University of Dundee

Batman Danny

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BATMAN DANNY

PATIENT NOTES:
Name - Batman, Danny
Occupation -
Caped Cancer-Kicking
Crusader

Notes by Megan Sinclair
& Danny Braithwaite
Scans by Elliot Balson

BATMAN DANNY

MEGAN SINCLAIR

I HAVE LOVED COMICS SINCE I WAS A KID BUT TRULY BECAME OBSESSED WHEN I STARTED STUDYING THEM AT UNIVERSITY. THROUGH MY COURSES, I DISCOVERED 'GRAPHIC MEDICINE' WHICH EXAMINES COMICS IN RELATION TO MEDICINE, AS MUCH AS I LOVED THE GENRE IT SEEMED A LIFETIME AWAY FROM THE SUPERHERO FANTASY, ACTION AND ADVENTURE I NORMALLY READ. GRAPHIC MEDICINE HELPED ME ANALYSE AND UNDERSTAND MANY ASPECTS OF MY GRIEF AFTER THE SUDDEN LOSS OF MY FATHER IN 2014 BUT THE SUPERHERO WAS THE GENRE I TURNED TO FOR INSPIRATION AND ESCAPISM. I WAS INTRIGUED HOW TWO SEEMINGLY DIFFERENT SPHERES OF COMICS COULD DO SIMILAR THINGS. WHEN I MET DANNY AT COMIC-CON I WAS INTERESTED TO LEARN ABOUT HIS ILLNESS AND HOW IMPORTANT THE SUPERHERO WAS TO HIM TOO. HE BECAME A HUGE PART OF MY DEVELOPING RESEARCH WHICH I HOPE WILL SHOW THE EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF USING COMICS.

BATMAN DANNY

SUPERHEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS IN MY LIFE. THEY WERE ALWAYS SOMETHING TO TURN TO IN A TIME OF NEED, BUT I HAD NO IDEA THE ROLE THAT THEY WOULD PLAY IN MY LIFE. WHEN I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER IN 2015, THE TWO THINGS THAT HELPED ME THROUGH THE FIGHT WERE FAMILY, AND BATMAN. SUPERHEROES HELPED ME KEEP UP MY MORAL AND HELPED ME CONNECT WITH THE PEOPLE AROUND ME AT THE HOSPITAL. WHEN I WAS APPROACHED BY THE RAINBOW CONNECTION WITH THE QUESTION "WHAT IS ONE THING YOU WOULD WANT TO DO?" I KNEW I WANTED TO GO TO SAN DIEGO COMIC CON. THAT IS WHERE I MET MEGAN. SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS STUDYING COMIC BOOKS AT UNIVERSITY. WE QUICKLY BECAME FRIENDS AND SHE ASKED ME TO BE A PART OF THIS COMIC BOOK WHICH I COULD NOT BELIEVE!

BATMAN DANNY IS EDITED BY
CHRIS MURRAY & PHILLIP VAUGHAN

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IT STARTED WITH A
GIFT FROM MY NANA...

HELPING ME TO
ESCAPE -

...AND SINCE THEN,
SUPERHEROES HAVE
BEEN A HUGE
PART OF MY LIFE.

ALWAYS THERE TO
SAVE THE DAY -

TO OVERCOME
ANY OBSTACLE -

- FIGHTING
EVEN IN
THE FACE OF
DEATH...

...LITTLE DID I KNOW
I WOULD SOON HAVE
TO DO THE SAME.

I WAS 17
YEARS OLD
WHEN I SUDDENLY
REALISED I COULD
NO LONGER MOVE
MY EYES
UPWARDS.

THE DOCTORS
GAVE ME AN MRI
SCAN TO DETERMINE
THE CAUSE.

THEY DISCOVERED
A BRAIN TUMOUR.

I HAD TWO SURGERIES TO
REMOVE IT AND AFTER THE FIRST
I BEGAN A COURSE OF
CHEMOTHERAPY.

PRIOR TO MY FIRST ROUND OF
CHEMO I HAD NOT EVEN
REALISED I HAD CANCER.

