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Introduction to Graphic Medicine

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Introduction to Graphic Medicine

Matthew Noe

Lamar Soutter Library, Fellow

NNLM/NER, Graphic Medicine Specialist

Acknowledgements

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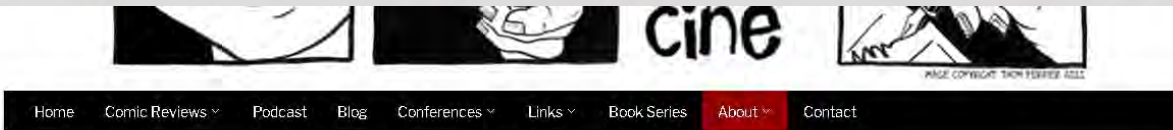
Some Logistics...

- This webinar is being recorded – look for the recording in about a week!
- Open for questions/discussion at the end

A Story

The background of the slide is a light, textured surface covered with faint, hand-drawn sketches in various colors like blue, red, and yellow. The sketches include human faces, hands, and abstract geometric shapes, creating a subtle, artistic pattern.

A Story



Home Comic Reviews Podcast Blog Conferences Links Book Series About Contact


Home / About Graphic Medicine

About Graphic Medicine

Facebook Twitter Pinterest Google+

Who is behind the Website?


The Graphic Medicine website was started in 2007 by [Ian Williams](#), a physician and artist from North Wales...



Dr Ian Williams

"I am a physician, comics artist and writer, based in Brighton, UK. After training in medicine I took postgraduate studies in fine art and then an MA in medical humanities. I have taught at both medical schools and art schools, and have written book chapters, scholarly papers for various journals and articles for broadsheet newspapers. I started making [comics](#) under the nom de plume [Thom Ferrier](#) in 2007 but have since reverted to using my real name. My debut graphic novel, [The Bad Doctor](#), was published in June 2014 by [Myriad Editions](#).


I am a member of the advisory board for the [International Health Humanities Network](#), a council member of the [Association of Medical Humanities](#) and joint series editor for a forthcoming book series from Penn State University Press. You can find me on twitter as [@TheBadDr](#) and MK and I also tweet as [@GraphicMedicine](#)."



In 2012 Ian joined forces with [MK Czerwiec](#), RN, MA to upgrade and relaunch [GraphicMedicine.org](#), amalgamating part of [MK's site](#) which hosted the Graphic Medicine Podcasts and conference information...

"... I have been making comics under the pseudonym [Comic Nurse](#) since 2000. My clinical experience is in HIV/AIDS and hospice care. In 2009 I received an MA in Medical Humanities and Bioethics at Northwestern Feinberg Medical School, where I then served as Artist in Residence. The faculty there has consistently been supportive and encouraging of my work. [Catherine Belling](#) and I developed a seminar called "Drawing Medicine" for M1 and M2 students, and I teach it each winter. I presented my work and teaching in comics & medicine at the first Graphic Medicine conference in London in


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<http://www.graphicmedicine.org/about>

Definitions

- “Graphic Medicine is the intersection of the medium of comics and the discourse of healthcare.” – Ian Williams, MD
- Comics are comprised of... “juxtaposed pictorial and other images in deliberate sequence, intended to convey information and/or to produce an aesthetic response in the viewer.” – Scott McCloud

Problems with these definitions?

Problems with these definitions?

- Broad

Problems with these definitions?

- Broad
- Narrow

Problems with these definitions?

- Broad
- Narrow
- Subjective

Roles for Librarians

- Health Literacy
- Consumer Health
- Medical Education
- Research and Discovery

Background: Health Literacy

- Only 12% of US adults are considered proficiently health literate
 - Minority groups, the elderly, and those with less education are disproportionately impacted
- Poor health literacy is tied to all manner of healthcare problems:
 - 4 times higher healthcare costs...
 - 6% more hospital visits...
 - 2 day-longer hospital stays...
 - And more
- Medical education needs to give special attention to ensuring future physicians can communicate clearly
 - “Most complaints about doctors are related to issues of communication, not clinical competency.” (Ha & Longnecker, 2010)

Background: Visual Literacy

- Definitions are often subject specific, but focus is always on ability to accurately interpret visual images.
- Recognizing the increasingly visual world, in 2011, ACRL approved the Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education.
- Numerous studies have found a positive relationship with comics readership and increased visual literacy competency.
 - Studies have similarly found comics to be a valuable tool in print literacy development.

