

FUN HOME



A NEW MUSICAL

Music by
JEANINE TESORI

Book and Lyrics by
LISA KRON

Based on the Graphic Novel by
ALISON BECHDEL

Fun Home

Sunday, October 21, 2018
Bovard Auditorium
University of Southern California

KNOW BEFORE THE SHOW

- ◉ *Fun Home*, first performed in 2013, was the first mainstream musical centered around a young lesbian.
- ◉ Before it was a Tony Award-winning musical, *Fun Home* was a best-selling memoir in comics form by Alison Bechdel.
- ◉ Bechdel coined the “Bechdel Test” in her long-running comic *Dykes to Watch Out For*.
- ◉ This production of *Fun Home* is fully student-produced and -performed by Dorothy’s Friends Theatre Company.

FUN HOME

The musical *Fun Home* is an adaptation by Lisa Kron and Jeanine Tesori of Alison Bechdel’s 2006 memoir-in-comics of the same name. It is about Bechdel’s coming of age, including her discovery of her lesbian identity, and her relationship with her gay father.

The musical version opened off-Broadway at the Public Theatre in 2013 and on Broadway in 2015. It swept the Tony Awards that year, winning Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, Best Original Score, Best Leading Actor in a Musical, and Best Direction of a Musical.

ALISON BECHDEL

Cartoonist Alison Bechdel has been an underground favorite for decades for her long-running comic strip *Dykes to Watch Out For* (1983–2008), one of the earliest ongoing representations of lesbians in popular culture. She came to mainstream critical and commercial success with the 2006 publication of *Fun Home*, a memoir in comics form, which spent weeks on the *New York Times* best-seller list. She published a second graphic memoir, *Are You My Mother?*, in 2012.

Bechdel has said, “The secret subversive goal of my work is to show that women, not just lesbians, are regular human beings.”

THE BECHDEL TEST

The Bechdel Test is a feminist litmus test for films, TV shows, books, and other works of fiction. The test asks: Does it feature at least two women who talk to each other about something other than a man or boy? If not, it fails the Bechdel Test.

MUSICAL THEATRE AND QUEER CULTURE

Musical theatre has long been associated with gay culture. Gay men are key figures in the history of modern American musicals—Leonard Bernstein, Cole Porter, Arthur Laurents, Stephen Sondheim. And the genre’s often campy aesthetic has become a kind of national vernacular among American gay men. But musical theatre has not historically been as much of a lesbian thing. The last few decades have seen lesbian characters in a few musicals, such as *Rent* and *Falsettoland*, but *Fun Home* was the first mainstream musical to feature a young lesbian as the protagonist.

DOROTHY’S FRIENDS THEATRE COMPANY

Dorothy’s Friends Theatre Company is a student-led theatre production company at USC. They focus on putting positive queer stories onstage and uniting a diverse community through celebration.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ◉ In the *New York Times*, Ben Brantley wrote, “*Fun Home* isn’t just a coming-out story or a coming-of-age story. Its universality comes from its awareness of how we never fully know even those closest to us.” Do you agree that we never fully know even the people we are closest to? What are the implications of this in your life?
- ◉ Think of the last three movies or TV shows you saw—do they pass the Bechdel Test? Or try it another way: how far back in your own watching or reading history do you have to go to find three titles that pass the Bechdel Test?
- ◉ If musical theatre has been so substantially created by queer people, why do you think it is only recently that mainstream musicals are centering queer protagonists?
- ◉ Why does it matter to see people of various identities represented in popular culture and entertainment?

IF YOU LIKED *FUN HOME*, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT ...

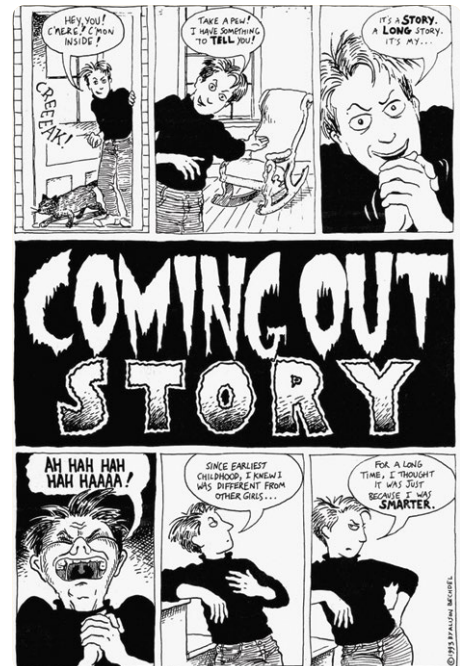
- ◉ The graphic memoir *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* by Alison Bechdel
- ◉ Alison Bechdel’s long-running comic *Dykes to Watch Out For*
- ◉ Other musicals about queer identities and experience such as *Avenue Q*, *Rent*, and *Falsettoland*
- ◉ The USC LGBT Resource Center
lgbtrc.usc.edu
- ◉ Dorothy’s Friends Theatre Company on Facebook
facebook.com/dftcUSC