I HAD
A LONG WAY
TO GO AFTER
RECEIVING MY
DIAGNOSIS AND
ENDURED ANOTHER
THREE ROUNDS OF
CHEMOTHERAPY
AND A MONTH
OF RADIATION
BEFORE MY
DOCTOR
APPROACHED
ME WITH A
LEAFLET...

YOU ARE
DOING SO
WELL WITH YOUR
TREATMENT,
DANNY.

I THINK
ATTENDING THIS 'CANCER
CELEBRATION OF LIFE'
EVENT WOULD REALLY
BENEFIT YOU.

THEY HELPED GIVE ME STRENGTH AND COURAGE.

I WORE MY BATMAN T-SHIRT TO EVERY CHEMO TREATMENT.

YOU CAN DO THIS, DANNY!

EVENTUALLY I WAS DECLARED CANCER-FREE AND THE RAINBOW CONNECTION CHARITY MADE MY DREAMS COME TRUE WHEN I RECEIVED TICKETS TO SAN DIEGO COMIC CON!

The
Rainbow
Connection

I MET WITH THE HEROES BEHIND THE CHARACTERS WHO HAD HELPED PULL ME THROUGH.

SCOTT SN

JIM LEE

I HAD AN AMAZING TIME, MEETING WITH SCOTT SYNDER, KEVIN CONROY, PAUL DINI AND JIM LEE -

- AND I GOT A SIGNED PICTURE OF BATMAN HIMSELF -- CHRISTIAN BALE.

EVEN BEFORE SDCC, THE CHARITY ARRANGED FOR ME TO RIDE IN A REPLICA OF THE '66 BATMOBILE!

HEY BATMAN - SLOW DOWN!

IT WAS AN INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE THAT STRENGTHENED MY LOVE OF THE SUPERHERO.

WHILST WAITING IN THE QUEUE AT SDCC TO SEE PAUL DINI, A LONE HARLEY QUINN STOOD IN FRONT OF ME.

DESPITE THE UNLIKELY TEAM UP WE SOON BECAME FAST FRIENDS.

HER NAME WAS MEGAN AND SHE HAD TRAVELLED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE, SCOTLAND, WHERE SHE STUDIED COMICS.

SHE WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN A THESIS ON THE SUPERHERO AND THE MEDICAL AND EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS OF THE GENRE. SHE WAS AMAZED AND INTRIGUED BY MY STORY.

WE SAID OUR GOODBYES AND EXCHANGED DETAILS AND MONTHS LATER SHE CONTACTED ME PROPOSING WE MAKE A COMIC.

AS I LOOK BACK ON MY STORY I REALISE THAT MANY OF THE COMICS I READ SHOWED THE SUPERHERO LOOKING DEATH IN THE FACE AND SPITTING AT IT.

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION FOR THE SUPERHERO.

FAILURE FOR ME WASN'T AN OPTION, SO THE COMICS I READ INSPIRED ME TO THINK THE SAME WAY...

...I AM NOW STUDYING
PHYSICS AT UNIVERSITY,
WHERE I PLAN TO GO INTO
THE FIELD OF MEDICINE AS
A RADIOLOGIST TO HELP
FIGHT CANCER IN
RADIATION THERAPY.

I WANT TO
GIVE BACK TO
THE COMMUNITY
THAT SAVED
MY LIFE.

ALTHOUGH
MY JOURNEY WAS
FILLED WITH FEAR
AND UNCERTAINTY
I NEVER STOPPED
FIGHTING OR BELIEVING,
THE HEROES I
LOVED TAUGHT
ME NEVER
TO GIVE UP.

I TOOK
CONTROL AND
BECAME THE
HERO OF MY
OWN STORY!

STORY BY
DANNY BRAITHWAITE &
MEGAN SINCLAIR

LAYOUTS BY
MEGAN SINCLAIR

ART AND LETTERING
ELLIOT BALSON

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO
'BATMAN DANNY'!

INTERVIEW: CHATTING WITH BATMAN DANNY!

Megan - On one hand the superhero is the perfect figure, for years they have overcome the impossible and continued to push on and succeed. Is this endless, positive message part of the reason you found the genre so uplifting throughout your illness?