Comics and (Health) Literacy

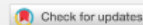
Charting Consumer Health

A Novel Tool for Health Literacy: Using Comic Books to Combat Childhood Obesity

Talicia Tarver , Deidra Woodson, Nick Fechter, John Vanchiere, William Olmstadt & Charlie Tudor

Pages 152-159 | Published online: 20 Apr 2016

 Download citation  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15323269.2016.1154768>





Patient Education and Counseling

Volume 98, Issue 4, April 2015, Pages 518–524



Research Information

Comic strips help children understand medical research:
Targeting the informed consent procedure to children's needs

Petronella Grootens-Wiegers^a,  , Martine C. de Vries^b, Mara M. van Beusekom^a, Laura van Dijk^a,
Jos M. van den Broek^a

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pec.2014.12.005>

Get rights and content



Journal of Stroke and Cerebrovascular
Diseases

Volume 24, Issue 11, November 2015, Pages 2533–2538



Original Article

Effective Education Materials to Advance Stroke Awareness
Without Teacher Participation in Junior High School Students

Satoshi Ohyama, MD, Chiaki Yokota, MD  , Fumio Miyashita, MD, Tatsuo Amano, MD, Yasuteru
Inoue, MD, Yuya Shigehatake, MD, Yuki Sakamoto, MD, Kazunori Toyoda, MD, Kazuo Minematsu, MD

 Show more

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jstrokecerebrovasdis.2015.07.001>

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Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health



Explore this journal >

Original Research

A Mixed-Methods Study of Immigrant Somali Women's
Health Literacy and Perinatal Experiences in Maine

Susan D. Jacoby CNM, DNP, RM , Monique Lucarelli MD, Fowsia Musse,
Ashok Krishnamurthy PhD, Vince Salyers DNSc, RN

First published: 13 October 2015 [Full publication history](#)

DOI: [10.1111/jmwh.12332](https://doi.org/10.1111/jmwh.12332) [View/save citation](#)



View issue TOC
Volume 60, Issue 5
September/October 2015
Pages 593–603

“I don’t know how to read a comic!”

Q. What is a “graphic novel”?

A. Graphic novels have a few defining characteristics. But first and most importantly, they are long comic books. (I’ll get back to the rest.)

Q. What is a “comic book”?

A. You may think you know the answer to this one, but stick with me a few minutes: A comic book is a magazine or bound book that contains “comics” (also known as “comix.”). Comics is a medium for expressing information and/or artistic ideas that is defined by



...and that’s it. However, comics also often feature such things as

“word balloons...”

...and sometimes, “thought balloons.”



These techniques aren’t necessary to make comics, but they are quite common. There are other common, familiar, but even more optional elements of many comics, such as certain kinds of characters, like funny animals or super-heroes. But I’ll get to that in a minute.

Here’s how to read a comic:



by Jessica Abel



Page 1 of 2, See more of Jessica Abel’s work at www.JessicaAbel.com
This piece was first published at www.Artbomb.com

©2002 Jessica Abel

Find the full comic here: <http://dw-wp.com/resources/what-is-a-graphic-novel>.

Consumer Health

- Librarians are regularly engaged in providing timely, evidence-based medical information. Few patrons can understand jargon-filled scholarly work however...
- People like *narratives*. Stories make things relatable.
- MedlinePlus is fantastic for factual knowledge. Graphic Medicine can meld that knowledge together with human experience.
- For some, reading about another person's experience with illness can be therapeutic.
 - This is one aspect of Bibliotherapy – a field unto itself that Graphic Medicine may play a role in. Sarah McNicol's research provides a good introduction: [doi: 10.1136/medhum-2013-010469](https://doi.org/10.1136/medhum-2013-010469).



MEET YOU AT EIGHT FOR A JOG AROUND THE NEIGHBORHOOD! SEE YA, RAY!

WOW, YOUR BUDDY RAY REALLY GOT YOU HOOKED ON EXERCISE!

I'M JEALOUS - I TRY, BUT I ALWAYS QUIT AFTER A MONTH OR TWO. HOW DO YOU KEEP YOURSELF GOING?!

WELL, I PLAN THINGS OUT AHEAD OF TIME AND LOCK THEM IN MY SCHEDULE!

