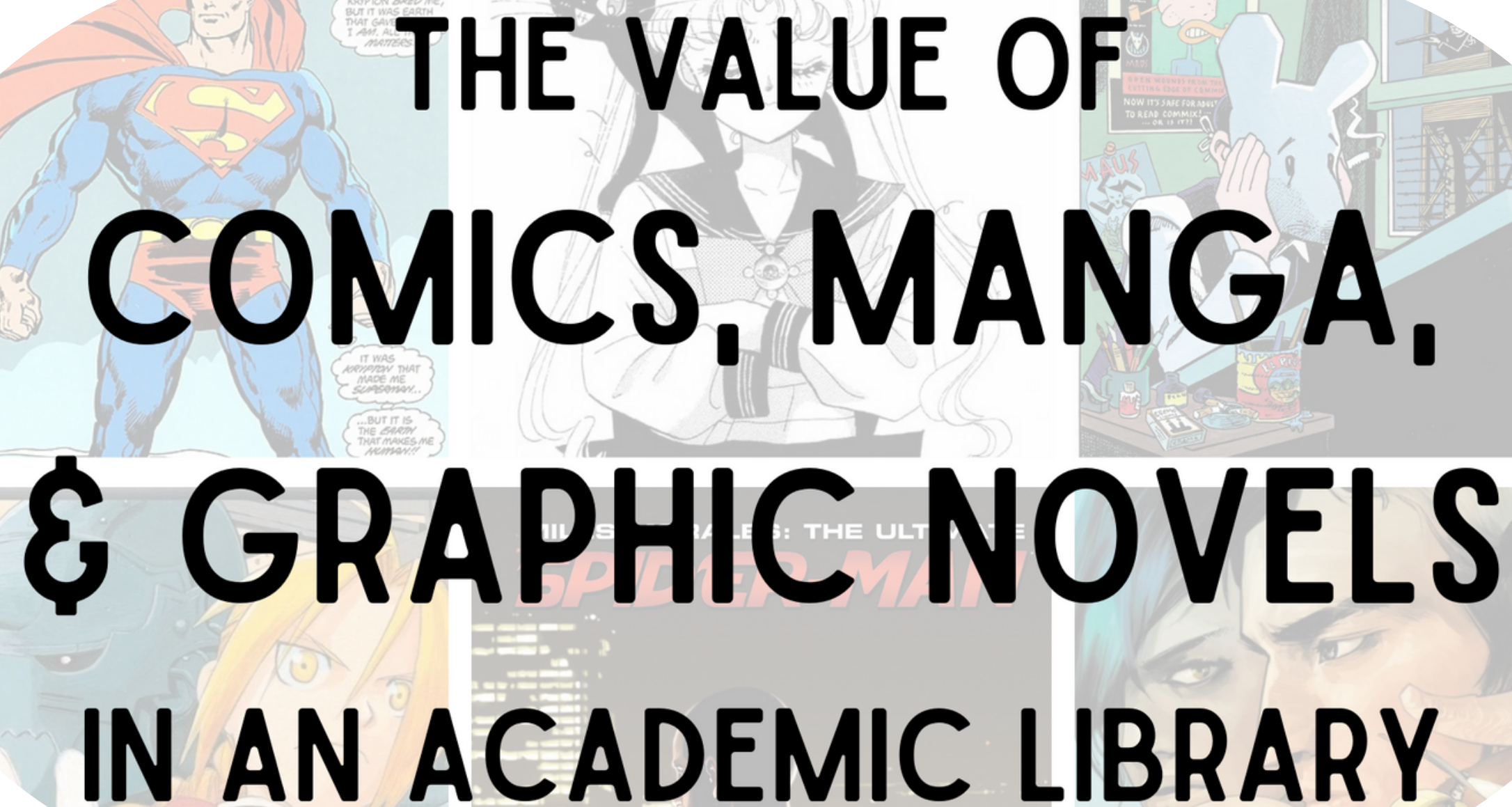




# THEY'RE JUST PICTURES?



## THE VALUE OF COMICS, MANGA, & GRAPHIC NOVELS IN AN ACADEMIC LIBRARY

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# WHOLE PERSON

In 2021, Georgian Court University adopted a new student “field guide” entitled *Joining the Mission*, which discusses the concept of the “whole person.” This idea asserts that people can only develop in relation to one another. Community is thus essential for learning and growing.

The “whole person” also recognizes the uniqueness of individuals and emphasizes the need to support students beyond the classroom. *Joining the Mission* articulates the following points:

- You are a whole person. You are not a “brain-on-a-stick.”
- Wholeness is wellness, and vice versa.
- Education is more than just academics.
- Learning involves imagination and creativity.
- Learning is ongoing.
- Your uniqueness as an individual resides in the “whole” you.
- The goal of education is the flourishing of the whole person.

Comics, manga, and graphic novels support the “whole person” by offering opportunities for recreation, cultural enrichment, community building, and skill development beyond what students typically encounter in the classroom.



We have events, study spaces, and lounge areas for a reason--the library at its best is a hub for the campus community.

Our CMGN collection is part of this!

Make students feel part of the collection decision-making process (through forms and suggestions)

Draw in students who might not be interested in the library otherwise.

Give them something to talk about!

# READING COMICS, MANGA, AND GRAPHIC NOVELS SUPPORTS VISUAL LITERACY

"Visual literacy is a set of abilities that enables an individual to effectively find, interpret, evaluate, use, and create images and visual media. Visual literacy skills equip a learner to understand and analyze the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials." (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2011)

## VISUAL LANGUAGE

Comics, manga, and graphic novels tell stories using visual languages or vocabularies, which use stylistic elements to visually convey what a character is thinking or feeling. Manga makes use of "Japanese Visual Language."



