The Anomalous Depiction of Text in *Chew* and How Groensteen’s “The Balloons in the Page” Substantiates Its Contribution to Content and Meaning

By Hannah Rivers
Comic books are unique

They tell a story with words and pictures

But what sets them apart is their layout of panels and word balloons

Word Balloons/Speech Bubbles
Chew
By John Layman and Rob Guillory

The TEXT stands out to me

Both the text and the drawings are important
Plot Summary of *Chew*

- All poultry is illegal
- Tony Chu = main character
  - Partner = Colby
- Then he joins the FDA
  - New partner = Savoy
- They solve murders and mysteries using their abilities as cibopaths
  - Cibopaths get psychic impressions from food
Borders for Text

- If the text didn’t have a border, it would get lost in the images.
- The atypical appearance of the speech bubbles in *Chew* makes the text stand out from the images even more.

Text with speech bubbles

Text without speech bubbles
The Use of Boldness

Stressing the word **OFFICER** conveys sarcasm

**WELL / HATE** = both emboldened to emphasize their contrariness
Enlargement of Text

Bigger Snork

Bigger zzzzzzzz
Colored Typeface

Gray color = subdued tone

Blue = Coldness of tone

Red = Angry and Menacing
Abnormal Speech Bubbles

Trembling voice =

trembling word balloon

Literally dripping with sarcasm
Centered Word Balloons
Focus the Dialogue

Many of the speech bubbles are in the center of the page

Which emphasizes the importance of the text
The End

Questions?