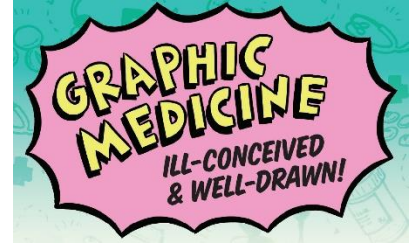


COUNTWAY READS



Countway Reads Discussion Guide for

Ripple Effects

by Jordan Hart and Bruno Chiroleu, with additional contributors

“In a world that is no stranger to superheroes, George Gibson is invulnerable to physical harm but fights every day to stay alive. Suffering from an acute case of type 1 diabetes, his invincibility is offset by a defective pancreas that must be monitored and treated daily. This incurable disease makes George's body both his greatest strength and his eternal weakness.

About Countway Reads

These events, held each semester, are open to all Harvard ID holders and facilitated by Countway Library librarians. The discussions provide a chance to connect with other patrons from across the campus and to foster conversations about a wide range of topics including health, medicine, literature, history, culture, art, and more. Our book selections include novels, autobiographies, graphic novels, and beyond. The events will be held in person, light refreshments will be provided, and registration will sometimes include a free copy of the book for advanced reading.

Questions for Discussion

1. Briefly, what did you think of *Ripple Effects*? Did you like it? Did you hate it? Did anything stand out strongly to you? Did you find yourself making notes or looking things up as you read? Did you seek out additional reads?
2. Did you appreciate the style of the book? What stood out to you about how the story was presented (good or bad)?
3. Does the book remind you of an aspect of your own life? A particular event? A person – like a friend, family member, co-worker, etc.?
4. Can you point to specific passages/panels that struck you personally? Why?
5. Did *Ripple Effects* change your perspective and/or understanding of invisible illness? If so, how? If not, why not?
6. In addition to the main story, *Ripple Effects* includes an additional essay at the end of each issue. Did any of these essays stand out to you? Did they enhance your reading of the comic or understanding of the issue(s) at play?
7. Were you surprised to see a superhero story tackle issues of illness? Do you think this is a genre that can be effectively used to address hard topics like this?
8. As Mike Ahn discusses in his essay, we see George hide his illness throughout the story as many do in real life. Why do you think people are often afraid to be open about their health, both to their friends and family and to their workplaces?
9. Have you read other memoirs or stories about invisible illness, disability, or health-related fiction in general? How does *Ripple Effects* compare?
10. As several of the essayists share, invisible illnesses, like most chronic health problems or disabilities, can come with lifelong disruption. What would it look like to build structures (school, work, etc.) that allowed for unplanned, random disruption *without* causing shame or harm (financial, social, etc.)?
11. In opening of my forward to *Ripple Effects*, I quote from Sonya Huber’s *Pain Woman Takes Your Keys*, “Pain creates its own knowledge.” What does that mean to you?
12. Would you share *Ripple Effects* with people in your life? Why or why not?

Remember: These are just suggested questions and there could be many, many more. Don’t feel tethered to these – let the conversation flow naturally and use these questions as starting points when conversation stalls.