## Visually literate individuals...

- Develop and refine critical observation skills
- Explore the choices made in the production of visuals to construct meaning
- Interpret visuals using context provided by captions or other related information
- Consider how personal experiences and worldviews shape a person's interactions with visuals

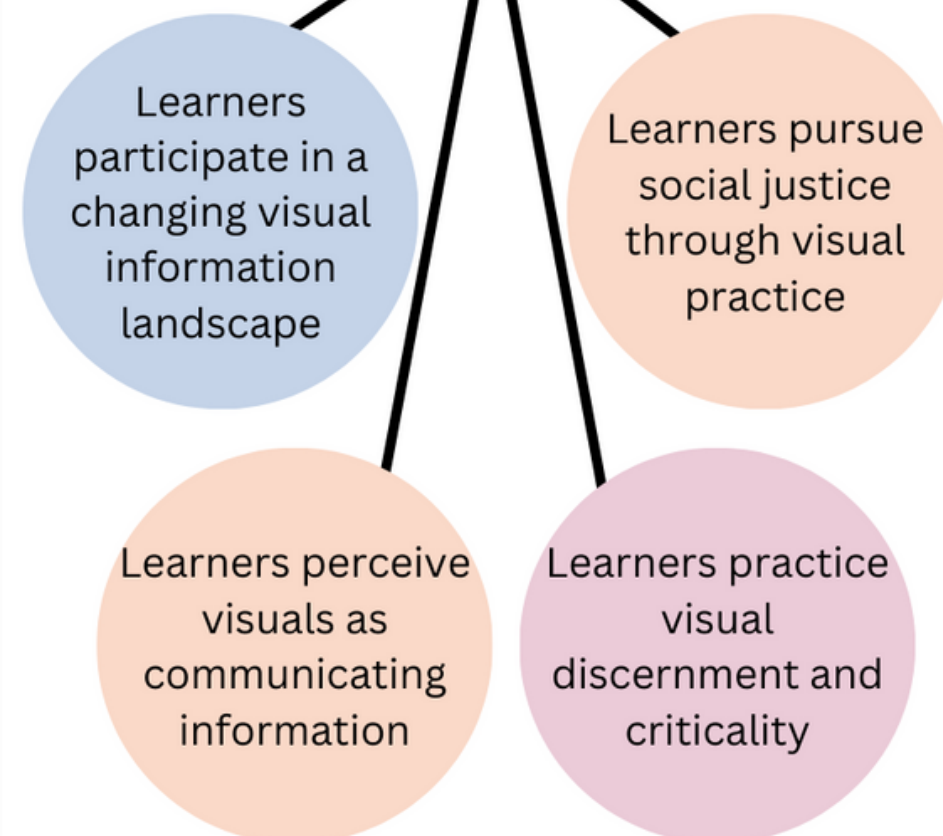
(Beene et al., 2022)

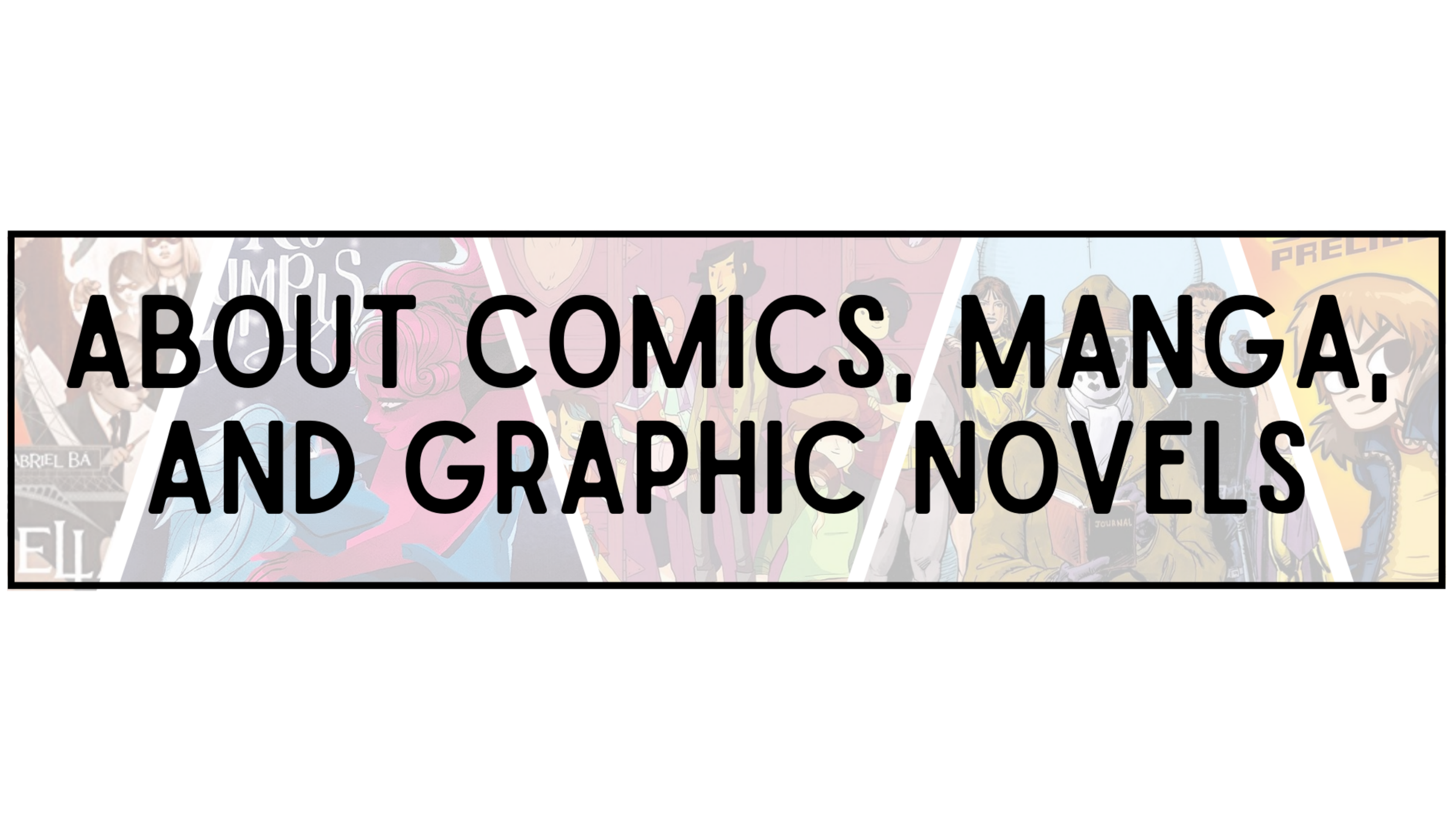
## VISUAL LITERACY IS IMPORTANT

We are surrounded by visual information all the time: advertisements, photographs, videos, maps, charts, graphs, and memes!

