

DANIELLE SPENCER

BIO

Academic Director of the Columbia University Master of Science in Narrative Medicine Program. Author of *Metagnosis: Revelatory Narratives of Health and Identity* (Oxford University Press, 2020) and co-author of Perkins-Prize-winning *The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine* (OUP, 2017). Research interests include retrospective diagnosis, contemporary film and bioethics, and healthcare pedagogy; scholarly and creative work appears in diverse outlets from *The Lancet* to *Ploughshares*. Formerly artist/musician David Byrne's Art Director, Spencer holds a B.A. from Yale University, an M.S. in Narrative Medicine from Columbia University, a Ph.D. from Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. She is a 2019 MacDowell Fellow and 2021 Yaddo Fellow. Lives in New York city.

EDUCATION

Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Ph.D. 2018: American Studies

Dissertation: *Blindsight: Diagnosing and Treating "Discovering Difference,"* awarded Summa Cum Laude. Thesis advisor: Prof. Dr. Mita Banerjee

Columbia University

M.S. 2012: Narrative Medicine

Narrative Medicine Fellowship Award

Yale University

B.A. 1996

Studio Art major, Humanities concentration

Editor-in-Chief, *Yale Literary Magazine* (est.1836)

Also attended The New York Studio School (1993-4); Lacoste School of the Arts (1997); + NYU in Paris graduate program with a MacCracken Fellowship (2000-1).

PUBLICATIONS

BOOKS

Metagnosis: Revelatory Narratives of Health and Identity. New York: Oxford University Press, 2020.

[OUP](#) | [Amazon](#)

The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine. Rita Charon, Sayantani DasGupta, Nellie Hermann, Craig Irvine, Eric Marcus, Edgar Rivera Colón, Danielle Spencer, Maura Spiegel. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017. *Winner of the 2019 International Society for the Study of Narrative Perkins Prize for the most significant book on narrative published in 2017. Translated into Japanese, French, Polish, Chinese, and Greek.* [OUP](#) | [Amazon](#)

CONTACT

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ARTICLES

“**Drifting Out to Infinity.**” *Ploughshares*, vol. 45, no. 3, October 2019, pp. 86–115.

([Ploughshares Solo](#) Vol. 7, No. 4.) [PDF](#)

“**Mutant Bodies, Human Viewers: Dissolving Boundaries in *Logan*.**” Saljooq M. Asif, Danielle Spencer, Madeline Disner, Folarin Odusola, Danielle A. Rojas. *Literature and Medicine*, vol. 37, no. 1, Spring 2019, pp. 141–65. [PDF](#)

“**Illness Doula: Adding a New Role to Healthcare Practice.**” Annie Robinson, Danielle Spencer and Bradley Lewis. *Journal of Medical Humanities*, vol. 40, June 2019, pp. 199–210. [PDF](#)

“**Review: 4 3 2 1: A Novel by Paul Auster.**” *The Mathematical Intelligencer*, vol. 40, no. 1, March 2018, pp. 80–83. [PDF](#)

“**Narrative Medicine.**” *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Medicine*, edited by Miriam Solomon et al., Routledge, 2017, pp. 372–82. [PDF](#)

“**All Creatures Great and Small.**” *The Lancet*, vol. 386, 2015, pp. 22–23. [PDF](#)

“**Sebald in Moszkva Tér.**” *The Hungarian Review*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2015, pp. 79–81. [PDF](#)

“**Critical Conversations: A 360° Clinical Portrait.**” Danielle Spencer and Stephanie Adler Yuan. *Esopus*, vol. 22, 2015, pp. 137–52. [PDF](#)

“**Looking Back.**” *Creative Nonfiction*, vol. 47, 2013, pp. 34–38. [PDF](#). Included in *Beautiful Flesh: A Body of Essays*, edited by Stephanie G'Schwind, Center for Literary Publishing, 2017, pp. 35–43.

“**Your Data is Showing.**” *WIRED*, vol. 13.11, 2005.

