**CANCER STORIES PROGRAM**

**About this Symposium**

"Cancer Stories" is a three-day symposium organized around the premise that narratives about cancer have influenced the ways in which cancer is experienced.

Leading scholars in illness narrative, physicians, nurses, patients, artists and advocates will explore how the making and dissemination of narrative—including prose, poetry, performance and the visual arts—have changed collective knowledge about the disease.

"Cancer Stories," a free, public symposium, will take place November 6-8 in Indianapolis, Indiana. This symposium is part of a series of events in celebration of the opening of the Indiana University Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center (IUSCC) on the campus of the Indiana University School of Medicine (IUSM) and Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

"Cancer Stories" is made possible by an Indiana University New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities grant and the generous support of the Complete Life Program of the IUSCC. For further information, see Sponsors.

**Sponsors**

"Cancer Stories" is the result of collaboration between the Melvin and Bren Simon Cancer Center (Indiana University School of Medicine), as well as the Medical Humanities - Health Studies Program and the Department of English (Indiana University School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis).

This event is made possible by an Indiana University New Frontiers in the Arts and Humanities grant and the generous support of:

The CompleteLife Program of the IU Simon Cancer Center

The Estate of Robert M. and Phyllis A. Rose

The Heroes Foundation

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Gubka
Symposium Program
Thursday, November 6

5:30 p.m. Welcome Remarks: Stephen D. Williams, Director, IU Simon Cancer Center
Introduction: Richard M. Frankel, Professor of Medicine and Geriatrics, IU School of Medicine
Plenary I: Arthur Frank (University of Calgary & University of Toronto [2008-09])
"Telling Your Story: Narrating Illness in an Age of Authenticity and Appropriation"
Location: IU Simon Cancer Pavilion Atrium
Ill people need stories because illness dislocates the present and threatens the future. Stories relocate the body and the soul. Ill people also need to reclaim their experiences from others' representations. A story of such reclaiming illustrates how an illness narrative can draw upon two character types: the truth teller and the trickster. In conclusion, issues are raised about how stories can be appropriated; storytelling may be used to good ends, but it is not inherently good.

6:30 Reception
Location: IU Simon Cancer Pavilion Atrium

Friday, November 7

8:00 a.m. Registration check-in
Morning beverages and light refreshments
Location: Campus Center, Room 450C

8:30 Welcome remarks:
Uday Sukhatme, Executive Vice Chancellor & Dean of the Faculties, IUPUI
Jane E. Schultz, Professor of English, IUPUI and Symposium Director
Introduction: William H. Schneider, Director, Medical Humanities-Health Studies Prog, IUPUI
Location: Campus Center, Room 450C

9:00-10:00 Plenary II: David Cantor (National Institutes of Health)
"Choosing to Live: Cancer Education, Movies, and the Conversion Narrative in Twentieth-Century America"
Location: Campus Center, Room 450C
When the American Society for the Control of Cancer (from 1944, the American Cancer Society (ACS)) released its first cancer education movie in 1921, it chose a narrative form for this film that would dominate cancer education movies until the 1960s – the conversion narrative. Sometimes the language of these narratives echoed that of Christian conversion, with individuals being 'saved' or 'choosing to live.' But these were not religious stories. ACS conversion narratives dramatized the ways in which people were persuaded to accept medical advice regarding cancer: those who converted survived their disease; those who did not tended to die. This presentation seeks to show why these narratives emerged, how they changed as anti-cancer campaigns evolved, and why, from the 1950s and 1960s, ACS movies came to adopt a variety of other narrative forms in their efforts to educate the public about cancer.

10:00 Break: Beverage service
Location: Campus Center, Room 450C

10:30-12:00 Concurrent Sessions I
Ia. Film Discussion: "A Lion in the House": The Transformative Power of Storytelling at Pediatric End-of-Life
Chair: Chie-Schin Shih (Clarian Hospitals)
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 229
Julia Reichert (documentary filmmaker, Wright State University)
Melissa Godoy (Line Producer, "A Lion in the House")

Ib. Workshop: The Tuesday Group: A Project on the Art of Dying
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 224
Sue Eckstein (Brighton and Sussex Medical School, United Kingdom)
Bobbie Farsides (Brighton and Sussex Medical School, United Kingdom)
The session will comprise a presentation in which the genesis of The Tuesday Group – a play inspired by the lives and words of day care patients in a hospice – will be described. Participants will also be introduced to the British hospice in which this activity took place. This will be followed by a practical workshop in which participants will be invited to create characters, plot and dialogue to give life and meaning to clinical accounts.
Ic. Panel: Cancer Narrative Analysis
Chair: Meg Gaffney (IU School of Medicine)
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 215
Jennifer Yiallouros (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom)
“Sorry for any delays – Stories of People Diagnosed with Bladder or Kidney Cancer”
Hernando Salcedo Fidalgo (Universidad Externado de Colombia)
“Biographic Narratives and Illness: Making Sense of Living with Breast Cancer”
Ulrich Teucher (University of Saskatchewan College of Arts and Sciences, Canada)
“Narratives of Cancer and Aging: Genres and Metaphors of Mystery”

