, the researcher was unable to elicit responses from non-library users. The majority of respondents, 48.8%, said they used their local library 1 to 2 times each month (see figure 3). This was followed by those who use their library more than once a week (22%), once per week (14.6%) and everyday (9.8%). The remaining 4.9% of respondents said they used their local library less than once each month.

Figure 3. Respondent library use.



The majority of respondents were aware that their libraries had graphic novel collections. 73.2% knew their library had a graphic novel collection, while the other 26.8% did not know. Not surprisingly, the number of respondents who did not know if their local library had a graphic novel collection was much higher for the section of the sample who did not read graphic novels. While 54% of non-readers did not know if their library had a graphic novel collection, only 14% of readers were unsure. No respondents thought their public library did not have a graphic novel collection.

6.2.2 Who graphic novels are aimed at, and who reads them.

Participants were asked a series of questions about who they thought graphic novels were aimed at, and who they thought actually reads graphic novels.

Although the research found no strong opinions about who graphic novels were

written for, slightly more respondents agreed that graphic novels were mainly written for adults. A vast majority of respondents felt that graphic novels were not written for children. The research also found that respondents were slightly more likely to agree that teenagers were the main readers of graphic novels. In all three cases there were moderate to strong positive correlations between the levels of agreement between who graphic novels are written for and who the main readers are. The research therefore suggests that respondents believe graphic novels are mainly being read by their target audience.

In regards to adults 29.3% of respondents thought graphic novels were written for adult readers (see figure 4). 36.6% had no opinion while 34.1% thought graphic novels were not written for adults. There was only a slight change when the statement was changed to “graphic novels are mainly read by adults” with 24.4% thinking adults were the main audience for graphic novels (see figure 5). Again 36.6% of respondents had no opinion, while the percentage who thought adults were not the main readers of graphic novels rose to 39%. In each case 1 individual felt strongly that graphic novels were not written for, nor read by adults. There was a moderate, positive correlation ($\rho = 0.627$) between the level of agreement. This indicates that those respondents who agree graphic novels are written for adults also tend to think they are mainly read by adults.

Figure 4. Graphic novels are written mainly for adults.

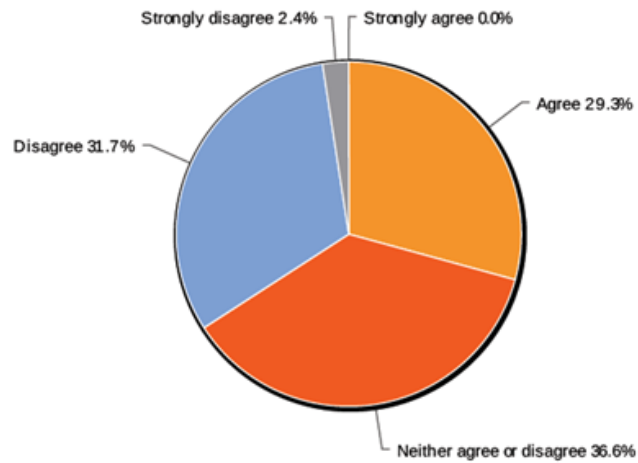
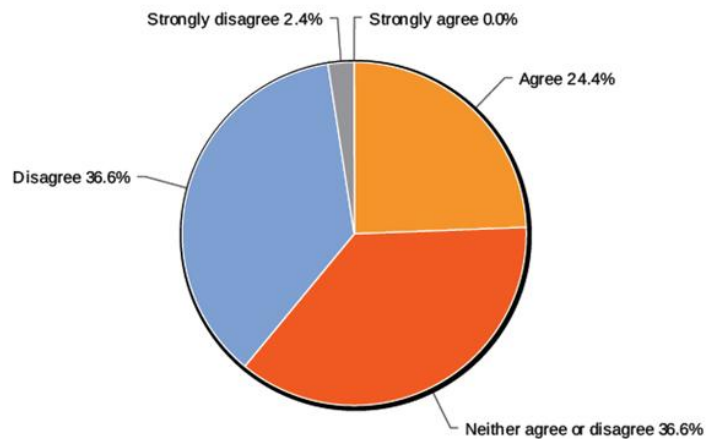


Figure 5. Graphic novels are mainly read by adults.



While respondents did not feel any more strongly that graphic novels were written for teenagers than adults, they were more forceful in their views (see figure 6). 4.9% strongly agreed that graphic novels were written for teenagers, while another 19.5% agreed. At the other end of the scale 29.3% of respondents disagreed that graphic novels were written for teenagers, and another 2.4% strongly disagreed. Respondents were however more likely to think that graphic novels were mainly read by teenagers (see figure 7) with 12 respondents agreeing and 3 strongly agreeing with this statement. Only 7 respondents disagreed that teenagers were the main readers of graphic novels, and a further 1 strongly

disagreed. Here there was a strong, positive correlation ($\rho = 0.726$) between the levels of agreement.

Figure 6. Graphic novels are written mainly for teenagers.

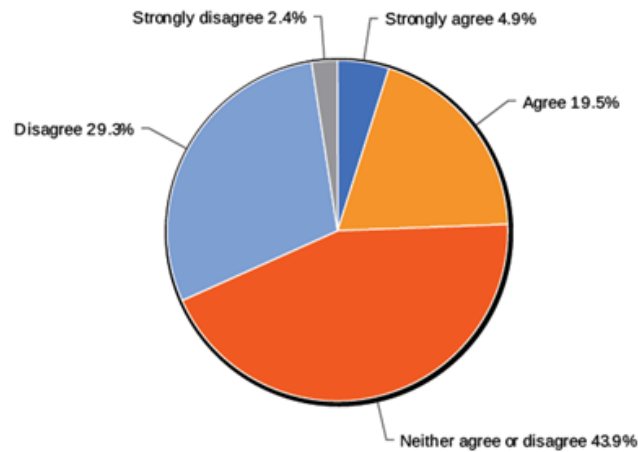
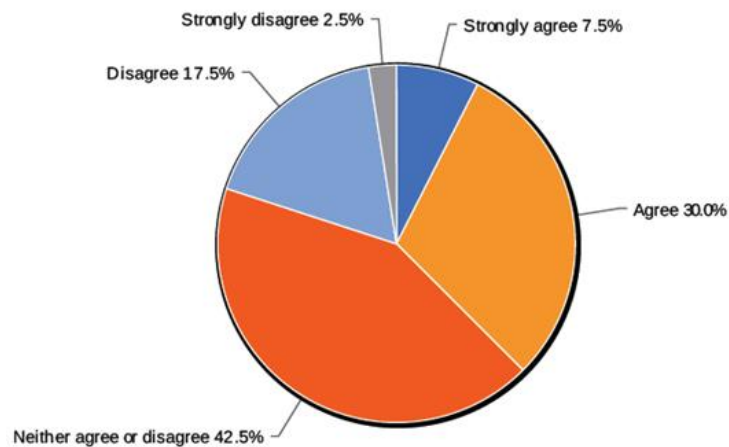


Figure 7. Graphic novels are mainly read by teenagers.



Overwhelmingly respondents felt that graphic novels are not mainly written for children, (see figure 8) with nearly sixty percent of respondents either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with that statement (43.9% and 19.5% respectively). Only 19.5% agreed and 2.4% strongly agreed, and 14.6% neither agreed nor disagreed. Respondents were less willing to agree or disagree with whether or not children were the main readers of graphic novels, (see figure 9) with 2 respondents failing

to answer this question and 30.8% of those who did, neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Figure 8. Graphic novels are written mainly for children.