“**It’s Like a Thing of Everything...**” davidbyrne.com, 2002 [PDF](#)

TEACHING

Academic Director and Senior Lecturer in the Discipline of Narrative Medicine, Columbia University Master of Science in Narrative Medicine Program // 2020–present

Associate Director and Lecturer in the Discipline of Narrative Medicine, Columbia University Master of Science in Narrative Medicine Program // 2019–2020

Instructor: Giving and Receiving Accounts of Self; Close Reading: Principles, Practice, Practicum; Narrative Ethics. Faculty Advisor and Chair, Curriculum Committee

Lecturer, Columbia University Narrative Medicine Master of Science Program // 2013–2019

Instructor: Giving and Receiving Accounts of Self, Methods in Narrative Medicine. Instructor and course design: Narrative Ethics. Faculty Advisor and Independent Study Supervisor

Lecturer, Einstein-Cardozo Master of Science in Bioethics // 2013–Present

Instructor, Bioethics and Medical Humanities I & II; Bioethics Consultation Skills. Instructor + course design for seminars: Personhood; Bioethics in Contemporary Media; Contested Categories: Illness, Identity and Cyborgs; Brave New World: Bioethics in Literature and Film; Ways of Seeing: Bioethics through the Lens of Visuality; Medical Narratives

Instructor, Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons // Spring 2019

Instructor + course design, Ways of Seeing: Vision, Healthcare, + Ethics seminar

Adjunct Professor, Hunter College Department of English // Fall 2015–Spring 2016

Instructor + course design, Narrative Medicine

Faculty, Columbia University Medical Center Narrative Medicine Intensive Workshops, 2013–Present

Weekend Narrative Medicine workshops for clinicians and scholars

Faculty, Summer Medical and Dental Education Program & MedPrep, Columbia University // 2012–2015

Narrative Medicine Instructor for 6-week intensive summer course for ~200 undergraduate students underrepresented in the health professions (now named SHPEP)

Instructor, Child Psychiatry Fellows, Narrative Medicine Rounds // 2012–2014

NewYork-Presbyterian Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital, Columbia University Medical Center, Child Psychiatry Consultation-Liaison Service

Faculty, Macy Seminar on Interprofessional Teamwork, Columbia University Medical Center // 2013–2014

“The Cultures of Health, Illness and Health Care”: Seminar comprised of students from each of the schools of CUMC: College of Dental Medicine, College of Physicians & Surgeons, Mailman School of Public Health, and School of Nursing

Instructor, Mt. Sinai Medical Center Palliative Care Fellows // Spring 2013

Narrative Medicine Rounds

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Interdisciplinary Narratives: End-of-Life Challenges that Result in Organizational Changes

Talk, with David Hoffman // The Completed Life Conference, October 1, 2020

Narrative Medicine Applications to Promote Well-Being among Medical and Healthcare Professionals

Panel // 2020 Well-Med 4th International Meeting on Well-Being and Performance in Clinical Practice, Halkidiki, Greece, May 2020 [cancelled]

Narrative Medicine Workshop

Workshop // 2020 Preconference Symposium, Health Humanities as A Teaching and Learning Strategy, Northeast Group on Regional Affairs meeting for the Association of American Medical Colleges, Burlington, VT, 30 April 2020 [cancelled]

Metafiction + Metagnosis

Paper // 2020 International Health Humanities Consortium Conference: The Politics of Health, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 28 March 2020 [cancelled]

Metafictional Diagnosis

Paper // Narrative 2020, International Society for the Study of Narrative Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA, 7 March 2020

The Ethics of Reading and Medicine

Talk + Workshop // Institut for Kulturvidenskaber, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark, 14 February 2020

Narrative Medicine

Lecture // School of Medicine, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark,
13 February 2020

“Drifting out to Infinity”: Mathematics, Creative Writing and Literary Criticism

Reading + Workshop // Data and Stories in Digital Health Care: Mixed Methods for Medical Humanities, Charité – University Medical Center Berlin, Germany, 6 December 2019

