



The tenth year - a story of resilience and change

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RHIME has completed nine years as a freely accessible, peer-reviewed, online-only journal and this landmark achievement was supported by peers like yourselves: authors, reviewers, readers, cover artists, layout editors, editorial board members and advisors.

We started with 15 articles published in 2014, the year RHIME came to life, and went up to 92 articles in 2020, the first year of the pandemic. People, it would appear, found solace in writing in response to the deadly uncertainty of COVID-19. But just as the virus overwhelmed individuals, families and communities, healthcare providers and governments, service

providers and businesses, it also overwhelmed the journal.

A small group of volunteers holds RHIME together and keeps it running year after year. Our strongest desire is to provide a freely available space for people to share their experiences in the health humanities. The journal neither seeks, nor receives, any financial support from anywhere; the free enterprise of the journal rests on out-of-pocket expenses of the Editor-in-Chief. The data shows that we are successful in providing a bridge between authors and readers. Our readers have continued to increase over the years. Table-1 shows the download rates for our most-read articles

Table-1: The volume of traffic to the most-read articles in 2022

Article	Type of Article	Issue	PDF Views
Book Review: THESIS WRITING - The T,H,E,S,I,S Approach	Book Review	2022	442
The year of dying and living	Editorial, poem	2022	261
What's in a name? Defining interdisciplinary learning within and outside the medical realm	Perspective	2022	214
Murmurs	Poetry	2019	205
Set the child free	Perspective	2022	195
I know you didn't follow up three years ago!	Narrative	2022	191
Disability-inclusive vaccine equity framework for persons with disabilities in India: A call to action	Perspective	2022	174
First MBBS: three decades ago	Perspective	2022	149
Ken Kesey's 'One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest: the sardonic representation of power and authority in nurse Ratched	Original Article	2020	146
Writing the review of literature: rasgulla as metaphor	Perspective	2014	125
Psychological effects of the Coronavirus disease-2019 pandemic	Perspective	2020	114
RESISTANCE or misguided beliefs of invincibility	Book Review	2022	101
Medical students and suicide: are we okay?	Narrative	2021	98
Her hope	Poetry	2021	87

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over the last year alone (2022, January to December). It would seem that, for our readers, poems and narratives are as sought after as are research or perspective-based articles.

When we consider the type of work that authors send to RHIME, this pattern continues, and is amplified in favor of poetry. Table-2 shows a breakdown of the major types of articles published over the last few years. Here too, you'll notice that many more poets and writers of narratives send their work to RHIME than do people doing original research in the field of the health humanities. I've excluded the last year, 2022, because [owing to editorial team burnout] we suspended new article submissions in May.

Editorial team burnout, you ask? Indeed, yes. As I mentioned earlier, we're a tiny team of volunteers with many other

Table-2: Types of submissions to the journal over the last few years

Type of Article	2019	2020	2021
Original articles	3	6	4
Perspectives	2	7	4
Reviews	0	0	1
Narratives	2	9	7
Poetry	13	57	15
Visual Art	4	1	2
Book Reviews	2	0	3

academic, research, teaching and personal commitments. Image-1 shows the number of articles we have received over the period of the journal's life (column three) and specifically in 2021 (column two).

When we look at the volume of submissions, the numbers are extremely heartening to see, but there is a great deal of editorial work that ensues as a result. It is invisible work - but it is just as time-consuming and labor-intensive as is any other work.

Any endeavor to do with RHIME is a labor of love as opposed to other kinds of labor such as that for material benefits. And therein lies the rub - material benefits. RHIME, when it was envisioned in 2014, was to be fully-free for readers to access, and also free for authors to submit their work to. We don't want that to ever change. Someone on the team did tentatively suggest that we start charging authors to submit so that we could hire people to work for the journal. Rest assured that we will not go that route. RHIME stands for open access and academic freedom just as much as it does for ethics, equity, humanity and healthcare.