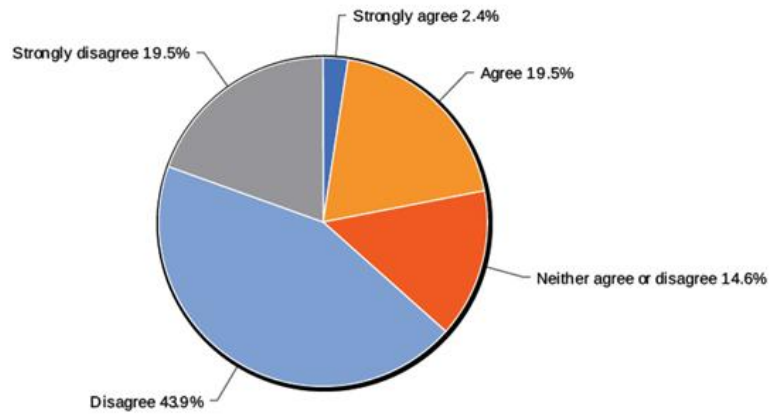
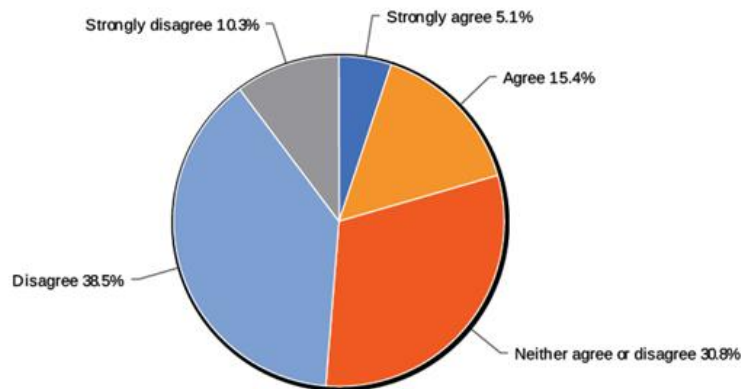


Figure 9. Graphic novels are mainly read by children.



While there was a slight drop in those who agreed graphic novels were mainly read by children, there was a rise in respondents who strongly agreed, and a marked decrease in those who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Despite this, Spearman's rho still suggested a strong correlation ($\rho = 0.836$) between the levels of agreement between the two statements.

6.2.3 Opinions of graphic novels

Participants in the research were also asked if they thought graphic novels constituted proper/serious literature (see figure 10). 60% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement “graphic novels are not proper/serious books”, while only 20% agreed with the statement, and 20% neither agreed nor disagreed. This quite clearly showed that the majority of participants consider graphic novels to be serious books, even some those who do not read them. These opinions were backed up by some of the free text responses asking for more information on society’s opinion of graphic novels in general.

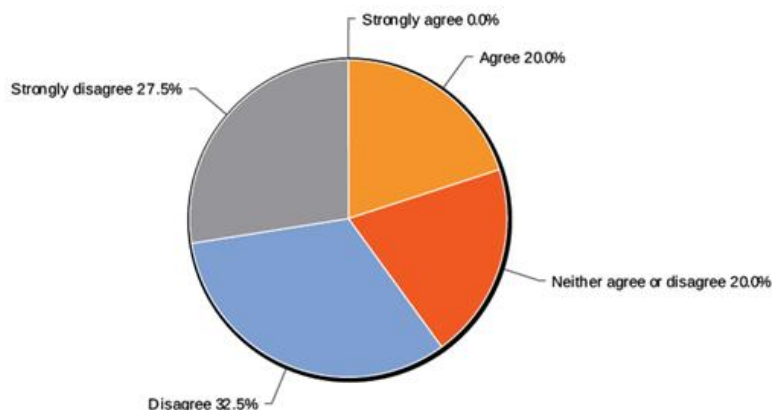
I feel that people who do not read them associate them with picture books, and do not consider them to be proper material for adults.

I believe they have an "alternative connotation", which places them at the fringe end of the literacy spectrum.

Graphic novels are, for the most part, marginalized by the public sector, and written off as 'not serious' literature. This is bullshit, and is a comment generally held by someone who does not have the mental fortitude to read a single graphic novel.

As the final comment above shows, some respondents felt quite strongly about this subject.

Figure 10. Graphic novels are not proper /serious Books.

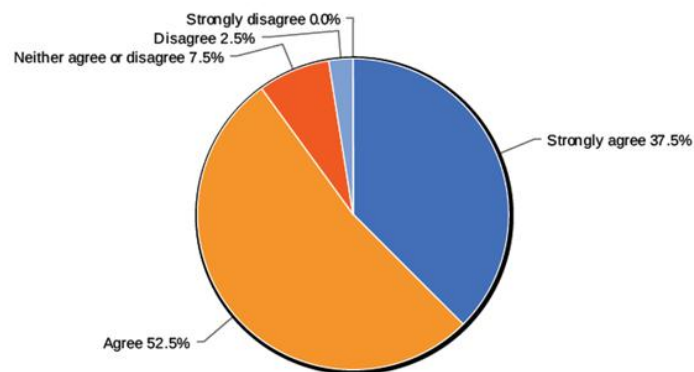


As the free text responses suggest, there was a very strong difference in opinions when respondents were split into those who read graphic novels, and those who do not, with over half (54%) the non-readers agreeing that graphic novels are not proper literature, while 70% of readers disagreed with the statement.

6.2.4 Placement and shelving

The survey found respondents overwhelmingly agreed that public libraries should have graphic novel collections, and that graphic novels should have their own area in the library. A massive 90% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed public libraries should have graphic novel collections (see figure 11). Only one person disagreed with this statement, while another did not answer the question.

Figure 11. Public libraries should have graphic novel collections.



The statement “Graphic novels should have their own area in the public library” also met with almost unanimous agreement with 89.5% of those who responded agreeing or strongly agreeing. No one disagreed with this statement, although 3 participants did not respond to this question. These opinions were also echoed strongly in these free text responses.

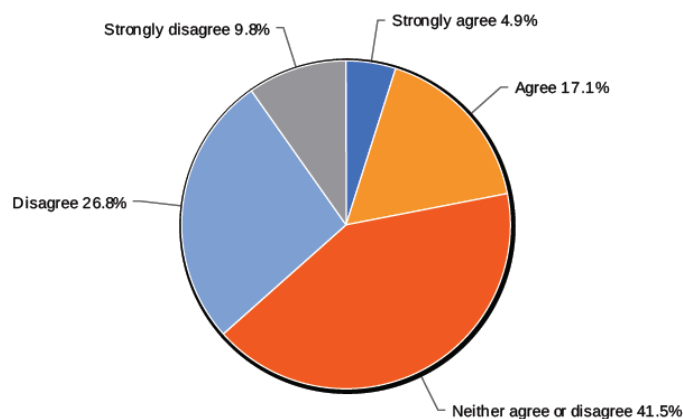
I believe these novels should have their own area in a library, for the reason that they represent - or at least "seem" to represent - a distinct genre. Given that they seem to be "fringe" as well, having their own area may actually allow them to stand out, and given more of a chance to be accepted as a serious literacy form.

Grouped in their own section, together, somewhere visible and accessible to everyone. Ideally accessible to younger readers especially.

Graphic novels should have their own section. Within this section, texts should be categorized according to genre and age-group. Texts, including superhero/adventure comics, should only be categorized as "young adult" if they are explicitly marketed as such.

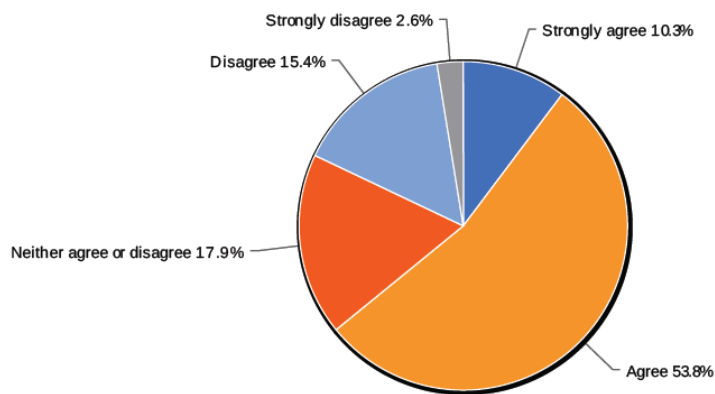
As the free text responses suggest the question of where to place graphic novel collections was not so clear cut. When asked if graphic novels should be placed in the teen area the majority of respondents (41.5%) had no opinion, neither agreeing or disagreeing (see figure 12). 36.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed, while only 22% agreed or strongly agreed.

Figure 12. Graphic novels would be best placed in the teen area.



There was strong agreement for the proposition that graphic novels should be displayed face out as much as possible, with 53.8% of respondents agreeing and a further 10.3% strongly agreeing (see figure 13). When asked if graphic non-fiction should be shelved with graphic fiction the opposite trend surfaced. 2.4% strongly agreed and 25.6% agreed while 41% disagreed and 7.7% agreed. 23.1% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Figure 13. Graphic novels should be displayed face out as much as possible.