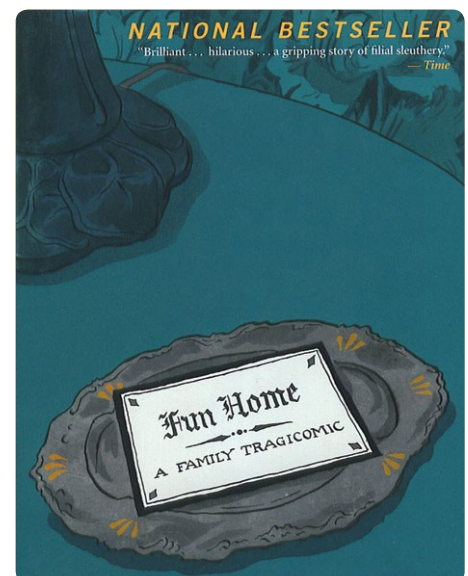
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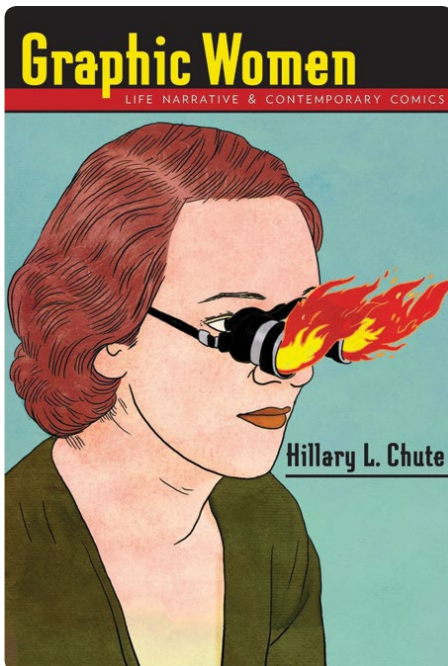
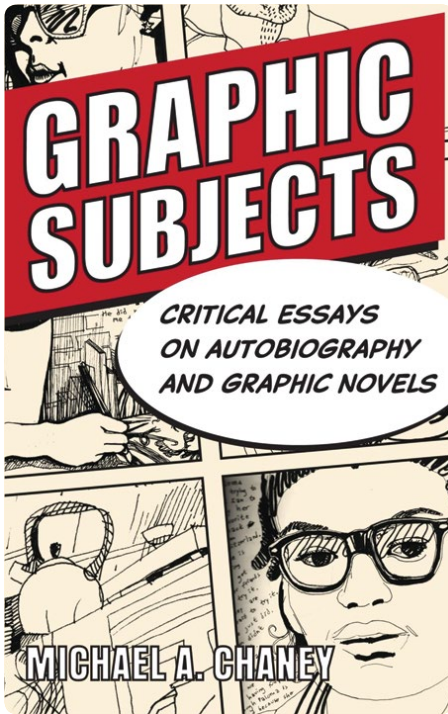


Alison Bechdel



Dykes to Watch Out For





DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

HANNAH SCHILPEROORT of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about tonight's performance. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. journal articles and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