Visual literacy helps us to understand how these things convey information and evoke ideas or feelings in their audience.

## THE FRAMEWORK FOR VISUAL LITERACY IN HIGHER EDUCATION





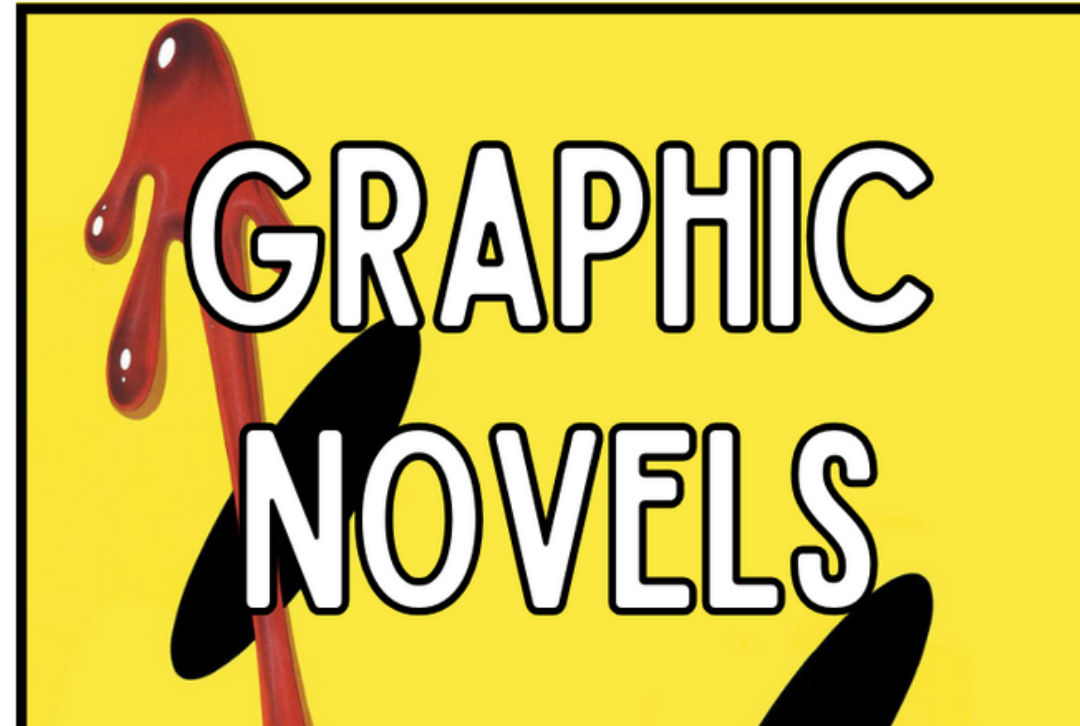
# ABOUT COMICS, MANGA, AND GRAPHIC NOVELS



comics originating in Japan



image-based storytelling that was originally serialized OR, alternatively, an umbrella term



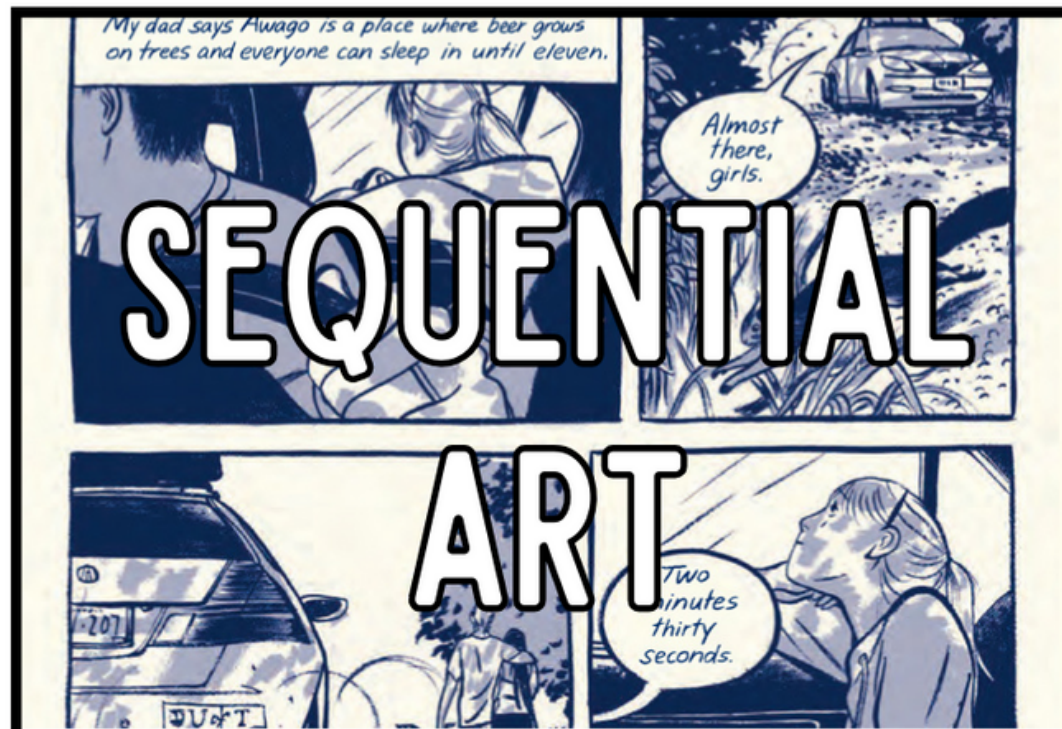
stories published as a complete whole (usually one book) OR, alternatively, an umbrella term