Respondents to the survey were overall very happy with their ability to find graphic novel titles in their library's collections. Although a reasonable number of users answered 'Not Applicable' to the questions related to how well they are able to locate graphic novels in their libraries. Of those that did respond only 2 disagreed with the statement, "I am able to find the graphic novels I want using the library catalogue" and only 2 disagreed with the similar statement about browsing the shelves. No respondent said they could not find graphic novels with the help of the staff.

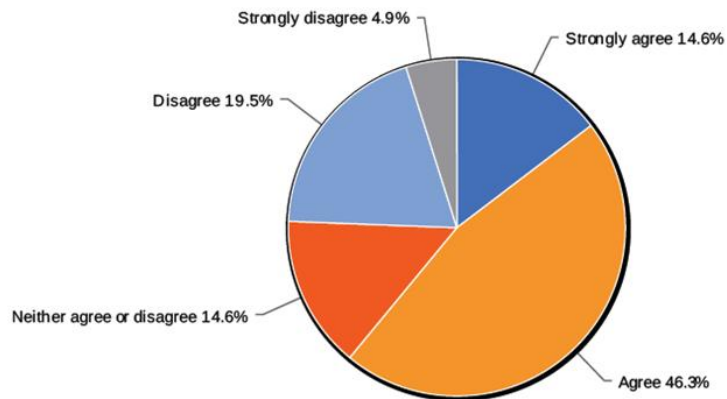
6.2.5 Classification

The phase 2 survey asked respondents to agree or disagree with whether they thought graphic novels should be catalogued, and given call numbers using a variety of methods currently employed by various public libraries.

Respondents agreed most strongly with the statement 'Graphic novels should be classified using the author's last name' with 46.3% agreeing and 14.6% strongly agreeing while less than 20% disagreed and less than 5% strongly disagreed (see figure 14). There was moderate agreement that graphic novels should be shelved using the series name, i.e. SPID for Spider-man, with 12.2% strongly agreeing,

34.1% agreeing, 26.8% neither agreeing or disagreeing, 22% disagreeing and 4.9% strongly disagreeing.

Figure 14. Graphic novels should be classified using the author's last name.

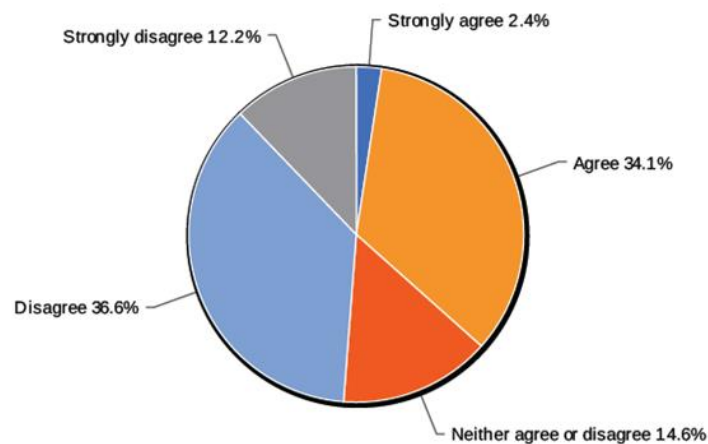


Although it has been suggested by some libraries, most respondents disagreed with the suggestion that graphic novels be classified using the publishers name. The idea behind this is that people who read graphic novels would be loyal to their publisher, say DC comics or Marvel for example, and so only want graphic novels from these publishers. When asked, 62.5% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, while only 15% agreed in some way. Despite this, there was some support for this type of classification in the form of the free text answers. Like the following;

Comics published by companies who specialise in "house characters," such as DC and marvel, should be shelf under publisher. Creator-owned works, such as Harrick's, should be by authors name. Signs could cross-reference, for example, Alan Moore's DC's work could be accompanied by a direction to his creator-owned shelf, and vice versa.

A more complex question was whether the Dewey Decimal System should be used to classify graphic novels. Respondents here were reasonably evenly split, although they did disagree slightly more than they agreed (see figure 15).

Figure 15. Graphic novels should be shelved using the Dewey Decimal classification system.



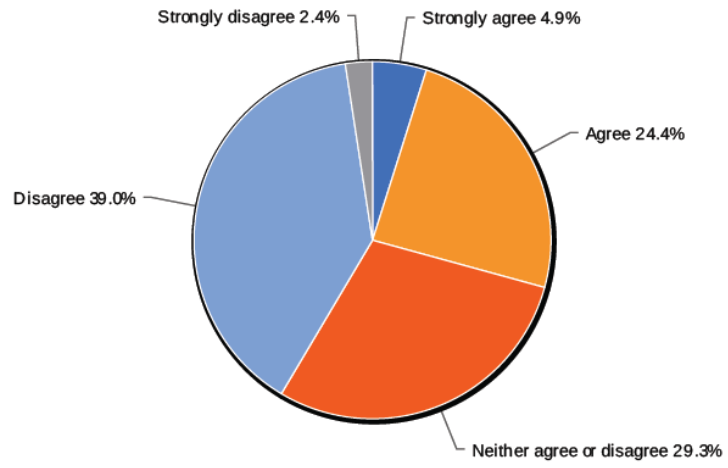
The survey did not make it clear in what way the Dewey Decimal System should be used; to shelve in the traditional manner, using 741.5 to denote 'graphic novel' or using the Dewey Decimal System to catalogue items under their predominant subjects. The free text responses went some way to clearing this up, with some respondents qualifying how they would like to see different classification methods employed.

I think graphic novels and graphic non-fiction should be kept under common systems (i.e.: fiction classified by author's last name, and non-fiction under the Dewey system) to stop confusion.

Having the comic shelved by series would make them easier to find, if u were interested in a particular series. But I believe that non-fiction type graphic novels should be classified by the dewey decimal system

This interpretation is further backed up by the majority of respondents disagreeing with the statement 'graphic non-fiction should be classified in the same way as graphic novels'. 39% of respondents disagreed with this statement and another 2.4% strongly disagreed (see figure 16). 24.4% agreed graphic non-fiction and fiction should be classified the same way, and another 4.9% strongly agreed.

Figure 16. Graphic non-fiction should be classified in the same way as graphic novels.



7. Discussion

How do public librarian's perceptions of graphic novel collections differ from those of library users, and how does this affect the placement and shelving of graphic novel collections and their overall use?

7.1 The acceptance of graphic novels in public libraries.

One of the most surprising findings of this project was the general acceptance from both librarians and the public for graphic novel collections in public libraries. The literature shows a gradual increase in acceptance by librarians, especially as a literacy tool. Walker (2009) and Behler (2006) are good examples of this. This acceptance has progressed to a point where the librarians involved in this project all consider graphic novels to have a place in our public libraries.

The public, at this stage, does not fully share the belief that graphic novels are of value, with 20% of the sample believing graphic novels are not serious literature. As expected, there was a notable difference between the opinions of those who read graphic novels and those who do not, on this matter. Of the 13 non-readers who responded to this question, 7 did not think graphic novels were serious literature, while only 1 of the 27 readers who responded, felt the same way. This respondent identified them self as only reading graphic novels occasionally.

It is very surprising, therefore, that the vast majority (90%) of respondents thought public libraries should have graphic novel collections. In total, only 1 respondent thought public libraries should not have graphic novels. This strongly suggests that even those who do not think graphic novels are serious literature believe that public libraries should collect them. The convenience sampling method used in this study does mean however that these results cannot be generalised to the wider population.

7.2 The placement of graphic novels.

Not only did respondents to phase 2 think public libraries should have graphic novel collections, they also strongly felt that graphic novels should have their own area within the library. When asked if graphic novels should have their own area in the library no respondents thought graphic novels should not have their own section, 89.5% agreed in some form, while the remaining neither agreed nor disagreed. This backs up Hartman (2010) who tells us that readers would prefer graphic novels in a separate collection. This research project adds that non-readers would also prefer graphic novels in a separate collection within public libraries. Phase one suggested that librarians share this opinion, but often lack the resources to make this happen.