Narrative Medicine: Genealogy, Principles, and Practice

Lecture // Narrative Medicine Faculty Training Workshop, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, 2 November 2019

Narrative, Medicine, and Imagination

Lecture // Pediatrics Grand Rounds, Texas Children’s Hospital, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Houston, TX, 1 November 2019

Narrative Medicine: Close Reading, Ethics, and Clinical Practice

Lecture, with Craig Irvine // Department of Medicine Grand Rounds, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, TX, 31 October 2019

Metagnosis: Retrospective Revelations from Blade Runner to ADHD and Beyond

Lecture // Duke University, Durham, NC, 17 October 2019

“The Narrative Turn” in Healthcare

Plenary Lecture // Narrative Medicine Workshop, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, 22 June 2019

Medical Rhetoric: Complaining, Complying, and Adhering

Paper // Cultures of Medicine conference, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, 20 June 2019

Beyond Borders: The *Boulevard* of Lived Retrospective Diagnosis

Paper // CHCI Health and Medical Humanities Network Summer Institute, Paris, France, 15 June 2019

Medical Anagnorisis: Narrative Effects of Lived Retrospective Diagnosis

Paper // International Society for the Study of Narrative, Pamplona International Conference on Narrative, Pamplona, Spain, 31 May 2019

Narrative Medicine

Plenary Lecture and Workshops // Interdisciplinary Palliative Care Conference: Building Provider Resilience Course, NYU Langone Health, New York, NY, 30 April 2019

Blade Runner, ADHD, and You: A Narrative Analysis of Lived Retrospective Diagnosis

Lecture // Department of Public Health, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, 24 January 2019

Discovering Difference: A Narrative Medicine Investigation of Lived Retrospective Diagnosis

Lecture // Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, 22 January 2018

Narrative Medicine: A Method to Build Interprofessional Teams

Workshop + talk, with Deepthiman Gowda // InterProfessional Care for the 21st Century conference, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA, 26 October 2018

Logan, Frankenstein, and Shane: Family, Sacrifice, and Generic Mutancy in the Western X-Verse

Paper // X-PANEL: From Frankenstein to Logan: Bodily Narratives in the X-Verse, 2018 International Health Humanities Consortium Conference, Frankenstein@200, Stanford University, Stanford, CA, 21 April 2018

The Future Praxis of Health Humanities in the U.S.

Roundtable discussion // Symposium: Opening Doors: From the Medical to the Health Humanities, Drew University, Madison, NJ, 23 March 2018

“Drifting out to Infinity”

Reading // Narrative Medicine Workshop, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, 12 January 2018

Narrative Medicine: History, Context, and Deployment

Plenary lecture // Narrative Medicine Workshop, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, 13 January 2018

Short Narrative Forms as Social Practices: Medical Humanities and Narrative Medicine

Panelist // The American Short Story: New Horizons—Form of Contact, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, 7 October 2017

Frankenstein to X-Men: Bioethics in literature and film

Lecture // Global Bioethics Initiative International Bioethics Summer School, Pace University, College of Health Professions, New York, NY, 21 June 2017

Discovering Difference

Lecture // American Studies Department, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, 24 May 2017

Narrative Medicine

Lecture and workshop // [Re]Usable Practices, Stonehill College, Easton, Massachusetts, 19 May 2017

Narrative Medicine: Topography and Topologies

Paper // International Society for the Study of Narrative Annual Meeting, Lexington, KY, 24 March 2017

Discovering Difference: Diversity and Diagnosis

Paper // Health Humanities Consortium Annual Meeting, Houston, TX, 10 March 2017

Dualism and Its Discontents: Philosophy, Literature, and Medicine

Paper // with Craig Irvine, International Health Humanities Consortium Annual Meeting, Houston, TX, 11 March 2017

Narrative Medicine: History and Context

Lecture // Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, 12 January 2017

Where do We Stand: Bioethics, Narrative Medicine + Healthcare Education

Paper // American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, Washington DC, 9 October 2016

