

Resource Guide

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LIS 5937: Graphic Novels

Dr. Denise Sheriff

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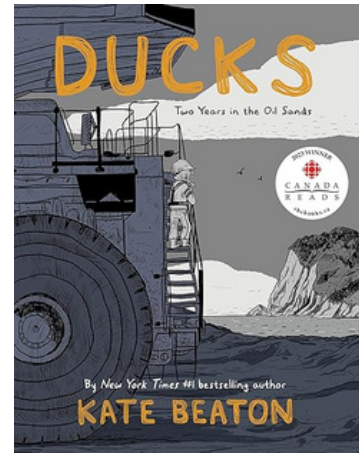
For my resource guide, I chose graphic memoirs as the focus as the memoir itself tends to draw in fresh voices rather than the established or franchised authors you typically find in fiction books. I believe the audience for memoirs is always looking for new life stories and new experiences far and away removed from themselves. In this respect, I believe the readership of memoirs is more open to new points of view. The same could be said for graphic memoirs, memoirs using the medium of comics.

The titles in the following pages are geared toward adult readers in a public library setting. While advisory boards do typically exist in local branches of public libraries for teens, many of the librarians I spoke to don't have adult advisory panels that recommend which materials to purchase. Of course, any patron can recommend books to be added to the collection and my system tries to accommodate those patrons whenever possible. Should a graphic memoir be challenged by a patron, I can seek out advice from the Freedom to Read Foundation.

In creating this resource guide, I did look for groundbreaking authors in the genre of graphic memoir as well as new voices of note. I strived to make this list as diverse as possible. *Crude: A Memoir* was highlighted in the November 2023 selection of Latinx in Publishing and *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?* was featured on the Jewish Book Council's list of Graphic Novels from a Jewish Perspective.

Typically, even on lists of diverse books, graphic memoirs are relegated to biography sections or even nonfiction sections which makes discovering them trickier than other genres of graphic narratives. Still, I believe the relative newness of the genre of graphic memoirs provides a great opportunity for representation in collection.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Beaton, Kate

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands

● ● ● APA Citation

Beaton, K. (2022). *Ducks: two years in the oil sands*. Drawn and Quarterly.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands is a memoir from cartoonist Kate Beaton, creator of *Hark! A Vagrant*. The narrator recounts her time working for an oil drilling operation in Alberta, Canada. Beaton recounts the beauty of the indigenous land and how it was exploited for resources. I chose this for the collection because of its environmental themes.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Bechdel, Alison

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic

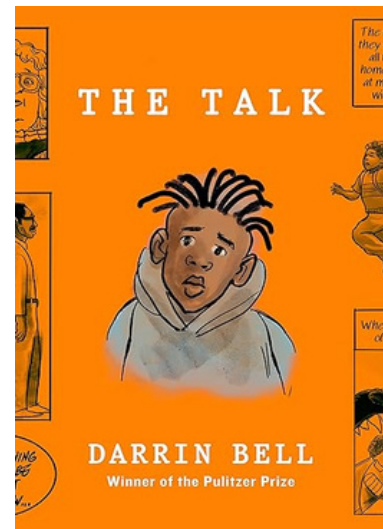
● ● ● APA Citation

Bechdel, A. (2007). *Fun home: a family tragicomic* (First Mariner books edition.). A Mariner Book, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

In this groundbreaking graphic memoir, Alison Bechdel recounts her relationship with her father and the funeral home her family ran. Through nonlinear storytelling, Bechdel comes to terms with her own sexuality and eventually learns that her father was gay. *Fun Home* is considered a landmark entry in LGBTQ+ literature which is why I chose it for the collection.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Bell, Darrin

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

The Talk

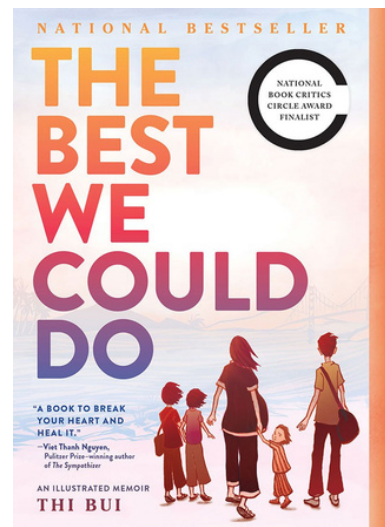
● ● ● APA Citation

Bell, D. (2023). *The talk* (First edition.). Henry Holt and Company.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Darrin Bell recounts his experiences of growing up in the United States from his early childhood to adulthood. Through good humor, we see through Bell's eyes the racial prejudice he encountered through his life. Bell realizes that there's a "talk" the black members of his family always avoid, a talk that's long overdue which is why I chose this for the collection.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Bui, Thi

