

## Completing the Transition from Newsletter to Journal

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### Background

From 1987-2002, *Hypothesis* served as the newsletter for the Medical Library Association (MLA) Research Section. News of the Section began to appear toward the end of each issue in the new millennium. Articles became more prominently displayed in the front of each issue with [Volume 16, Number 1, 2002](#). In 2005, the word ‘journal’ was added to *Hypothesis* for the first time and the title changed to, “*Hypothesis*: Journal of the MLA Research Section.” The newsletter included top research questions, members of the section, and short but noteworthy pieces by up-and-coming leaders.

In 2012, Editor Diane Cooper<sup>1</sup> and the Research Section leadership began transitioning *Hypothesis* into a journal. Peer reviewed articles were clearly identified to distinguish these submissions from those articles reviewed by one of the editors. In the *Hypothesis archives*, [Volume 27, Number 1](#), was the first issue to include Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for individual articles<sup>2</sup>.

Despite being indexed in CINAHL, LISSA, and LISTA; *Hypothesis* accepted submissions via email until 2018, when then Co-editors Erin D. Foster (Foster) and Carol L. Perryman (Perryman) worked with MLA Headquarters to create an online submission system hosted on the MLA website. In 2020, Foster and Perryman transitioned *Hypothesis* to its current website, which is hosted by the Indiana University Purdue University Open Journal System (OJS) platform. Shortly after publishing the first issue in Summer 2020, they invited Community Manager of the Research Caucus, Margaret A. Hoogland (Hoogland), to serve as Co-editor.

### Transitioning to the Open Journal System website

While a basic structure existed in OJS, it became clear that Hoogland’s curiosity and enjoyment of technology could be used to streamline some of the existing processes and to implement new OJS features. Below is a table describing some of the major changes we implemented during June 2020 - February 2022:

**Table 1:** Timeline of changes made to OJS platform to improve Editorial Team processes.

<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>Accomplishment</b>
August - October 2020	Created email templates to improve communication among members for the Editorial Team, Peer Reviewers, and Authors.
November 2020	Published second issue in OJS.
November 2020-February 2021	Added back issues to OJS website.
February 2021-February 2022	<p>Created Peer Review forms that could be added to Author notification emails.</p> <p>Created an area on the website describing the available Submission Categories. Editors revisited descriptions and divided submission categories by review type.</p> <p>Created and implemented use of online Peer Review forms for all categories.</p> <p>Created and linked PDF copies of Peer Reviewer forms to facilitate taking notes.</p>

After publishing the second and entirely OJS based issue of *Hypothesis* in November 2021, Foster stepped down as Co-editor. In January 2022, *Hypothesis* published its short-term and long-term goals on the website and started soliciting regular input from the Research Caucus leaders. In late February 2022 after 5 years of hard work and many contributions such as crafting the [Voices of Experience](#) submission category and providing valuable feedback on our Peer Review forms, Perryman stepped down as Co-editor and plans to devote more time to conducting and participating on research projects and to working with the Texas Women’s University Library and Information Sciences student journal.

### **Planning for the Future: March 2022-Present**

Starting in March 2022, the Editorial Team reassessed the existing structure, discussed next steps, and recruited new Section Editors (Research – Jonathan Eldredge, Failure –

Heather Holmes, and Methods Moment – Nina Exner). From 2008-2013, most issues of *Hypothesis* included a column, called “The Research Mentor,” authored by Jonathan Eldredge. After an 8-year hiatus, “The Research Mentor” is back and we thank Jonathan Eldredge for agreeing to serve as column editor.

Change and transitions frequently result in turnover and so in mid-March 2022, Heather Healy decided to step down as lead Copy Editor. We thank Heather for her input, assistance, hard work and for working with and transitioning duties to Andrea Ball and our newest Copy Editor, Christine Rigda, through the inaugural August issue.

To assist in getting *Hypothesis* ready for PubMed Central inclusion in the upcoming years, we created a LaTeX template<sup>3</sup> for each submission category. Hoogland will be training and then transitioning duties to our new Production Editor, Alexandria Quesenberry Wilson, who previously served on the Hypothesis Marketing Team. In July, *Hypothesis* added a new subtitle, “Research Journal for Health Information Professionals” and new logo to our website, [Twitter](#), and [Facebook](#) accounts. We encourage you to follow and like our posts on social media.

In 2022-2023, expect to see and to hear more about Hypothesis on social media, in your caucuses, on your listservs, and at your state, national, regional, and local conferences.

We intend to provide candid and encouraging yet thoughtful feedback for all submitters. We invite authors to submit their manuscripts regardless of how much or little experience they have with writing, research, and publishing. Recognizing that not everyone has employer support for participating in research or for completing Scholarly Activities, *Hypothesis* provides opportunities to interested Caucus members to serve as peer reviewers or as members of the Marketing Team. Volunteering in any capacity improves your understanding of journal requirements, research, and knowledge of the publishing process. If you would like to serve as a peer reviewer, which involves reviewing a minimum of one article per issue, or as a member of the Marketing Team, consider emailing [hypothesisj@protonmail.com](mailto:hypothesisj@protonmail.com).

We hope you enjoy our new look and first issue as *Hypothesis: Research Journal for Health Information Professionals*.

## Acknowledgements

I thank Ted Polley for his patience with my questions and curiosity with OJS related questions and issues. I appreciate Jon Eldredge’s support and wisdom – I know it will continue. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the University Libraries at The University of Toledo, who listened patiently and provided feedback, as we implemented these changes.

## References

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