EH, I'LL DO YOGA SOMETIME THIS WEEKEND.

NOPE! DIDN'T DO IT.

I'LL TAKE A WALK FOR HALF AN HOUR ...

... ON SUNDAY AT 10AM AND CLICK SAVE, AND DONE!

I DON'T WANNA GET UP ...

WHEN I SIGN UP FOR STUFF IN ADVANCE, I FEEL A LOT MORE COMMITTED TO GOING.

... BUT I ALREADY PREPAID FOR THAT BELLYDANCE CLASS!

AND I TACKLE ANYTHING THAT GETS BETWEEN ME AND MY EXERCISE. MAKE IT EASY!

LIKE HOW I KEPT MISSING MY MORNING WORKOUT BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO GET ALL MY GEAR.

NOW I PACK EVERYTHING UP THE NIGHT BEFORE SO I CAN GRAB IT AND GO!

ISN'T IT A LITTLE HARD STAYING SO DEDICATED?

WELL, I ALSO MAKE SURE TO TREAT MYSELF ALONG THE WAY AS A REWARD! GUESS WHAT I BOUGHT DURING LUNCH BREAK?

OOH, A NEW PHONE CASE? CUPCAKES?

EVEN COOLER!

STYLING!
NEW WORKOUT OUTFIT!
GO SUZIE GO!



BEHAVE REALLY BADLY!

IN SOMEONE WITH MELANOMA, IT'S THE MELANOCYTES THAT START BEHAVING BADLY.

VIVA LA MEL!

MEL RULES!

IT'S MEL WAY OF THE HIGHWAY!

UM, AXON, YOU'VE GOT A LITTLE...

NOT... ONE... WORD!



THE BAD MELS START SPLITTING OUT OF CONTROL!

THERE ARE MORE OF THEM EVERY SECOND!

YOU CAN NEVER HAVE TOO MANY MELS!

YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN, MEL!

THE BADLY BEHAVING CELLS COME TOGETHER TO FORM A LUMP CALLED A TUMOUR.



THE TUMOUR GETS IN THE WAY OF OTHER CELLS AND STOPS THEM FROM BEING ABLE TO DO THEIR JOBS PROPERLY.

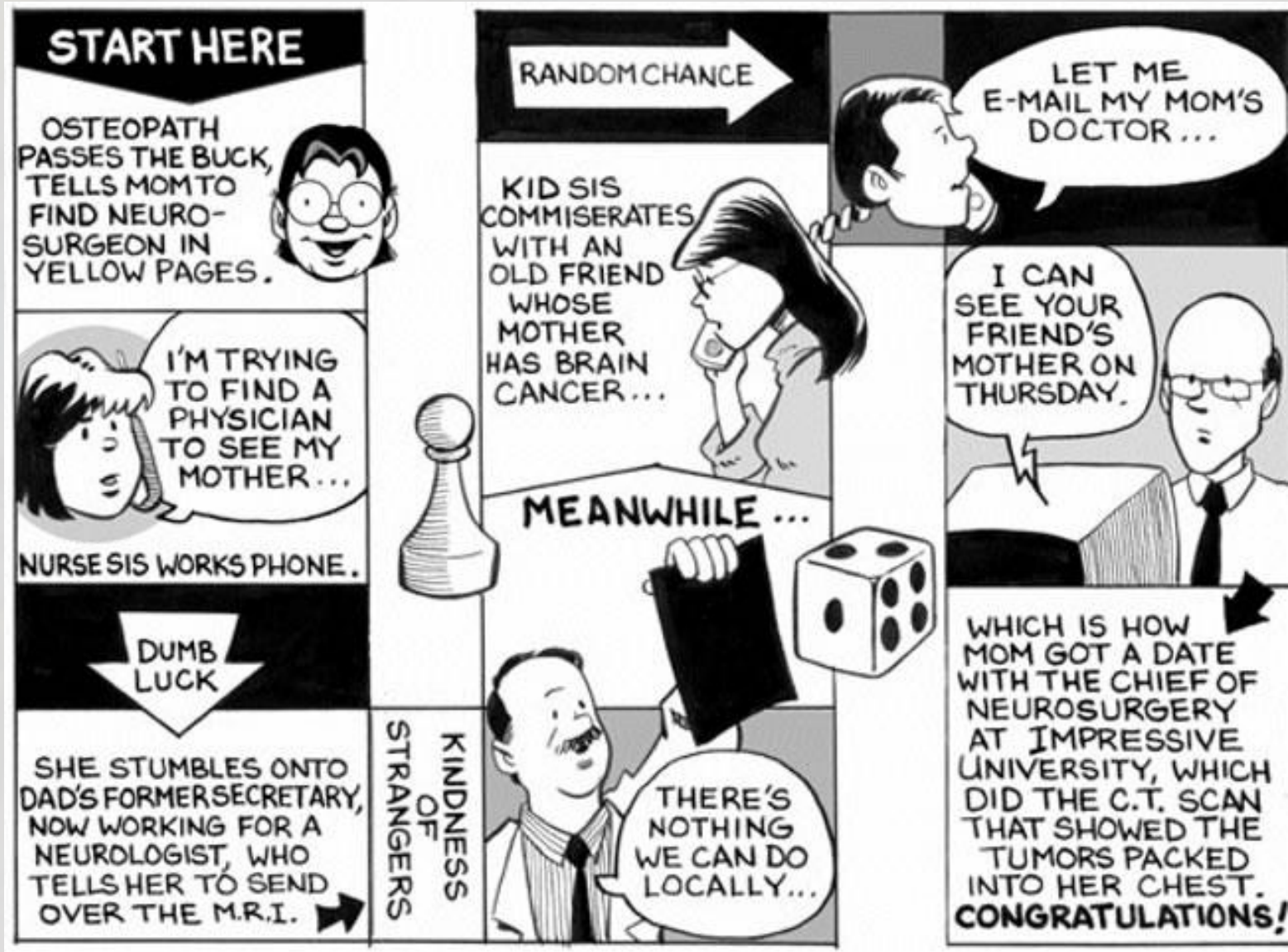
PLEASE, JUST MOVE, WE HAVE WORK TO DO!

NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.

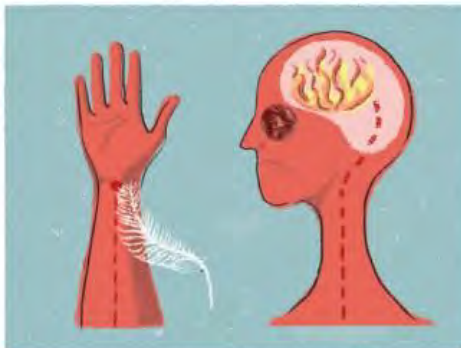
MAKE IT STOP! MAKE IT STOP!

THOSE GUYS ARE JERKS.

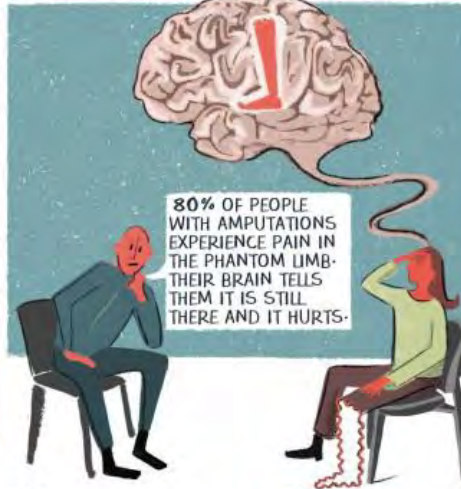
HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE MELANOMA?



Mom's Cancer by Brian Fies



A YOUNG DANCER SPRAINS HER WRIST AND THE PAIN AMPLIFIES UNTIL BEING TOUCHED WITH A FEATHER IS A TERRIFYING BURNING.



SEEING X-RAYS AND MRI SCANS MAY ACTUALLY MAKE YOU MORE LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE PAIN AS THEY LOOK SCARY.

IN FACT MANY OF US HAVE TORN TISSUES, DISC BULGES AND KNARLY LOOKING BONES WITH NO PAIN.