Id. Panel: Ethics of Remembrance: Cancer and the Family
Panel Chair: Patrick Loehrer (IU School of Medicine)
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 217
Mary DeShazer (Wake Forest University College of Arts and Sciences)
“Cancer Narratives and the Ethics of Commemoration: Susan Sontag, Annie Leibovitz, David Rieff”
Greg Gramelspacher, M.D. and Megan Ciaccio, M.D. (IU School of Medicine)
“Portraits of the Living: How Photography Can Enhance the Care of the Dying Poor”
Betsy Fife (IU School of Nursing)
“The Impact of Breast Cancer on Intimate Relationships”

12:00-1:00 Lunch Break
Registration continues

1:00-2:30 Concurrent Sessions II
Iia. Panel: Voice and Empathy
Chair: Ann Cottingham (IU School of Medicine)
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 225
John MacArtney (London School of Economics, United Kingdom)
“Ethical Intuition: Listening to the Subjectivised Voice of Cancer Narratives”
Rebecca Dresser (Washington University School of Law)
“Bioethics and Cancer: When the Professional Becomes Personal”
Jill Lauren Kauffman (IU School of Liberal Arts)
“Physician-Authored Pathography as an Answer to Issues of Empathy Loss Resulting from Traditional Medical Socialization”

Iib. Panel: Female Identity and the Language of Breast Cancer
Chair: Karen Iseminger (St. Vincent’s Hospital)
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 201
Emily Bartels (Rutgers University School of Arts and Sciences)
“Outside the Box: Queer Subjectivity and the Discourse of Survival”
Barbara Zang (Worcester State College)
“The Power of Words: A Breast Cancer Narrative”
Jane E. Schultz (IU School of Liberal Arts)
“(Un)body Double: A Rhapsody on Hairless Identity”

Iic. Workshop: The Illness Narrative: Giving Cancer Patients and Their Caregivers a New Voice
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 226
Patricia Stanley (Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons)
Frances Eichholz-Heller (NY Presbyterian, CUMC)
We invite participants to learn about the practice of narrative medicine with its specific application to narrative oncology and to experience the exceptional illumination that close reading and reflective writing can bestow upon one’s personal or clinical experience with cancer. Our workshop will include an introduction to the close reading of a short published cancer narrative, reflective writing about an illness experience, followed by the collective discussion of our representations in a safe and confidential environment.

IId. Panel Discussion: Closing the Gap: Different Perspectives of a Single Illness
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 237
Patient’s Perspective
Jan Lucas-Grimm, performance artist and author of My Beautiful Leukemia
Family Perspective
Barbara Shoup, author of *Night Watch* (1982) (Writers' Center of Indiana)

*Physician’s Perspective*

Larry D. Cripe (IU School of Medicine)

**2:30 Break:** Beverage service and light refreshments  
Location: Cavanaugh Hall 2nd Floor — Outside Rms. 225 & 226

**3:00-4:30 Concurrent Sessions III**

**Illa. Panel: Users and Uses of Cancer Narrative: The Narrative as Cultural, Social, and Institutional Resource**

Chair: Elizabeth Toon (University of Manchester)  
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 225  
Simon J. Craddock Lee (University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center)  
“Narratives for Translation: Framing Science as Salvation”  
Elizabeth Toon (Centre for the History of Medicine and Disease, Manchester University, United Kingdom)  
“Not a Whole Woman, or a Survivor? The Standardization of Breast Cancer Narratives in Late-Twentieth-Century Britain”  
Sarah Lochlann Jain (Stanford University School of Humanities and Sciences)  
“Scar Photography: Elements of Style”

**Illb. Panel: Material Narratives of Cancer**

Chair: Fran Brahmi (IU School of Medicine)  
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 201  
Jessica Les (Stanford University School of Medicine)  
“When Spoken Words Fail: interpreting the cancer experience through the art of box construction”  
Dawn Reynolds (University of Maryland College of Arts and Humanities)  
“Scrapbooking Cancer Narratives”

