Capturing and Articulating Visual Media as Scholarship

Avital Y. O'Glasser, MD, FACP, SFHM (@aoglasser)
Vineet M. Arora, MD, MAPP (@FutureDocs)
Teresa M. Chan(iD), MD, MHPE (@TChanMD)

The Challenge

Recent advancements in social media and educational technologies have facilitated dissemination of information in visual formats to broad audiences. When academic and creative visual media work is of high quality and accessible via various platforms (eg, in journals, on websites), it can meet the definition of scholarship.

However, visual scholarship is sometimes viewed as an afterthought. For example, even venues that include visual abstracts with manuscripts may encourage authors to create visual abstracts post-submission to promote the article rather than as an independent scholarly pursuit. Typically, annual performance reviews, accreditation requirements, and promotion and tenure processes do not recognize or reward visual media as scholarly activity, despite the considerable technical and pedagogical skills required for its creation.

What Is Known

The updated Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Common Program Requirements define scholarship as including discovery, application, and teaching.[1] This position builds on antecedent work by Boyer and Glassick.[2,3]

The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA) has encouraged scholars to equitably acknowledge each form of scholarship by using specific quality metrics, rather than relying on surrogate measures such as impact factor.[4] DORA explores how we can value various forms of visual scholarship as meaningful contributions to the medical and medical education communities. For example, infographics and tweetorials can be examined by dissemination measures using journal-based or platform-based metrics such as Altmetric or Twitter analytics, respectively.[5]

How You Can Start TODAY

1. **Incorporate visual scholarship into "traditional" scholarly practices.** For example, infographics can powerfully explain study methods or summarize take-home points for a study. Graphic medicine or comics can craft strong narratives and highlight issues in medical education, such as gender equity or antiracism efforts. Familiarizing yourself with the

RIP OUT ACTION ITEMS

- Recognize that visual scholarship is impactful and deserves recognition
- Add visual scholarship to your curriculum vitae and educator's portfolio utilizing consistent formatting.
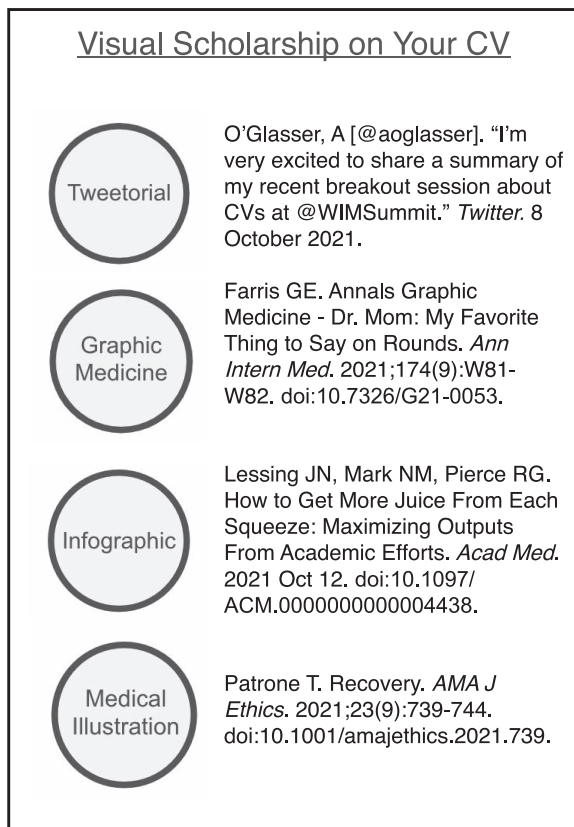- Capture and communicate impact metrics, such as data from altmetrics

visual scholarship of others will also help build your own skills in this space.

2. **Recognize that visual scholarship is legitimate scholarship.** Acknowledge the influence, reach, and academic contributions of your own visual scholarship. This can empower you to participate in further discussions about its merit and impact.

3. **Catalogue visual scholarship wherever possible.** Enter visual scholarship into your educator's portfolio and on your curriculum vitae (CV). Document its reach on your CV,[5] by embedding hyperlinks to digital media and available metrics,[5] or add this information to your program's teaching evaluation form. Use existing document outlines and citation formats to include peer and non–peer-reviewed visual scholarship (FIGURE).

4. **Amplify and disseminate visual scholarship.** Incorporate your work and the work of others into your academic educator brand. For example, disseminate visual scholarship early and often via your social media channels—both your own work and that of others. Additionally, cite and amplify the work of others by including visual scholarship among the references in your own scholarly work.