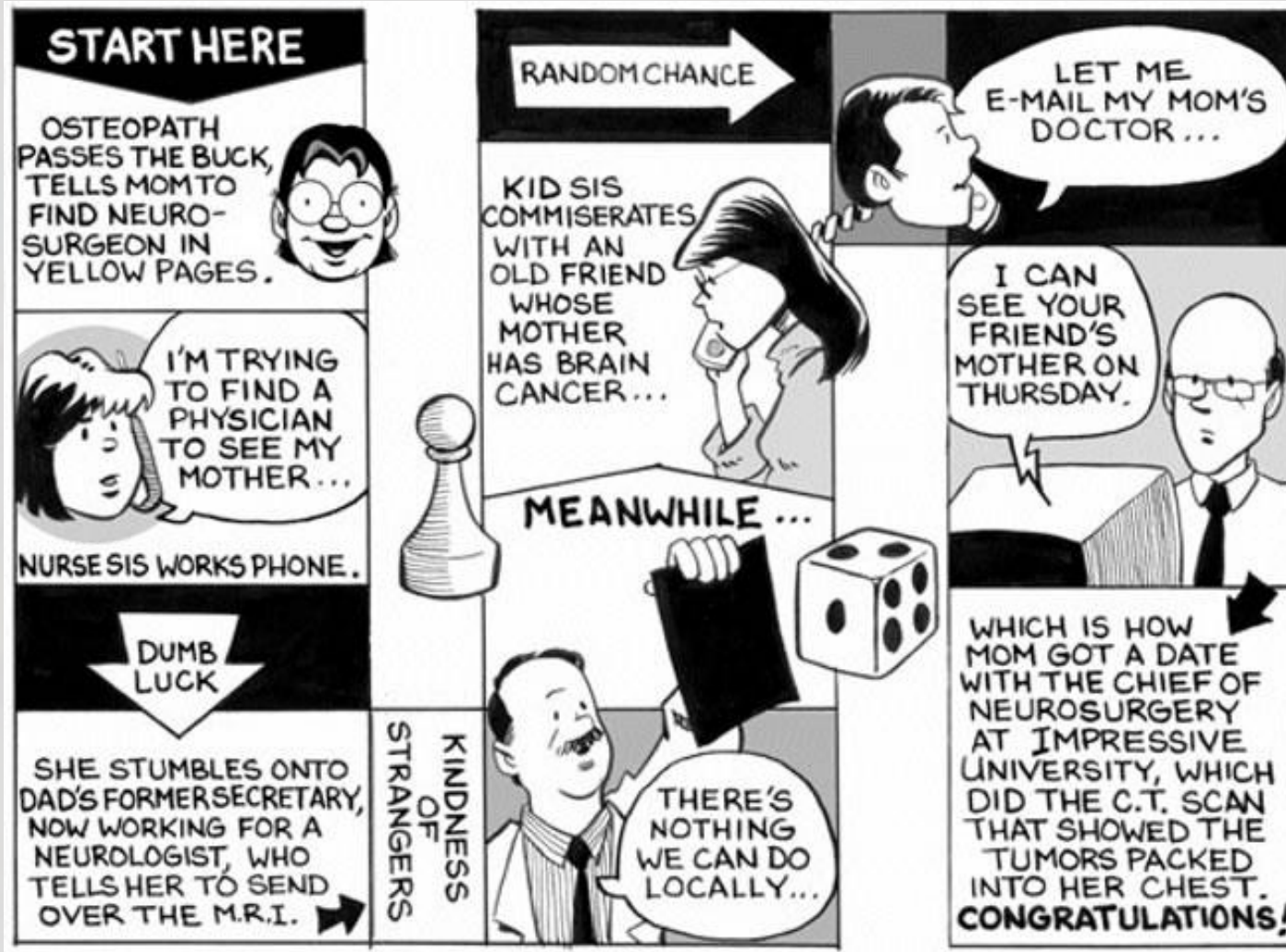
In the London 2012 Olympics Manteo Mitchell ran the first leg of the heat for the 4x400 metres relay and felt a pop. X-rays revealed afterwards that he broke his left fibula. His team still qualified (Huffington Post 2012).

The dancer's experience is the centre of a great TED talk by Krana (2011). 'Allodynia' is the term for when light touch generates severe pain - the nervous system is confused and sensitized.

Medical Education

- Empathy
- Identity Formation
- Illustrating Physician Experience
- Value of Comics as Educational Tool

Empathy



Mom's Cancer by Brian Fies

Identity Formation

Home

A collection of graphic stories by fourth-year medical students at Penn State College of Medicine

Since 2009, fourth-year medical students at Penn State College of Medicine have created comics as part of a course called "Graphic Storytelling and Medical Narratives." The course was developed to show fourth-year medical students how graphics and text can be used to effectively communicate complex medical narratives and to help students develop their own stories into graphic depictions.