Contextualizing Narrative Medicine

Plenary lecture // Narrative Medicine Master’s Workshop, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, NY, 10 September 2016

Writing in the Clinical Context and Beyond

Plenary lecture // Narrative Medicine Workshop, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Germany, 18 June 2016

Clinical Crucibles: Physician-Writers as Guardians and Wards

Paper // The International Conference on Narrative, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, 16 June 2016

Narrative Ethics

Plenary lecture // Narrative Medicine Workshop: A Call to Ethics, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, 15 April 2016

The Patient Voice 2016: Bridging the Diabetes Gap

Panelist, with Tim Cunningham, Manny Hernandez, Heather Stuckley // The BETES Organization, New York, NY, 20 March 2016

Narrative Medicine Rounds: At the Intersection of Art & Medicine—Esopus 22: Medicine

Panelist, with MK Czerwiec, Ian Williams, and Tod Lippy // Columbia University Medical Center, New York, NY, 4 November 2015

Discovering Difference: Case Studies and Creative Responses

Paper // American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, Houston, TX, 23 October 2015

Healthcare and Oral History: Ethics, Expression and Inclusion

Paper // American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, Houston, TX, 25 October 2015

Narrative Medicine and Ethics

Lecture // AMSA's Medical Humanities Scholars Program Webinar, 6 October 2015

Listening with Care in Mind: Oral History and Narrative Medicine

Paper, with Stephanie Adler Yuan // Narrating Population Health: Oral History, Disparity and Social Change, Columbia University Center for Oral History Research, New York, NY, 16 June 2015

Clinical Oral History as a Tool for Social Advocacy

Paper, with Stephanie Adler Yuan // 4th International Health Humanities Conference, Denver, CO, 1 May 2015

Clinical Oral History: A 360° Portrait

Paper, with Stephanie Adler Yuan // 2015 Oral History in the Mid-Atlantic Region (OHMAR) Annual Meeting, "Oral History and Health", Rutgers, Camden, NJ, 9 April 2015

Interprofessional Collaboration in Senior Care

Workshop, with Abby Rosmarin // The Collaborative Age: Integration Across Disciplines, 42nd Annual Conference of the State Society on Aging of New York, New York, NY, 23 October 2014

Clinical Crucibles: An Analysis of Medical Training Memoirs

Paper, American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, 19 October 2014

Narrative Medicine: An Interactive Workshop in Reading, Writing, and Listening

Workshop, with Sarika Talve-Goodman // American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, 18 October 2014

Ways of Seeing: Teaching Bioethics Through the Lens of Visuality

Paper, American Society for Bioethics + Humanities Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, 17 October 2014

Narrative Understanding Workshop

Workshop, with Abby Rosmarin // Academy of Professional Mediators Annual Meeting / Association of Divorce Financial Planners Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, 16 October 2014

Narrative Understanding Workshop

Workshop, with Abby Rosmarin // International Academy of Collaborative Professionals Annual Meeting, Vancouver, Canada, 25 October 2014

Narrative Medicine: Panel Discussion

Panelist, with Catherine Rogers, Nellie Hermann + Deepu Gowda // UnionDocs Center for Documentary Art, Brookly, NY, 23 March 2014

Narrative Medicine Workshop

Workshop, with Maura Spiegel // Minding the Body: Dualism and its Discontents, CUNY Graduate Center, 1 March 2013

Narrative Understanding Workshop

Workshop, with Abby Rosmarin // Collaborative Divorce Association of North Jersey, 9 February 2013

After the End of Reason: David Byrne's PowerPoint Universe

Lecture presentation, Microsoft Research, Redmond, WA, 18 November 2003

HONORS

2020–2021 Dean's Applied Research Award, Columbia University School of Professional Studies

2021 Yaddo Fellowship

2019 MacDowell Fellowship

2019 Perkins Prize for *The Principles and Practice of Narrative Medicine*, co-author, awarded by the International Society for the Study of Narrative for the most significant contribution to the study of narrative

2012 Narrative Medicine Fellowship Award

2008 AICA Award for Best Show in a Public Space for David Byrne's *Playing the Building*, Producer

2007 Independent Publisher Book Award gold medal and 2006 AIGA 50 Books/50 Covers for David Byrne's *Arboretum*, co-designer

2001 NYU MacCracken Fellowship Award, French Department

BOARDS + SERVICE

Chair, Columbia Narrative Medicine M.S. Curriculum Committee, 2019–present

Reviewer: Routledge, *Literature and Medicine*, etc.

