

"I thought the library only had serious books"

Popular Fiction: Birth of a Collection

- Started in the Summer of 2024 as a Book Tok Collection suggested by a Library Experience Librarian
- Purchasing was initially led by 2 Collection Management & Engagement Librarians
- The collection is now spread across 3 libraries & includes Manga, fiction & graphic novels
- Important to lose preconceptions about what books the Collection should contain - beach reads, romance, fantasy, horror, thrillers, crime
- Students & staff help shape the collection



How the Popular Fiction Collection is being used

- Students/ staff physically browsing & borrowing books
- Outreach events where books from the collection are used (engagement)
- Conversation starters with staff & students
- Included in Resource Lists



Why Popular Fiction in a H.E. Library?

- Encourages students to come into the library's spaces
- Provides an opportunity for focussed & sustained reading
- Exposes students to new vocabulary and writing styles
- Escapism/ relaxation - the opportunity to "live a 1000 lives"
- Wellbeing, including reducing stress levels
- Avoids buyer's remorse for students - fiction books aren't cheap
- Promotes the joy of reading



The importance of a diverse Collection

"Studies have found that reading for pleasure enhances empathy, understanding of the self and the ability to understand one's own and others' identities"

Literature Review: the impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment



"The fiction books help bridge the gap between students and library staff as it builds a connection. There have been many times a student has spoken to me about a book we have both read. Think it helps with the feeling of library anxiety as there is a sense of commonality with the students and library staff"

Library Experience Advisor

What next?

- Continue to encourage students & staff to suggest books to purchase for the Collection
- Continue purchasing diverse books - authors & subject matter
- Buy more Manga (there's demand)
- Develop a deeper understanding of how the Collection is being used
- Discover more ways to engage the university community with the Collection
- Shout more about the Collection!

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