Taught seminar-style, the course requirements are minimal: participate in all classroom activities, be good colleagues to one another, and produce a short, original, graphic narrative, or comic.

Of course, not all medical students are naturally gifted writers or artists, but as one can see from the following pages, everyone can tell stories and everyone can draw pictures. While this course is unlike any other in their medical school experience, the students rise to the task, sharing their reflections on becoming a doctor with honesty, wit, and creativity.

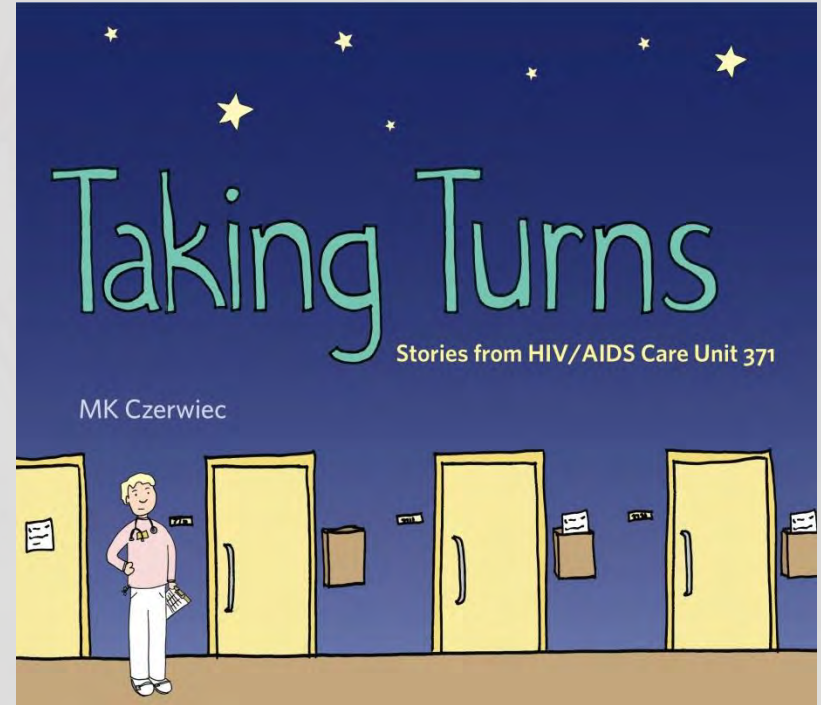
Michael Green, MD, MS, FACP

Course Director, Professor of Humanities and Medicine



Drawing created by Taylor Olmsted, 2012

Illustrating Physician Experience



Left: From *The Bad Doctor* by Ian Williams

Above: MK Czerwicz's exploration of her experience as a nurse for HIV/AIDS patients

Educational Tool

- Using comics for pre-class preparation
 - <https://dx.doi.org/10.1111/medu.12868>
- A Potential Use for Manga in Medical Education
 - <https://dx.doi.org/10.1097/ACM.00000000000001063>
- Memory for biopsychology material presented in comic book format
 - <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21504857.2016.1219957>

Research and Discovery

- Graphic Medicine is still an *emerging field*.
 - There is more that we don't know (in the scientific sense) than we do.
 - Most studies are small and/or narrow
- Opportunities for librarians to get involved in research:
 - Our skills and knowledge make us ideal for exploring graphic medicine.
 - Example: P.F. Anderson (Taubman Health Sciences Library) led this study on building empathetic communication:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jacr.2016.09.015>.

Research and Discovery

- Research into comics and medicine is minimal. What does exist can be unduly difficult to find.
 - MeSH terminology for comics is faulty (Cartoon-as-Topic is *far* too broad, misses the mark)
 - Numerous ways of saying comics make keyword searching problematic.
 - How can we improve findability of studies?
- Comics created for research studies on medical comics often disappear.
 - Difficult to replicate research without access to the *exact* comics being tested.
 - Perhaps a role for LIS in graphic medicine is to collect, store, and make these comics available? Consider our emerging role in dataset curation.
- Collections – both in public and medical libraries – are sorely lacking in medical comics
 - If comics on medical topics do exist, how are we helping patrons find them?