This research also shows that while a lot of libraries used to connect teenagers with graphic novels, as Serchay (2004) does, librarians are moving away from the belief that graphic novels are aimed at, or read by teenagers, although traces of this mindset can still be seen in today's libraries. Two of the four libraries taking part in phase 1 had better developed teen graphic novel collections than adult collections. Librarian 1's comment also reinforces the conclusion that the teen focus has not fully left librarian's minds.

Librarian 1: I think that anybody can enjoy them, but probably if we marketed them as a library I presume, oh I think probably we would market to the teen group, but I think they can be enjoyed by anybody.

Data collected in phase 2 showed that readers are far more likely to want graphic novel collections distanced from teen areas in the public library, with 46% of them sharing this opinion. Non-readers are far more likely to connect teenagers and graphic novels. 31% thought graphic novel collections should be in teen

areas, 42% of non-readers also thought that teenager graphic novels were mainly read by teenagers, and 31% thought graphic novels were targeted at teenagers. These opinions could result from the traditional, collections in many libraries. However, around 50% of non-readers offered no strong opinion either in support or opposition, when asked about teenagers and graphic novels, so further research would be needed before this supposition can be verified. These findings show that librarians are progressing away from opinions similar to those of non-readers, and are moving toward the opinions held by a large number of readers. There is still some way to go however.

All three groups involved in this research agreed that graphic novels should be displayed face out, as much as possible. Non-readers were less likely to agree to this, 54% compared with 69% of readers, and one reader pointed out how frustrating they thought having face out covers was.

It is mainly difficult to locate graphic novels because they are not particularly sorted, and are all placed in one area with the covers facing outward. Reading the spine would be easier. The library catalogue is easy to use, it's just finding the graphic novel once you know it's available that's hard/time consuming.

While librarians agree that face out shelving is preferable, both librarian 3 and 4 made comments to the effect that it is not always possible due to a lack of space.

7.3 Classification

As with graphic novel placement, the opinions of the librarians in this project match more closely with the opinions of graphic novel readers, and less so with those of non-readers. The librarians favour primarily classifying graphic novels the same way as they classify text fiction, i.e. by the surname of the author.

Again, however, libraries do not always conform to what the librarians think is best. Librarian 4's library also classifies popular series by its series name,

Librarian 4: That's the other thing, we do do with the graphics ... Is file it by series. but a lot of Superman or the DC ones will be shelved under the series so Superman is under 'super' and Spiderman...

Readers share this preference for author's surnames, with 14% strongly agreeing and 57% agreeing that graphic novels should be shelved this way. Non-readers were less sold on this method of cataloguing. As with readers 15% strongly agreed, but unlike readers only 23% more agreed. A Spearman's rho calculation only showed a very weak correlation ($\rho = 0.09$), too weak to show a relationship between reading and non-reading and a person's preference for this type of classification. Neither readers nor non-readers appear to have a problem with classifying graphic novels using series names in the way librarian 4's library does. 47% of readers approved, 18% strongly agreeing and 29% agreeing while 46% of non-readers also agreed with this form of classification (none strongly agreed however). This suggests that even non-readers of graphic novels are aware of how large a part of the graphic novel industry is made up of series. Some of the respondents to the phase 2 survey had clearly given classification some thought as the free text response below illustrates.

Series names e.g. Batman, Naruto etc are more commonly used and known than the author. If the author's style is liked because of the series, then the catalogue on the computers can be used to find other works by that author. In my opinion, for DC, Marvel etc the type of graphic novels people are more interested in the hero/superhero than the author, while for manga the interest will be more for other works by that author. Especially as character won't show up in works by other authors.

As mentioned in the results above, no clear picture was created of what readers and non-readers thought of using the Dewey Decimal system to classify graphic

novels. The free text responses suggest respondents were more in favour of using Dewey to classify graphic non-fiction.

Autobiographies graphic novels should be shelved with the fiction graphic novels, but should still be separate within that collection, i.e. have Dewey numbers for nonfiction graphics before the fiction. Just like the DVD collections within libraries.

7.4 The treatment of graphic non-fiction

One thing librarians, readers and non-readers do not agree on is how to treat graphic non-fiction. Graphic novel readers clearly thought graphic non-fiction should be separated from graphic novels with slightly over half the readers sharing this opinion (54%) and only 23% agreeing that graphic novels and graphic non-fiction should be interfiled. Non-readers were completely undecided with 38.5% agreeing, 38.5% disagreeing and the remaining 23% offering no opinion. This changes when it comes to how graphic non-fiction should be classified. 46% of readers think graphic non-fiction should not be catalogued the same way as graphic novels, while 46% of non-readers think they should be, and a further 8% strongly agree that they should be. A Spearman's rho calculation shows a weak positive relationship between those who do not read graphic novels and the tendency to think graphic novels and graphic non-fiction should be shelved the same way ($\rho = 0.44$), although because this research used a convenience sample, this relationship cannot be extended to the entire population. As mentioned above, the free text answers suggest that respondents would prefer graphic non-fiction be classified using the Dewey Decimal Classification. Of the librarians involved in phase 1, only one shelves graphic non-fiction in a separate area to her graphic novels. Instead, she interfiles them with the text non-fiction. The other three librarians treat their graphic non-fiction as graphic novels, and some appeared surprised when asked if they had thought of using an

alternative to this classification. All the librarians interviewed were sure that their collections contained very little graphic non-fiction, despite the numerous autobiographies and histories now in print in the comic format. Either librarians are not buying graphic non-fiction, or are not aware that some of the material they are buying for their graphic novel collections is in fact non-fiction.

7.5 How librarian perceptions affect graphic novel placement.

The results from phase 1 of this research suggest that librarian perceptions are not a major contributing factor to the shelving and placement of graphic novel collections. While all the participating librarians held positive opinions of graphic novels, only 1 library had a significant amount of area dedicated to the graphic novel collections. Librarians 2 and 3 showed strong support for graphic novels, Librarian 3 even related how she has had to defend the collection. Both libraries fail to set out their graphic novels in constant ways. Librarian 2 noted that the size of her collection limits what she does with it, while librarian 3's library uses a different method for organising each of its three collections. The children's collection is interfiled with fiction due to space issues, the teen collection has its own stand and the adult's collection is split between the 741.5 Dewey Decimal number and the fiction where it is interfiled. Both librarians suggested that they would like to improve the current situation for graphic novel collection in their libraries.

Space is the area which the librarians identified as the major obstacle holding back development of their graphic novel collections. Even librarian 1 and 4, who have a large well organised graphic novel collection in their library, noted that they were restricted by space. Librarian 1 pointed out that they have to put higher volumes of series out in the library's stack because they do not have room on the

shelf for them. Librarian 3 also cited a lack of room as a problem and pointed out that they would like to organise their graphic novels differently if they could.

Librarian 3: I know the collection specialist who buys for the children's (*graphic novel collection*) would love it to be on its own, but she's not actually able. It can't happen. It would be at the detriment of the whole collection, and it's as important as the rest of the collection, but not more important.

8. Conclusions

This research project concluded that the opinions of public librarians are closer to the opinions of graphic novel readers than they are to those of non-readers. At the outset, the researcher believed the opposite would be true, as the majority of public librarians are not themselves graphic novel readers. The graphic novel collections in public libraries in the Southland and Otago regions do not reflect the views of the librarians that work with them. Instead, the placement and shelving of graphic novel collections in these libraries are largely affected by other factors. The major factor often sighted was the ongoing issue of space within public library buildings. Several librarians reported that they would organise their graphic novel collections differently if space allowed.

The research also came to the conclusion that public library patrons overwhelmingly support the collection of graphic novels by public libraries. This is despite a large majority of non-readers still holding the opinion that graphic novels are not serious literature. This research therefore recommends that any public libraries that do not yet have graphic novel collections begin them. The public believes it is something libraries should have, and since public libraries exist to serve their community, they should heed this call.

Despite readers and non-readers disagreeing on most things to do with placement and shelving, this research found that both readers and non-readers agree graphic novel collections should have their own areas within the library. They should therefore not be interfiled with other collections, and this research recommends public libraries do their best to find space to have separate graphic novel collections.

With the increase of graphic non-fiction in library collections, the research also suggests that public libraries separate graphic non-fiction and graphic novels. Graphic novel readers support this view, and a number of them suggest that graphic non-fiction should be classified by the subject of the contents using the Dewey Decimal System.

