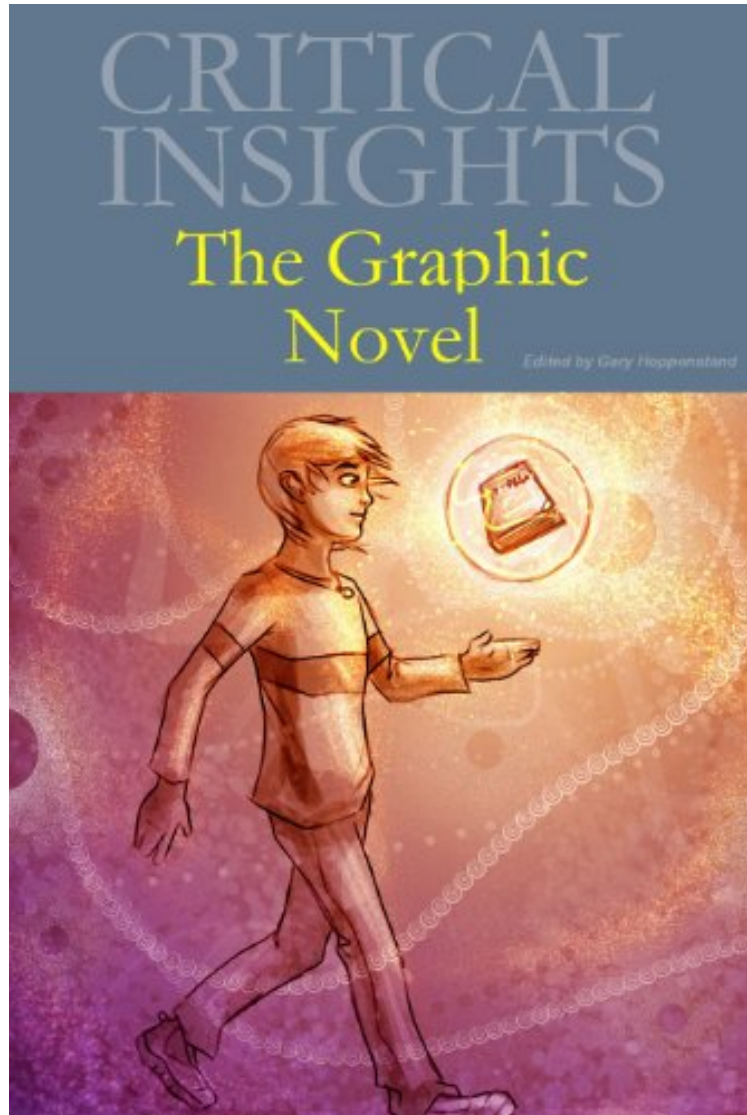


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The Graphic Novel (Critical Insights)

Gary Hoppenstand

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Gary Hoppenstand : The Graphic Novel (Critical Insights) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Graphic Novel (Critical Insights):

"The Graphic Novel offers an examination and analysis of the contemporary graphic novel as literature. Specific attention will be paid to the use of narrative genre in the graphic novel (e.g. the superhero graphic novel, the crime narrative graphic novel, the horror graphic novel, and the realistic/fantastic graphic novel). Attention will also be paid

to the most important and most frequently discussed graphic novels published during the past three decades, including *Batman: The Dark Knight Returns* by Frank Miller, *Watchmen* by Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons, *The Crow* by J. O'Barr, *Sin City: The Hard Goodbye* by Frank Miller, *The Walking Dead: Days Gone Bye* by Robert Kirkman and Tony Moore, *Road to Perdition* by Max Allan Collins and Richard Piers Rayner, *A Contract with God and Other Tenement Stories* by Will Eisner, *Maus* by Art Spiegelman, *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi, and *Sandman: preludes and Nocturnes* by Neil Gaiman, Sam Kieth (et al)."--Publisher's website.

From School Library Journal Gr 10 Up Crediting comics legend Will Eisner for coining the phrase "graphic novel" more than 30 years ago, this well-organized collection of essays looks at the prehistory of the genre as well as the contemporary scene. The volume begins with lengthy essays on four different subgenres: the superhero narrative, the horror narrative, the crime narrative, and the reality/fantasy narrative. Separately authored, these treatments offer a historical evolution of the genre and typical characteristics of each. The crime narrative, for example, covers the debut of the Dick Tracy comic strip in 1931, which may have been influenced by real-life prohibition gangsters Al Capone and Charles Luciano, whereas newer works are explained as being a blend of crime, horror, and noir, as in *The Road to Perdition*. The next section critiques 10 graphic novels, including *Maus: A Survivor's Tale*, *Watchmen*, *Batman*, *Persepolis*, *Sandman*, *The Walking Dead*, and more. Each contributor devotes 10 or more pages to each essay, and only a few are divided into accessible sub-sections for themes, criticism, awards, or summary. In general, the discussion focuses on literary elements, such as themes, characterization, allusion, symbolism, and archetypes of comic book superheroes, but the work is sophisticated enough to render it most appropriate for advanced secondary students and undergraduates. All entries are followed by a list of works cited, and a larger bibliography of resources in the various genres is appended. A general index will guide users to characters, titles, and many other comic references, and the title comes with ebook permission. Vicki Reutter, State University of New York at Cortland

From Booklist This volume in the Critical Insights series provides a historically based introduction to the contemporary graphic novel as a piece of literature. Specific attention is given to the narrative genre in four types (or subgenres) of graphic novels: the superhero graphic novel, the horror graphic novel, the crime graphic novel, and the reality/fantasy graphic novel. The narrative in each section covers the history and the current state of the subgenre and looks at its evolution from a novel-length story with captioned art panels to the current comic-book medium. The remainder of this volume presents 10 essays that examine a variety of titles in great detail, including Will Eisner's *A Contract with God* (1978), Frank Miller's *The Dark Knight Returns* (1986), Max Allan Collins' *Road to Perdition* (2002), and Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* (2003). An extensive resources section includes additional graphic novels, a bibliography, and contributor biographies. The purchase price includes online access through Salem's online platform Salem Literature. This literary criticism is an excellent resource for high-school, college, and most public libraries. --Carol Sue Harless