A Research-Focused Graphic Memoir



- *Raised on Ritalin* by Tyler Page
- Unique in that it is both a personal account of life with ADHD *and* a well-researched, historical account of ADHD and the pharmaceuticals industry surrounding it.
- Tyler's graphic novel includes an extensive bibliography, made available online here: <http://raisedonritalincomic.blogspot.com/p/raised-on-ritalin-research-bibliography.html>.

Keeping Up-to-Date

- Graphic Medicine website – www.graphicmedicine.org
- Social Media:
 - GM Twitter List:
<https://twitter.com/NoetheMatt/lists/graphmed-graphlib-list>
 - Graphic Medicine Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/Graphic-Medicine-118202494896480/?ref=page_internal
- Graphic Librarian Blog – www.graphiclibrarian.wordpress.com

2017 Comics & Medicine Conference: Access Points

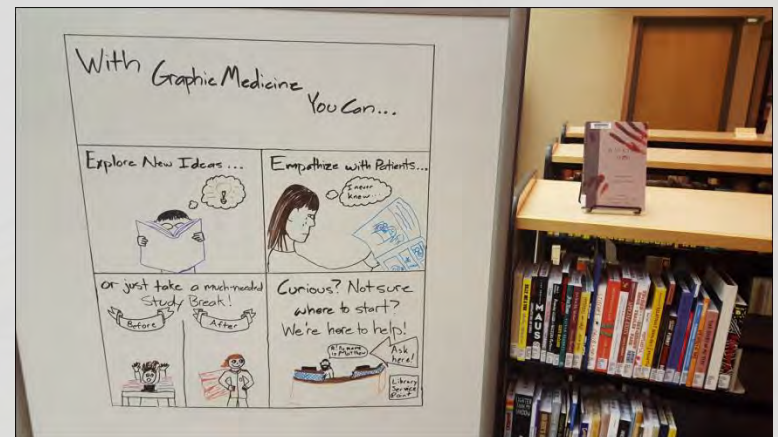


Conference Art by E.T. Russian

- June 15th – 17th
- Seattle Public Library Central Branch
- Registration Opens March 18th
- Special Librarian Brown Bag session on March 16th

Our Efforts

- Created in August 2016, the Lamar Soutter Library's Graphic Medicine Collection now holds 65+ titles.
 - [Holdings in WorldCat](#)
- Last December, we hosted James Sturm, Director of the Center for Cartoon Studies for a talk on applied comics and their partnership with White River Junction VA.
- Beginning this academic year, 3rd-year UMass Medical Students will have the option of taking a 1-week course on Graphic Medicine
- And...



Announcing Graphic Medicine Book Club Kits!

Graphic Medicine Book Club Kits

Graphic Medicine Book Club Kits

Addiction

Aging

AIDS

Cancer

Epilepsy

Grief

LGBTQ

Mental Health

OCD/Doctor-as-Patient

Veteran's Health

Graphic Medicine Book Club Kits

If you are curious about medical comics, want to start a book club in your organization, or just want to learn more about the experience of a specific topic, our Graphic Medicine Book Club Kits can help. Each kit includes six copies of a graphic novel, a quick-guide to reading comics, discussion questions, and topic-relevant MedlinePlus information. Currently there are ten Book Club Kits available (see below) and at this time, are only available to organizations within the New England Region (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI).

What is a Graphic Medicine Book Club Kit?

Kits are...

- Available for any New England-based organization
- Loaned for six-weeks at a time
- Non-renewable
- Free-of-charge – mailed to you by us, with a return shipping label included
- Appropriate for both new and long-time comic readers
- Great for students, faculty, professionals, and the public alike!

Request a Graphic Medicine Book Club Kit [HERE!](#)

Contact Matthew Noe (Matthew.No@umassmed.edu or 508-856-2229) if you have questions about the kits or suggestions for other Graphic Medicine kit titles or programs.

Topics and titles available can be seen by clicking the green tabs above.

<https://nnlm.gov/ner/guides/graphic-medicine-book-club-kits>

Thank You!

Questions? Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to contact me any time at:

Matthew.Noel@umassmed.edu

@NoetheMatt on Twitter

A full bibliography for this presentation can be found here:

www.graphiclibrarian.wordpress.com/graphic-medicine-in-the-academy