Ironically, while it was the pandemic that opened a deluge of fantastic creative

Image 1: Lifetime journal data showing average editorial workload

Trends			2021-01-01 — 2021-12-31
Name	2021-01-01 — 2021-12-31	Total	
Submissions Received	60	378 (58/year)	
Submissions Accepted	34	233 (35/year)	
Submissions Declined	28	135 (23/year)	
Submissions Declined (Desk Reject)	21	70 (20/year)	
Submissions Declined (After Review)	7	65 (11/year)	
Submissions Published	37	232 (35/year)	
Other Submissions	47	47	
Days to First Editorial Decision	23	22	
Days to Accept	81	64	
Days to Reject	34	44	
Acceptance Rate	57%	62%	
Rejection Rate	43%	36%	
Desk Reject Rate	33%	19%	
After Review Reject Rate	10%	17%	

submissions to the journal, it is also the pandemic which showed us the way forward in the face of limited time and manpower resources. Resilience and Change were the watchwords for the healthcare community and for society at large, and these attributes are what will help us survive this gap between author/reader expectations and the reality of running this journal that means the world to us.

As far as editorial work is concerned, original articles, perspectives and reviews engender the most work because of larger word counts and issues pertaining to the accuracy, completeness and formatting of references. Narratives, poetry, letters, history, and visual art are comparatively easier to manage editorially and prepare for publication. In its tenth year, therefore, RHiME will change to a version that will be manageable in terms of editorial workload, but will also be relevant to authors and readers and will cater to their needs.

In order to honor the readers who look to RHiME for health humanities material, and to fulfill our commitment to the authors who have come to depend on RHiME as a much-needed forum to publish their work,

we will continue to publish the journal but on a different scale. RHiME's focus will now be on poetry, on reflective narratives, and on visual artwork. We will no longer consider original articles, perspectives and review articles. However, reviews of books, movies, artwork and other media dealing with health and illness, or pertinent to health professions education are welcome. A unique perspective of historical milestones in medicine; reputable medical institutions and physicians of yore; or original artwork pertaining to any of the afore-mentioned are also welcome in the History of Medicine section.

Aspiring authors may visit our submissions page and choose from a variety of manuscript types that will be considered for publication in future issues.[1]

RHiME's tenth cover is testimony to the importance of forging one's own path to resilience. Titled 'Believe', it seems to hint at hope even as one negotiates the myriad challenges of a world in chaos. To my mind, the image highlights the power of connectedness - to search for and to find strength within, but also to connect outwardly with others in the universe who can help one make sense of things.

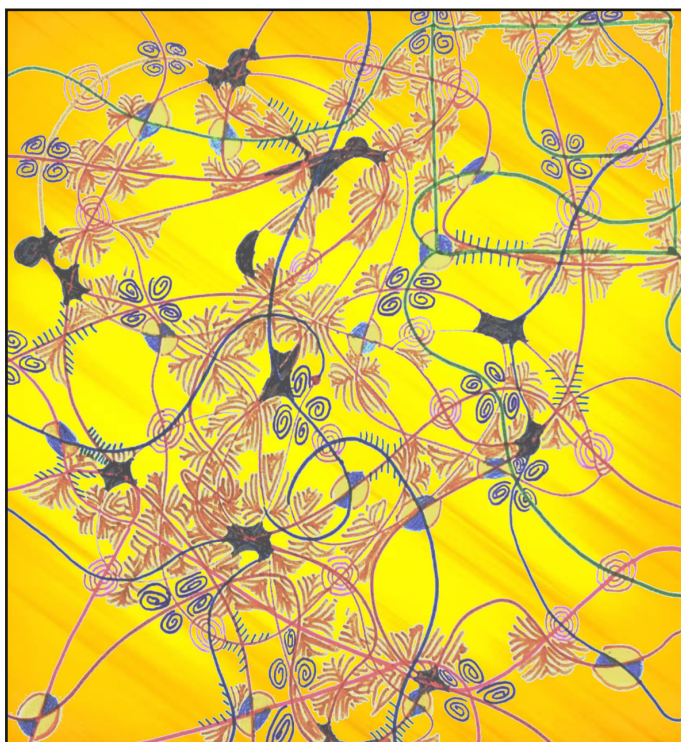


Image-2
RHiME Cover, 2023

Believe

Credit: Atullya Singh
Freelance artist, poet and musician

Needless to say, RHiME is grateful to all the people connected to it and hopes to foster new alliances in this new avatar.

I'll end by sharing our previous covers in gratitude to the artists who have always

come through for RHiME (Image-3). Thanks again, on behalf of the RHiME-team, for journeying with us. Hope this new year brings happiness and health, and builds on our understanding of and our use of the humanities in healthcare.

Image-3: RHiME Covers, 2014 to 2022



Reference

1. Research & Humanities in Medical Education. Types of Manuscripts and Limits. Available at <https://rhime.in/ojs/index.php/rhime/about/submissions#Bookmark%209>