

UC San Diego

Presentations and Posters

Title

Graphic Medicine for Health and Well-Being Outreach

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Peer reviewed

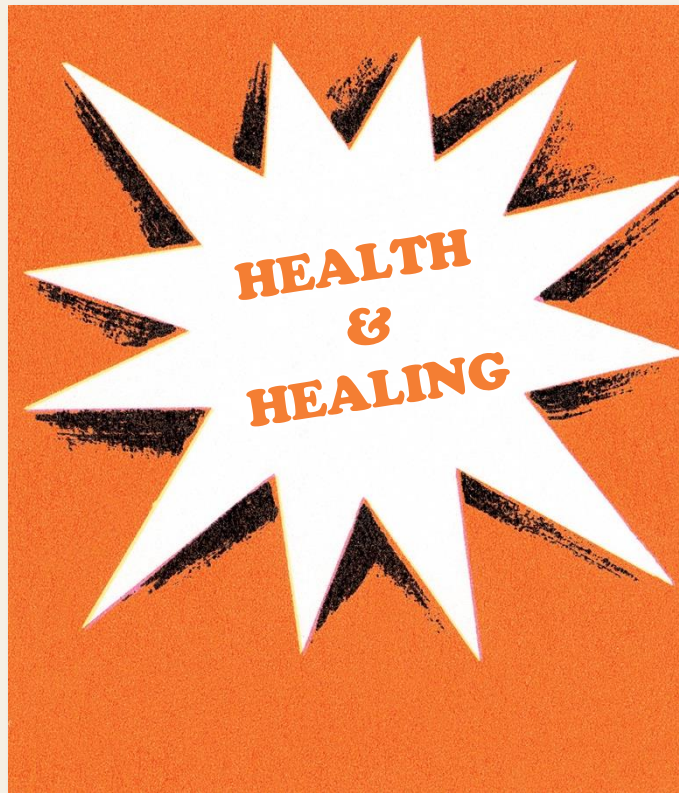
Graphic Medicine for Health and Well-Being Outreach

Jeffery Loo • Zemirah Ngow • Karen Heskett

2026 MCMLA Annual Meeting

Graphic Medicine

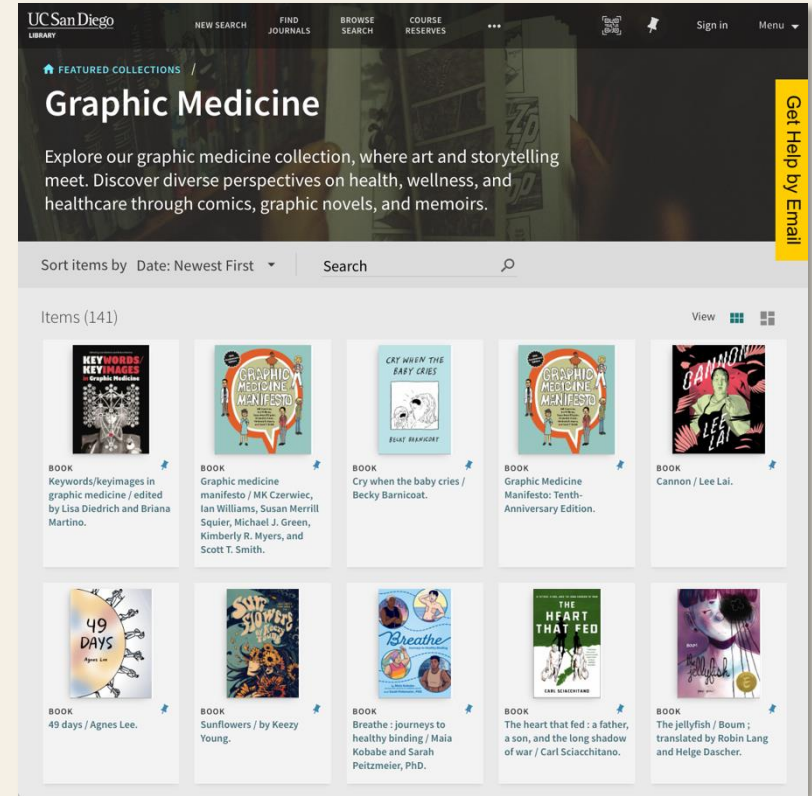
- Uses comics to tell health stories and share information
- Makes health and well-being more approachable
- A flexible tool for outreach:
 - Leisure reading and book displays
 - Art and cultural events