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

The Best We Could Do: An Illustrated Memoir

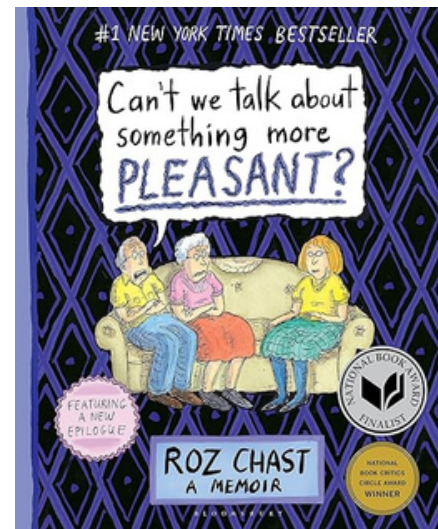
● ● ● APA Citation

Bui, T. (2017). *The best we could do: an illustrated memoir*. Abrams ComicArts, an imprint of ABRAMS.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Thi Bui and her family came to the United States as refugees from Vietnam after the fall of Saigon. We learn the life story of her mother and father and are given an intimate glimpse of that country before the conflicts. Readers get to see another side of the war, through the eyes of South Vietnamese civilians. That perspective is why I chose it for the collection.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Chast, Roz

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Can't We Talk about Something More Pleasant?: A Memoir

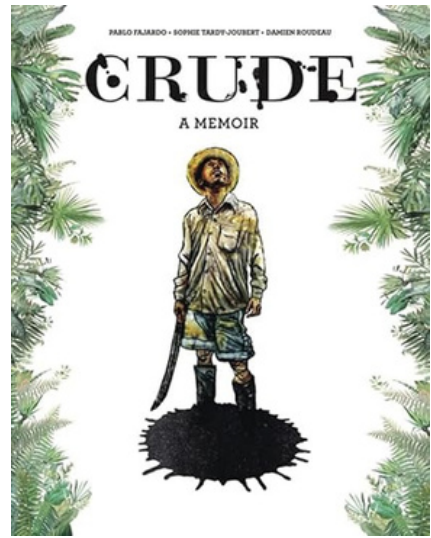
● ● ● APA Citation

Chast, R. (2014). *Can't we talk about something more pleasant?: a memoir* (First U.S. edition.). Bloomsbury.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

New Yorker Cartoonist Roz Chast brings a wonderful sense of humor when recollecting on the final years of her elderly parents. This memoir goes into the dementia her father had live with and caregiving decisions Chast was faced with. Through cartoons, family photos, and relevant documents, Chast weaves a touching story about her parents' final years. I chose this for the collection to help bring awareness for those living with dementia. This book also came recommended from the Jewish Book Council.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Fajardo, Pablo

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Crude: A Memoir

● ● ● APA Citation

Fajardo, P., Tardy-Joubert, S., Roudeau, D., & Chute, H. (2021). *Crude: A Memoir*. Penn State University Press.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Pablo Fajardo tells of the horrors he witnessed working in the Amazonian oil fields and the destruction caused by the Chevron Corporation. Fajardo grows up to be an activist and lawyer who challenges Chevron to make amends. I chose this lavishly illustrated memoir for the collection because it gives attention to a dark chapter in Ecuadorian history and the American oil company that exploited them.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Gharib, Malaka

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

I Was Their American Dream: A Graphic Memoir

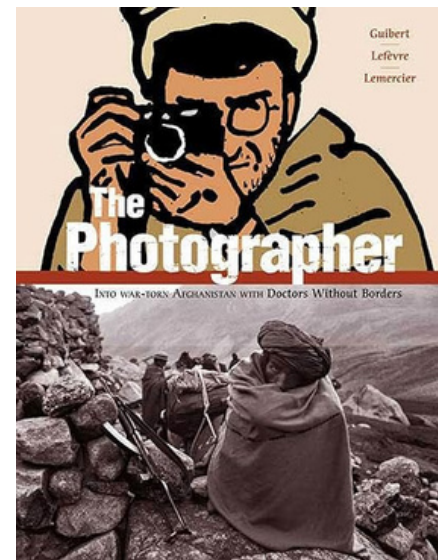
● ● ● APA Citation

Gharib, M., & Leigh, T. (2019). *I was their American dream: a graphic memoir* (First edition.). Clarkson Potter.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Malaka Gharib tells us her life story as a child of mixed ethnicity and her quest for identity. Gharib's mother mother is Filipino and father is Egyptian and her life has been a juggle of two heritages while dealing with the influence of American popular culture. I chose this for the collection because Gharib shows us that many Americans don't fall neatly into a checked box.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Guibert, Emmanuel