The current research was small scale, localised and due to necessity, drew on a convenience sample rather than a random sample from the target population. For this reason generalisations cannot fully be drawn from it, and the research recommends that this field of research be investigated further. It would be beneficial to see this project replicated on a larger scale involving both more librarians and more members of the public. Further research should also aim to examine the opinions of non-library users in regards to graphic novels. It would be of interest to know how the opinions of non-library users, both those who read graphic novels and those who do not, stack up against those of the three groups targeted in this project. An investigation into why non-readers of graphic novels tend to associate graphic novels with teenagers could also lead to interesting results.

Even though they suggested a number of improvements to how graphic novels are shelved and classified it is important to note that participants in this research were for the most part happy with how their libraries currently treat graphic novels, so on the whole, public librarians are not too far off the mark as far as graphic novel readers are concerned. Public libraries in New Zealand have come a long way in regards to graphic novels over the last 20 years, and it is important to note they are moving steadily in the direction the users of their collections would have them go.

Appendices

Appendix A: Email to library managers

Donald Cunningham cunnindona@myvuw.ac.nz

Feb 3



Dear Sir

I am a masters student in Information Studies at the Victoria University of Wellington. As part of this degree I am undertaking a research project into the perceptions of both librarians and the public in regards to the placement and cataloguing of graphic novels in public libraries. This research will be split into two studies. Phase 1 will gather data from public librarians while phase 2 will be a public survey. The university requires that ethics approval be obtained for research involving human participants.

Following a preliminary investigation I have identified libraries in the Otago/Southland region that include graphic novels in their collections. Some have dedicated graphic novel collections while others include a number of graphic novels in some of their other collections. I would like to invite your library to participate in this research project. My aim is to interview one or two librarians from each participating library and compare their opinions with data gathered in a public survey.

Librarians selected to participate will be provided with an information sheet and asked to sign a consent form before commencing interviews. Participation is voluntary and interviews should take between one half and three quarters of an hour. It will not be possible for participants or participating libraries to be identified. All material collected will be kept confidential.

Participating libraries would also be asked to place paper copies of the public survey in areas where they will be accessible to the public and if possible allow access to a digital version of the survey via a link from their website or advertisement of the digital survey. The digital survey will be conducted using Survey Gizmo online survey software. The paper survey will include a prepaid envelope so that participants will be able to return the surveys themselves and participating libraries need not worry about handling completed surveys. Participants will not be able to be identified but if they wish they may enter a separate draw for a fifty dollar gift voucher thanking them for their help.

If your library is willing to participate in this research project and you have a suitable candidate or candidates who are willing to be interviewed, please contact me using the details

listed below. As the sample pool for this research is small I would truly appreciate any offers of interest.

If you have any further questions or would like to receive further information about the project please contact me at:

12 Nelson Street

Georgetown

Invercargill 9812

Appendix B: Phase 1 information sheet



Participant Information Sheet for a study into The Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions. (Phase 1, Librarian Interviews)

Researcher Donald Cunningham: School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington.

I am a Masters student in Information studies at the Victoria University of Wellington. As part of this degree I am undertaking a research project into the perceptions of both librarians and the public with regard to the placement and cataloguing of graphic novels in public libraries. This research will be split into two Phases. Phase 1 will gather data from public librarians while phase 2 will be a public survey. Ethics approval has been obtained from the university for this research as it involves human participants.

By looking into the perceptions of both librarians and the public this research is expected to offer insight into the way public libraries market and manage their graphic novel collections. The results from this study will help public libraries organise their graphic novels in a way that will benefit users and so help increase public use of library graphic novel collections in the future. It is important that the researcher gains insight from librarians in order to build an understanding of the view of graphic novels in public libraries.

The manager of your library has given consent for you to participate in this research. Participants will partake in one private interview at which their perceptions about how graphic novels are viewed in public libraries and how this view affects graphic novel placement and cataloguing in public libraries. A series of open ended questions will be used as an interview guide. Interviews will be digitally recorded and notes will be taken during the interview process.

Interviews will take place at a location chosen by the interview participant. In most cases it is envisaged this will be their place of work. The interview is expected to last between thirty and forty five minutes. Participants have the right to check interview notes and amend details if required.

If you would like to withdraw from the project you may do so before data analysis begins on March 30 2012. If you withdraw all data you have provided will be destroyed immediately or returned to you at your request.



Responses collected will be added to data gathered from a public questionnaire before forming the basis of my research project and put into a written report. It will not be possible for you or your library to be identified. All material collected will be kept confidential. No other person beside me and my supervisor, Dr Chern Li Liew, will hear the recorded interviews or see notes made during interviews.

All computer files containing personal details of participants, notes, and recordings will be stored in password protected files which can only be accessed by the researcher. All physical notes will be stored in a locked case which can only be accessed by the researcher. An electronic copy of the final report will be submitted for marking to the School of Information Management and a printed copy deposited in the University Library. Recorded interviews and written notes will be destroyed two years after the completion of the research .

The researcher may use this research as the basis of articles in professional journals or as the basis for presentations at academic or professional conferences.

Please read and sign the accompanying consent form if you are willing to participant in this research and thank you for taking the time to help in this project.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact me at:

12 Nelson Street
Invercargill 9812

Email: cunnindona@myvuw.ac.nz
Phone: 03 211 1767 (work), 021 111 9396 (mobile)

Or my supervisor, Chern Li Liew:

School of Information Management,
Victoria University of Wellington,
P O Box 600,
Wellington 6140,

Email: chernli.liew@vuw.ac.nz
Phone: 04 463 5213

Donald Cunningham

Appendix C: Phase 1 participation consent form



Research Participation Consent Form

The Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions. (Phase 1, Librarian interviews)

- I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project.
- I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and had them answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself (or any information I have provided) from this project before March 30, 2012 without having to give reasons or without penalty of any sort.
- I understand that should I choose to withdraw, any data I have provided will be returned to me or destroyed immediately.
- I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidential to the researcher and the supervisor.
- I understand the published results will not use my name, and that no opinions will be attributed to me in any way that will identify me or my Library.
- I understand that the digital recording of interviews and other research data will be electronically wiped two years after the conclusion of the project.
- I understand I will receive a written copy of my interview notes if I request it and I have the right to alter any comments or change any information I have provided if I feel this is necessary.
- I understand the researcher may use this research as the basis for articles published in professional journals or conference presentations
- I would like a summary of the research sent to me at the conclusion of the research project.

Name of Participant _____

Signed _____

Date _____

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Appendix D: Phase 2 information sheet



Participant Information Sheet for a study into The Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions. (Phase 2, Public Survey)

Researcher Donald Cunningham: School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington.

I am a Masters student in Information studies at the Victoria University of Wellington. As part of this degree I am undertaking a research project into the perceptions of both librarians and the public with regard to the placement and cataloguing of graphic novels in public libraries. This research will be split into two Phases. Phase 1 gathers data from public librarians and Phase 2 is a public survey of which you are invited to participate in. Ethics approval has been obtained from the university for this research.

By looking into the perceptions of both librarians and the public this research is expected to offer insight into the way public libraries market and manage their graphic novel collections. The results from this study will help public libraries organise their graphic novels in a way that will benefit users and so help increase public use of library graphic novel collections in the future. It is important that the researcher gains insight from librarians in order to build an understanding of the view of graphic novels in public libraries.

A graphic novel is a book (hardback or paperback) consisting of a work in a comic form. It might be fiction or non-fiction, a collection of stories or part of a series. For the purposes of this study we are not talking about comics in magazine format and will also exclude strip comics such as Garfield or Footroot flats.

I am asking members of the public from around Southland and Otago to participate in this research by completing this survey and returning it in one of the attached envelopes. Whether you read graphic novels or not, I value your participation.

You may be entered into a one-off draw for a \$50 book voucher. Any personal information given will be for the purpose of this draw only. For this reason if you wish to be entered into this draw you will need to apply via email. Alternatively you may enter this draw by supplying your details in the second attached envelope. Please do not send your details in the same envelope as the survey.

**SCHOOL OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ADMINISTRATION**



Responses collected will be added to data gathered from librarian interviews before forming the basis of my research project and put into a written report. It will not be possible for you to be identified from your responses as the questionnaire does not collect any personal information other than age and gender. Returning the questionnaire via the prepaid envelope will ensure your anonymity.

