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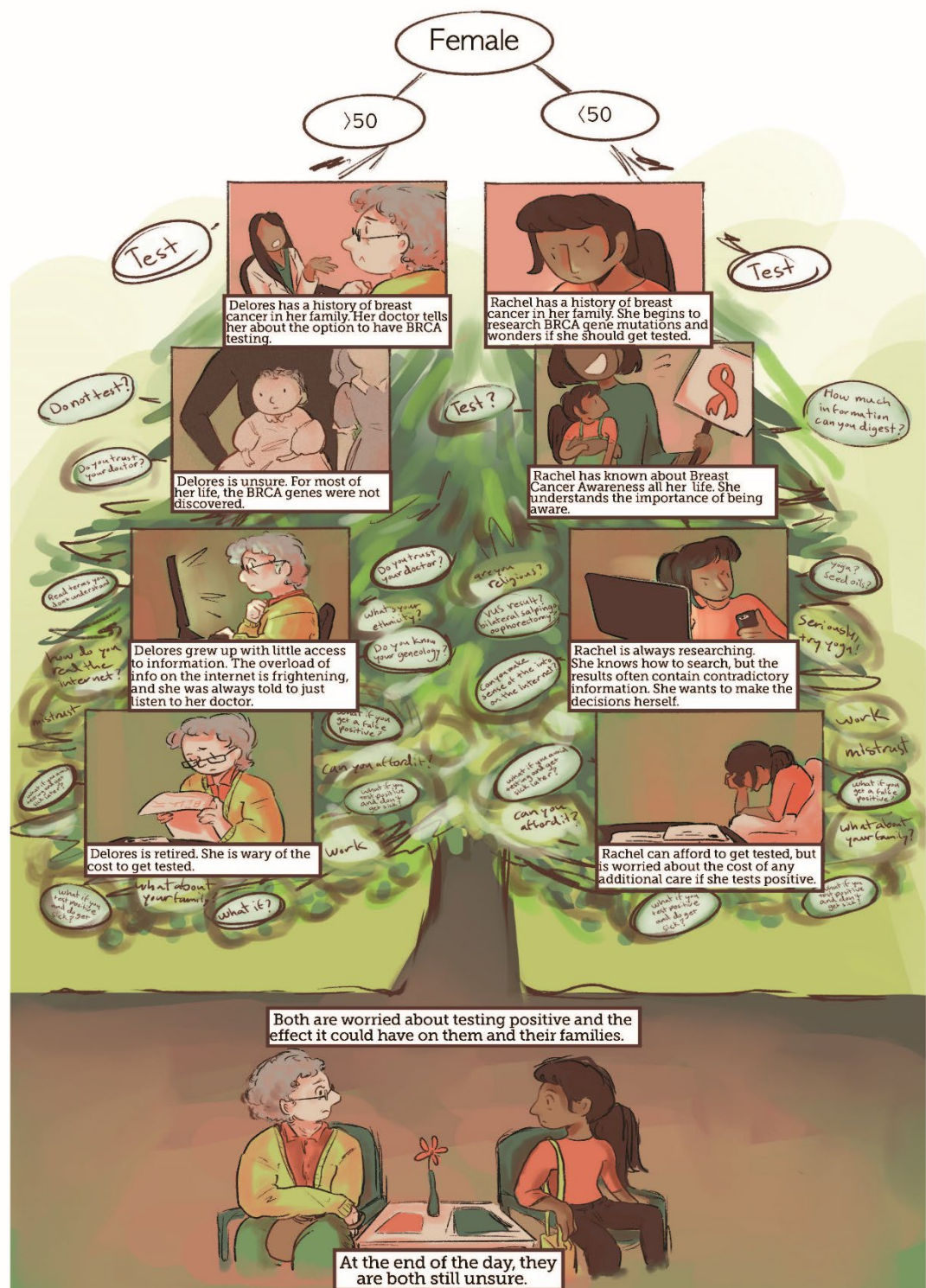
Wavering on Branches of a Decision Tree

Lio Barnhardt

Abstract

Risk-benefit analyses are part of most health decisions and are investigated visually and narratively in this comic, which follows a story of 2 women assessing merits and drawbacks of breast cancer testing.

Figure. Decision Tree Comic



Abbreviation: BRCA, breast cancer.

Media
Procreate digital illustration.

Caption

Risk assessment decisions about whether to test for breast cancer (BRCA) gene mutations can be confusing and are certainly multifactorial. **Decision trees** are common visual tools for mapping choices and their possible consequences. This tree follows the story of 2 women—differing in age, internet and **health literacy**, and risk tolerance—struggling with decisions about whether and when to undergo BRCA testing. As their decision paths travel figuratively down the tree, their option sets become more complex and overwhelming. Although we live with a persistent influx of information, information does not make knowledge without individual investments in thinking and carefully applying that information to oneself and other stakeholders. Overall, as Delores and Rachel learn, choices might only rarely, if ever, be “correct,” but they should be made with care, not only for our own selves, but for the relationships in which our selves are held.

Lio Barnhardt is an undergraduate student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in Illinois. They are also an interdisciplinary filmmaker, writer, and comic artist with an interest in personal psychology, history, and women’s mental and physical health.

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Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Author disclosed no conflicts of interest.

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