How to Start a Comic Book and Graphic Novel Collection
Session
The Hart House Library Comic Book Collection

ARLIS/NA Annual Conference
New Orleans
Feb. 7, 9:30am

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Image: University of Toronto Archives, “Students in Military Uniform in the Hart House Library” ca. 1943. 2001-77-161MS
Mission Statement from the Hart House Library

Hart House is an organic space, a living institution which grows and adapts to the ever-changing needs of our dedicated multi-demographic patrons. Under the stewardship of the Literary and Library Committee, the library seeks to be all-inclusive by offering a variety of opportunities to student groups and volunteers to participate in building a stronger literary community at Hart House and maintaining a relevant and special collection of literature to reflect the library’s evolving interests.

Hart House Library is a reading and browsing library, whose unique contribution to the university experience and to Canada’s literacy culture has been attested by generations of students, including many of Canada’s promising writers and leaders. The library’s physical character is consistent with its cultural and historical character. This requires that, first, the library be maintained as readers space, not a study space, and second, that a conservation-oriented approach be taken to physical change.

Image: University of Toronto Archives, “Students in Military Uniform in the Hart House Library” ca. 1943. 2001-77-161MS
History of the graphic novel collection

Criteria for Selection

The Hart House Library:

- does not select curriculum textbooks
- provides materials for pleasure reading
- selects popular materials of current interest
- selects contemporary materials representing varying points of view
- considers materials in relationship to the existing collection
- considers and encourages recommendations from HHL patrons

Special Consideration

- Written by Canadian author(s)
- Illustrated by Canadian artist(s)
- Published by Canadian publishers
- Explicit Canadian content
- Toronto-based content
- Written, illustrated or published by alumni of the University of Toronto
- Stand alone graphic novels should be given preference
- Ensuring the selection of quality work with consideration towards the security of the library
The selector of graphic novels should consult:

i) Bibliographies and literary award nominations using the latest editions and supplements:

- The Doug Wright Awards
- The Joe Shuster Comic Book Creator Awards
- The Will Eisner Awards
- The Ignatz
ii) Current Reviewing Media:

- Quill & Quire
- Broken Pencil Magazine
- CBC Canada Writes
- The Comics Journal
iii) Independent publishers and vendors specializing in graphic novels in Canada:

- *Drawn and Quarterly*
- *Conundrum Press and BDANG*
- *The Beguiling*
- *Koyama Press*
Events and Festivals

Toronto Comic Arts Festival
Canzine
OCAD Library Zine Fair
Toronto Queer Zine Fair
Zine Dream
New Formats

Currently the HHL only collects print materials for its collection. However, in the future, the HHL may collect materials to include a diverse and ever-expanding proliferation of formats.

The selection of material in any new format may result in the Library's decision to retire specific items or material formats from its collections in order to accommodate trends in user demands and/or changes in technology.
