

Arthritis & Rheumatism

(Policy and Writing Hints)

Michael D. Lockshin, MD

Director, Barbara Volcker Center for Women and Rheumatic Disease

Co-Director, Mary Kirkland Center for Lupus Research

Professor of Medicine and Obstetrics-Gynecology

Weill/Cornell Medical College



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No conflicts to report

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Arthritis & Rheumatism

- **Our origins**
- **Statistics: what we publish**
- **Writing skills**
- **Impact Factor**
- **A day in the life of an editor**
- **The future**
 - **What we anticipate**
 - **What you can tell me**

Arthritis & Rheumatism

(Note the ampersand)
(Even numbered volumes)

Arthritis Care & Research

(Odd numbered volumes)

Arthritis & Rheumatism

First issue February 1958

Arthritis Rheum 2009;60:xxxx-xxxx

Arthritis Care & Research

Joined A&R in 2001

Arthritis Rheum 2009;61:xxxx-xxxx

Arthritis & Rheumatism

Basic science

Clinical science (trials, mechanistic,
outcomes)

Arthritis Care & Research

Clinical science

Epidemiology

Physical medicine

Policy statements (some)

Consensus Guidelines

A stylized blue figure composed of geometric shapes: a circle for the head, a horizontal bar for the right shoulder, a vertical bar for the right arm, a horizontal bar for the right torso, a diagonal bar for the right leg, a vertical bar for the left arm, and a diagonal bar for the left leg.

Impact Factor for both 7.677



AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF RHEUMATOLOGY
EDUCATION • TREATMENT • RESEARCH

WILEY-BLACKWELL

Arthritis & Rheumatism

AN OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE
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VOLUME 58
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FEBRUARY 2008



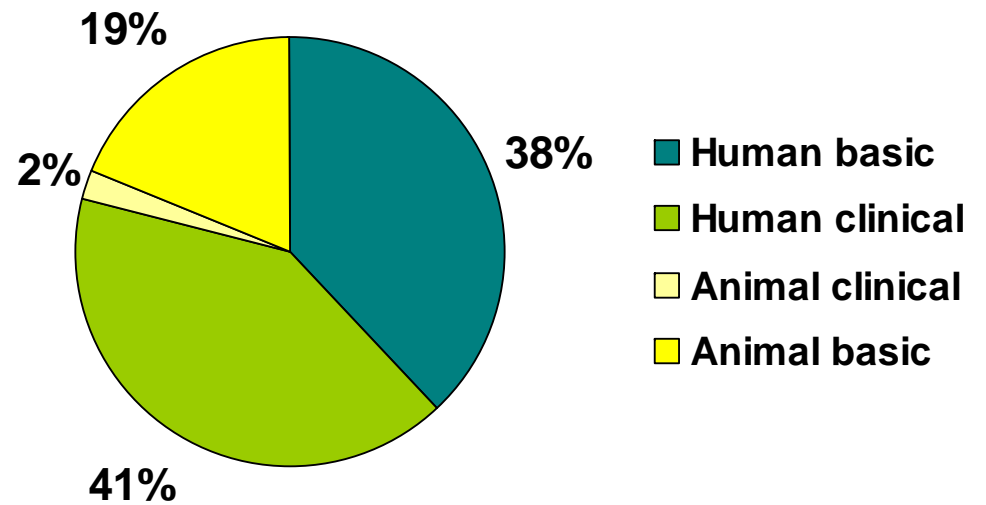
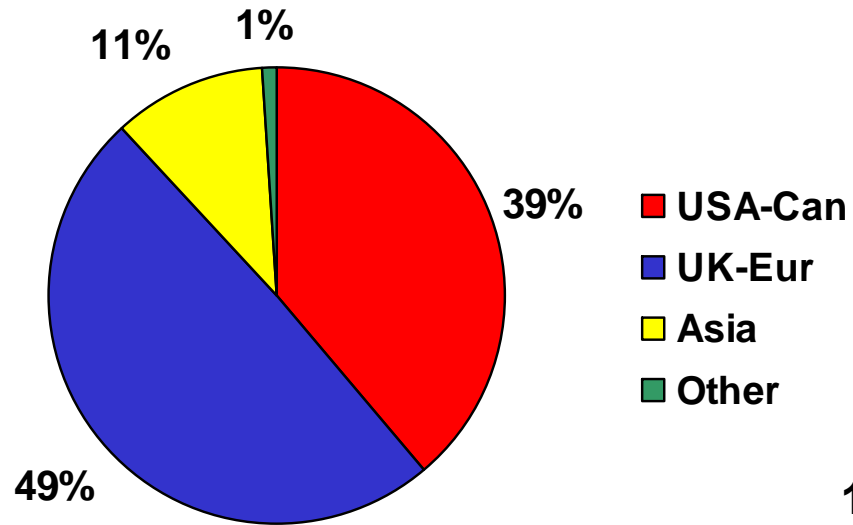
Arthritis & Rheumatism at 50