Danny - That is very much the reason they helped me through my illness. One particular story that helped me in this way was *Batman: Endgame*. Even though Batman understood that this time, it was very likely that he would die, he was not going to give up because he had a city depending on him. Similarly, I knew that I was in a situation that could certainly be the end, but I had family and friends looking to me to pull through.

Megan - On the other hand, however, it can be argued that the superhero is too perfect. They are unattainable and almost taunting in their perfection? Was there ever a time you recall treating the superhero with contempt?

Danny - Not that I can recall. I understood that these characters are meant to be the pinnacle of human perfection. Rather than resent them for being portrayed as such, I would strive to be like them when I felt I was straying from this. Also, I think in today's comic books, writers try to humanize the characters by showing some of the imperfections of these characters. It makes them more relatable to the reader.

Megan - Do you think the fantasy world of the superhero and the escapism it provides is important? Particularly when faced with something awful in our reality, such as illness.

Danny - It is very important. Escapism is the reason for entertainment. It lets people relieve stress even if just for a short amount of time. When you are stuck in the hospital for days at a time, a comic book is a different world where you don't need to worry about what is being pumped into you at the time. I would forget what was going on around me by focusing on what was going on in the story.

Megan - Do you believe the superhero, and comics in general, helped aid your recovery?

Danny - They definitely eased the road through recovery. If I did not have Gotham City to escape into, then I would have been stuck in my head all day and would have been very depressed. Rather than that, I could see my heroes accomplish the impossible which is what it felt like I was facing.

Megan - Do you think having the superhero, often an outsider or a unique individual, helped with the isolation of illness?

Danny - In my case, I never felt alone while I was fighting. Sometimes I felt the people around me did not understand, but that is not what I turned to comic books for. What comics did help with was finding other people in my hospital that also like superheroes who were going through something similar and therefore giving me someone that I could talk to that further understood my struggle.

Megan - What is it you love so much about the superhero?

Danny - The superhero looks in the face of death and spits. Failure is not an option for the superhero. Failure for me was not an option, so the comics I read inspired me to look death in the face and spit.

Megan - Do you think the superhero offers a contemporary and educational insight to our identity and our relevance within a society?

Danny - Superheroes can help you define yourself. They can teach you what kind of person you want to be. Not just good guy or bad guy as society isn't so black and white. They help you decide if you want to be the kind of person that is willing to go to great lengths to accomplish your goals. Although life isn't as black and white as in comic books, they help to define the basis of what it means to do good or to do bad. Based off of this basis, you can further decide what kind of person you would like to become.

Megan - Do you think hospitals would benefit from introducing comics into the healthcare system, both educationally and for leisure? If so, what do you think the benefits of this could be?

Danny - Comic books helped me to find people in the hospital I could relate to. I felt a connection to the receptionist and two young boys because of the comics. Comic books could be used to help build connections in healthcare. Of course they would also be a great source of leisure for the reasons that I have mentioned previously. They could also help educate kids on how to not give up.

HELP AND INFORMATION

Cancer is the name given to an abnormal cell growth. Statistically, cancer is one of the biggest health problems worldwide with millions being diagnosed each year. Unlike various other illnesses, which are more common in adulthood, cancer is just as rife in children. The brain and central nervous system tumours are the second most common cancer in children making up about 26% of childhood cancers.

There are various types of brain cancer and as such there are several different symptoms to look out for.

Some of which include:

- Visual Problems (as was the case with Dan)
- Dizziness/Headaches
- Vomiting
- Seizures
- Extreme Tiredness.

Treatments vary but most include surgery, radiotherapy, and chemotherapy (again, all of which Dan undertook throughout his illness.)

Cancer, at any age, is a terrifying and difficult experience but for children and their families the ordeal is arguably even more emotional. There are many charities worldwide who work to make this process as painless as possible and provide constant support to both the patient and their relatives.

Listed are but a few of the many organisations that deal specifically with childhood cancer, each website offer further advice and information:

Children's Cancer and Leukaemia Group (CCLG)

CCLG coordinates research and care for children and their parents. There are 21 CCLG specialist centres for the treatment of childhood cancer and leukaemia, covering all areas of the UK and Ireland.