An electronic copy of the final report will be submitted for marking to the School of Information Management and a printed copy deposited in the University Library. Survey data will be destroyed two years after the conclusion of the research.

The researcher may use this research as the basis of articles in professional journals or as the basis for presentations at academic or professional conferences.

Please note by completing and returning the accompanying survey you are agreeing to participate in this research.

If you have any questions or would like to receive further information about the project, please contact me at:

12 Nelson Street
Invercargill 9812

Email: cunnindona@myvuw.ac.nz
Phone: 03 211 1767 (work), 021 111 9396 (mobile)

Or my supervisor, Chern Li Liew:

School of Information Management,
Victoria University of Wellington,
P O Box 600,
Wellington 6140,

Email: chernli.liew@vuw.ac.nz
Phone: 04 463 5213

Donald Cunningham

Appendix E: phase 1 interview guide

The Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions. (Phase 1, Librarian interviews)

Interview Guide

1. Tell me a little about your experience working in the libraries.
 - a. How long have you worked in libraries?
 - b. What level of library training do you have?
2. What is your relationship to your library's graphic novel collection?
 - a. Are you involved in material acquisition?
 - b. Do you catalogue graphic novels?
 - c. Are you responsible for collection management?
3. Do you read graphic novels?

(literature suggests that graphic novel collections are often spearheaded by an enthusiastic librarian who is also a graphic novel fan. This question is to establish if this is the case or not here.)
4. Could you tell me a little of the history of graphic novels in your library?
 - a. Have you collected them for long?
 - b. Is there a long term plan that you know of for development?
5. How do you think graphic novel collections are generally perceived by library staff in public libraries?
6. Do you feel this perception has changed during your career?
7. Who do you think uses your graphic novel collection?
 - a. Who do you think graphic novels are aimed at?
 - b. Who do you think actually reads graphic novels?
8. How are your graphic novels shelved?
 - a. Are they interfiled or do you have a separate collection?
 - b. Do you display some or all of them face out?
 - c. Do you treat manga the same as Western comics?
9. How are your graphic novels catalogued?
 - a. Why?
 - b. Have you considered alternatives?
10. Do you have graphic non-fiction and if so how do you treat The collection?

11. Have you had any trouble with your graphic novel collection?
 - a. Can you give examples of Theft or vandalism?
 - b. Have you had complaints about the novels or any particular title?
 - c. Can you think of any other problems that have surfaced around graphic novels in your library?

(The literature often cites problems such as these as reasons libraries do not have Graphic novel collections. This question looks for evidence supporting this claim)

12. Do you think patrons are able to easily find the graphic novels they want in your library collections?

Appendix F: Phase 2 survey questions.

Cataloguing and shelving of graphic novels: A comparison of public librarian and patron perceptions. (Phase 2, Public survey)

Survey Questions

1. How old are you?

_____ years

2. Are you male or female? (Please circle one) **Male** **Female**

3. Which of the following describes you best? (Please tick one)

I never use my local library ____

I use my local library less than once per month ____

I use my local library 2 - 3 times per month ____

I use my local library once per week ____

I use my local library more than once per week ____

I use my local library everyday ____

4. Which of the following describes you best? (Please tick one)

I only read graphic novels ____

I mostly read graphic novels ____

I read an equal mixture of graphic novels and other material ____

I occasionally read graphic novels ____

I never read graphic novels ____

5. Does your local library collect graphic novels? (Please circle one)

Yes **No** **I don't know**

In the next set of questions, you are presented with a statement. You are being asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by indicating whether you: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither agree or disagree (N), Disagree (D) or Strongly Disagree (SD). Please circle your choice.

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 6. Graphic novels are written mainly for adults. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 7. Graphic novels are written mainly for teenagers. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 8. Graphic novels are written mainly for children. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9. Graphic novels are mainly read by adults. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 10. Graphic novels are mainly read by teenagers. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 11. Graphic novels are mainly read by children | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 12. Graphic novels are not serious/proper books. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

13. Please feel free to comment on how you think graphic novels are viewed by society.

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 14. Public libraries should have graphic novel collections. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 15. Graphic novels should have their own area in the public library. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 16. Western comics and Manga (Asian comics) should be shelved together. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 17. Graphic novels should be displayed face out as much as possible. (with the front cover displayed). | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 18. Graphic novels would be best placed in the teen area. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 19. Graphic non-fiction (autobiographies and histories in comic format) should be shelved together with fiction graphic novels. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 20. Please feel free to make further comments about where, if at all, graphic novels should be placed within Libraries. | | | | | |

21. Graphic novels should be classified by the author's last name. E.g. Hicksville: A comic book by Dylan Horrocks shelved under 'HOR'. SA A N D SD
22. Graphic novels should be classified using the Dewey Decimal classification system as used for other materials in the public library. E.g. Hicksville: A comic book by Dylan Horrocks shelved under '741.5 HOR'. SA A N D SD
23. Graphic novels should be classified using Publishers names. e.g. Batman, Wargames: Outbreak by Ed Brubaker shelved under 'DC comics' SA A N D SD
24. Graphic novels should be classified using series names. e.g. Batman, Wargames: Outbreak by Ed Brubaker shelved under 'BATMAN' SA A N D SD
25. Graphic non-fiction (autobiographies and histories in comic format) should be catalogued the same way as fiction graphic novels. SA A N D SD
26. Please feel free to make further comments on how you think graphic novels should be classified/shelved in order to make them easy to find.

In the next set of questions, you are presented with a statement. You are being asked to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement by indicating whether you: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Neither agree or disagree (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD) or (NA) Not applicable. Please circle your choice.

27. I am able to find the graphic novels I want using the library catalogue. SA A N D SD NA

28. I am able to find graphic novels by browsing the library shelves. SA A N D SD NA

29. I am able to find the graphic novels with help from library staff. SA A N D SD NA

30. Please feel free to make further comments on how easy/difficult it is to locate graphic novels in your local library.

Thank you for completing the survey. If you would like to be entered into the draw for a \$50 book voucher please email contact details to cunnindona@myvuw.ac.nz or send your contact details in the second envelope provided. Please do not send you details in the same envelope as the survey.

Appendix G: Survey response frequencies

1. How old are you?

Age	Count
11	1
12	1
13	2
14	1
15	1
16	1
17	1
18	1
20	1
21	2
24	1
25	1
26	1
28	1
30	3
31	1
32	1
33	1
35	2
36	1
37	1
39	2
42	1
45	1
46	1
47	1
49	2
51	1
54	2
64	1
65	1
66	1
67	1
Total	41

2. How old are you?

Male	Female	Total
36.60%	63.40%	41
15	26	

3. Which of the following describes you best?

I never use my local library.	I use my local library less than once per month.	I use my local library 1 to 2 times each month.	I use my local library once per week.	I use my local library more than once per week.	I use my local library every day.	Total
0.00%	4.90%	48.80%	14.60%	22.00%	9.80%	41
0	2	20	6	9	4	

4. Which of the following describes you best?

I only read graphic novels.	I mostly read graphic novels.	I read an equal mixture of graphic novels and other material.	I occasionally read graphic novels.	I never read graphic novels.	Total
2.40%	4.90%	24.40%	36.60%	31.70%	41
1	2	10	15	13	

5. Does your library collect graphic novels?

Yes	No	I don't know	Total
73.20%	0.00%	26.80%	41
30	0	11	

6. Graphic novels are written mainly for adults.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
0.00%	29.30%	36.60%	31.70%	2.40%	41
0	12	15	13	1	

7. Graphic novels are written mainly for teenagers.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
4.90%	19.50%	43.90%	29.30%	2.40%	41
2	8	18	12	1	

8. Graphic novels are written mainly for children.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
2.40%	19.50%	14.60%	43.90%	19.50%	41
1	8	6	18	8	

9. Graphic novels are mainly read by adults.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
0.00%	24.40%	36.60%	36.60%	2.40%	41
0	10	15	15	1	

10. Graphic novels are mainly read by teenagers.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
7.50%	30.00%	42.50%	17.50%	2.50%	40
3	12	17	7	1	

11. Graphic novels are mainly read by children.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
5.10%	15.40%	30.80%	38.50%	10.30%	39
2	6	12	15	4	