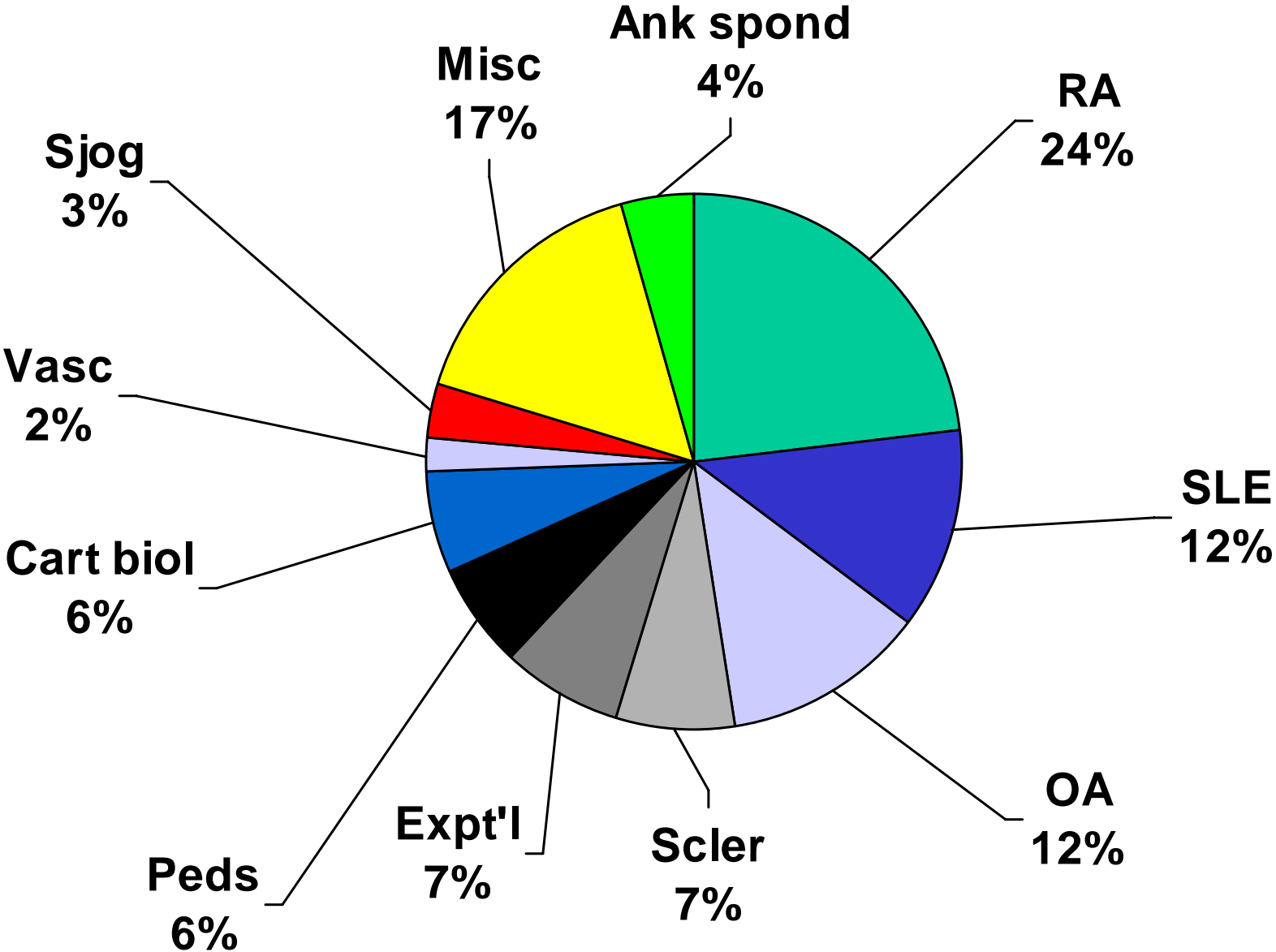
STATISTICS

- ~ 2000 submissions/year
- ~ 1250 original full length papers
 - Letters
 - Concise communications
 - Brief reports
 - Case reports
- ~ 112 referred to AC&R
 - Epidemiology
 - Physical medicine
 - Criteria papers
 - Methodology

DISTRIBUTION OF A&R PAPERS 2007-8



Papers by Subject Jul 07-Jun 08



Process

- Arrives in editorial office (1 day)
- Checked for format, size, appropriateness, signatures, etc. (1 day)
- Goes to editor (1 day)
- Triage decision with (sometimes without) concurrence of co-editor (1-3 days)
- Assigned to co-editor (1 day)
- 6 reviewers asked (3 days)
- Reviews returned (4-6 weeks)

