

Illustrated review article: A new format for disseminating scientific progress

Dissemination of science traditionally occurs through ages-old formats, including oral communications at conferences and print formats including posters at conferences and published manuscripts. Modern communication methods are increasingly enabling creative new ways to convey science rapidly across the globe. With its Open Access, online format, *Research and Practice in Thrombosis and Haemostasis* has embraced these advances, and is piloting new publication formats to meet our goals of enhanced scientific communication and learning. Multimedia formats will help us accomplish this.^{1,2} The most recent of these is a new article type, the “Illustrated Review Article,” the first of which is featured in this issue.³

Much like a graphic novel—a comic book, if you will—an Illustrated Review Article consists of “capsules” that each include a central image that conveys the author’s message, accompanied by brief supporting text. By encouraging this distilled format, we aim to stretch the creativity of scientists to effectively convey their work to the broad science community and the public. This format should also allow improved retention and understanding of the information by readers.²

We plan to publish two types of Illustrated Review Articles: those related to conferences/symposia, and those focused on a theme.

RPTH’s inaugural Illustrated Review Article is a symposium-centered one, developed in collaboration with organizers of the 9th Annual Symposium on Hemostasis: Advances in the Clinical and Basic Science of Coagulation that took place in April, 2018 in Chapel Hill, North Carolina in the United States.³ Several months in advance of the Symposium, the 20 conference speakers were each invited to submit a single three-component capsule with an image (containing no more than two panels) illustrating the central concepts of their planned presentation, a 150-word summary, and up to three references. The submitted capsules were assembled into the Illustrated Review Article with 22 authors including the conferences chairs. The article underwent traditional peer review and a revision was ultimately accepted. It was then published online to coincide with the start of the conference.³ Consequently, all content in the Illustrated Review Article was immediately freely available for download from the *RPTH* journal webpage. Attendees could view and refer to the article capsules electronically during the presentations. Since printed copies were also distributed during conference check-in, attendees seeking a more traditional format were also able to take notes directly on the capsules during the talks.

Illustrated Reviews for conferences offer several unique strengths. Presenters need to develop the theme of their talks early to meet publication consideration deadlines. Readers have immediate access to comprehensive peer-reviewed figures that include text explanations and can help provide visual context during oral presentations. The images can be disseminated instantly through social media (eg, Twitter) to ignite conversations amongst attendees, and also to engage individuals who are not present at the conference.

The second type of Illustrated Review Article will allow authors working on long-term projects or complex multi-part projects to submit a review of their work, or will allow authors to provide a comprehensive review, akin to a traditional review article. For example, a two-decade observational study might present an Illustrated Review Article with 10 capsules covering different aspects of the body of work. Or, an author might present an Illustrated Review Article including eight capsules that depict the story of a significant development in thrombosis and hemostasis science.

Both types of Illustrated Review Articles allow active use of the material by readers. The images can be easily incorporated into presentations, or placed in teaching slide decks or e-learning platforms for medical, graduate, and continuing education courses. Open Access makes this especially feasible, because it enables free access for investigators at both large and small institutions around the world, and does not require a journal subscription. Open Access also facilitates access for the general public, helping to “close the loop” and ensure that individuals across a range of backgrounds can learn about the latest scientific advances. In the Illustrated Review format, the information is presented as a simple, digestible figure that may help traverse the “science-speak” gap that can hinder communication among disciplines.

The early response to our first Illustrated Review Article was positive, from conception to publication. Conference organizers and authors were enthusiastic, flexible, and creative. They were willing to forego composing traditional review articles for the Symposium. Creative and dedicated peer reviewers provided rapid, thoughtful feedback that enhanced the quality of the article capsules, and in several cases in the presented slides themselves. Conference attendees commented on the fresh format and ability to immediately use the figures in their presentations and work. Social media allowed live broadcasting from the conference.

This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2018 The Authors. *Research and Practice in Thrombosis and Haemostasis* published by Wiley Periodicals, Inc on behalf of International Society on Thrombosis and Haemostasis.

The Open Access platform of *RPTH* allows the editors to develop innovative publishing formats, including Illustrated Review Articles. We are not aware of other journals with a similar article type. We hope that the scientific community and learners, including those from all career stages, benefit from it. We strongly encourage our readers to review the author instructions and consider submitting an Illustrated Review Article for publication consideration. We are happy to discuss your ideas for potential articles and look forward to your creative approaches to this new manuscript format.

ORCID

Alisa S. Wolberg  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2845-2303>

Mary Cushman  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7871-6143>

Alisa S. Wolberg PhD¹  

Mary Cushman MD, MSc²  

¹Associate Editor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill,
Chapel Hill, NC, USA

²Editor in Chief, Larner College of Medicine at the University of
Vermont, Burlington, VT, USA

Email: Mary.cushman@uvm.edu

REFERENCES

1. Butcher KR. The multimedia principle. In: Mayer RE (ed). The Cambridge handbook of multimedia learning. 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press; 2014: pp. 174–205.
2. Mayer RE. Using multimedia for e-learning. *J Comput Assist Learn.* 2017;33:403–23.
3. Bergmeier W, Antoniak S, Conway EM, et al. Advances in clinical and basic science of coagulation: illustrated abstracts of the 9th Chapel Hill Symposium on Hemostasis. *Res Pract Thromb Haemost.* 2018;2:407–428.