12. Graphic novels are not serious/proper books.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	32.50%	27.50%	40
0	8	8	13	11	

13. Please feel free to make further comments on how you think graphic novels are viewed by society.

Becoming more accepted but widely regarded as less serious, not 'literature'.
Graphic novels are junk food for the intellect
Graphic novels are read by all age groups.
More acceptable, especially in regards to young readers. In that any reading is better than none.
People read them because they are people that don't like to read much and they like graphic novels
Society tends to view graphic novels as a youth-oriented field, with the exception of a few acknowledged 'literary' works like "Maus." This view is perpetuated by publishers like DC and Marvel, who continue to use superhero tropes created for children 50+ years ago (even while their intended audience is an adult and aging one).
in personal demographic & educational level as aids to facilitate reading/learning. Aids to seniors to enjoy reading experience when managing a disability
People think only nerds and geeks read them
light reading

usually quite violent
I think society or those who have never read graphic novels view them as children's books or comics like you get in the newspaper.
I don't know how they are viewed by society. I am a regular reader and enjoy a good suspense story, but I would not even consider a graphic novel and I would imagine that would be the view of most regular book readers.
I believe they have an "alternative connotation", which places them at the fringe end of the literacy spectrum.
personally I feel that graphic books are now very popular and people who are mainly adults and teens enjoy browsing and viewing graphic novel books.
I feel that people who do not read them associate them with picture books, and do not consider them to be proper material for adults
Graphic novels are for the most part marginalized by the public sector and written off as 'not serious' literature. This is bullshit and is a comment generally held by someone who does not have the mental fortitude to read a single graphic novel
It depends upon who you ask. I think it breaks down by demographics. A large percentage of society, who do not read and are unfamiliar with graphic novels think they are juvenile. Of those who are readers a small subsection will regularly read graphic novels and think they can fit the definition of worthy literature and entertainment. Those readers who are not may be aware of them but are not particularly interested or knowledgeable about them (which is a shame). It is also cultural - for example the Japanese who regularly consume manga, or Belgium who may be familiar with their own cultural comics such as Tintin or Asterix. On the whole I feel they are an undeveloped form of literature but with the rising popularity of new forms of technological interaction (eg webcomics or ebooks) this could change with new & younger readers. So our cultural change back towards them could yet occur. (As postulated by Scott McCloud for example.)

14. Public libraries should have graphic novel collections.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
37.50%	52.50%	7.50%	2.50%	0.00%	40
15	21	3	1	0	

15. Graphic novels should have their own area in the public library.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
31.60%	57.90%	10.50%	0.00%	0.00%	38
12	22	4	0	0	

16. Western comics and manga (Asian comics) should be shelved together.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
5.10%	30.80%	38.50%	25.60%	0.00%	39
2	12	15	10	0	

17. Graphic novels should be displayed face out as much as possible. (With the front cover displayed.)

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
10.30%	53.80%	17.90%	15.40%	2.60%	39
4	21	7	6	1	

18. Graphic novels would be best placed in the teen area.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
4.90%	17.10%	41.50%	26.80%	9.80%	41
2	7	17	11	4	

19. Graphic non-fiction (autobiographies and histories in comic format) should be shelved together with fiction graphic novels.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
2.60%	25.60%	23.10%	41.00%	7.70%	39
1	10	9	16	3	

20. Please feel free to make further comments about where, if at all, graphic novels should be placed within Libraries.

They should be like books, with their own genres
They should have their own section
specific section with deliniation between non-fiction and fiction graphic novels. See 15
there should be a seperate room place for graphic novels collections
I guess fiction and non fiction should be seperated, but in the same area. They should be seperate from mainstream books.
Grouped in their own section, together , somewhere visible and accessible to everyone. Ideally accessible to younger readers especially.
Graphic novels should have their own section. Within this section, texts should be categorized according to genre and age-group. Texts, including superhero/adventure comics, should only be categorized as "young adult" if they are explicitly marketed as such.
I believe these novels should have their own area in a library for the reason that they represent - or at least "seem" to represent - a distinct genre. Given that they seem to be "fringe" as well, having their own area may actually allow them to stand out, and given more of a chance to be accepted as a serious literacy form.
Unless the target audience for a specific series is well known and easy to determine thay should be placed in the adults section to be on the safe side. Also a lot of manga series start of light (harmless, funny , nonsexual) and get darker (more violent, sexual, twisted etc) as the series progresses eg volume 6 or 10 can be adult themes Rated while volume 1 was a natural PG rated.

<p>They should be in the corner brooding like most of the protagonists that lay beneath the beautiful and sometimes dark covers that conceal them. The Fred Frasier Science Fiction collection exhibition currently on display at the Otago University central library would be an excellent example of this</p>
<p>Alot depends on the layout of the library. At my library the graphic novels are placed in the teen section, this area is shaped like a 'U', with the graphic novels at the back. I doubt many adults know they are there, and those who do with to read them may not want to entre that section when it is filled with noisy 15 yr olds</p>
<p>Autobiographies graphic novels should be shelved with the fiction graphic novels, but should still be separate within that collection, i.e. have dewey numbers for non fiction graphics before the fiction. Just like the DVD collections within libraries.</p>
<p>I believe they have an "alternative connotation", which places them at the fringe end of the literacy spectrum.</p>
<p>personally I feel that graphics books are now very popular and people who are mainly adults and teens enjoy browsing and viewing graphic novel books.</p>
<p>I feel that people who do not read them associate them with picture books, and do not consider them to be proper material for adults</p>
<p>Graphic novels are for the most part marginalized by the public sector and written off as 'not serious' literature. This is bullshit and is a comment generally held by someone who does not have the mental fortitude to read a single graphic novel</p>
<p>It depends upon who you ask. I think it breaks down by demographics. A large percentage of society , who do not read and are unfamiliar with graphic novels think they are juvenile. Of those who are readers a small subsection will regularly read graphic novels and think they can fit the deffinition of worthy literature and entertainment. Those readers who readers who are not may be aware of them but are not particularly interested or knowledgeable about hem (which is a shame0 It is also cultural - for example the Japanese who regularly cunsume manga, or Belguim who may be familiar with their own cultural comics such as titin or asterix. On the whole I feel they are an undeveloped form of literature but with the rising populatrity of new forms of technological interaction (eg webcomics or ebooks) this could change with new & younger readers. So our cultural change back towards them could yet occur. 9As postulated by Scott Mcloud for example.)</p>

21. Graphic novels should be classified by the author's last name. E.g. Hicksville:

A comic book by Dylan Horrocks shelved under 'HOR'.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
14.60%	46.30%	14.60%	19.50%	4.90%	41
6	19	6	8	2	

22. Graphic novels should be classified using the Dewey Decimal classification

system as used for other materials in the public library. E.g. Hicksville: A

comic book by Dylan Horrocks shelved under '741.5 HOR'.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
2.40%	34.10%	14.60%	36.60%	12.20%	41
1	14	6	15	5	

23. Graphic novels should be classified using Publishers names. e.g. Batman,

Wargames: Outbreak by Ed Brubaker shelved under 'DC comics'.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
5.00%	10.00%	22.50%	52.50%	10.00%	40
2	4	9	21	4	

24. Graphic novels should be classified using series names. e.g. Batman,

Wargames: Outbreak by Ed Brubaker shelved under 'BATMAN'.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
12.20%	34.10%	26.80%	22.00%	4.90%	41
5	14	11	9	2	

25. Graphic non-fiction (autobiographies and histories in comic format) should be catalogued the same way as fiction graphic novels.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
4.90%	24.40%	29.30%	39.00%	2.40%	41
2	10	12	16	1	

26. Please feel free to make further comments on how you think graphic novels should be classified/shelved in order to make them easy to find.

