

ON THE PAGE

*exploring simple graphic and visual methods as ways of working
with the research process, data and theoretical ideas*

- Dr Kate Carruthers Thomas
Birmingham City University

graphic social science; an emerging practice

- graphic means of communicating social research – a means to *transform attitudes, awareness and behaviour around social issues* (Priego 2016)
- analysis of (textual) data through visual means
- comics creation as a **way of thinking** (Sousanis 2015)



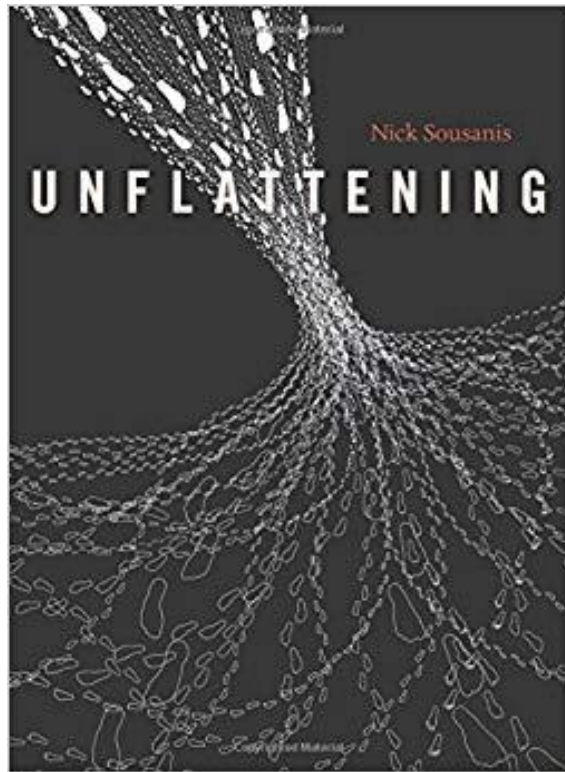
VISUAL MINUTES

live, illustrated records “It's about listening and then visualising ideas in a dynamic way”



GRAPHIC MEDICINE

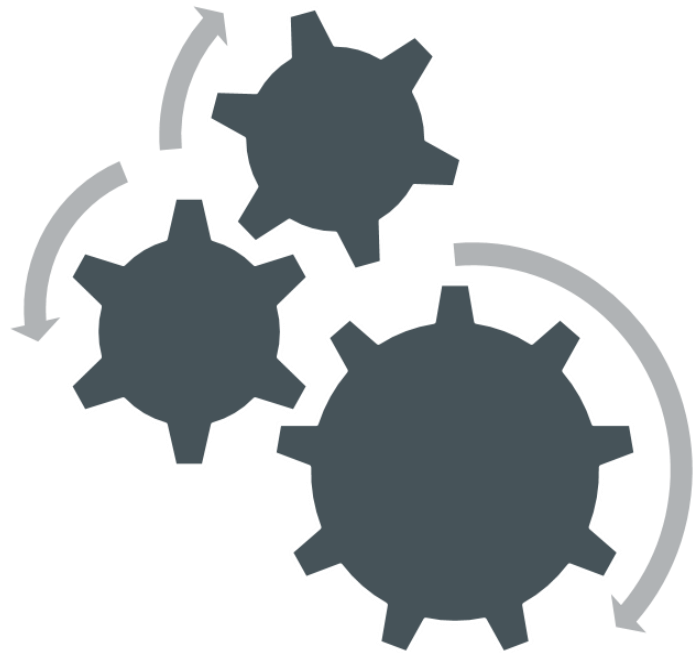
The interaction of comics and healthcare <https://www.graphicmedicine.org/>



Unflattening Nick Sousanis (2017)

A comics dissertation-turned book. “a stunning work of graphic art and a serious inquiry into the ways humans construct knowledge”