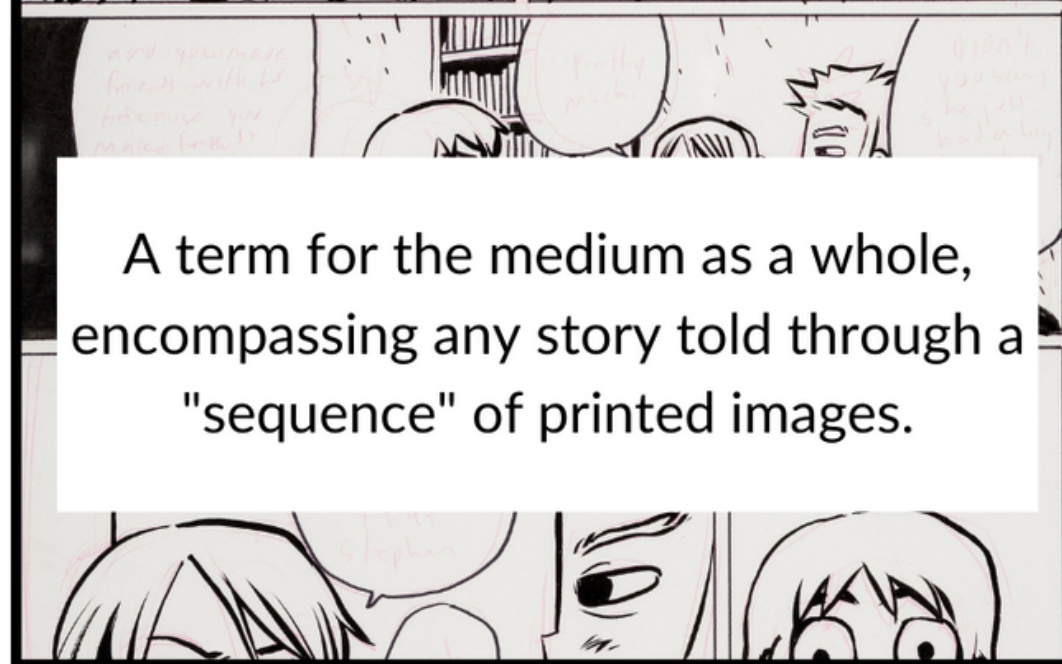


MANHUA  
Chinese comics

MANHWA  
Korean comics



A term for the medium as a whole, encompassing any story told through a "sequence" of printed images.



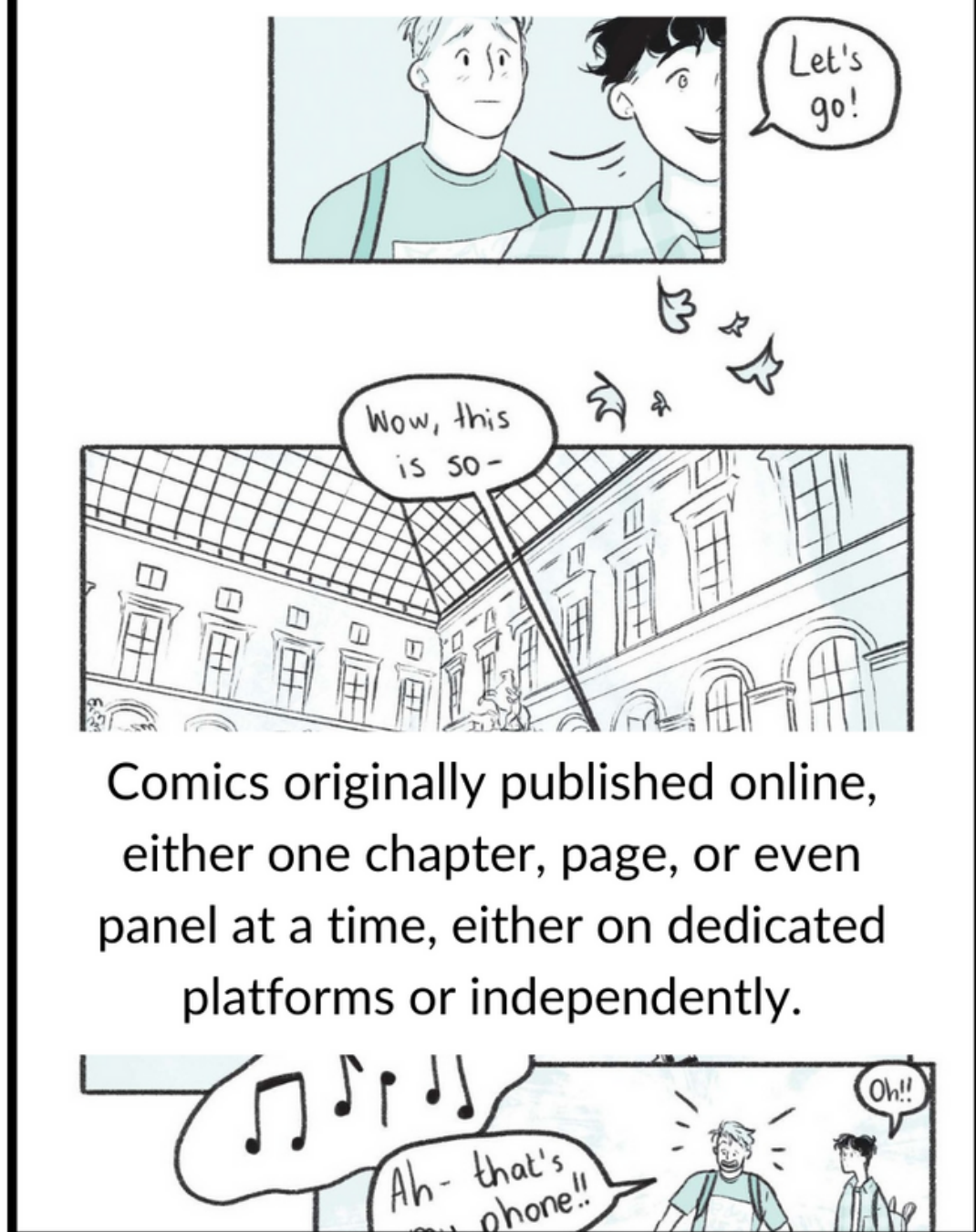
Animation from Japan.

Often adapted from manga or light novels.

