

# THOUGHTS ON PAPER, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

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HEADINGS – Paper. Information technology.

A recent anecdote refers to a child who told his father he would have seen a supercomputer in his grandfather's garage. Surprised, the father asks him how it was that machine. The boy describes: the computer had no screen, the keyboard was attached to it, while it is typed, the text was simultaneously printed, and the best, did not need to be plugged and was not dependent on sophisticated programs or operating system, passwords, etc. Actually, it was a simple typewriter with which the boy had never had contact.

Appears to me the question: how long will use paper as a reading media? Were books, magazines, comics, newspapers, finally, all the knowledge set by writing, to be converted to digital format, allowing access and read on any phone, tablet or multimedia kiosk?

My grandmother, 20 years ago, almost blind, passionate about reading, used the talking book: cassette tapes that told stories! At this time I thought: there is the future! In true, she preferred someone beside her, reading a story or a book. This kind of book, even with all of "modernity" that represented, did not move forward.

A few years ago the tablets and digital books came. I thought: now yes, the world of electronic reading will change. This electronic device was launched 6 years ago with affordable format and popular price, however, when visiting the traditional bookstores, I see a plethora of books on all subjects, in different formats, on large shelves and calls me the attention that there are often many people in front of it, handling them, flipping them, reading them, some even furtively, as if read without buying it were a large tort.

A particular journal, which I have access to, a few years ago started to publish the chapter Material and Methods only online and at the end of this year, will have it only by digital access. At the same time, the Scielo is mandating that all collection of its magazines start to be presented in a digital language called XML (extensible markup language), thus being published electronically and accessed via smartphones, tablets and computers.

I support this initiative because, once again reinforcing my enthusiasm for progress and the easy access to information. However, unless my brain is fooled, my ability to understand a text is still much higher when presented in paper record. I can, in this format, locate passages I've ever read, without anything more than a quick eye movement. Rereading is easier since I easily fixed the text in memory.

But, this ability is individual and may depend on the evolution of learning. Each new generation seems to be more eager for information and dependent on the speed with which this knowledge comes to them. Hours in libraries in research related texts, today are replaced by search engines where only a keyword and a click determine a list of endless other similar sources, which greatly facilitates the researcher's life.

So, if for researchers the crossing of the digital language of information allowed by technology facilitate their work, the reader is interested in a text that brings objective information content of the research. The rule for a good text is independent of the technology that will serve as a vehicle of information and put up the results of a survey in cursive format, the researcher always should have the worry of being clear and concise. A truncated text, with additional information, interrupting the reading, can determine dispersion of attention. It happens often when using the digital format and media.

When you have a book or written text in our hands, which no need power supply or rely on technology, it has the power and the feeling of the possibility of access at any time and place.

The middle way should be ideal and can enjoy all the aspirations of the reader and the researcher. Digital files are good and do not take up space. Documents, texts and paper books will exist for many decades and perhaps irreplaceable, because always will be real, palpable.

The planet needs saves on carbon and energy consumption to produce the paper. Decrease their spending would bring a cheaper periodic (less printing and less postage). This is not happening. We're

just trading costs and mechanisms to expend energy. The digital magazines has no cheaper cost and its production is the same or even more expensive than the paper vehicle. A lot of energy is expended to produce technologies and keep them running.

The Archives of Gastroenterology have a policy to embrace these new technologies without, however, dispense the traditional printed media. We thus settle the new search engines to the researchers and readers, contributing in our

specialty for the advancement of research and education institutions.

Even providing digital format, with open access, we'll keep our journal in traditional paper form, until it runs out this possibility.

We salute and thank our loyal readers, reviewers and researchers who believe and support the existence of a specialty journal that represent them in all different acting fields.

Ricardo Guilherme **VIEBIG**

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\* Executive Editor