CLIC Sargent

CLIC Sargent offers practical support to children and young people aged 21 and under, with cancer or leukaemia, and to their families.

HeadSmart – Be Brain Tumour Aware

HeadSmart is a project that aims to enhance the awareness of symptoms of brain tumours in children and young people.

The Brain Tumour Charity

The Brain Tumour Charity funds research into brain tumours and offers support and information to people with brain tumours, and their families.

Cancer is a deadly and terrifying disease but together, with the right information, support and ongoing research, we can fight and stand up to it.

ORIGINAL ROUGH DESIGNS

BY

MEGAN SINCLAIR

HELP AND INFORMATION (CONT)

In difficult times such as battling with cancer, it is important that there is hope. For children, who often do not fully understand their illness, the superhero inspires them to fight, they give them the strength and courage. Various charities have utilised the symbol of the superhero as a way to treat and improve healthcare and wellbeing in children.

DC Comics worked alongside a hospital in Brazil to reshape its paediatric ward into the 'Hall of Justice' and transforming the children's intravenous bags into 'superformulas.' In addition, 'comics were also created in which Wonder Woman, Batman, Superman, and Green Lantern are laid low by their greatest foes, and depend on [the] superformula (delivered in an IV pouch just like the real ones the kids use) to regain their fighting strength and defeat the bad guy.' The aim being that the children on the ward can believe in their heroes, relate to them and are comforted by them, giving them the bravery and strength to undergo their treatment.

Other independent charitable organisations include:

'You are the Hero' which inspires hope through the genre, however instead of using well-known characters, artists instead turn the young patients into their very own unique superhero with the aim to 'uplift and inspire sick children.'

'Capes for a Cure' is a similar charity that places the patient as the superhero and gifts children suffering through illness with their very own cape.

Comics in general are a powerful medium that can communicate difficult issues such as cancer, several creators have openly discussed their personal battle with the illness through the medium, many of which can be found at, <http://www.graphicmedicine.org/>

However, one such comic that uses the superhero genre is Susie Gander's, a cancer patient now in remission, 'Perry Winkle'. Created throughout her illness as a coping mechanism, Gander now wishes to use her comic as way to help others 'find their inner superhero.'

These are just a few of many examples showing the ways that comics and superheroes can be used in a medicinal environment specifically targeted at children and highlights the educational and psychological power that using the medium and genre can have.

Megan Sinclair is also working on a comics project about heart disease called 'Close to the Heart.'

CLOSE TO THE HEART

ORIGINAL ROUGH DESIGNS
BY
MEGAN SINCLAIR (CONT.)

BATMAN DANNY: THE CAPED CANCER KICKING CRUSADER!

SCRIPT BY MEGAN SINCLAIR

Page 1

Key things to happen on page - An introduction to Danny/how he first got into comics and the sudden diagnosis of his cancer.

Danny's paragraph –

So I first got into comics from my grandma giving me one Batman toy. I'll send a picture of the particular toy. After that, my dad kinda fed my obsession by buying me toys all the time and always getting toys for birthdays and christmases. It was on a constant increase ever since. It really became everything to me. My diagnoses came out of nowhere. I was 17 and I could not move my eyes up. By that I mean that I could not keep my head straight and look at the ceiling. The doctors did not know what would cause that. They decided to have me get an MRI. They discovered a brain tumor. I was not aware it was cancer yet. I had to get two brain surgeries. After the first brain surgery, I started chemo therapy. The second brain surgery was to fix a problem from the first one. My doctor invited me to a cancer celebration of life event and I told him I didn't think it was cancer and then the doctor explained to me that it was indeed cancer. After 4 rounds of chemo and one month of radiation, I finished treatment.

Panel 1 - Caption: It started with a gift from my Nana...
[Maybe just have a photo scan of the batman toy – comic it up a bit]

Panel 2 - Caption: ... And since then superheroes have been a huge part of my life.
[A youngish picture of Danny reading a comic, batman toy next to him, the pages drift out of the comic forming the next panel.]

