



Superheroes in the Library...

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COVER: there are many different types of comic books and graphic novels: fantasy, sci-fi, humour, romance, even non-fiction and biographies. Nothing, however, quite says comic book like a superhero. This month's issue focusses on the adventures of the superhuman men, woman, and, well, 'things', who through their amazing powers and noble spirits, keep our planet safe.

Compiled by Jon Adams, Masterton District Library

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Getting to know your Library staff in ten questions...

What is your name?

Jon Adams.

Where were you born?

Otahuhu, South Auckland.

Favourite book from your Childhood?

Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne.

What is your position at Masterton Library?

Team Librarian.

Have you had any previous, non-librarian jobs?

Storeman, delivery driver.

Name the book and author you are reading at the moment

The Bad-Ass Librarians of Timbuktu by Joshua Hammer.

Name a book you haven't read but know you should:

Too many to name, but I'll start with *1984* by George Orwell as it seems very topical.

If you had one magazine subscription it would be for...

'Q' - now available through Zinio!

Favourite place to read...

On the couch, within easy access of the kitchen and refreshments.

If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want with you?

The Complete Oxford English Dictionary - it would be an opportunity to expand my vocabulary, and at 20 volumes I could use it to build a rudimentary shelter.





From your Library...

Library Manager, Sandy Green

When I saw the topic for this month's newsletter, I remembered when I first established a Graphic Novels collection in the library and started the process of developing readers in a new area. I handed the selection for the graphic novels to Jon when he was last working for us, and he developed the collection even further. With Paul Greville purchasing the graphic novels these days we are extremely lucky to have our 'aficionado' achieving extremely good results in terms of the interest in the three collections, and the turnover (library term for the number of times each item issue per year). Last year adult graphic novels achieved turnover of 4.4, young adult graphic novels a turnover of 4.68, and junior graphic novels a turnover of 7.42 issues per item. This compares very well with a turnover of 6.01 issues for the junior fiction collection.

Where does the graphic novel fit in the literary world? Many people still see them as comics, not recognizing the fact that most popular fiction novels, for YA particularly, are now being reproduced as graphic novels in much the same way that we have talking book and large print versions. They are increasingly becoming referred to as an alternate format rather than their own genre. Research has been done into the impact of these books, which look like comics on steroids and seem to have near miraculous properties. They lure teen boys, while retaining the qualities beloved by teen girls. They work for ESL students, teach visual literacy and sequencing, and, above all else, they are wildly popular with an adolescent audience. There is an art to reading a graphic novel which can be likened to watching a film. To get the full experience of the film, the visual and text elements must be considered together. Graphic novels must be read in the same way, with the images being examined in concert with the text.

Am I a reader of the graphic novel myself? No I am not, but as a trained librarian that was not a barrier when I took on the responsibility of establishing the collections. I used my skills and knowledge and my ability to research to work out what should be key titles for a collection. I have read many children's graphic novels though, as my grandson has a fascination with graphic novels and insists that I read them to him. Both his mother and I agree that they are not easy 'read alouds' but he seems satisfied with my efforts to deliver a reading experience for him.



**Like us on Facebook for the latest
Library news, events, and some
random fun stuff.**

Z zinio for LIBRARIES

Here's two new magazine titles, now available on Zinio through Masterton District Library.



KRASH KRASH is simply the world's coolest boys' magazine. It's core of WWE, animé and gaming is surrounded by a world of sport, comics, cars and more to create a magazine environment that will keep any 8-12 year old boy busy for weeks.



Mania The hottest kids' mag Mania is cheeky, cool and in the know. Kids love reading Mania to keep up with what's hot in gaming, movies, music, celebrities and the latest toys. Mania also features fun fiction, jokes, pets, comics, sport, challenging puzzles and interesting and funny stories.

Librarians and their Pets.