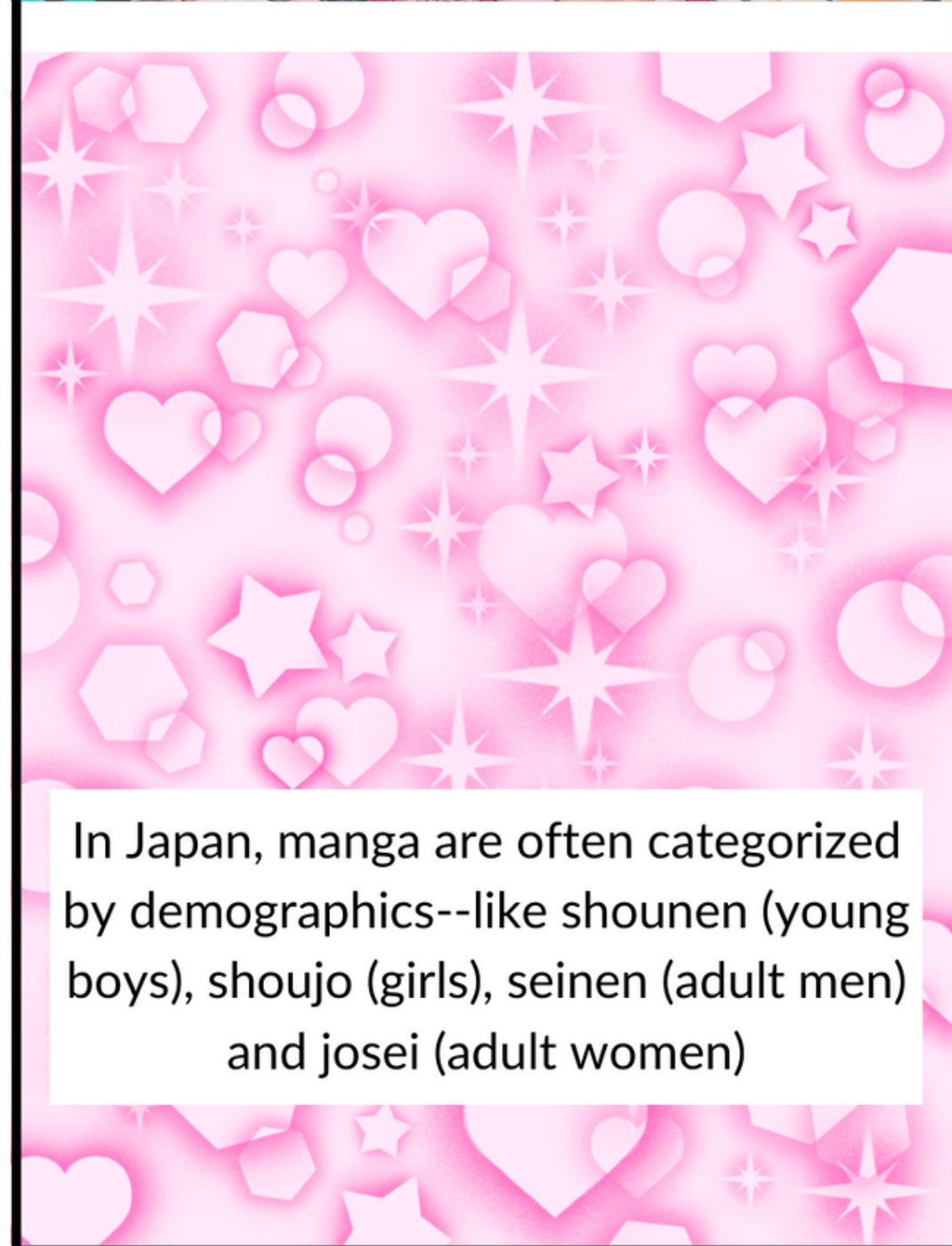




Short, easy-to-read novels associated with manga. Often have manga-style illustrations and were originally web novels.



Comics originally published online, either one chapter, page, or even panel at a time, either on dedicated platforms or independently.

