DATA PAPER

Data from 'Graphic Medicine' as a Mental Health Information Resource: Insights from Comics Producers

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This dataset contains the full text transcripts from 15 semi-structured interviews (approximately 44,100 words) conducted during November and December 2014 with participants involved in various aspects of the process of health-related comics production. These participants are authors and publishers and their work is publicly recognised in the comics community.

The dataset has been deposited in the Open Health Data Dataverse repository as a zipped folder containing 15 individual simple text files corresponding to each interview and a ReadMe file containing contextual information and other metadata.

An initial domain analysis of the interviews was published as Farthing, A., & Priego, E. (2016). 'Graphic Medicine' as a Mental Health Information Resource: Insights from Comics Producers. *The Comics Grid: Journal of Comics Scholarship*, 6(1), 3. DOI: http://doi.org/10.16995/cg.74

1. Overview

Introduction/Study Description

Recent literature suggests that a growing number of comics are being published on health-related topics, including aspects of mental health and social care (Williams 2012 [1]; Czerwiec et al 2015 [2]) and that comics are increasingly being used in higher education settings as information resources. Graphic narratives have been linked to the concept of narrative medicine and/or the medical humanities (Green and Myers 2010 [3]; Williams 2011 [4]) because they can provide 'new insights into the personal experience of illness' (Green and Myers 2010: 574 [3]).

This qualitative dataset was produced in order to obtain insights from comics creators and disseminators regarding 'Graphic Medicine' and its connections with mental health institutions and higher education. This dataset is an output from a research project exploring the wider context of comics production and distribution (with a focus on 'Graphic Medicine' or health-related comics) as part of a mixed methods examination of the interface between these documents and potential academic audiences.

The dataset contains original qualitative textual data gathered through semi-structured interviews with 15 participants actively involved in comics creation and production. Elements of domain analysis (Hjørland 2002 [5]) were used to obtain insights into attitudes to the creation, dissemination and use of mental health-related comics.

Though potentially useful comics material is being produced in the mental health domain, significant challenges remain for producers in enabling their work to be accessed within higher education settings. This paper suggests that comics producers need to make a concerted effort to reach academia, and academia (including information professionals) need to embrace new types of material to enhance teaching and research.

2. Context

Spatial coverage

Description: London, United Kingdom

This dataset contains transcripts from interviews with English-speaking authors of works published in English.

Temporal coverage

01/11/14–10/03/16.

Species

N/A.

3. Methods

Abstract

Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted during November and December 2014 with participants involved in various aspects of the process of health-related comics production. Each interview was transcribed in its entirety.

Steps

Following a literature review relevant participants were identified, located and contacted. The interviews were conducted through different interfaces – in person, by phone or Skype, or by email depending on the interviewee's circumstances and availability – and the type and length of responses to questions varied. The interviews were transcribed manually (approximately 44,100 words).

Sampling strategy

Literature review.

Quality Control

Facts were checked after transcription and full transcripts were copyedited and approved by each participant.

Constraints

A limitation of the study was geographical and linguistic. Interviews were obtained with participants available for interview during the period of data collection in the UK area and interviews were conducted in English.

Privacy

Written consent to identify interviewees publicly by full name/author name and occupation was obtained from each participant and they were aware the dataset would be shared openly and publicly. No patient nor sensitive personal information is disclosed.

Ethics

Collection of the data was approved by City University London's Research Ethics Committee.

4. Dataset description

Object name

Data from Graphic Medicine. Insights from Comics Producers.

Data type

Primary Data.

Ontologies

N/A.

Format names and versions

Simple text (.txt) files in a compressed folder.

Creation dates

1/11/2014–10/03/16.

Dataset creators

The data was gathered, transcribed, edited and prepared for submission by the authors. The dataset contains data sourced from the following participants:

- Catherine Gray, publisher of Couch Fiction
- L.B. Lee, comics creator
- Ian Williams, comics creator and founder of Graphic-medicine.org
- Steven Walsh, bookseller, Gosh! Comics comics shop
- Jessica Leach, illustrator of Episodes of Schizophrenia

- Alex Bowler, editorial director at Jonathan Cape
- Nina Burrowes, psychologist, writer and illustrator
- Barbara Bloomfield, therapist and writer
- Jonathan Rigby, co-owner, Page 45 comics shop
- Chloe Pursey, editorial director at Panel Nine
- Stephen Lowther, cataloguing librarian at Wellcome Library
- Sam Arthur, managing director at Nobrow
- Corinne Pearlman, creative director at Myriad Editions
- Biserka Stringer-Horne, writer for comics-explorer. tumblr.com/ and organiser for the Thought Bubble comics festival
- Meg-John Barker, psychologist, lecturer and author

Language

English.

Programming language

N/A.

Licence

CC-0.

Accessibility criteria

Open Access.

Repository location

Farthing, Anthony and Priego, Ernesto (2016) 'Graphic Medicine' as a mental health information resource: Insights from comics producers [Interviews]. [Dataset]

URI: http://repository.tavistockandportman.ac.uk/id/eprint/1231; Also available at https://dx.doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.3753792.v1

Publication date

10/03/16.

5. Reuse potential

The authors believe qualitative dataset are valuable as historical evidence of cultural perceptions at a given moment in time in particular settings. Qualitative datasets are fundamental in the arts, humanities and social sciences. We believe this dataset contains information of value to other researchers interested in the medical humanities, comics scholarship, library and information science and other related areas.

There is still much to do in terms of promoting open qualitative data sharing in the arts, humanities and social sciences. We believe open qualitative datasets are of value to researchers and we would want to facilitate access to our source dataset so that the scholarly community learns as much from it as possible.

Analysis of the data generated by these interviews suggests that, to fully explore or realise the potential of comics in the context of the mental health domain of academia, firmer links need to be established between comics producers and their potential users (Farthing and Priego 2016 [6]). We hope that sharing the complete transcripts as a dataset can encourage other researchers to conduct further research into comics producers' perceptions around 'graphic medicine' and the relationships between comics, mental health institutions and higher education.

The data was correct at the time of collection and is shared as is. Users must bear in mind that interviewees' individual perceptions on the discussed subject matters may have varied since the time of data collection.

Acknowledgements

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Competing Interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

References

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