

of the medical-industrial complex on patient care. Although *Dear Dr B* would resonate with anybody who has experience of cancer, some of the more graphic images might be too intense for the casual visitor. I think that residents in training, foremost, would benefit from Mossaed's reminder that mastery of the medical sciences is not exactly the same as mastery of the healing arts.

Susan Sontag famously began her ground-breaking *Illness and Its Metaphors* (1978) with the figure of the exile:

"Everyone who is born holds dual citizenship, in the kingdom of the well and in the kingdom of the sick. Although we all prefer to use only the good passport, sooner or later each of us is obliged, at least for a time, to identify ourselves as citizens of that other place".

As the technological pace of medicine increasingly estranges the social body from the medical, we are faced with a chasm not only between Sontag's two kingdoms but between two incommensurable languages. Every radiograph tells a story (and carries an diagnosis code), but by supplying the face to the radiograph, *Dear Dr B* reminds us as oncologists of the possibility, and our responsibility, to speak the language of the other kingdom.

Jeffrey Kuo
jkuo@uci.edu



Secord: a woman after surgery. Red-soaked gauze adorns her chest