Thanks to everyone who took part in last month's competition, and thanks to Ladymead Boarding Kennels and Cattery for providing the prize. For the record:

Sam belongs to Jon

Biscuit belongs to Jane

Chippy belongs to Rachel

Pepe belongs to Thea

Bruxa belongs to Angela

Soul belongs to Georgia-May

Bella belongs to Chris

Myfanwy belongs to Charlotte

Misty belongs to Cindy

(although the cats question the whole 'belongs to' idea)

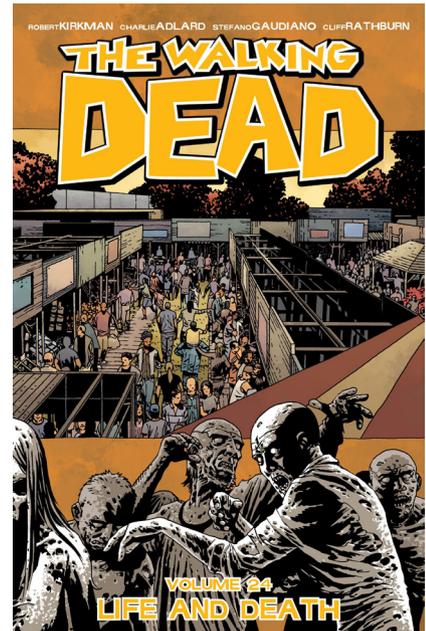


Top Graphics for the past 12 months

Masterton Library has three Graphic Novel collections - Adult, Young Adult, and Junior. Our collections are very well utilised by Masterton readers of graphic works, and are also very popular with borrowers from the other SMART Libraries. Below are the top-ten most reserved Adult graphic novels for the past 12 months. The most reserved Junior Graphic book is **Amulet. Book Four. The Last Council** by Kazu Kibuishi (with six further *Amulet* titles in the Top 10), and the equal most reserved Young Adult Graphics are **Cherub. The Recruit: the graphic novel** by Robert Muchamore and **Maximum Ride, Book Three** by James Patterson.

10. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 20, All Out War. Part One** by Robert Kirkman.
09. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 17, Something to Fear** by Robert Kirkman.
08. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 22, A New Beginning** by Robert Kirkman
07. **Lumberjanes. Vol. 03, A Terrible Plan** by Noelle Stevenson.
06. **Lumberjanes. Vol. 02, Friendship to the Max** by Noelle Stevenson.
05. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 21, All Out War. Part Two** by Robert Kirkman.
04. **Saga. Vol. 1** by Bryan K. Vaughan.
03. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 23, Whispers into Screams** by Robert Kirkman.
02. **Bart Simpson's treehouse of horror : heebie-jeebie hullabaloo** by Matt Groening.
01. **The Walking Dead. Vol. 24, Life and Death** by Robert Kirkman.

Robert Kirkwood's Walking Dead received the 2007 and 2010 Eisner Award for Best Continuing Series. It has been collected into 27 volumes (so far) and has also been adapted into a video game, a miniature wargame, seven novelisations, and the television series of the same name.





Given their pictorial nature, it is perhaps unsurprising that comic books have provided a rich source for film and Saturday film serials for characters such as Mandrake the Magician, Batman, and The Phantom were produced. The Jerry Siegel and Joe Schuster's original comic. Subsequent TV adaptations of the man of steel have included *The* have been more successful than others, but below is a selection of twelve films based on comic books that are av

Deadpool (2016)

Based on the Marvel Comics character of the same name, *Deadpool* was the 9th highest grossing movie of 2016. Ryan Reynolds starred as Wade Wilson / Deadpool, a subversive superhero who regularly breaks the fourth wall.



Captain America: The First Avenger (2011)

Chris Evans stars as Steve Rogers, a sickly man who is transformed into the super soldier, Captain America. Followed by two sequels, *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* (2014) and *Captain America: Civil War* (2016).



Guardians of the Galaxy (2014)

Chris Pratt as Peter Quill/Star Lord heads an ensemble cast in this sci-fi/superhero extravaganza. Humour, action and visual effects made the film a critical and commercial success and a sequel is due out later this year.



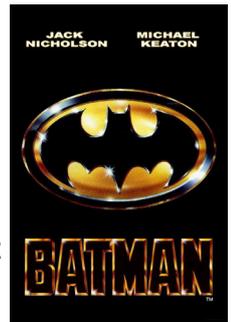
The Amazing Spider-Man (2012)

This reboot of the Spider-Man story stars Andrew Garfield as Peter Parker and traces his evolution into the title character. The film won praise for its visual style and Garfield's performance, and was followed by a sequel in 2014.



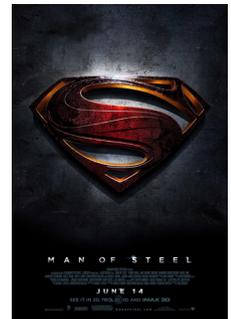
Batman (1989)

Staring Michael Keaton as Bruce Wayne/Batman, Jack Nicholson as the Joker, Kim Bassinger as Vicki Vale, and directed by Tim Burton, *Batman* was a critical and financial success, earning over \$400 million at the box office.