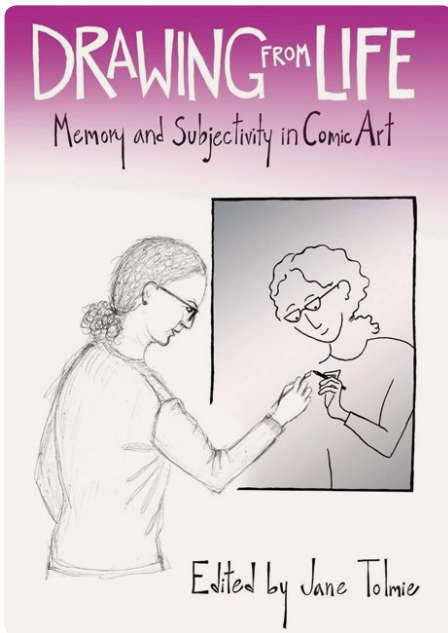
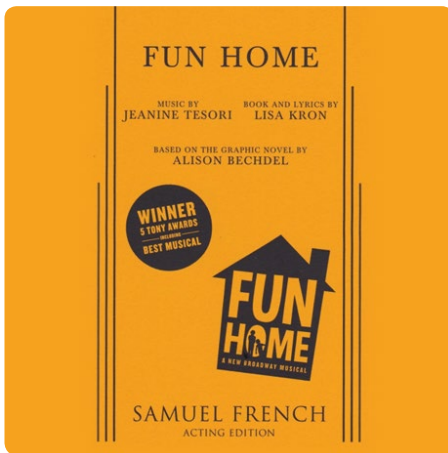
- Amihay, Ofra, and Lauren Walsh, editors. *The Future of Text and Image: Collected Essays on Literary and Visual Conjunctions*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: PN56.V54 F889 2012
- Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*. Houghton Mifflin, 2006.
LEAVEY LIBRARY: PN6727.B3757 Z46 2006
- Chaney, Michael A. *Graphic Subjects: Critical Essays on Autobiography and Graphic Novels*. University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: PN6710.G7375 2011
- Chute, Hillary L. *Graphic Women: Life Narrative and Contemporary Comics*. Columbia University Press, 2010.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY AND LEAVEY LIBRARY: PN6714 .C49 2010
- Kron, Lisa, and Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home*. Samuel French, 2015.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: PS3561.R584 F86 2015
- Tolmie, Jane, editor. *Drawing from Life: Memory and Subjectivity in Comic Art*. University Press of Mississippi, 2013.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: PN6714 .D73 2013

RECOMMENDED MUSIC

- Tesori, Jeanine, et al. *Fun Home: A New Broadway Musical*. Samuel French, 2016.
MUSIC LIBRARY: M1508.T47 F86 2016

RECOMMENDED ARTICLES

- Barounis, Cynthia. "Alison Bechdel and Crip-Feminist Autobiography." *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol. 39, no. 4, 2016, pp. 139-161.
- Bauer, Heike. "Vital Lines Drawn from Books: Difficult Feelings in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and *Are You My Mother?*" *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2014, pp. 266-281.
- Cvetkovich, Ann. "Drawing the Archive in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 36, no.1/2, 2008, pp. 111-128.
- Fantasia, Annette. "The Paterian Bildungsroman Reenvisioned: "Brain Building" in Alison Bechdel's "*Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*." *Criticism*, vol. 53 no. 1, 2011, pp. 83-97.
- Freedman, Ariela. "Drawing on Modernism in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Journal of Modern Literature*, vol. 32, no. 4, 2009, pp. 125-140.
- Gardiner, Judith Kegan. "Queering Genre: Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* and *The Essential Dykes to Watch Out For*." *Contemporary Women's Writing*, vol. 5 no. 3, 2011, pp. 188-207.
- Lemberg, Jennifer. "Closing the Gap in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Women's Studies Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 1/2, 2008, pp. 129-140.



- McBean, Sam. "Seeing in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Camera Obscura: Feminism, Culture, and Media Studies*, vol. 28, no. 3(84), 2013, pp. 103-123.
- Rohy, Valerie. "In the Queer Archive: *Fun Home*." *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 16, no. 3, 2010, pp. 341-361.
- Simon, Margaret. "Collective Reading and Communities of Practice: Teaching Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Transformations*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2016, pp. 139-156.
- Watson, Julia. "Autographic Disclosures and Genealogies of Desire in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *Biography*, 2008 pp. 27-58.
- Warhol, Robyn. "The Space Between: A Narrative Approach to Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*." *College Literature*, 2011, pp. 1-20.

RECOMMENDED DATABASES

GenderWatch

GenderWatch features publications that focus on the impact of gender across a broad spectrum of subject areas including media, health sciences, political science, and more.

JSTOR

Fields covered include: anthropology, ecology, economics, education, finance, mathematics, philosophy, political science, sociology, literature, biology.

LGBT Life with Fulltext

Premier resource to the world's literature regarding Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Transsexual issues.

ProQuest Social Science database

Core collection of social sciences journals including gender studies, sociology, and cultural studies.

Women's Studies International

Index to the core disciplines in women's studies and feminist research.