Graphic Biographical Fiction (collected volume)

Scholars have only recently turned a critical eye towards the fictionalization of real people despite biofiction’s popularity on the literary market since the 1980s. Unlike autobiographies or biographies, rather than a truthful account of the person’s life story, biofiction centres on a creative interpretation of a real person’s life in which they become a character.

Following David Lodge, who emphasized that the biographical novel “takes a real person and their real history as the subject matter for imaginative exploration” (8), Michael Lackey emphasizes that “the biographical novel is, first and foremost, fiction” (5). Further refining his definition of this literary form, Lackey explains how “the author of biofiction fictionalizes a historical person’s life in order to project into existence his or her own vision of life and the world” (Biofiction 13).

Despite its growing popularity in life writing studies (Lackey, Latham, Layne), there has been a lack of research in graphic narratives that dramatize the lives of real people across words and images. In this issue, we take our cue from Paul Franssen and Ton Hoenselaars, who wished to “locate this genre in the field of literary production” (18), to locate it in the field of comics studies. As such, this special issue seeks to fill an important gap in exploring the tensions and productive relationships between biofiction and the graphic medium. Graphic biographical fiction asks us to reflect on several questions about storytelling, reading, and consumption and marketing patterns.

These include, but are not limited to:
- What is the relationship between graphic biographical fiction from graphic biography, historical fiction, or portraiture?
- How does graphic biographical fiction impact our understanding of biographical fiction?
- How does graphic biographical fiction address identity or the fact/fiction divide?
- What questions about authorship does graphic biographical fiction raise?
- What implications for character does graphic biographical fiction’s fictionalized treatment of a real person have?
- How do graphic biographical fictions navigate the dangers of imposture, falsification, or sensationalism?
- How does the visual aspect of graphic biographical fiction contribute to the dramatization of a real person and a real life?
- To what extend are readers encouraged to merge the real life person with their work/ creative output?
- What real life people are represented in graphic biographic fiction, and what makes them a suitable choice for authors?
- Why do graphic biographical novels from European countries often focus on British or American subjects?
- How is this genre promoted and why?
- What readership does this genre attract and why?
Please send an abstract (200-300 words) and a short biography (100 words) to both editors, Maria Juko (mariajuko@gmail.com) and Nancy Pedri (npedri@mun.ca).

**Deadline:** 31 September 2023

**Works Cited**


