25 Years Ago in the *JBPA/JBP*

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In this column, we look back at the content and imagery found in the Journal of the Biological Photographic Association (JBPA), later renamed the Journal of Biological Photography (JBP). This column examines important articles from 25 years ago. In doing so, we gain some insight into those legacy photography techniques of that time.

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In 1996, the Journal of Biological Photography published Volume 64 in three issues. Here, we will provide a look back at all three issues.

JBP Volume 64, Number 1

The cover figure by Eadweard Muybridge (sic) in 1887, showing locomotion of disabled patients. Muybridge's technique involved using a 12-camera device to capture 19,347 images in order to illustrate the patient's movements. The author adds that in order to record these movements accurately, the patient had to be nude.

Cover of *JBP* Vol. 64, No. 1, January 1996

Note the box on this issue's cover, stating, "SPECIAL ISSUE, The Nude Image In Medical Photography." The three major articles in this issue include, "Nudity in clinical photography: A literature review and the quest for standardization," by Michael Peres, David Teplica and Stanley Burns; "The nude in medical photography: A historical perspective, with modern legal ramifications," by Stanley Burns, and "Guidelines for inclusion of psychologically sensitive anatomic regions," by David Teplica and Melany Bundy.

Nudity has been a sensitive subject for a long time. The Bible says that after Adam and Eve ate the apple from the tree of knowledge, they realized they were naked and made fig leaf coverings. Can you imagine what your great-grandmother might think if she were to walk onto a California beach today?

A medical photographer is often required to record areas of the human body that are usually covered. They must be sensitive to the modesty of the patient, while recording the necessary areas. The patient should be well informed and understand why the images are needed, where they will go and who will see them. The lines that separate a medical photograph from art and pornography can be very blurry. The interpretation can be affected by social attitudes of the time, religious standards, and many other intangible laws.

The biological photographer must be aware of, and sensitive to, these considerations, while still obtaining the needed images. It can be a real test of patient handling skills.

JBP Volume 64, Number 2

The cover photo by Evan Burrows shows a branding burn scar from a branding iron.

G. W. Armstrong showed in, "Modification of dental mirrors and retractors for intraoral photography," how small changes to standard occlusal mirrors can improve results.

"Principles of forensic photography: The photographer and the law," by Gale Springs goes into great detail of the legal implications and considerations of photography. All the work has to be documented and be non-biased. A perspective of the photograph should not imply an angle, etc. Photos should follow a strict protocol as per equipment, locations, angles etc.

In cases where the exposed film/digital storage media becomes evidence, it must be handled following a strict "chain of evidence." Anyone handling the film, or the photos, must be accountable for

every moment while these materials are in their possession, and they cannot simply just be laid on a counter.

The images can be used in court as visual evidence and the photographer can be called to testify to provide specific information regarding the images; where they were shot, type of equipment used, how they were handled, etc.

Cover of JBP Vol. 64, No. 2, April 1996

JBP Volume 64, Number 3

The cover is a sagittal view of a mouse embryo by Bob Turner.

Cover of JBP Vol. 64, No. 3, July 1996

Michael Morris shared several tricks of the trade in, "Photography in the Operating Room, A Primer: Part 2 - Photographic technique."

Using a "library stool" that locks in place when weight is applied allows the photographer to work at an elevated position. (Figure 1)

Good orientation photos are needed to allow the user of the photos to know where the area is located. Being aware of the background is also a key consideration and things such as bloody gloves and drapes should be avoided when possible.

Figure 1. Use of a library stool to elevate the height of the photographer

Morris also discussed how a series of related images made of the same subject, over a period of time, should be shot with the same camera orientation. (Figure 2)

This requires the cooperation between the surgeon and the photographer to ensure that the best images for the surgeon are obtained.

Figure 2. Maintaining the same orientation in a photographic series.

In a *JBP* Vol. 64, No. 3, technote, “Film Container Recycling Program,” Robert Turner describes the Eastman Kodak recycling program for photographic departments to collect and recycle used 35mm film cassettes, plastic containers, and 120 film reels.

Kodak provided a shipping box and a plastic cover. **(Figure 3)** When the inner cardboard box was full, it was sealed and shipped to a recycler.

Figure 3. Kodak recycling container

Jerry Arnold addresses the creation of pictorial rosters in “Digital Imaging of Class Rosters.” Every August, 200 new students arrive at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine and a photographic roster is needed by the facility. **(Figure 4)** Arnold described the latest procedures available to produce glossy prints, paper prints and a CD. The digital portraits of all the students are combined and sent to three different output devices to produce the three different types of rosters. Nowadays most of this could be done of a desktop computer and an electronic image sent out to all who need a copy.

Figure 4. Class roster image

“Narrow Band Imaging and Fluorescence and its Role in Wound Pattern Documentation,” by Russell E. Schneider, Mary Ann Cimmancic, and Michael H. West provides a historical background, as well as the modern uses, of different wave lengths of light, producing both reflected and fluorescence of the skin. These images can be an indicator of the health of the tissue as a result of disease or trauma. They can also indicate how the injury may have occurred. Dermatologists and law enforcement can benefit from these types of images.

In reviewing these issues, they illustrate how things have changed, but are still the same. Muybridge could have recorded the gait of the patient with digital video; the digital surgical photos done today should follow similar guidelines to produce a professionally useful image, not just bloody snapshot; we may not recycle used 35mm film cassettes, but used inkjet cartridges and toner containers can be recycled: etc. A skilled photographer is needed to produce professional images, not ones that are simply “good enough,” when recorded with a cell phone.

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