my starting points



abstracting



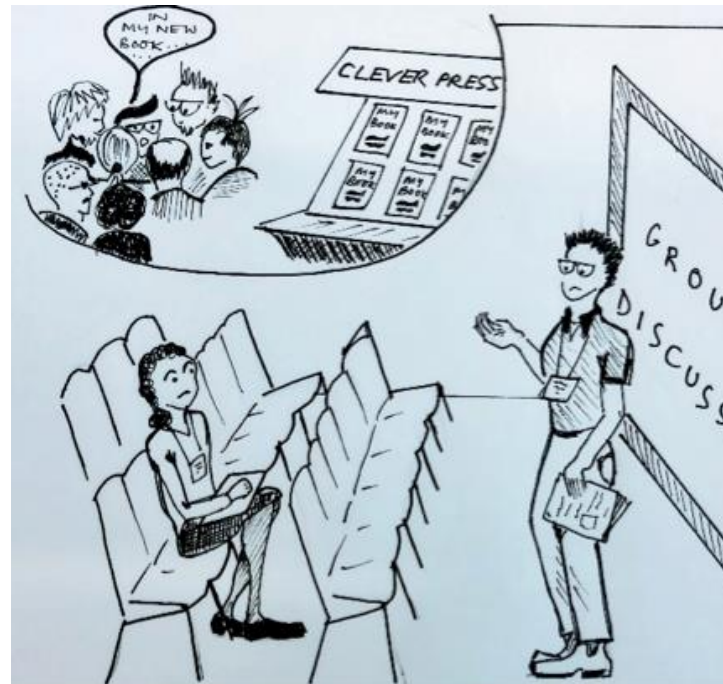
embodying



narrative

GUEST POST: CONFERENCE WITH CONFIDENCE

conferenceinference.wordpress.com



getting graphic with research

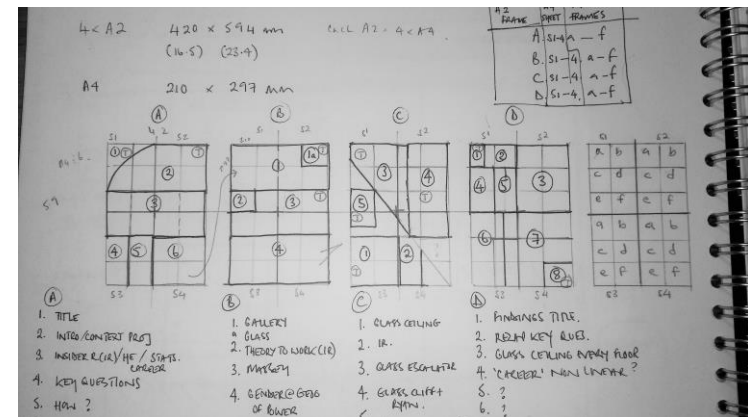
- *Gender(s) At Work* – institutional research project – 50 participants at one post-92 UK university
 - ❖ in what ways does gender operate as a geography of power within HE to shape experiences of work and career for individuals of all genders?
 - ❖ what are the implications for gender-neutral, linear career metaphors, for organisational structures and equality agendas?
- data analysis underpinned by idea of ‘space as social relations shaped by power’ and device of ‘activity space – shaped by geographies of power’ (Massey 2005)

career archetypes: glass ceiling, glass escalator, glass closet, glass cliff

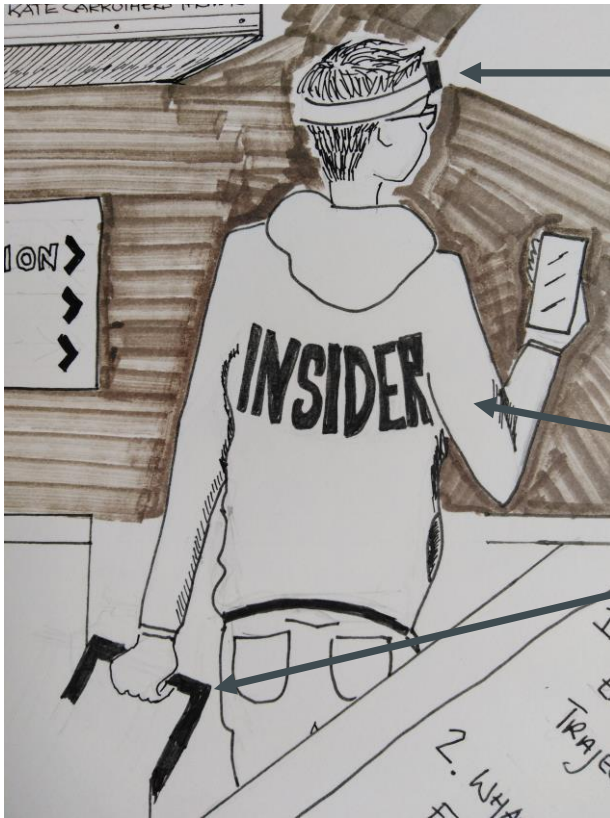


graphic essay - *My Brilliant Career? An Investigation.*

- uses text and image to explore a specific topic...generally convey non-fictional histories, cases and/or arguments (designlab.wisc.edu 2018).
- combines the structural conventions of the academic essay/article with those of the cartoon strip