The Man of Steel (2013)

A darker, more action-packed, reboot of the Superman story starring Henry Cavill as Clark Kent/Superman. Retelling Superman's origin story, along with his battle to preserve humanity, the film was a worldwide success grossing over \$668 million.





television adaptations. Almost as soon as superheroes comics were gaining an audience in the 1930s and 40s, The television series *The Adventures of Superman* began production in 1951, 13 years after he first appeared in *Adventures of Lois and Clark*, which ran from 1993 to 1997, and *Smallville* which ran from 2001 to 2011. Some available from Masterton or the other SMART Libraries.

Scott Pilgrim vs The World (2010)

Michael Cera stars as Scott Pilgrim, a struggling musician who must battle delivery girl Ramona's seven evil exes in order to be able to date her. The film was not a box office smash, but was generally well received by critics.



Iron Man (2008)

Fast paced action, great visual effects, but Robert Downey Jr. steals the show with his performance as the brilliant but flawed Tony Stark/Iron Man. Followed by the less successful *Iron Man 2* (2010) and a return to form with *Iron Man 3* (2013).



The Avengers (2012)

Big name actors (including Samuel L. Jackson, Scarlet Johansson, Chris Hemsworth, and Mark Ruffalo) and big name superheroes (Captain America, Iron Man, Hulk, Thor, and the agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.) makes for a true blockbuster movie.



Men In Black (1997)

Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones star as the Men In Black, the "... first, last and only line of defence against the worst scum of the universe." The third highest grossing film of 1997, *Men In Black* was followed by *Men In Black 2* (2002) and *Men In Black 3* (2012).



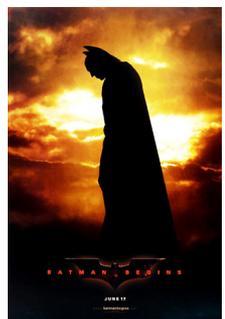
X-Men: First Class (2011)

Set mostly in 1962, with a back drop of the Cuban Missile crisis, the film uncovers the origins of the X-Men and the relationship between Professor Charles Xavier (played by James McAvoy) and Erik Lensherr / Magneto (played by Michael Fassbender).



Batman Begins (2005)

This dark, brooding reboot of the Batman story has been described by many as the greatest superhero movie. Part of a trilogy of movies directed by Christopher Nolan it was followed by *The Dark Knight* (2008) and *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012).



Marvel vs. DC Comics

Comic books are full of rivalries, Batman vs The Joker, Superman vs Lex Luthor, and Professor X and Magneto for example. Another classic rivalry is that between the two largest publishers of comic books, Marvel and DC Publishing who between them share about 2/3rds of the American comic book market. There are differences between the two and the merits of each publisher and their creations have been much debated.

DC Comics (the initials come from their early 'Detective Comics' series) was founded in 1934 and is the vehicle for well-known characters such as Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman, Green Lantern and the Flash. Although the company had initial financial problems, DC has endured and today is also home to imprints such as Mad Magazine and the Vertigo label which delivers more alternative content. On February 2, 2010 a copy of *Action Comics No.1*, the first to feature Superman, sold for US\$1 million.

Marvel Comics began in 1939 as Trinity Comics. In the 1950s it was known as Atlas Comics, and in 1961 the Marvel Comics brand emerged. Marvel has produced iconic comic heroes such as Iron Man, Spiderman and

the X-Men, and has also enjoyed great success with film adaptations of many of these characters. In 2009 Marvel Entertainment was acquired by The Disney Company for a reported \$4 billion (U.S)

The rivalry between DC and Marvel is essentially a friendly one and there have been several occasions when their respective superheroes have crossed over. In 1996 the two publishers combined forces to create a limited edition comic book series 'DC vs Marvel'. The series is based on the premise that two godly brothers, who personify the DC and Marvel universes, become aware of each other's existence and challenge one another to a series of duels, championed by the superheroes of their respective universes.

This resulted in classic match-ups such as Superman Vs. Hulk, Batman Vs. Captain America, and Wonder Women Vs Storm. In the end the brothers come to realise they are both unique, and conflict between them is pointless. Speculation amongst fans, however, about who would win a battle between the various superheroes will no doubt continue indefinitely, and fill many comments sections on the internet.



Women in Graphic Novels.

