

6-12-2014

Read Between the Lines: Marketing Graphic Novels

Rebecca A. Nous

University at Albany, State University of New York, rnous@albany.edu

Wendy L. West

University at Albany, State University of New York, wwest@albany.edu

Kate Seidlinger

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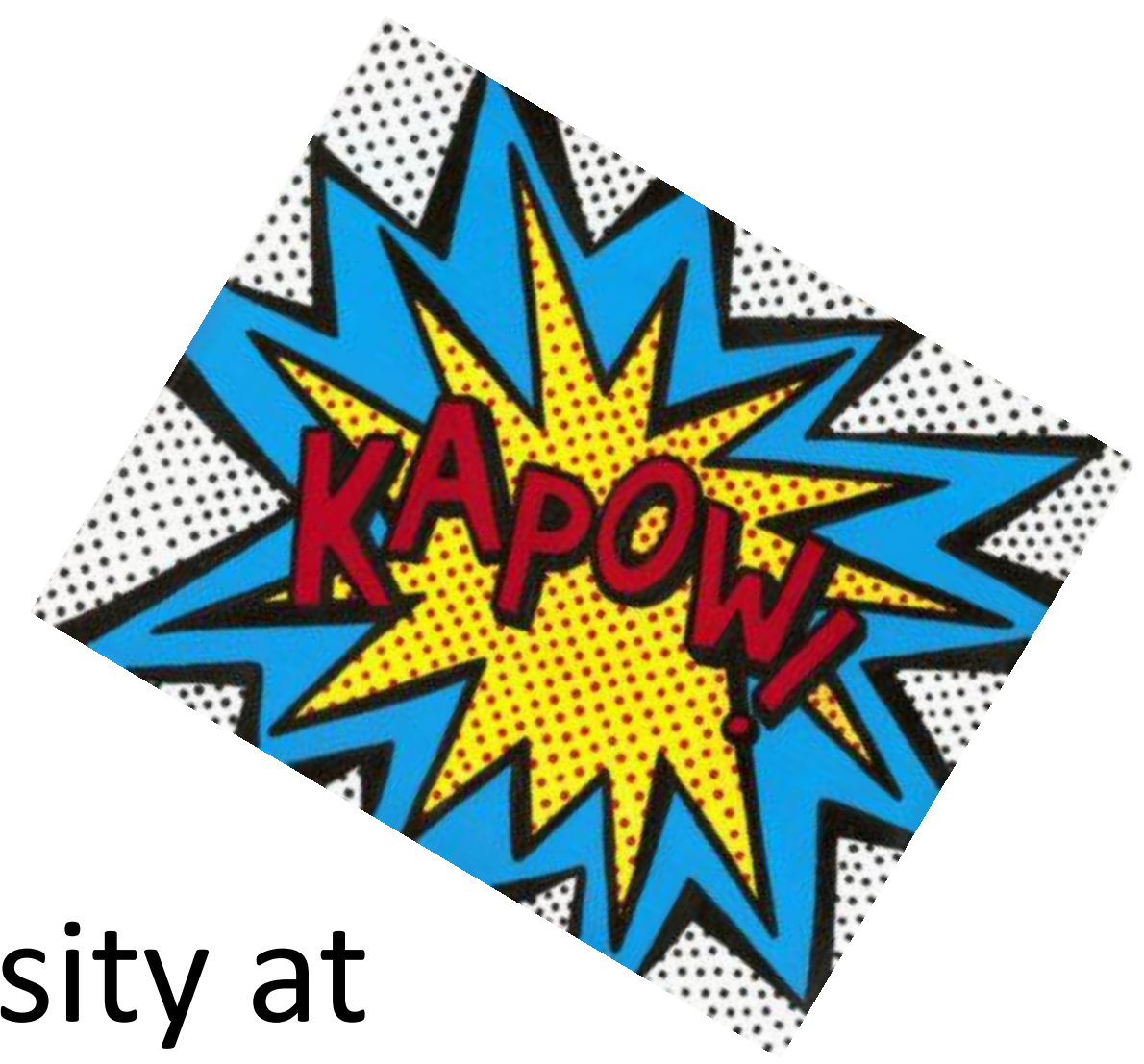
Nous, Rebecca, Kate Seidlinger & Wendy West. "Read Between the Lines: Marketing Graphic Novels." University at Albany: State University of New York Librarians Association Conference. Poster session. June 11, 2014.