**Illc. Panel: Visual Narrative and the Breast Cancer Subject**

Panel Chair: Sue Rawl (IU School of Nursing)  
Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 237  
Lynn Pike (IU School of Liberal Arts)  
“How U.S. Women with Breast Cancer View Postmodern Photos of Other Women with Breast Cancer”  
Art Myers (co-author of *Winged Victory: Altered Images Transcending Breast Cancer* [1996])  
“How French Women View Postmodern Artistic Photos of Women with Breast Cancer”  
Madalina Akli (Sam Houston State University College of Humanities and Social Sciences)  

**Illd. Reading and Discussion Group: Literature and Medicine - Cancer Narratives**

Location: Cavanaugh Hall, Room 226  
Emily Beckman (IU School of Liberal Arts)  
*This session allows the audience to engage in thoughtful discussion about selected cancer narratives. Participants will read short works of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry and then reflect on the illness experience, which will be examined from the perspectives of the patient, family and care giver*

**5:00 Performance:** Gretchen Case (Duke University School of Arts and Sciences)  
“*Apoptosis Is My Favorite Word*”  
Location: Emerson Hall Auditorium, Room EH 304  
*Apoptosis refers to “programmed cell death,” the biological narrative that every cell follows to the end—if all goes well. Cancer changes that narrative completely. “Apoptosis Is My Favorite Word” tells a story of cancer moving from distant misfortune to intriguing research to consuming passion, with stops at plot device and metaphor along the way. Oh, and there will be dancing.*

**6:00-8:00 Dinner Break**

**8:00-10:00 Movie Night**  
Location: Emerson Hall Auditorium, Room EH 304  
*Dark Victory* (Edmund Goulding, 1939)  
*Dark Victory* tells the story of fictional heiress Judith Traherne’s end-of-life journey to happiness and wholeness after she receives a cancer diagnosis. Nearly 70 years after its release, this film still moves audiences with its unadorned realism and its spare emotional honesty.
Saturday, November 8

8:30 a.m. Morning beverages and light refreshments
Location: Campus Center Room 450A

9:00 Introduction: Lawrence Cripe, Associate Professor of Medicine, IU School of Medicine
Location: Campus Center Room 450A

Plenary III: Martha Stoddard-Holmes (California State University-San Marcos)
“Cancer Comix: Narrating Cancer through Sequential Art”
Location: Campus Center Room 450A

One of the most interesting narrative forms to engage cancer stories in the last several years is the comic book. Graphic narratives of cancer like Harvey Pekar and Joyce Brabner’s Our Cancer Year (1994), and Marisa Acocella Marchetto’s Cancer Vixen (2006) are distinct not simply for integrating the visual and verbal, but also for working in distinctive ways with time as space and using avatars that render human embodiment through iconic, morphing “masks” in combination with realistic objects. These features both make graphic narrative an apt medium for cancer stories and allow it to be more politically and socially provocative than purely verbal cancer stories. The notion of comic books as kid stuff or funny papers leaves readers ripe for the social critique that many cancer comics generate, making them a powerful activist tool, especially for young people who are comics-literate.

10:30-12:00 Concurrent Sessions IV

IVA. Panel: Cancer in Literature
Chair: Hilene Flanzbaum (Butler University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
Location: Campus Center Room 450A
Catherine Belling (Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine)
“There Already, Maybe: Telling When Cancer Begins”
Diane Price-Herndl (Iowa State University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences)
“Reinscribing the Myth of the ‘Cancer Personality’ in Advice Books and Recent Women’s Fiction”
Richard Gunderman (IU Schools of Medicine and Liberal Arts)
“The Greatest Cancer Story Ever Told: Tolstoy’s The Death of Ivan Ilych”

IVB. Panel Discussion: Our Stories Ourselves: Health Care Professionals as Patients
Location: Campus Center Room 307
Richard Frankel (IU School of Medicine)
Janet L. Hortin (Family Practice Physician)
Pat Ebright (IU School of Nursing)
Cancer stories are often dramatic and use metaphors such as “war” as the basis for hope in conquering the disease. Less time is spent on the mundane aspects of day to day life with cancer and the role of “routine” story-telling in living with cancer. This panel will focus on both the dramatic and the mundane in an exploration of the act of story-telling and its meaning for the teller. We will begin with a short video presentation of a physician and his spouse talking about the meaning of cancer in their lives. Next we will hear from two cancer survivors in a live, unscripted interview format, about their experiences as patients and story-tellers. We will conclude with a brief question and answer period.

IVC. Workshop: Writing Cancer Stories
Location: Campus Center Room 309
Jeanne Bryner (Forum Health, Trumbull Hospital, Ohio)
John Woodcock (IU College of Arts and Sciences)
This will be a participatory workshop for those writing or hoping to write about their own cancer or their experience with the cancer of another person. There will be advice on both technical and emotional issues, with a particular focus on commonly experienced creative roadblocks. There will be time for questions on individual projects and probably for a short writing exercise.