Panel 3 (Fantasy Spread) - Caption: Always there to escape to, always there to save the day, to overcome any obstacle, fighting even in the face of death... (top of panel)
[Images of comic, batman beating villains, maybe some famous scenes when Batman looks defeated mixed into it (Bane – Knightfall) I'm bias but maybe a Joker one too]
Caption: ... Little did I know I would soon have to do the same. (bottom of panel)

Caption (speech bubble): I was 17 years old when I suddenly realised I could no longer move my eyes upwards.
[I was thinking of doing this bit as a circular panel in the middle of the page, like a batman logo, dan in the middle then an image of the brain tumour on one of the wings and an image of him in the chemotherapy chair on the next]

Caption: The doctors gave me an MRI scan to try and determine the cause.

Caption: They discovered a brain tumour. I had two surgeries to remove it and after the first, I began a course of chemotherapy. At the time, I had not yet realised I had cancer.

Caption: After four rounds of chemotherapy and a month of radiation I finished my treatment and my doctor invited me to

a cancer celebration of life event.

Caption: (Maybe have this as a dialogue) Danny explaining he did not think he had cancer, doctor replying that it was indeed cancer.

[Dan holding a leaflet saying 'Cancer Celebration of Life'. A speech bubble, asking if it was cancer, saying he thought it was a tumour. Doctor explaining that it was cancer]
Hoping this isn't an overload on page 1, I want it to be quite a unique standout layout, striking a difficult chord with the diagnosis but always having the superhero within it in some way.

Page 2

Key theme of page – using the superhero as a positive coping mechanism

Danny's paragraph -

I always wore a Batman shirt for every surgery or chemo treatment. Just the yellow oval symbol. I always made jokes to the doctors asking if any of my treatments would give me super powers. I had a small thing implanted in my chest under my skin. I asked if it would power an ironman armor. I always made jokes about the radiation turning me green if I got angry or if a spider got in there and bit me if I would be spider-man. I asked my brain surgeon to give me telepathy or telekinesis. Batman also helped me to meet two young boys at the hospital that are fighting cancer. Both are disabled. It was the fact that I was wearing a Batman shirt that the young boy's mom thought that the Batman shirt would help him warm up to me to start his treatment. The other young boy's dad is a fan of the 66 show. The receptionist and I developed a friendship because of the book The Dark Knight Returns. The doctor's, nurses, and fellow patients all referred to me as Batman Danny.

Panel 1 – Caption: Speechbubble - Comics played a huge role in my treatment and my subsequent road to recovery.
[Danny facing readers, medium shot, maybe a comic wallpaper background]

Panel 2 – Caption: They helped give me strength and bravery. I always wore my Batman t-shirt to every chemotreatment. [Danny in superhero pose, his cape flying in the air making the shape of the panel, within it maybe a bunch of superheroes looking at him, smiling, cheering him on.]

Panel 3 – I was always making jokes, asking my doctors if any of my treatments would give me superpowers.

Panel 4 – As part of the treatment I had a small thing implanted into my chest, the first thing I questioned was if it would power up Ironman's armour.

Panel 5 – Be it turning into the Hulk after a round of radiation, or having a spider sneak in on my treatment and transforming me into Spider-Man, superheroes were constantly a part of my illness.

[Middle panel, open, three superheroes, iron man, hulk and spider-man]

Panel 6 – They also paved the way for me to make new friendships. Another young patient's mother saw my batman t-shirt and thought I could help her son warm up to this treatment...

[Danny placing a comforting hand on the shoulder of a similarly young boy]

Panel 7 - ... The receptionist and I grew close through our love of Miller's The Dark Knight Returns.

[Conversation shot, Danny speaking with receptionist. (I will find some interesting chat stuff about Miller and the comic to fit in it if there is space)]

Panel 8 – Speechbubble - In fact, the superhero was so integrated into my treatment that I became known as Batman Danny to everyone on the ward.

[Danny dressed as Batman]

Page 3

Key themes of page – attending SDCC, dream come true, meeting heroes.

Danny's paragraph - I was able to go to comic con due to an organization called Rainbow Connection. I was able to meet some of my favorite creators. Scott Snyder, Kevin Conroy, Paul Dini, Jim Lee, got a signed picture of Christian Bale (not from him), and just had a great time. They also were able to set it up so that I could drive a replica of the 66 Batmobile.