Graphic non-fiction should have a dewy number
I'd like it if all the non-fiction graphic novels were together.
It depends on the type pf comic/graphic novel series. Most could be filed as; 1) genre (eg superhero, TV series, General fiction) 2) Series (eg X-men, Dr Who, historical or subgenre. 3) Chronologicla position or Author/writer. Specifi titles/ Non-fiction or other non-conforming one offs. These could be in their own subsection listed be writer.
personally I feel that all graphic novels should be classified as either library of ccongress classification or dewey decimal classification.
As I don't make use of this type of book I can't make a valid comment except to say that I prefer they were not mixed with the 'mainstream'selection
1)I think graphic novels and graphic non-fiction should be kept under common systems (ie: fiction classified by author's last name, and non-fiction under the Dewey system) to stop confusion. 2) Re: question 24. The graphic novels I have seen (but not read) seem to often be based upon character/series, like batman etc. Sub-classifying them according to series while having them all in one area may help people find their favorite series.
Having the comic shelved by series would make them easier to find, if u were interested in a particular series. But i believe that non-fiction type graphic novels should be calssified by the dewy decial system

<p>Series names eg batman, Naruto etc are more commonly used and known than the author. If the Authors style is liked because of the series then the catalogue on the computers can be used to find other works by that author. In my opinion for DC, marvel etc the type of graphic novels [people are more interested in the hero/superhero than the author wkile for manga the interest will be more for other works by that author. especially as character wont show up in works by other authors.</p>
<p>Comics published by companies who specialise in "house characters," such as DC and marvel, should be shelf under publisher. Creater-owned works, such as Horrock's, should be by authors nam'e. Signs could cross-reference, for example, Alan Moore's DC's work could be accompanied by a direction to his creator-owned shelf, and vice versa.</p>
<p>I think they should be ordered on the shelves by genre. That way you can getquite precise into subject matter. Thriller, Drama, Comedy, Detective/mystery, action, hentai.. etc. Graphic non-fiction should be ordered in a separate section by subject matter as well. For example, War, Politics, Family, Music, Film, TV and so on</p>

27. I am able to find the graphic novels I want using the library catalogue.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable	Total
10.00%	45.00%	22.50%	5.00%	0.00%	17.50%	40
4	18	9	2	0	7	

28. I am able to find graphic novels by browsing the library shelves.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable	Total
14.60%	56.10%	12.20%	4.90%	0.00%	12.20%	41
6	23	5	2	0	5	

29. I am able to find the graphic novels with help from library staff.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not Applicable	Total
24.40%	41.50%	12.20%	0.00%	0.00%	22.00%	41
10	17	5	0	0	9	

30. Please feel free to make further comments on how easy it is to locate graphic novels in your local library.

A bug in the library system results in error pages for many graphic novel holdings.
I don't know where the graphic novels are in my library and I have never tried to find them.
None in storage
It is mainly difficult to locate graphic novels because they are not particularly sorted and are all placed in one area with the covers facing outward. Reading the spine would be easier. The library catalogue is easy to use it's just finding the graphic novel once you know it's available that's hard/time consuming.
Most graphic novels are shelved together in the Teens section however there are other titles shelved under a separate section in the library which are less visible and thus less visited. Which is a shame as they deserve greater visibility.
It's difficult, but because it doesn't shelve them in an easily locatable area/order you might look in a completely wrong area without realizing it
never noticed graphic novels in my local library - invercargill - & I am conversant with layout. I shall look for some next visit.
I have never gotten any out, but i do know that there are some in a special shelf in the teen section. There are also 'simpler' comics spread through the childrens section depending on authors name
Re Question 29: Agree disagree as opposed to N. I've found that never mind what type of novel I want to find, unless they are placed in one area, staff can only help if they are familiar with the particular type of genre.

References

- Bates, M. J. (2005). An introduction to metatheories, theories, and models. In Fisher, K. E., Erdelez, S. & McKechnie, L. E. F. (Eds.), *theories of information behavior* (pp. 1-24). Medford, NJ: Information Today for ASSIST.
- Bechal, A. (2006) *Fun Home; A family trgeticomic*. Boston; Houghton Mifflin
- Behler, A. (2006). Getting Started With Graphic Novels: A Guide for the Beginner. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, 46(2), 16-21.
- Black, S., & Highby, W. (2005). Marketing Models of Assortment Planning Applicable to Serials? *The Serials Librarian*, 48(3/4), 327-34. doi: 10.1300/J123v48n03_16
- Boyd, J R W. (2000) *Graphic novels in New Zealand Public Libraries: A case study of the Palmerston North City Library*. Unpublished MLIS Research Project, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand.
- Brubaker, E et al (2005) *Batman, Wargames: Outbreak*. DC Comics, New York
- Bryman, A. (2008). *Social research methods* (3rd ed.). Oxford, New York: OUP.
- Charbonneau, O. (2005). Adult Graphic Novels Readers: A Survey in a Montreal Library. *Young Adult Library Services*, 3(4), 39-42. Retrieved from Library Lit & Info Full Text database
- Crawford, P. (2004). A novel approach: using graphic novels to attract reluctant readers and promote literacy. *Library Media Connection*, 22 (5), 26-28.
- Dickinson, G. (2007) The Question: Where Should I Shelve Graphic Novels? *Knowledge Quest* 35(5), 56 – 57.
- Gabaldon, D. (2010) *The Exile: A Outlander graphic novel*. New York, N.Y. : Del Rey /Ballantine Books
- Guy, P (2011) Charges for Burrowing; public library member's reactions to the prospect of paying for all Adult items. *New Zealand Library and information management journal/Nga Purongo*. 52(2), 78 - 95.

- Hartman, A. (2010) Creative Shelving: Placement in library collections. In Weiner, R. G. (2010) *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives: Essays on readers, research, history and cataloguing*. (pp. 52 - 62) McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina.
- Ho, J., & Crowley, G. (2003). User Perceptions of the “Reliability” of Library Services at Texas A&M University: A Focus Group Study. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 29(2), 82-7. doi: 10.1016/S0099-1333(02)00423-8
- Holston, A. (2010) A librarian's guide to the history of graphic novels. In Weiner, R. G. (2010) *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives: Essays on readers, research, history and cataloguing*. (pp. 9 - 16) McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina
- Horrocks, D. (2010) *Hicksville: A comic book*. Wellington, New Zealand: Victoria University Press.
- McCloud, S. (1994) *Understanding comics: The invisible art*. New York, N.Y.: HarperCollins
- Maceli, M., Wiedenbeck, S., & Abels, E. (2011). The Internet Public Library (IPL): An Exploratory Case Study on User Perceptions. *Information Technology and Libraries*, 30(1), 16-23.
- Niffenegger, A. (2010) *The Night Bookmobil*. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Nyberg, A. K. (2010) How librarians learned to love the graphic novel. In Weiner, R. G. (2010) *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives: Essays on readers, research, history and cataloguing*. (pp. 26 - 40) McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina
- OCLC (n.d.) Graphic Novels in DDC: Discussion Paper. Retrieved October 15, 2011 from <http://www.oclc.org/dewey/discussion/papers/graphicnovels.htm>
- O'English, L., Matthews, J., & Lindsay, E. (2006). Graphic Novels in Academic Libraries: From Maus to Manga and Beyond. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, 32(2), 173-82. doi: 10.1016/j.acalib.2005.12.002

- Serchay, D.S. (2004). But those aren't really books! Graphic novels and comic books. In C. A. Nichols (Ed.), *Thinking outside the book: Alternatives for today's teen library collections* (pp. 21-54). Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
- Snowball, C. (2007). Researching Graphic Novels and Their Teenage Readers. *LIBRES*, 17(1), p. 1-20.
- Snowball, C. (2011) *Graphic Novels: Enticing Teenagers into the Library*
Unpublished doctoral Thesis, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia.
- Stebbins, R.. (2009). Leisure and Its Relationship to Library and Information Science: Bridging the Gap. *Library Trends*, 57(4), 618-631. Retrieved January 9, 2012, from Research Library. (Document ID: 1808508391).
- Tarulli, L. (2010) Cataloguing and the Problem of Access: Creativity, collaboration and compromise. In Weiner, R. G. (2010) *Graphic Novels and Comics in Libraries and Archives: Essays on readers, research, history and cataloguing*. (pp. 213 - 221) McFarland & Company, Jefferson, North Carolina
- Wagner, C. (2010). Graphic Novel Collections in Academic ARL Libraries. *College & Research Libraries*, 71(1), 42-8.
- Walker, B. A. (2009) *Examining the adoption and use of graphic novels as a learning resource in Hamilton schools*. Unpublished MLIS Research Project, Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand.

Word count – 13122 excluding appendices