

Shortness of Breath (SoB): *Times They Are A Changin'*, isn't it?

Come gather 'round people
Wherever you roam
And admit that the waters
Around you have grown
And accept it that soon
You'll be drenched to the bone.
If your time to you
Is worth savin'
Then you better start swimmin'
Or you'll sink like a stone
For the times they are a-changin'.
[Bob Dylan]

Shortness of breath (SoB) is a common symptom in respiratory medicine, but it is also an expression of concern and worrying. Shortness of Breath (SoB) is a new online journal aimed first of all to be read. Favorite readers will be physicians, respiratory and critical care ones, but not only them, with the ambition to be timely for the readers, but also moving to the next future.

Bob Dylan sang the song "*Times they are a changin'*" just on the night President JF Kennedy was killed, and it immediately became the song of a new generation which accompanied the hopes and the changes of the following years. At the beginning, the journal will privilege mini-reviews on scientific and daily practice topics, and clinical cases. Quarterly SoB will cover respiratory medicine, with emphasis on clinical medical practice, but also translational medicine, innovation in respiratory and critical care. We are deeply convinced that medicine is a rapidly changing multidisciplinary field of knowledge based on Life Sciences. Current medical care could not exist without a constant referral to knowledge area just few decades ago not involved into traditional references of pathology and clinics, such as biotechnology, molecular biology (the "omics" and beyond), bioinformatics, GRID computing, nanotechnology, economics, safety and quality evaluation, and so on. Systems biology is giving its aid to medicine moving from a reductionist to a personalized approach to the patient. A major paradigm of changing point of view in medicine is the dominant role of Internet not only for training and learning, but also for medical practice (e.g. 'googling' for diagnosis) and patient-physician relationship. Even if medicine is even more science of life than a physician centred discipline, relationship among humans remains the core of medicine, attention will be also paid to "medical humanities", a section of the journal hosting non-medical papers concerning the complexity of human factor in health and illness status. In this first issue of the journal we have the privilege to host the contribution of the famous writer and newspaper columnist Claudio Magris. The Italian-French artist Marco Ceruti will help the journal to stay young and pleasing by means of cartoons and paintings in the New Yorker's magazine style.

We claim for contributions from physicians (pneumologists, critical care physicians, but not only them), and scientists. Each contribution will be peer reviewed in an attempt to ensure that articles meet the journal's standards of quality, and scientific validity. The journal SoB is coming out in changing times, characterized by the global economic crisis, climate change, social and religious conflicts: it should be easier to follow the "*Zeitgeist*", the spirit of the times, and to be worried and concerned. Nevertheless, we will collect in a section of SoB called "Land of hope and dreams" any news from the scientific literature that may carry hope for positive changes of patient care in a next future¹. Respiratory medicine and science of life are for the progress and wellness of human being, so they have a bet on better times, anyway. Hoping this spirit of SoB will be shared by Authors and readers too.

All articles published by "Shortness of Breath" are made freely and permanently accessible online immediately upon publication, without subscription charges or registration request. Full-text of each article is deposited immediately and permanently archived in PubMed Central.

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¹ Bruce Springsteen "Land of hope and dreams", at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XWOZotnFhLA> accessed on December 9th, 2012.