What You Can Do LONG TERM

1. **Advocate for academic recognition of visual scholarship.** The work of promoting and advancing visual media as scholarship requires longitudinal

Visual Scholarship on Your CV

Tweetorial — O'Glasser, A [@aoglasser]. "I'm very excited to share a summary of my recent breakout session about CVs at @WIMSummit." *Twitter.* 8 October 2021.

Graphic Medicine — Farris GE. Annals Graphic Medicine - Dr. Mom: My Favorite Thing to Say on Rounds. *Ann Intern Med.* 2021;174(9):W81-W82. doi:10.7326/G21-0053.

Infographic — Lessing JN, Mark NM, Pierce RG. How to Get More Juice From Each Squeeze: Maximizing Outputs From Academic Efforts. *Acad Med.* 2021 Oct 12. doi:10.1097/ACM.0000000000004438.

Medical Illustration — Patrone T. Recovery. *AMA J Ethics.* 2021;23(9):739-744. doi:10.1001/amajethics.2021.739.

FIGURE

Visual Scholarship on Your CV

advocacy, such as ongoing conversations with department chairs, academic promotion committees, and professional societies. For example, visual media authors have formed the Advancing Vitae and Novel Contributions for Everyone (ADVANCE) advocacy group. ADVANCE members have articulated general ways to incorporate digital scholarship into a variety of documents, including promotion and tenure packets via educator portfolios, department chair letters, and letters of recommendation.[6,7] Use these guidelines to advocate for the value of visual scholarship at local, national, and international society levels.

2. **Be an ally in articulating the impact of visual scholarship.** List and amplify examples of effective visual scholarship created by others whenever possible. Incorporate and cite visual scholarship in your letters of reference, support letters for promotion and tenure, and award nominations.[5,6] Educate colleagues and those making high-stakes decisions regarding visual scholarship accomplishments by highlighting Altmetric score(s) and global audience when writing support letters.

3. **Build skills and change culture through faculty development.** Create programs to teach trainees and faculty knowledge and skills required to create visual content as scholarship. Faculty engaged in visual scholarship should mentor and sponsor colleagues and trainees.

4. **Advance the mission of visual scholarship.** Work to foster full acceptance of visual scholarship throughout medical education, such as via editorials and other types of outreach.[6] Ask medical education journals to appoint a visual media editor to explore how to best feature and amplify visual scholarship. Conduct research to examine the impact and practice change associated with visual media and to develop appropriate metrics for assessment.

References and Resources for Further Reading

1. Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. Common Program Requirements (Residency). Accessed June 1, 2021. https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/PFAssets/ProgramRequirements/CPRResidency_2022.pdf
2. Boyer EL. The scholarship of engagement. *Bull Am Acad Arts Sci.* 1996;49(7):18–33. doi:10.2307/3824459
3. Glassick CE. Boyer's expanded definitions of scholarship, the standards of assessing scholarship, and the elusiveness of the scholarship of teaching. *Acad Med.* 2000;75(9):877–880. doi:10.1097/00001888-200009000-00007
4. The Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. Accessed October 22, 2021. https://sfdora.org/read/
5. Breu AC, Abrams HR, Manning KD, Cooper AZ. Tweetorials for medical educators. *J Grad Med Educ.* 2021;13(5):723–725. doi:10.4300/jgme-d-21-00767.1
6. Obuobi S, Vela MB, Callender B. Comics as anti-racist education and advocacy. *Lancet.* 2021;397(10285):1615–1617. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(21)00940-5
7. Husain A, Repanshek Z, Singh M, et al. Consensus guidelines for digital scholarship in academic promotion. *West J Emerg Med.* 2020;21(4):883–891. doi:10.5811/westjem.2020.4.46441

Avital Y. O'Glasser, MD, FACP, SFHM, is Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Hospital Medicine, and Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Oregon Health & Science University; **Vineet M. Arora, MD, MAPP,** is the Herbert T. Abelson Professor of Medicine and Dean for Medical Education, Pritzker School of Medicine, University of Chicago; and **Teresa M. Chan, MD, MHPE,** is Associate Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of Emergency Medicine and Division of Education & Innovation, Clinician Scientist, McMaster Education Research, Innovation, and Theory (MERIT), and Associate Dean of Continuing Professional Development, Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Corresponding Author: Avital Y. O'Glasser, MD, FACP, SFHM, Oregon Health & Science University, oglassea@ohsu.edu, Twitter @aoglasser