

# What sort of a Narrative is the Clinical Case Report?

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Brian Hurwitz

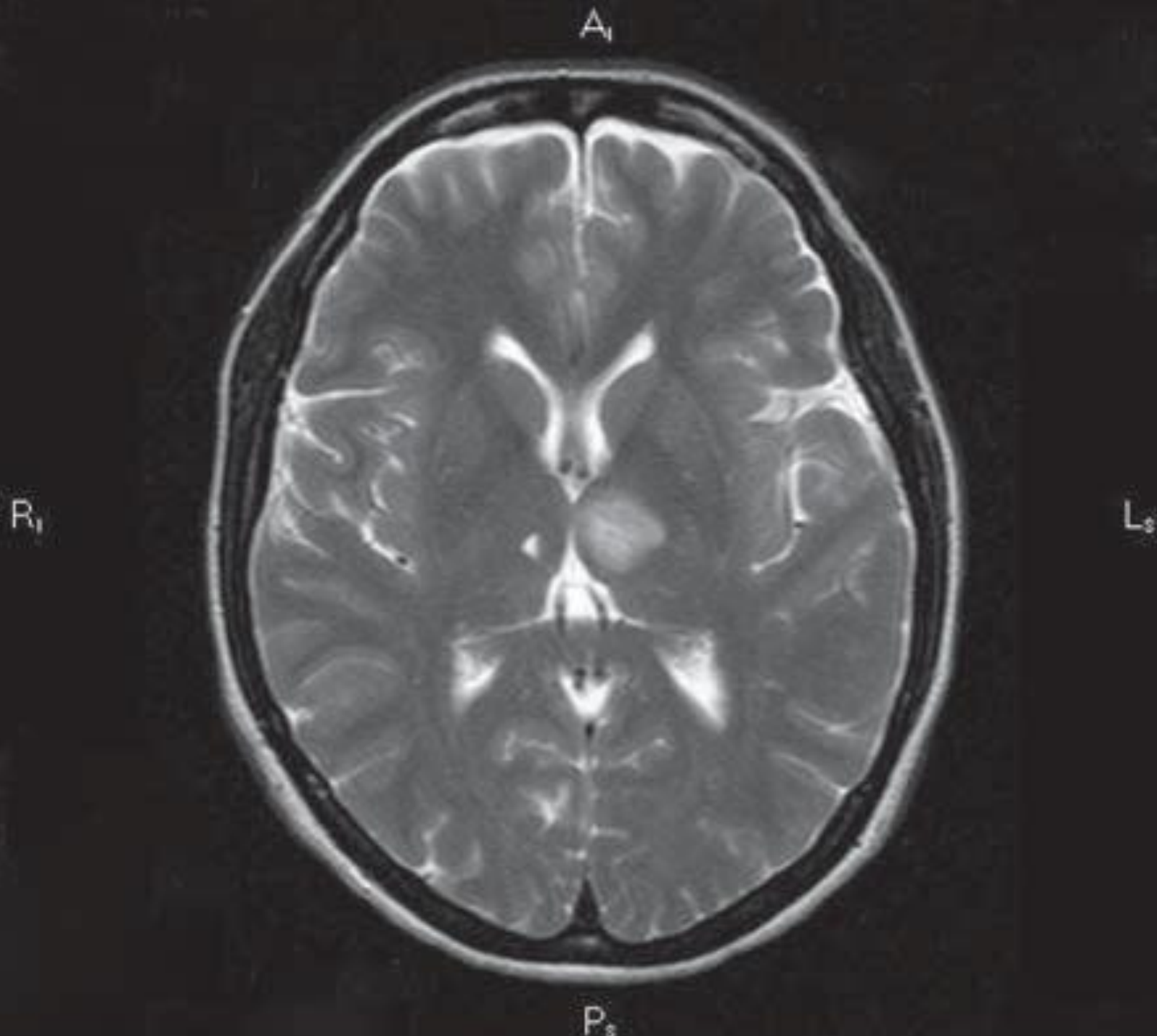
Professor of Medicine and the Arts, KCL

A talk based on: Hurwitz B Clinical Cases and Clinical Case Reports: Boundaries and Porosities. In: Morisco B, Turchetti G, Calanchi A, Castellani G.(eds) *The Case and the Canon* Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht Unipress (*In Press*)  
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# The Case of the Forgotten Address

A 39-year-old right-handed community nurse presented to us on the neurology ward in April, 2005. She had appeared subdued before starting the afternoon shift and when asked she could not recall her home address. The nurse's symptoms had begun 48 hours previously, when she woke with a bitemporal headache. Her vision then “flipped 180°” so that all images appeared inverted... She was able to crawl back to bed....

Samarasekera S, Dorman P. The case of the forgotten address.  
*Lancet* 2006;367:1290



# Case as a representational tool

- Hippocratic case reports (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> C BC)
- Galenic (2<sup>nd</sup> C AD)
- 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> C case reports
- 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> C reports
- Hospital and GP Cases – including self reports by doctors

‘...the case represents a problem-event that has animated some kind of judgement .. A symptom, a crime...a situation, ... any irritating obstacle to clarity....’

Berlant L. On the case. *Critical Inquiry* 2007:1; 663-72.

‘...the case reveals itself... as an event that takes shape.... One might say that a case is what an event can become.’

Berlant L. On the case. *Critical Inquiry* 2007:1; 663-72.

# What is a case?

- Events and occurrences pertaining to individuals
- Case
- Case Report
- Biography, Memoir, Pathography, Illness Narrative

# Case Reports – linguistic ‘portraits’

- Presentational
- Communicational
- Not medical records, letters, notes...etc
- Conversationally or formally presented



# Case Report –

A narrative and a model composed of testimonies

- Conversation
- Observation – external/internal
- Description/analysis – fluids, tissues
- Imaging
- Response to treatment

‘...the term case signals that, from at least one party’s point of view, the form of writing or discussion ... will always remain attached to a specific individual... [will always be] epistemically nailed down to the level of the individual....’