German Network for Narrative Medicine, Advisory Board, 2019–present

Health Humanities Consortium Steering Committee, 2015–present

Yale Alumni Schools Committee, 2012–present

Program Committee, “A Narrative Future for Healthcare”, Launch of the International Network of Narrative Medicine, 2013 // King’s Guy’s Hospital Campus, London UK, 19–21 June 2013

PRIOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Art Director and Senior Manager, David Byrne / Todo Mundo Ltd. // 2001–2011

Production company of artist/musician (former Talking Head) David Byrne

- As senior studio manager, led growth of Todo Mundo Ltd. from an administrative support office to a cross-platform production studio contributing to all facets of multi-media Byrne projects.
- Co-authored multiple art series with David Byrne; co-designed extensive solo, collaborative and Talking Heads releases with Byrne, including books, CDs and DVDs; produced graphics for multi-media projects.
- Projects received major international press coverage in outlets such as the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Guardian* UK, AP, Reuters, NPR, etc.
- Developed and managed a diverse array of complex projects on a variety of platforms from conception through execution, managing large teams of collaborators in parallel. Responsibilities included strategic project management, scholarly/legal research and consultation, writing and editing, production supervision, business management, licensing, marketing, hiring, press, graphic design.
- Managed office/studio, including hiring and supervising full-time and freelance staff and interns; implemented organizational systems; directed custom database design initiative integrating all facets of extensive multimedia archive; supervised digitization and digital assets management solutions.

Sample Todo Mundo projects and responsibilities:

- *Playing the Building*, a large-scale interactive audio piece, installed in Stockholm, NYC and London: Producer for all aspects, from budget generation, hiring production manager and crew, contract negotiation, publicity, graphics. Winner, 2008 AICA Award for Best Show in a Public Space. Also managed installation and coördination for *This Must be the Place* motion picture filming in Detroit, 2011 (dir. Paolo Sorrentino)
- Collaborative project management and production for book projects and associated exhibitions and events:
 - *Bicycle Diaries* (Penguin, 2009, and multiple international editions): Conceptualization, editing, project management, image research and licensing, planning for multiple bike forum events, international publicity