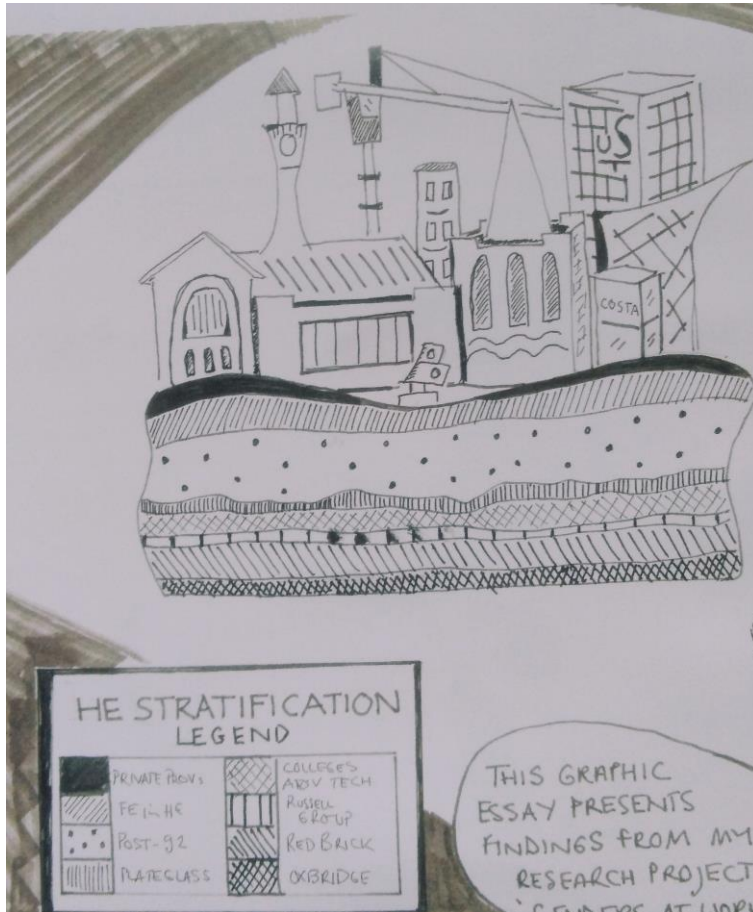


the researcher/research practice



- the act of research - focus, spotlight, illuminate
- positionality
- 'insider' researcher, embodied
- theoretical 'baggage'

research as process, researcher as embodied, visible, positioned



- stratified HE sector
- historical developments
- marketisation
- significance of university spaces
- a semi-autonomous 'world' (Bourdieu)

