



## **Comics & Medicine: Navigating the Margins**

**22-24 July 2012  
Toronto, Canada**

**Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto  
Biomedical Communications Program, University of Toronto  
Office of the Vice-Principal, Research, University of Toronto Mississauga**

The third international interdisciplinary conference\* on comics and medicine will continue to explore the intersection of sequential visual arts and medicine. This year we will highlight perspectives that are often under-represented in graphic narratives, such as depictions of the Outsider or Other in the context of issues such as barriers to healthcare, the stigma of mental illness and disability, and the silent burden of caretaking.

The conference will feature keynote presentations by comics creators Joyce Brabner and Joyce Farmer. Brabner, a comics artist and social activist, collaborated with her late husband Harvey Pekar on the graphic novel *Our Cancer Year* (1994), which won a Harvey Award for best graphic novel. Farmer is a veteran of the underground comics scene who nursed her elderly parents through dementia and decline as shown in her graphic memoir *Special Exits* (2010), which won the National Cartoonists Society award for graphic novels.

We invite proposals for scholarly papers (20 minutes) or panel discussions (60 minutes) focusing on medicine and comics in any form (e.g., graphic novels, comic strips, graphic pathographies, manga, and/or web comics). In particular, we seek presentations on the following—and related—topics:

- Graphic pathographies of illness and disability
- The use of comics in medical education
- The use of comics in patient care
- Depictions of the illness experience from the perspective of loved ones and family caregivers
- The interface of graphic medicine and other visual arts in popular culture
- Ethical implications of using comics to educate the public

- Ethical implications of patient representation in comics by healthcare providers
- Trends in international use of comics in healthcare settings
- The role of comics in provider/patient communication
- Comics as virtual support groups for patients and caregivers
- The use of comics in bioethics discussions and education

We also welcome workshops (120 minutes) by creators of comics on the process, rationale, methods, and general theories behind the use of comics to explore medical themes. These are intended to be “hands-on” interactive workshops for participants who wish to obtain particular skills with regard to the creation or teaching about comics in the medical context.

We envision this gathering as a collaboration among humanities scholars, comics scholars, comics creators, healthcare professionals, and comics enthusiasts.

300-word proposals should be submitted by Friday, 28 February 2012 to [submissions@graphicmedicine.org](mailto:submissions@graphicmedicine.org).

Proposals may be in Word, PDF, or RTF formats with the following information in this order:

- author(s)
- affiliation
- email address
- title of abstract
- body of abstract

Please identify your presentation preference:

- oral presentation
- panel discussion
- workshop

While we cannot guarantee that presenters will receive their first choice of presentation format, we will attempt to honor people’s preferences, and we will acknowledge the receipt of all proposals submitted. Abstracts will be peer-reviewed by an interdisciplinary selection committee. Notification of acceptance or rejection will be completed by 14 March 2012.

Please note: Presenters are responsible for session expenses (e.g. handouts) and personal expenses (travel, hotel, and meeting registration fees). All presenters must register for at least the day on which they are scheduled to present.

\*Information about the 2010 conference, “Comics and Medicine: Medical Narrative in Graphic Novels,” in London, England, and the 2011 conference, “Comics and Medicine: The Sequential Art of Illness,” in Chicago, Illinois, USA, can be found at [www.graphicmedicine.org](http://www.graphicmedicine.org).