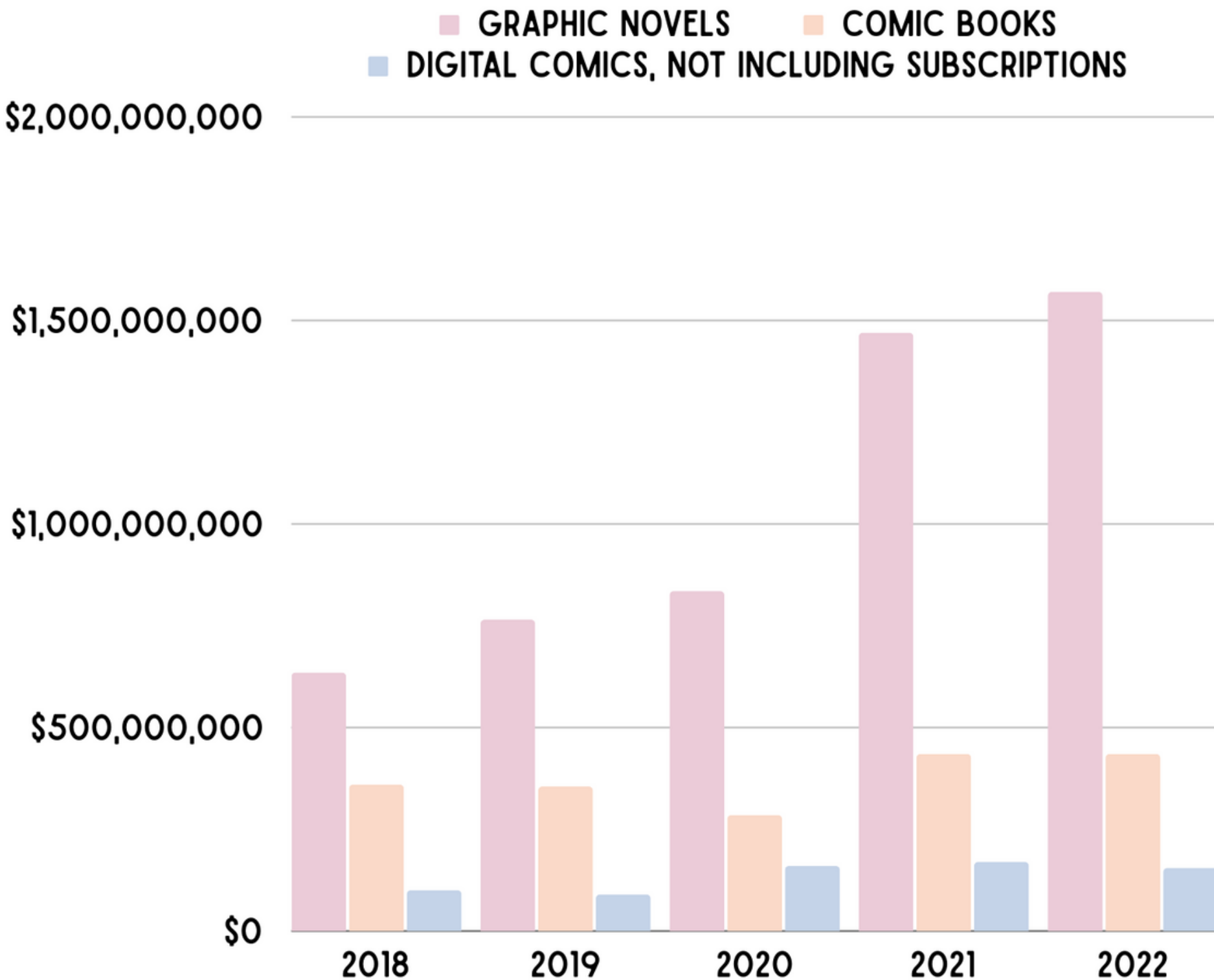


In Japan, manga are often categorized by demographics--like shounen (young boys), shoujo (girls), seinen (adult men) and josei (adult women)

# POPULARITY OF COMICS, MANGA, AND GRAPHIC NOVELS

## TOP-SELLING COMICS OF ALL TIME

NORTH AMERICAN SALES OF GRAPHIC NOVELS, COMIC BOOKS, AND DIGITAL COMICS, 2018-2022



All data from ICv2.com

**2020**  
 Graphic Novel sales, including manga, grew 29% over previous year. Overall print book sales rose by 8.2%.  
 (Watson, 2022)

**2021**  
 Graphic Novel sales grew 109.3%. Overall print book sales grew by 8.9%.  
 (Milliot, 2022)

**2022**  
 Graphic Novel sales grew 4.6%. Overall print book sales fell by 6.5%.  
 (MacDonald, 2022)

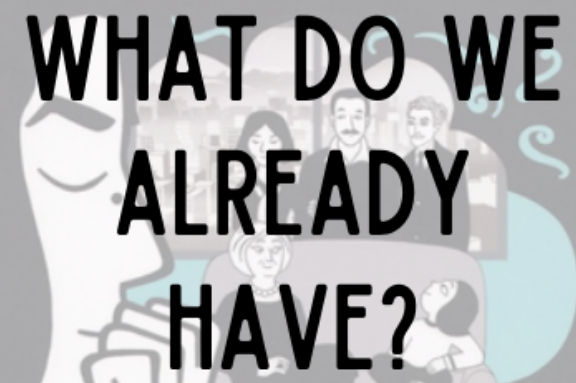
1. *One Piece* (1997-Present), Eiichiro Oda
2. *Asterix* (1959-Present), Rene Goscinny, Albert Uderzo
3. *Doraemon* (1969-1996), Fujiko Fujio
4. *Dragon Ball* (1984-1995), Akira Toriyama
5. *Lucky Luke* (1946-Present), Morris (Maurice De Bevere)
6. *Golgo 13* (1968-Present), Takao Saito
7. *Peanuts* (1950-2000), Charles Schulz
8. *Dragon & Tiger Heroes* (1969-Present), Wong Yuk-Long
9. *Case Closed* (1994-Present), Gosho Aoyama
10. *Naruto* (1999-2014), Masashi Kishimoto

Source: Wikipedia, "List of best-selling comic series"



# OUR COLLECTION





WHAT DO WE  
ALREADY  
HAVE?

We already had some graphic novels and comics in our collection!

“Literary” works like Maus.

Our Juvenile works collection.

And others!



WHAT DO WE  
WANT?

Variety! Genre, mood, length, style.

Popular titles & recognized classics

Historical & thematic weight

Student & other patron input



AND WHY?

Show the breadth of the medium

Offer something for every student, at any mood, and for any amount of time available.

Give the students what they want, and listen to what they're saying!

Appreciate our specific audience-- academic setting, primarily young adults who may not have a lot of free time.