One of the more valid criticisms of comic books and graphic novels regards their portrayal of women. Traditionally the role of women in comics was very limited. They were the victims, 'the damsels in distress', to be rescued; or little more than spectators (or possibly cheerleaders) to the actions of the main (male) characters. There are a number of female superheroes, such as Supergirl, Black Widow and Storm, and the Wonder Woman movie is scheduled for release later this year, but they are definitely in the minority.

Wonder Woman made her first appearance in December 1941, a time when the role of women changed dramatically with more and more joining the workforce. Wonder Woman possesses super-human strength and abilities, and in contrast to the norm, it is she who regularly rescues her romantic interest, Colonel Trevor. Wonder Woman does have her detractors, but for others she truly is a genuine superhero, particularly for her compassionate nature, and she has been described as an icon of the feminist, pacifist and LGBT movements.

Even when women do feature in comics, however, depictions of them can often be, at best described as anatomically unrealistic, and at worst, highly sexualised and lascivious. Their portrayal as sex objects can often undermine the acclaim female comic characters should achieve through their super deeds. They are often scantily clad, depicted in provocative poses, and even established characters like Wonder Woman wear much more revealing costumes than their male counterparts would ever be drawn in.

Sexism is an issue in many aspects of society, and comic books are no exception, but while the industry is still dominated by men amongst writers and illustrators, women do make up a significant percentage of the readership. One ray of hope is the recent reincarnation of Ms Marvel as Kamala Khan, a teenage Pakistani-American, and the first Muslim character to headline a series. She has superpowers, but otherwise a normal physique, and she faces the usual issues faced by a teenager. Her costume is influenced by the Shalwar Kameez (a traditional outfit worn on the Indian subcontinent), and although her faith is part of her identity, it does not limit or define her; and none of this stops her from being completely kick-ass when cleaning up crime on the streets of New Jersey.



From the Wairarapa Archive...

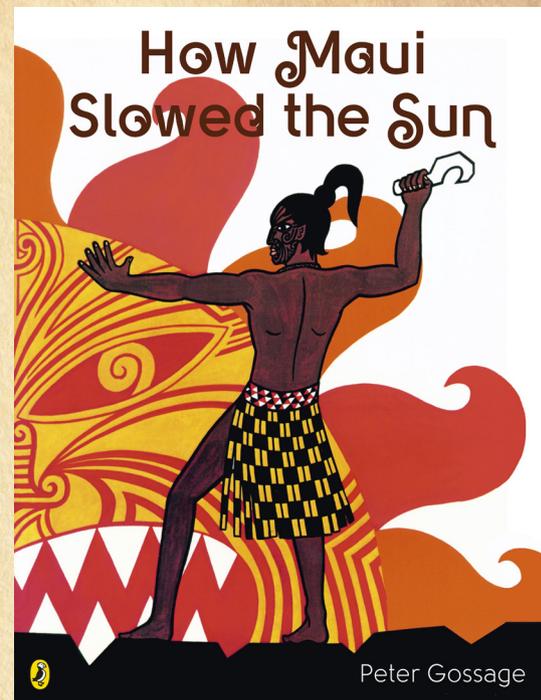
Of all the superheroes spoken of, surely none can excel the deeds of the first great New Zealand superhero Maui-tikitiki-a-Taranga, a child born prematurely to the goddess Taranga, and thrown into the sea, bundled in the hair from her topknot (tikitiki). Fortunately he was rescued by the spirits of the ocean, including his ancestors, then returns to the land as a teenager, entering his mother's house, although she does not recognise him. His brothers were a bit wary of this intruder but when he transformed himself into various different birds they accepted him.

His first big adventure was to slow the sun down, because it was passing across the sky too quickly. Armed with the jawbone of his ancestress Muri-ranga-whenua and helped by his brothers, he noosed the sun and beat him with his club until the sun relented and agreed to go more slowly in the future. He then took the jawbone fishing, using it to hook a gigantic fish from the deepest ocean. He left his brothers in charge of the flat fish while he went to get a tohunga to perform the necessary rites but his brothers try to cut the fish up, and it writhes in agony, and thrashing about, forming mountains and valleys. This is the North Island, Te Ika a Maui – Maui's fish. Wairarapa and Wellington form Te Upoko of Te Ika a Maui – the head of Maui's fish.