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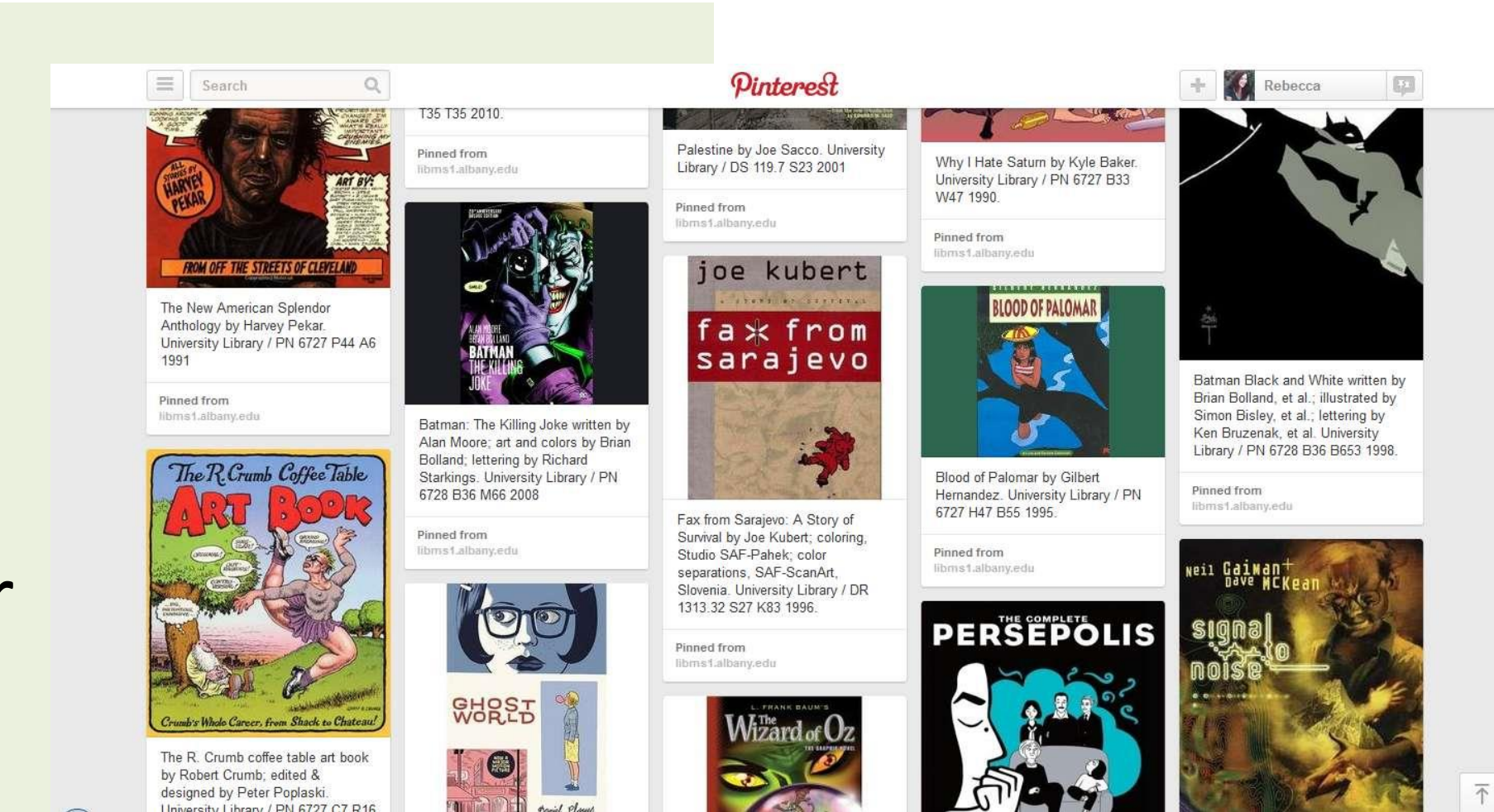
Rebecca Nous, Kate Seidlinger, & Wendy West, University at Albany



This poster session highlights a marketing initiative for graphic novels, an underutilized collection, at the University at Albany. The marketing initiative was a collaboration between the presenters and the University Library's Marketing Coordinating Committee. It included an exhibit case, book marks, a library Pinterest page, a designated location for the books with signage to draw attention to the books, writing a piece for the Libraries' newsletter, creating a promotional slide for the library lobby and website, coordinating with the bibliographer in the Science Library about her graphic novel display, and sending emails notifying staff about the display.