Panel 1 Caption – Eventually I was declared cancer-free and as part of the Rainbow Connection charity my dreams came true when I received tickets to San Diego Comic Con.

[Picture of Danny facing forward again, like panel 1 on page 2, this time with the Rainbow connection logo in the background.]

Panel 2, captionless, a map of USA, a plane going over it from Michigan to San Diego.]

Panel 3 (speechbubble)– I met with the heroes behind the ones that had helped pull me through my recovery.

[Panelless, Dan at the side holding onto this SDCC ticket/lanyard]

Caption – I had an amazing time, meeting with the likes of Scott Snyder, Kevin Conroy, Paul Dini and Jim Lee, and even got a signed picture of Batman himself, Christian Bale.

[4 photographs snaps, each showing Danny posing with the list of celebs mentioned. At the side of page Danny's hand holds the signed photo from Christian Bale.]

Speechbubble – The charity even arranged for me to ride in a replica of the 66 Batmobile, one of the highlights of the whole trip.

[Danny rides in the batmobile, the above text appearing as a speech bubble from out of the car. Behind Danny, Robin shouts 'Holey Moley Batdan! Slow Down!']

Panel 4 – It was an incredible experience that strengthened my love of the superhero.

Page 4

Panel 1 – Whilst waiting in the queue at SDCC to see Paul Dini, a lone Harley Quinn stood in front of me.

[POV view of a line of people, Harley (me) looks towards the reader, looking back.]

Panel 2 – Despite the unlikely team up we soon became fast friends.

[Replica selfie pic of me and Danny]

Panel 3 – Her name was Megan and she had travelled from the University of Dundee, Scotland where she studied comics.

Caption – Megan was about to begin a thesis on the Superhero and the medical and educational benefits of the genre. She was amazed and intrigued by my story.

[Not too sure if this should be one panel or two, I just have it as us chatting excitedly with a caption at top and bottom of image]

Panel 4 – We said our goodbyes and exchanged details and months later she contacted me proposing we make a comic.

[A picture of a hug or of waving, whatever is easier to draw]

Caption (speechbubble) – As I look back on my story I realise that many of the comics I read showed the superhero looking death in the face and spitting at it. Failure is not an option for the superhero. Failure for me was not an option, so the comics I read

inspired me to think the same way...

[Danny at bottom of page, facing readers, shadow of the batman behind his figure]

Page 5

Splash page of Dan, working in a lab, kind of like the Batcave, wearing a labcoat, maybe with a batman pin or something on it, looking out to the readers again.

‘... I am now studying physics at University, where I plan to go into the field of medicine as a radiologist to help fight cancer in radiation therapy. I want to give back to those that saved my life. Although my journey was filled with fear and uncertainty I never stopped fighting or believing, the heroes I loved taught me never to give up. I took control and became the hero of my own story!

Story by Megan Sinclair and Daniel Braithwaite

Layout by Megan Sinclair

Art and Lettering by Elliot Balson

With special thanks to Batman Danny!

ROUGH PAGE LAYOUT -- MEGAN SINCLAIR

COMPUTER ROUGHS -- ELLIOT BALSON

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

MEGAN SINCLAIR GRADUATED WITH A JOINT HONOURS IN ENGLISH AND HISTORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE BEFORE CONTINUING HER EDUCATION THERE WITH A MASTERS IN *COMICS STUDIES*. SHE IS NOW A PHD RESEARCH STUDENT AT THE UNIVERSITY, ANALYSING THE EFFECTS COMICS CAN HAVE ON EDUCATION, IN SPECIFIC RELATION TO THE SUPERHERO AND GRAPHIC MEDICINE GENRES. IN ADDITION, SHE IS ALSO THE COORDINATOR OF THE *SCOTTISH CENTRE FOR COMIC STUDIES* SITE AND IS A COMIC REVIEWER FOR *SLINGS AND ARROWS*.

WWW.SCOTTISHCOMICSTUDIES.COM & WWW.THESLINGSANDARROWS.COM

FOLLOW HER ON HER PERSONAL SITE - WWW.MADLOVE93.WORDPRESS.COM

DANNY IS CURRENTLY GOING TO SCHOOL AT OAKLAND UNIVERSITY TO STUDY PHYSICS. HE HOPES TO GRADUATE AND GO INTO MEDICAL PHYSICS TO HELP FIGHT CANCER IN RADIATION THERAPY. HE WANTS TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY THAT SAVED HIS LIFE.