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

The Photographer: Into War-torn Afghanistan with Doctors Without Borders

● ● ● APA Citation

Guibert, E., Lefèvre, D., & Lemerancier, F. (2009). *The photographer* (A. Siegel, Tran.; First American edition.). First Second.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Emmanuel Guibert travelled with Doctors Without Borders to photograph what he witnessed as a result of the war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. Comic panels are interconnected with his photographs to show the reader an epic tale involving doctors doing their best to save lives amidst this devastating conflict. I chose this memoir for the collection because it gives rare insight into the culture and customs of Afghan people.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Jacob, Mira

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Good Talk: A Memoir in Conversations

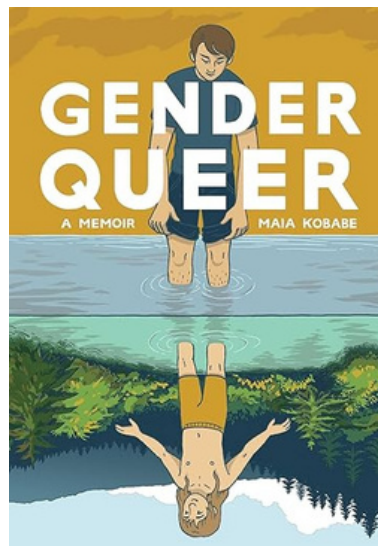
● ● ● APA Citation

Jacob, M. (2020). *Good talk: a memoir in conversations* (One World trade paperback edition.). One World.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Mira Jacob, the daughter of Indian immigrants, recollects many of the conversations she's had in her life concerning identity, sexuality, race relations, and the politics that divide us. As the stress of the 2016 election causes rifts in her own family, Jacob looks for answers in those conversations. These recollections are tipped off by the many questions on identity asked by her half Indian, half Jewish son. I chose this memoir for the collection to add to voices of Indian Americans.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Kobabe, Maia

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Gender Queer: A Memoir

● ● ● APA Citation

Kobabe, M., & Kobabe, P. (2022). *Gender queer: a memoir* (Deluxe edition.). Oni Press.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Maia Kobabe's memoir began as a means to explain to eir family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual. This reflection on eir path to self-realization has since become a guide for those struggling with gender identity. This memoir was written for an adult audience, but that hasn't stopped calls for its banning from libraries and has become a touchstone in the fight for the public's access to information. I chose this for collection because it's an important title in LGBTQ+ literature.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Pekar, Harvey

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

The Quitter

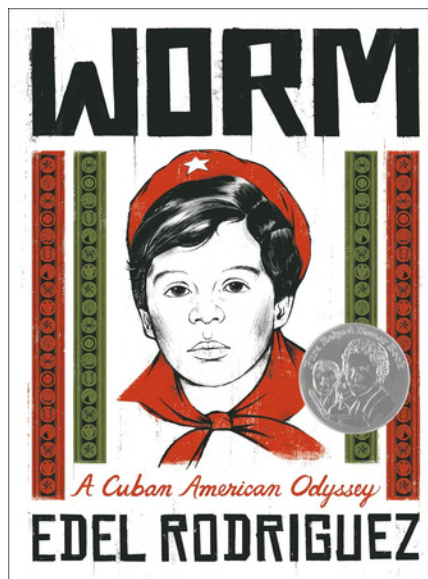
● ● ● APA Citation

Pekar, H., Loughridge, L., Brosseau, P., & Haspiel, D. (2005). *The quitter*. DC Comics.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Harvey Parker was a pioneer in using the medium of comics to tell personal stories in his *American Splendor* series. With *The Quitter*, we're given a glimpse into his childhood and young adult life and struggle with an anxiety over the fear of failing. Here, Pekar opens up about his experience with anxiety which is why I chose *The Quitter* for this collection.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Rodriguez, Edel

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Worm: A Cuban American Odyssey

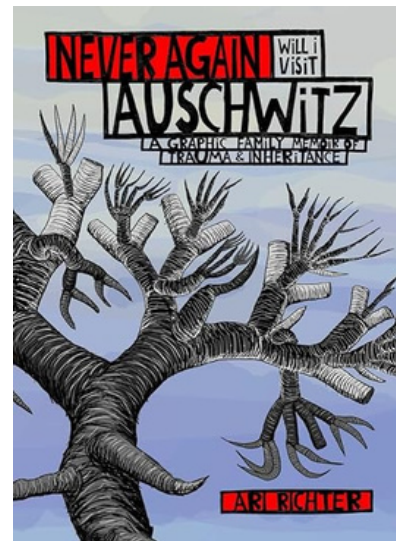
● ● ● APA Citation

Rodriguez, E. (2023). *Worm: a Cuban American odyssey*. First edition. New York, Metropolitan Books.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Famous illustrator Edel Rodriguez, reflects on his own family's exile from Cuba and growing up as a Cuban American. After the events of Jan.6 insurrection, he fears of a looming dictatorship in the United States not so different from the one his family left behind in Cuba. I'm including this memoir for one family's story of the detention center they forced into and the promise of a new life of freedom in the United States.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Richter, Ari