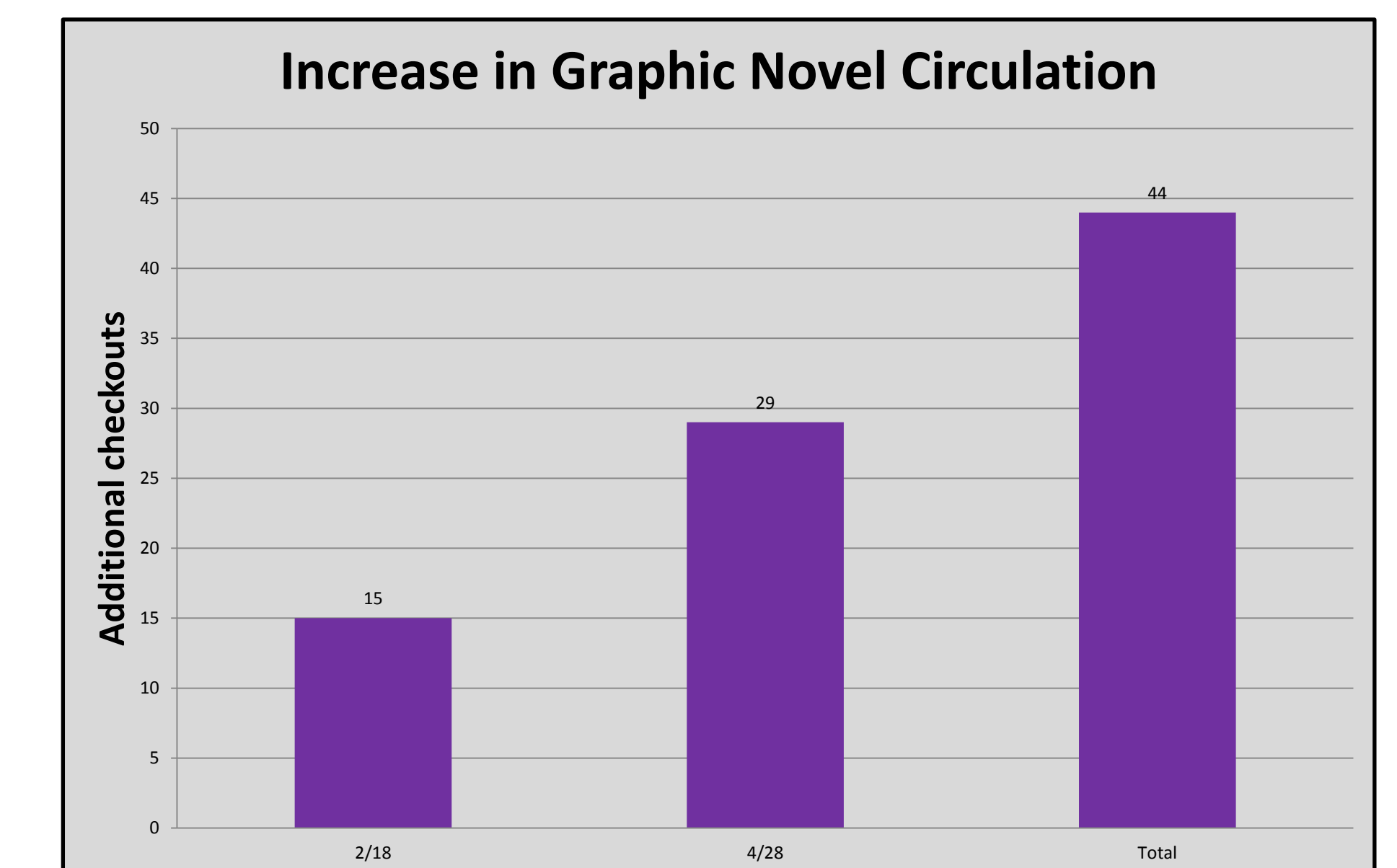
Methodology

- Identified our graphic novels
 - Located throughout stacks, not tagged or necessarily given genre heading in the catalog
- Put on display on special bookcases at the front of the library, with a promotional poster
- Scanned images and covers to display in cases, with props, in different areas of the library
- Created Pinterest page, advertised on the library website and lobby TV, and promoted through the library newsletter
- Identified initial circulation statistics & tracked several times through the semester



Results

- Circulation of graphic novels increased by 28% as of April 28, 2014.
- 25% of graphic novels circulated once from February 18 to April 28. 2% circulated more than once during that same period.
- 10 of the circulated titles were showcased in the display case or on the promotional poster. 2 additional titles by highlighted authors circulated.



Discussion

- Having books on display did increase circulation
- Anecdotal evidence: increased interest in the graphic novel collection. After the display went up:
 - Two people were seen browsing the collection and had taken a book to circulation to check-out. At the same time their picture was taken and the one of individuals said that the picture was being posted on the SEEN photo gallery on the Times-Union
 - A user came to the Reference desk looking for comics from the Cold War era
 - A user went to both the Reference and Circulation desk trying to locate a specific graphic novel that was on display but off the shelf.
- Further research: Collect data on cataloging and housing of graphic novels in other ARL library collections

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