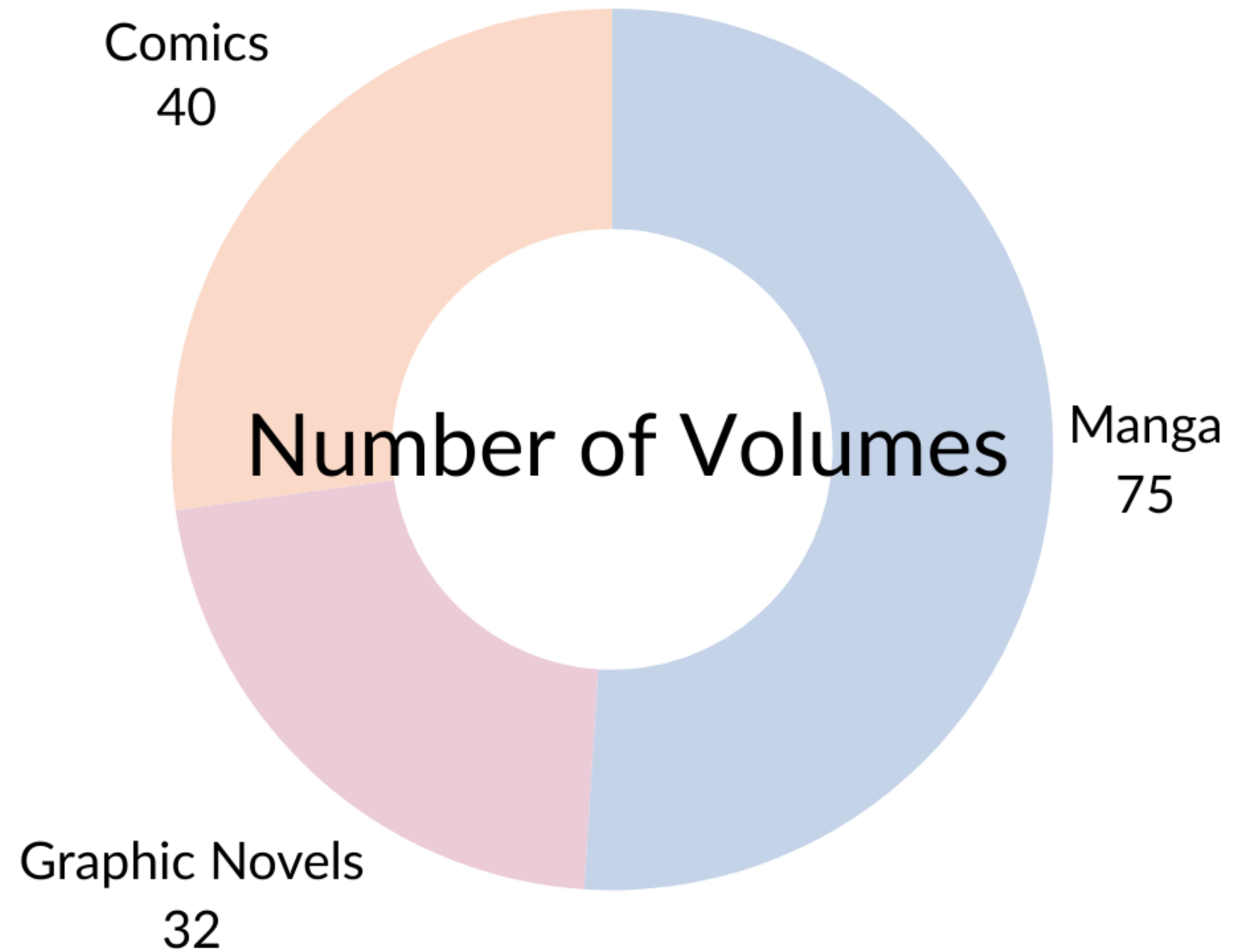
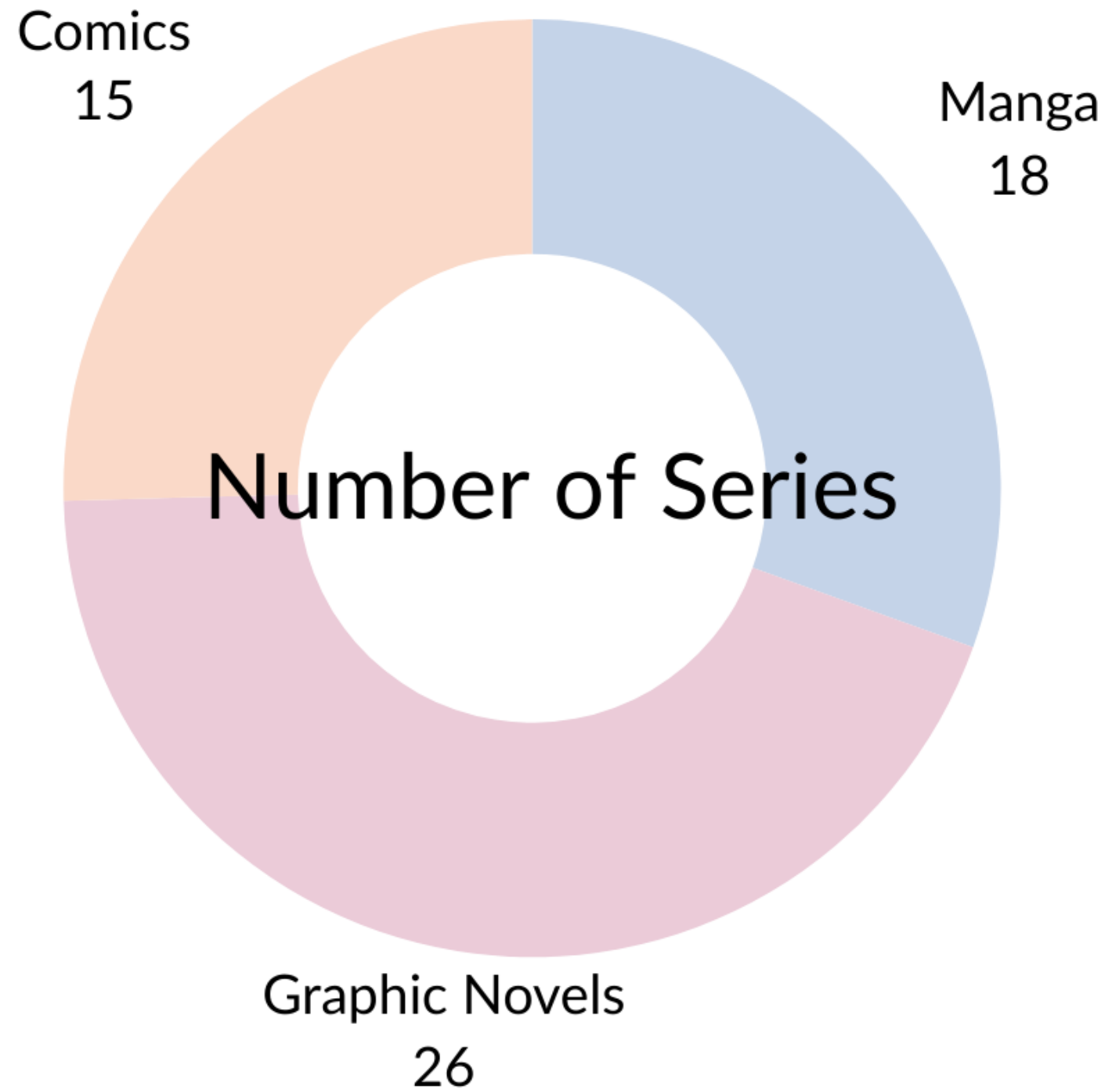


HINT: DO A  
TRIAL!

Some of these series are LONG.

We bought just three volumes of these series to gauge patron interest.