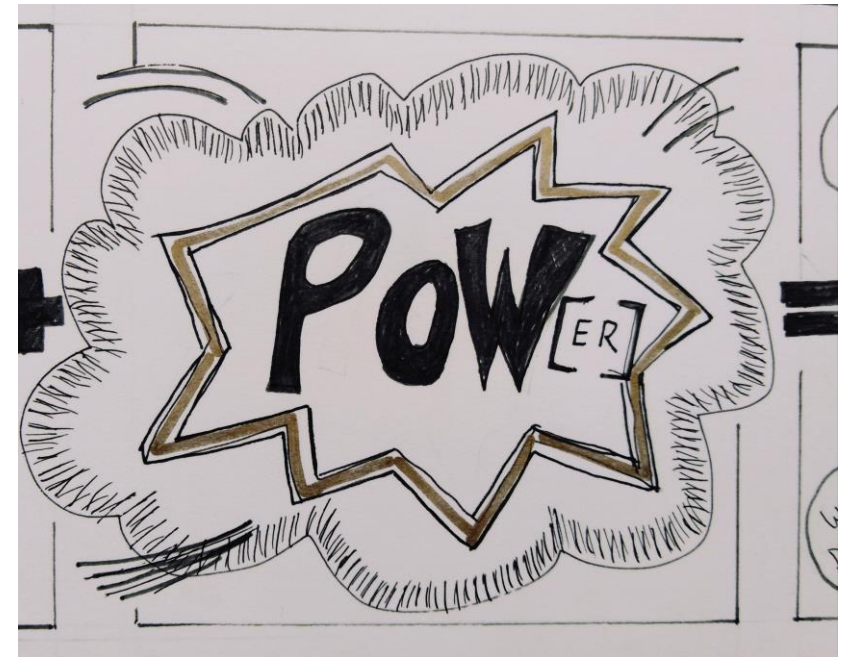
context-setting

Text

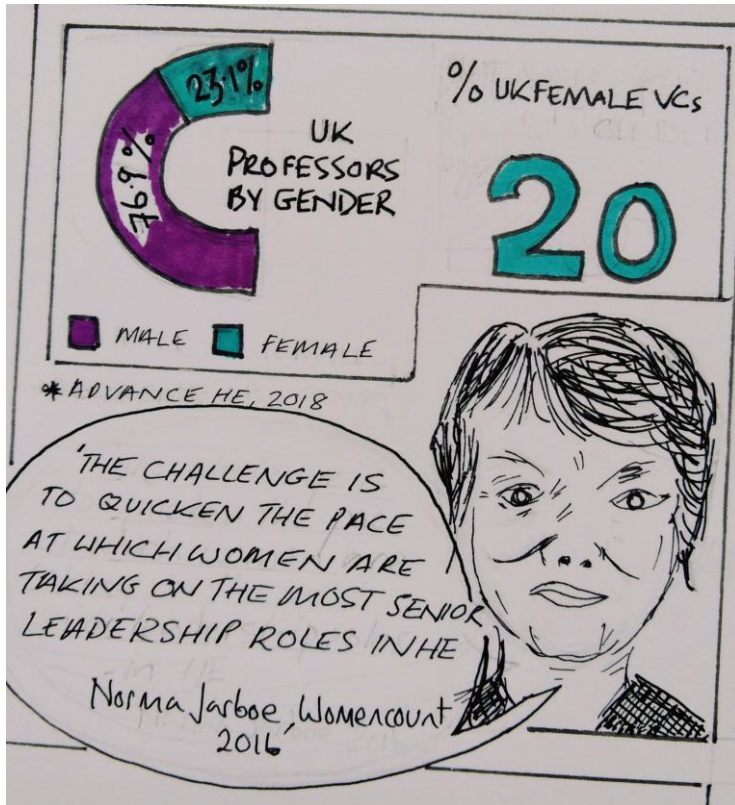
THE LITERATURE IS SIGNIFICANTLY
WEIGHTED TOWARDS FEMALE
ACADEMICS AND THEIR DISADVANTAGE
- FOR OBVIOUS REASONS...



BUT THE UNDERSTANDING OF GENDER
HAS BECOME MORE FLUID, BEYOND
BINARY, MORE CONTESTED, MORE
COMPLEX...



visual metaphors: multi-layered, show, tell, analyse, interpret, challenge...



making women theorists
and influencers literally
visible, citation as a political
act

'talking heads'



GRIDS and GESTURES

[@Nsousanis](#) [#gridsgestures](#)



GRIDS AND GESTURES

- take a blank sheet of paper
- create a grid that represents the shape of your day (this day, recent day, memorable day, typical day)
- inhabit the spaces with **lines, marks** or **gestures** that represent your **activity** or **emotional state** during those times
- do your best not to draw things. You can leave space blank but it has to mean something.



JAM COMICS

Abel & Madden www.dw.wp.com/2010/07



JAM COMICS

- begin with your blank 5-panel grid. Note the topic and the rule
- draw the first panel, following the rule. Pass on to the person next to you.
- draw the second panel in the grid you have been passed (same topic/rule)
- repeat until you receive the grid you started back. Complete the final panel.



THINK (IN) IMAGES

#onthepage



THINK (IN) IMAGES

- think of a concept, idea or method central to your research or of particular interest to you or that challenges you (something you might have to explain/defend)
- take a single sheet of paper
- working individually, develop a visual representation of the concept, idea or method
- minimal words allowed – but avoid if you can.

GETTING GRAPHIC ...

- opens up different ways of thinking and representing experience

in research:

- as **a way in** to projects/concepts/questions
- **in practice** – as a methodological or analytical tool
- as **dissemination** – stimulus, narrative, relationship,



Thank you

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Bl: <https://thegword2017.wordpress.com>

The accidental cartoonist: learning the art of the graphic essay

Sociological Review: thesociologicalreview.com

Conferencing with Confidence

Conference Inference: conferenceinferencewordpress.com



BIRMINGHAM CITY
University

RESOURCES

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