The superhero Maui discovered fire by tricking the fire goddess Mahuika, and only just escaped with his life. But his last trick turned to disaster. He sought to achieve immortality by conquering the goddess of the night, Hine-nui-te-po. He had almost achieved his task when one of his companions, piwakawaka, the fantail, burst out laughing and Hine-nui-te-po saw Maui and crushed him. He became mortal, as are all the people that followed him.

-Gareth Winter

Note: Maori mythology has provided a rich source of material for comic book writers and artists and there are several graphic novel adaptations of Maori legends available from Masterton Library. Included amongst these is **Ngarara Huarau** by local author and Education Strategy Curriculum Developer for Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Maxine Hemi .



How Maui Slowed the Sun, one of a number of Maori legends retold and illustrated by the late Peter Gossage.

What's on in the Library this month...

Book Bugs Book Club (ages 10 - 13)

Wednesday 1st of March,
5:30pm - 6:30pm

Story-Go-Round Pre-School Programme

Wednesday 1st, 8th, 16th, 22nd and 29th of March,
10:30am

Puanga Kohanga Te Reo Pre-School Programme

Thursday 2nd, 17th, 23rd, and 30th of March; and
Wednesday the 8th of March (joint session with Story-
Go-Round), 10:30am

Unmaking (taking electronic equipment apart)

Monday 6th and 27th of March,
3:30pm (registration required)

Clubcraft (Minecraft Club)

Monday 13th of March,
3:30 pm (registration required)

Lego Club

Monday the 20th of March,
3.30 pm (registration required)

BookEnds Book Club

Monday 27th of March,
1:00pm

Seniors Celebrate

Tuesday 28th of March,
2:00pm

There are always lots of events and activities happening at the Library. Check them out, and register if required, at our **EVENTS page <https://masterton.spydus.co.nz/events> or click on the link from the Library/Archive website.**

Check the Library noticeboard by the Queen Street entrance for more Wairarapa events.

A LEGO minifigure of Batman, wearing his iconic black suit, cape, and mask, standing against a background of colorful LEGO bricks. The figure is positioned on the left side of the banner.

Masterton Library LEGO Club

Masterton Library LEGO Club meets every third Monday during term time, from 3:30 to 5:00pm in the Library. The group take on different LEGO based activities and challenges at each meeting. Masterton Library LEGO Club is open to all school aged children but registration through our **EVENTS** page is essential to secure your place. The Library has an awesome collection of LEGO but any donations will be gratefully received. You can never have too much LEGO!



Stan Lee (born Stanley Martin Lieber in 1922) is an American comic book writer, editor, publisher, and former president and chairman of Marvel Comics, taking it from a small division of a publishing house to a huge multimedia corporation. In collaboration with other artists (including Jack Kirby) Lee has created comic book characters such as *Spiderman*, *the Hulk*, *Doctor Strange*, *the Fantastic Four*, *Iron Man*, *Thor*, and *the X-Men*. Through a career that has lasted well over 70 years, the name Stan Lee is synonymous with comics.

Lee graduated college at the age of 16 and in 1939 started work as an assistant at Timely Comics, who would later evolve into Marvel Comics. His job involved tasks such as fetching lunch, proofreading, and filling inkwells, but in 1941 he made his comic book debut, writing a filler piece in a Captain America story. He soon began writing more and more comics and at 19 was installed as interim editor. After several years serving with the US Army Signal Corps Lee returned to writing comics, but after over a decade was beginning to feel stifled. Salvation came in 1961 when Lee was able to free his imagination with *The Fantastic Four*, which became Marvel's most popular title until the 1966 publication of probably Lee's best-known creation, *The Amazing Spider-Man*.

Outside of comic book creation, Lee has led a relatively quiet life. When told someone was planning to produce a movie of his life, Lee reportedly replied "What the hell could you do? I've never been arrested, I haven't taken drugs, I've had the same wife for 54 years – where's anything of interest to people?" He has however made numerous cameo appearances in film and television adaptations of his stories including *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* and *Iron Man*, and appeared as himself in an episode of *The Big Bang Theory*. In 2010 Lee established The Stan Lee Foundation, a non-profit organization that seeks to provide access to literacy, education and the arts throughout the United States. Lee has overseen the development of Marvel comics into a massive, multimedia publishing entity, and is responsible for the creation of some of comic books' most iconic characters. When it comes to comic books, Stan is the Man!

I try not to do anything that's too close to what I've done before. And the nice thing is we have a big universe here. It's filled with new ideas. All you have to do is grab them.

STAN LEE, Brandweek, May 2000