# WHAT'S IN OUR COLLECTION?



# IS THE COLLECTION BEING CHECKED OUT?

~ 1/3 of the series in the collection have been checked out at least once (21/60)

Most checkouts are of newly purchased series (13/21)

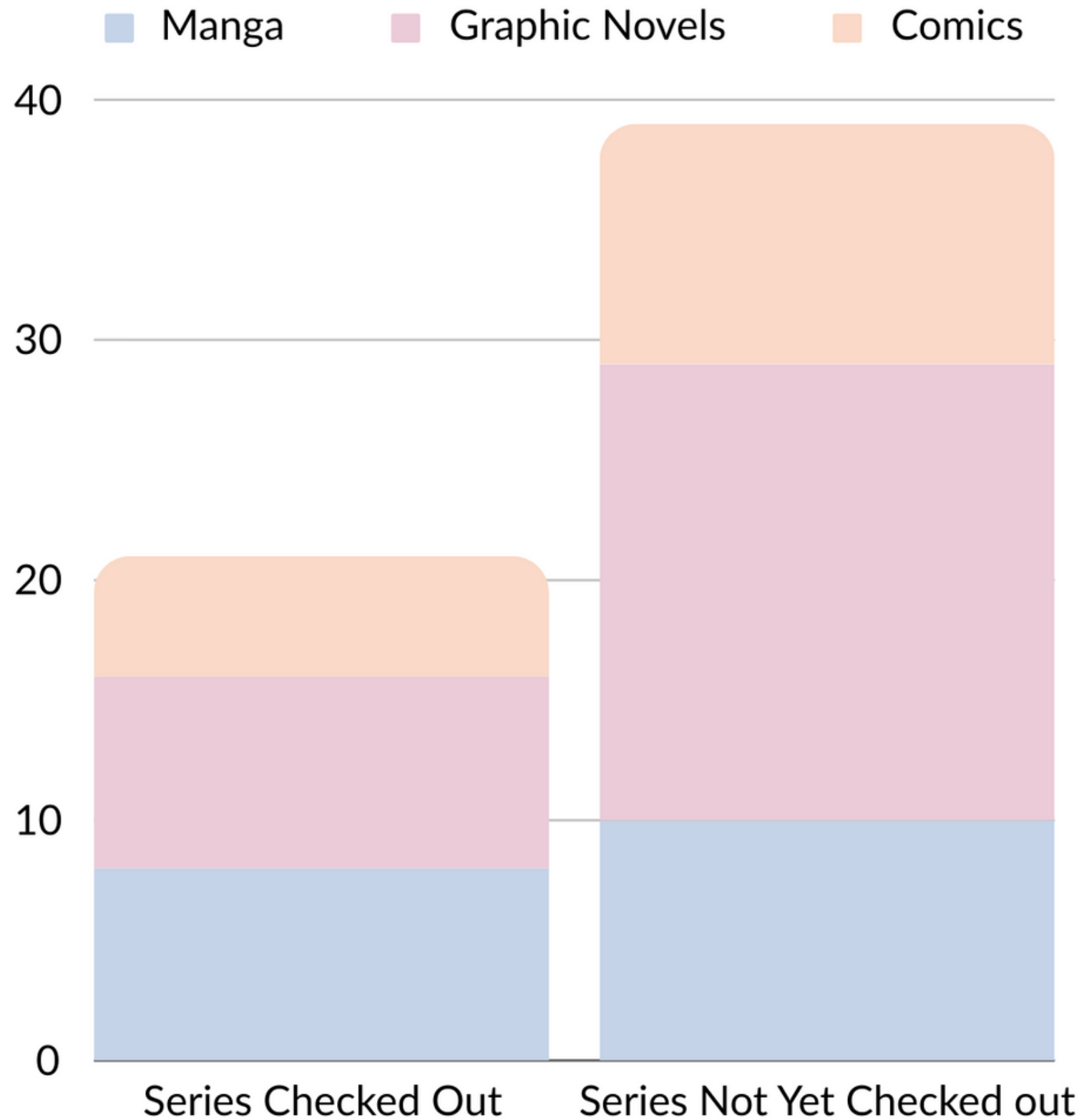
**YES!**

We've had 60 checkouts so far

Of the series not yet checked out, ~50% are either donations or older works moved from elsewhere in our circulating collection (3 donation + 17 moved = 20/39)

~40% of the newly purchased series have already been checked out (13/32)

# WHAT'S GETTING CHECKED OUT?



# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE...



## Space Planning

A permanent home, somewhere inviting.

Lounge area? Near board/video game spaces?

## Expanding the Collection

What have students requested or suggested?

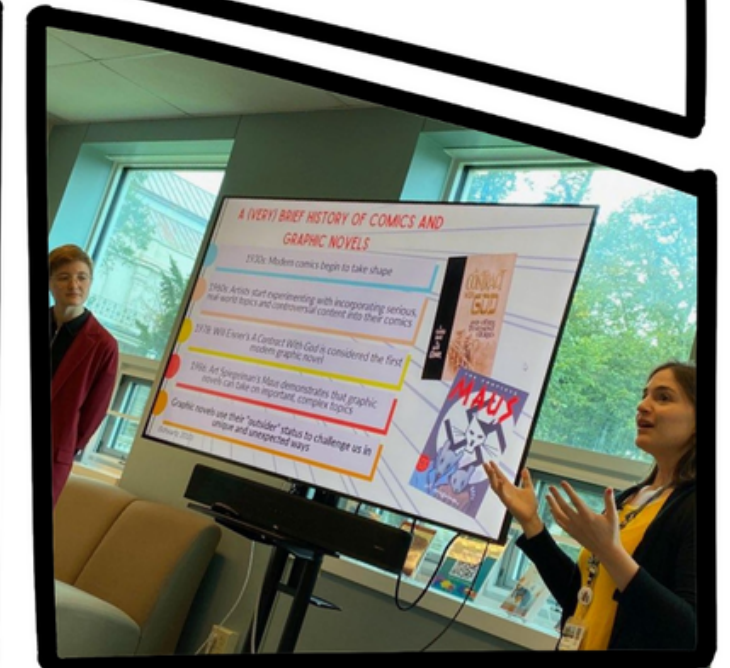
What types of works are circulating?

What series are circulating?

What's new and popular?

## Events

- Trivia nights
- Streaming anime & movies
- Discussion/book club/"panels"
- Japanese culture programs/collabs



# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [mangainlibraries.com](http://mangainlibraries.com)
- Eisner Awards
- NYT Bestseller List of Comics and Graphic Novels
- Anime News Network Lexicon
- ALA's Comics and Graphic Novel Round Table



Check out our  
LibGuide!



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