- *Envisioning Emotional Epistemological Information*: Directed all aspects of multi-faceted PowerPoint art project: planned and executed art installations in public spaces, festivals, galleries and museums; designed fine art book and DVD (published by Steidl / Pace/MacGill, 2003); coordinated multiple talks and events; managed international press campaign
- *The New Sins* (McSweeney's, 2001): Production management, press oversight, event planning, direction of multiple public art installations
- *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (Byrne/Eno album) reissue: legal research and strategic planning and troubleshooting regarding remix contest licenses; negotiation and project coordination between record label directors, attorneys, artist management, musicians and copyright reform organization
- Designed and managed all aspects (strategic planning, fabrication, production coordination, publicity) of large-scale art installations of diverse media types, including interactive public audio installations in NYC and London; public installation in the Tokyo Yamamoto subway; singing robot at the Reina Sofia museum in Madrid; interactive guitar pedal piece in Japanese gallery; multimedia sculptural chair production for exhibitions; block-long billboard installation on the façade of Saks 5th Avenue NYC; series of creative bike racks installed on NYC sidewalks; public lightbox series for festivals in Reykjavík, Toronto and Sydney; dozens of exhibitions in galleries and museums worldwide
- Webmaster for davidbyrne.com: Conducted site-wide design and improvements; designed, implemented and maintained Radio and Journal sections—both received extensive international press coverage and website traffic increased over 300%; extensive research, editing, and contributions for Journal essays (e.g. net neutrality, web radio royalty); created and maintained interactive section for 08/09 album and international tour, coordinating with music management, booking agents, venues and press
- Extensive design and production for all Byrne art projects and Byrne/Spencer collaborative art projects; design for tour merchandise, advertisements, posters, invitations, website graphics, etc.
- Graphic Design collaborations with David Byrne for releases:
 - *Talking Heads Chronology* DVD/Book (Eagle Rock, 2011)
 - *Here Lies Love: A Song Cycle about Imelda Marcos & Estrella Cumpas* DVD/Book (Todo Mundo / Nonesuch, 2010): 2-DVD package with 100-page book; research and editing of historical essays
 - *Everything that Happens Will Happen on This Tour* (Todo Mundo, 2009): Digital EP
 - *Big Love: Hymnal* CD (Todo Mundo, 2008)
 - *Music for the Knee Plays* CD/DVD (Nonesuch, 2007): Package design and project coordination with Robert Wilson Studio, photographer JoAnn Verburg (creation of custom DVD slideshow), record label, film and CD production
 - *Arboretum* book (McSweeney's, 2006): Production execution, graphic design and press oversight; Winner, design: AIGA 50 Books/50 Covers of 2006, and winner: Independent Publisher Book Award gold medal (Popular Culture / Leisure, 2007); featured, with *The New Sins*, in *Art of McSweeney's* (Chronicle, 2010)
 - *David Byrne Live at Union Chapel* DVD (Rhino, 2005)
 - *Grown Backwards* CD (Nonesuch, 2004)
 - *Envisioning Emotional Epistemological Information* book/DVD (Steidl / Pace/MacGill, 2003): PowerPoint Art book and DVD; Winner, Wired RAVE award for Art, 2004; lectured on the project at Microsoft Research, Redmond, in 2004
 - *Lead Us Not into Temptation: Music for the Film Young Adam* CD/Vinyl (Thrill Jockey, 2003): Featured in *Creative Review*, 2003
 - *What is It?* (Pinspot, 2002)
 - Cover art direction: *Ride, Rise, Roar* DVD (Eagle Rock, 2011); *Talking Heads: Same as it Ever Was* CD (Starbucks, 2009) and *Score! Vol. 9* CD (Merge, 2009)

Freelance Graphic Design // 1998–2016

NYU in France // 1999–2001: Program Associate, IT consultant

Lacoste School of the Arts, Provence, France // 1997: Artist-in Residence, Drawing Instructor

Nan Goldin Photography Studio NYC // 1996–7, 1998–9: Studio Associate

ART EXHIBITIONS

DAVID BYRNE ARTISTIC COLLABORATIONS

VACANT by NO IDEA, Tokyo, Japan, December 11–26, 2010

Economy of Scale, Hemphill, Washington, DC, November 7 – December 23, 2009

Destination Works at PULSE/Miami, Miami, FLA, December 1 – 4, 2005

Trees, Tombstones and Bullet Points, George Eastman House, Rochester, NY, September 25, 2004 – February 6, 2005

Tactical Action, Gigantic ArtSpace, New York, NY, April 14 – June 10, 2004

The Voting Booth Project, Parsons Gallery, New York, NY, October 8 – December 5, 2004

What is It?, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Winston-Salem, NC, July 19 – September 26, 2003

Illegal Art: Freedom of Expression in the Corporate Age: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art Artists Gallery, San Francisco, CA, July 2 – 25, 2003; Nexus Gallery, Philadelphia, PA, October 3 – November 2, 2003; Art and Culture Center of Hollywood, Hollywood, FL, February 2 – April 2, 2006; Pacific Northwest College of Art Feldman Gallery + Project Space, Portland, OR, August 28 – October 21, 2006

David Byrne, Pace/MacGill Gallery, New York, NY, March 6 – April 26, 2003