SINCE GRADUATING FROM BOTH ANIMATION AND THE *COMICS STUDIES* COURSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE, ELLIOT BALSON HAS BEEN WORKING IN *INK POT* STUDIO. HIS RECENT PROJECTS INCLUDE AN ALBUM COVER FOR LOCAL BAND FRANCIS DUFFY & THE KINGPINS' ALBUM *SUICIDE NATION*, AND *UNTETHERED*, A COMIC THAT FOLLOWS A GENIE AND THE MAN WHO ACCIDENTALLY DRINKS IT.

YOU CAN FIND SOME OF HIS WORK AT - WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ELLBALSONART

SIOBAHN MCDONALD GRADUATED FROM ANIMATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE BEFORE COMPLETING HER MASTER IN *COMICS STUDIES*. SHE IS NOW A FREELANCE ARTIST AND CONTRIBUTES THE ARTWORK TO THE BACK PAGE STRIP OF *BATMAN DANNY*.

YOU CAN FIND SOME OF HER WORK AT - WWW.COMSICSTRAWBERRY.DEVIANTART.COM

UniVerse

HI!

I'M MEGAN AND AM CURRENTLY DOING A PHD IN **COMICS STUDIES** AT THE **UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE**.

MY STORY BEGINS IN 4TH YEAR AFTER FINISHING A DISSERTATION ON MY FAVOURITE CHARACTER, **THE JOKER**.

JUMP FORWARD A YEAR AND MY **MLITT** DISSERTATION WAS ON COMICS, **CARDIOLOGY** AND **COLLECTIVE GRIEF**.

IT LOOKED AT HOW COMICS CAN BE USED AS MEANS TO OVERCOME GRIEF AND THE STIGMA OF MOURNING.

YEAH BOTH PRETTY DIFFERENT...

BUT IT WAS ONLY WHEN I BEGAN MY PHD THAT I THOUGHT...

MAYBE THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE.

MAYBE THE **SUPERHERO** GENRE COULD HAVE JUST AS MUCH EDUCATIONAL AND PHYSIOLOGICAL BENEFITS AS **GRAPHIC MEDICINE**.

AT THE CORE OF MY STUDY IS EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION. I WANT TO SHOW THE MORAL AND MEDICAL VALUE OF READING AND DISCUSSING COMICS.

PATIENTS AND DOCTORS CAN RELATE TO STORIES OF HEROISM AND SUPERHERO COMICS CAN INSPIRE!

AS PART OF MY THESIS I WILL MAKE AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL COMIC ABOUT HEART DISEASE, AS A RESPONSE TO THE DEATH OF MY DAD,

THIS WILL SHOW HOW COMICS CAN BE USED TO WORK THROUGH OUR PAIN AND AID RECOVERY.

I AM ALSO PART OF A GROUP WORKING TO CREATE AN ORGAN DONATION COMIC, PARTIALLY FUNDED BY THE **NHS**.

Yes I donate
ORGAN DONATION

NHS

THIS WILL GIVE INFORMATION ON DONATION FROM **MEDICAL** AND **PERSONAL** PERSPECTIVES.

INSIDE THIS COMIC YOU WILL LEARN OF **DAN'S** STORY AND HOW COMICS CAN PROVIDE US WITH **HOPE**.

IT IS MY AIM TO HELP CREATE **DUNDEE'S** OWN VERSION OF THE **GRAPHIC MEDICINE** GENRE.

THE SUPERHERO IS SO OFTEN THOUGHT OF AS A FANTASY GENRE AND THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL, GRAPHIC MEDICINE AS SEEMINGLY MORE FACTUAL AND AUTHENTIC.

I WANT TO SHOW HOW SEAMLESSLY THESE GENRES CAN BE BLENDED AND ARGUE THAT **FANTASY**,

CAN BE JUST AS **EDUCATIONAL** AND **POWERFUL** AS REALITY.