The Collection

- Comics, graphic novels, and memoirs
- Covers a broad range of health topics: illness, caregiving, recovery, and more
- Grown from ~30 titles in 2021 to 140+ today (print and online)
- Most of our print titles cost under \$25
- Browse:

lib.ucsd.edu/graphic-medicine-collection



Build Your Collection

- **Start small** and gauge interest
- **Build variety:**
 - Memoir, fiction, informational works
 - Different health conditions and perspectives
- **Expand access:** print + digital
- **Find titles:**
 - GraphicMedicine.org
 - National Library of Medicine Graphic Medicine Exhibit, www.nlm.nih.gov/exhibition/graphicmedicine
 - Library of Congress Graphic Medicine Research Guide, guides.loc.gov/comic-books/graphic-medicine



Outreach Through Leisure Reading

- Approachable, low-pressure way into health topics
- Memoirs and novels may build empathy around illness, caregiving, and recovery
- Visual storytelling can express our health experiences and emotions differently from clinical texts



Mental Health Awareness Month Book Display

- Shared by campus health & wellness departments
- Extended reach beyond the Library
- Demonstrated the broader appeal of graphic medicine
- One display → Multiple campus audiences



Outreach Through Art & Cultural Events

- As an art form, comics connect Library collections to campus and community cultural events
- Annual exhibit:
Comics of Care: Healing Through Graphic Medicine
calendar.ucsd.edu/event/comics-of-care-healing-through-graphic-medicine-2026
- Timed to align with San Diego's major pop culture convention

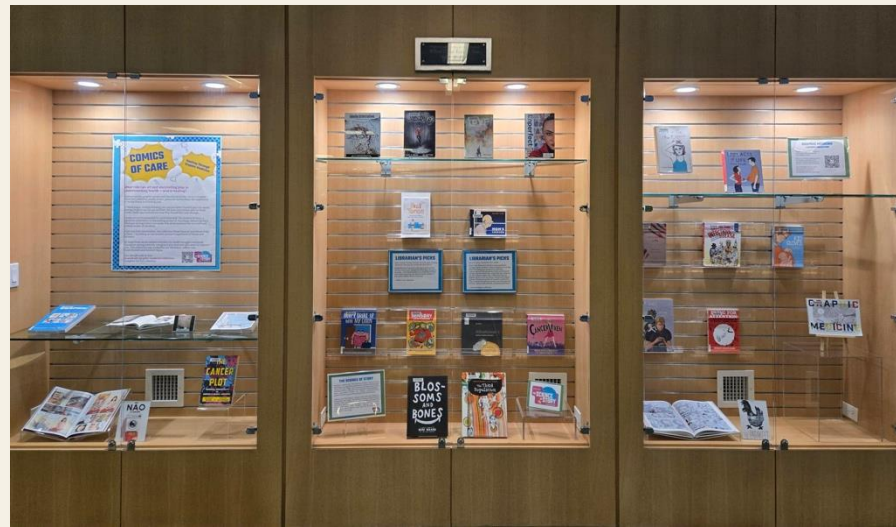


Exhibit development and photograph by Jen Cormier

The Science of Story Experience

- Partnership with the UC San Diego storytelling celebration
artpower.ucsd.edu/scienceofstory-2026
- Brings graphic medicine to new audiences: comics fans, campus visitors, community members
- The art becomes the entry point to health stories



What We Learned

- Start small and grow incrementally
- One collection can support multiple outreach strategies
- Graphic medicine offers a low-pressure entry point to health topics
- Cultural connections extend our reach beyond the Library
- Graphic medicine connects health, culture, and community

*Books and art combine,
Health and culture intertwine,
Outreach redefined.*