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Never Again Will I Visit Auschwitz: A Graphic Family Memoir of Trauma & Inheritance

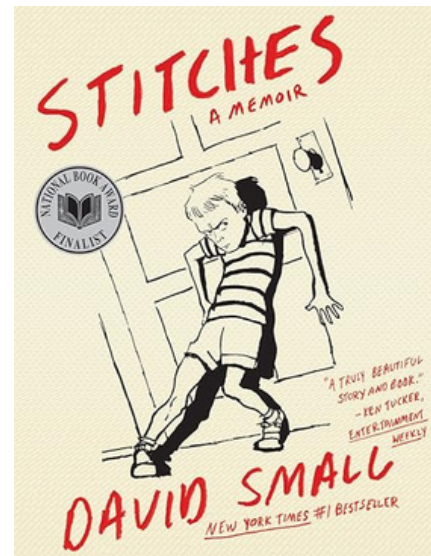
● ● ● APA Citation

Richter, A. (2024). *Never again will I visit Auschwitz: a graphic family memoir of trauma & inheritance*. Seattle, Washington, Fantagraphics Books.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Author Ari Richter tells his family story across generations beginning with a pre-war Germany to a modern America. Richter tells his family's story leading up to the Holocaust and well beyond it. I'm including this memoir because of its exploration of trauma and how it can be intergenerational.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Small, David

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Stitches: A Memoir

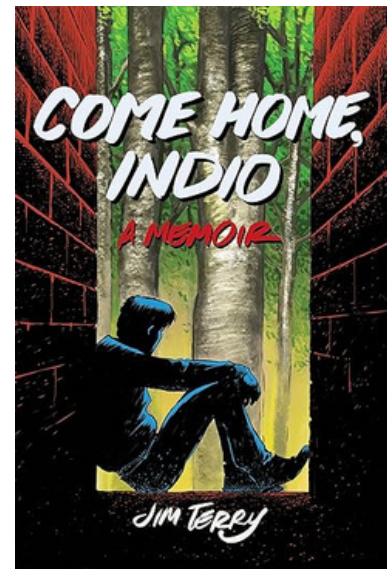
● ● ● APA Citation

Small, D. (2010). *Stitches: a memoir*--. New York, W.W. Norton.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Before David Small was a celebrated children's book artist, he had a rough childhood himself. Through parental neglect, he had one of his vocal cords severed and lost his voice. I'm including this memoir because it shows how the tough road through physical and mental therapy can result in recovery. This may give hope to readers dealing with their own struggles.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Terry, Jim

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Come Home, Indio: A Memoir

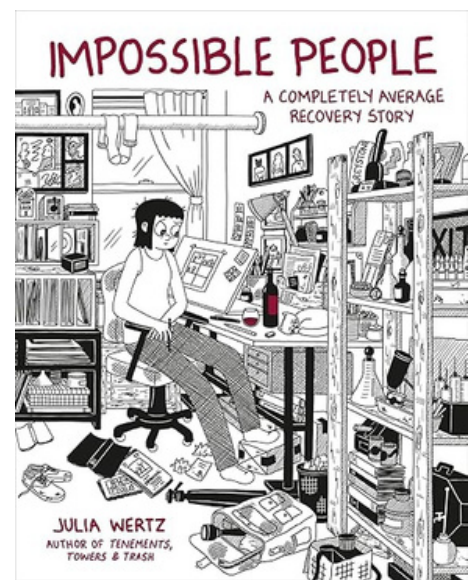
● ● ● APA Citation

Terry, J. (2020). *Come home, Indio: a memoir*. First edition. Brooklyn, New York, Street Noise Books.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

The American Library Association named *Come Home, Indio* in their ten best graphic novels of 2022. In this memoir, author Jim Terry tells the story of childhood neglect and addiction. He was the son of an indigenous mother belonging to the Ho-Chunk nation and his father was Irish-American. I picked this for the collection to grow indigenous representation and for narrator's journey to sobriety.

Annotated Bibliography



● ● ● Name of Author

Wertz, Julia

● ● ● Title of Graphic Memoir

Impossible People: A Completely Average Recovery Story

● ● ● APA Citation

Wertz, J. (2023). *Impossible people: a completely average recovery story*. First edition. New York, Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers.

● ● ● Reason for Inclusion

Professional cartoonist Julie Wertz tells the up and downs of her journey toward sobriety through her memoir *Impossible people*. Through her singular wit, she show the reader the ups and downs of sobriety. I chose this graphic memoir for the collection due its unique take on the addiction narrative which shows how relapses interfere with the road to recovery.