Process

- **Reviews adjudicated by co-editors (3-7 days)**
- **Co-editor recommends to editor (same 3-7 days)**
- **Editor decides (1 day)**
 - **Accept**
 - **Minor revision**
 - **Major revision**
 - **Reject**

Process

- **If accepted**
 - **Rechecked for size, figures, etc. (1 day)**
 - **Signatures, COI verified (highly variable)**
 - **Managing editor edits for consistency of facts, grammar, ambiguity, and technical points like legibility of figures, size of figures (3 weeks)**
 - **Goes to press**
- **Greatest delay: revision > review > COI papers**

Good Writing

- **Topic important, timely, interesting**
- **Clear rationale, process, conclusion**
 - Hypothesis, methods, results, alternative explanations
- **Clear yes or no answer**
- **Language clear**

Good Writing

- **Language clear**
 - **Active rather than passive voice:**
 - “studies show” rather than “it has been demonstrated”
 - **Avoid excess verbiage:**
 - “ $x = y$ ” rather than “previous studies indicate that $x = y$ ”
 - “males have” rather than “males as opposed to females have” (is there any other alternative?)
 - **Anglo-Saxon root words are punchier than Latin or Greek root words**
 - “Jones showed” rather than “Jones demonstrated”

Good Writing



- **Make one single important point, not many**
- 
- 
- 

Good Writing



- **Make one single important point, not many**
- **I. T. T. Higgins' rule:**
 - **Write the paper**
 - **Cut it by half**
 - **Then cut it by two-thirds**

Good Writing

- **Make one single important point, not many**
- **I. T. T. Higgins' rule:**
 - Write the paper
 - Cut it by half
 - Then cut it by two-thirds
- **Before sending it in:**
 - Last read: do I make the same point in the introduction, methods, results, and discussion
 - **Delete anything that does not focus on that point**
 - **CHECK YOUR FIGURES AND TABLES:** do they match the text?

IMPACT FACTOR

- **Ratio citations (Years 0+1 and 0+2)/Number of certain types of papers published Year 0**
 - Original research, reviews, ± editorials, + meeting abstracts
 - Not letters, teaching cases such as CPCs, images, etc.
- **Rates impact of *journal*, not *paper*, for librarians to purchase subscriptions wisely**
- **Falsely used for promotions and funding, primarily in Europe and China**

LIFE IN THE DAY OF AN EDITOR



- 50 page lawsuit

LIFE IN THE DAY OF AN EDITOR



- 50 page lawsuit—in French

LIFE IN THE DAY OF AN EDITOR

- 50 page lawsuit—in French
- Author accuses co-author of unauthorized addition of name

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- Author accuses co-author of unauthorized addition of name—but recognizes own signature

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- **Author wants to publish erratum about misspelled name**

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- **Co-editor reviews own paper**

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- Co-editor reviews own paper—**favorably**

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- **Reviewer notes he cannot read paper**

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- **The most interesting paper on the least interesting topic**

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- The most interesting paper on the least interesting topic--**are breast implants safe in X disease?**

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- Co-editor reviews own paper—favorably
- Reviewer notes he cannot read paper—but reviews it anyway
- The most interesting paper on the least interesting topic--are breast implants safe in X disease? **With many, many artfully posed before and after photos.**

THE FUTURE

- **Currently A&R and AC&R are logged together in National Library of Medicine (A&R even numbered volumes, AC&R odd numbered volumes)**
 - **Will this stay the same?**
- **Currently A&R is an American journal**
 - **Will this stay the same?**
- **English will remain the language of science**

THE FUTURE



- **Data manipulation?**
 - **Figure manipulation?**
 - **Plagiarism**
 - **Fraud**
 - **Conflict of interest, esp. pharmaceutical**
 - **Ghost writing**
- 

THE FUTURE



- **The Wikipedia model for scientific journals**

THE FUTURE

- **The Wikipedia model for scientific journals**

Shreve Town was originally contained within the boundaries of a section of land sold to the company by the indigenous Caddo Indians in the year of 1835. In 1838, Caddo Parish was created from the large Natchitoches Parish (pronounced "NACK-a-tish") and Shreve Town became the parish seat. Shreveport remains the **Drew H. is tall. Watch fred on youtube!**parish seat of Caddo Parish today.

THE FUTURE



- Paperless journal?
- Interactive articles?
- Open Access (author pays or reader pays)?
- What do you need or want?

A stylized human figure composed of geometric shapes: a blue circle for the head, a blue rectangle for the torso, and four blue rectangles for the arms and legs, all set against a dark blue background. The figure is centered on the page.

WHAT CAN YOU TEACH ME?

HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL SURGERY

BARBARA VOLCKER CENTER
FOR WOMEN AND RHEUMATIC
DISEASE

MARY KIRKLAND CENTER
FOR LUPUS RESEARCH

JOAN & SANFORD WEILL
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF
CORNELL UNIVERSITY