EDITORIAL

Making *Seminars* Better through Popular Literature

Since assuming the role of Editor in Chief of this journal, I've taken a greater interest in newsstands. I figure that if I could emulate (i.e., steal) ideas used in popular magazines, I could make this journal better. I started by looking at magazine covers. Covers are very important and set the tone for the entire periodical. When Al Nemcek took over as editor of the *Journal of Vascular and Interventional Radiology* in between harmonica gigs, he listed all content on the front cover. I really like this because it allows me, the reader, to pick up the magazine and go directly to whatever I deem interesting and avoid the rest of the stuff. My name is on the cover of this journal. I'm certain that this makes my mother proud, but I can't see how anyone else could possibly care.

I decided the covers of most popular magazines do list content but, in general, the covers are designed to entice you to buy the magazine. This usually translates into scantily clad people or ridiculous claims related to golf such as "Never miss a 20-foot putt again." The first option is clearly out for *Seminars*; it costs too much and would get me fired as editor. The second concept is also probably not appropriate (e.g., "Cure every patient with metastatic liver disease using a radio-frequency probe"). Some magazines use other gimmicks to attract readers. These options also didn't seem to fit well with a medical journal. I can't attach a CD-R to every issue like some computer magazines. The content is already available to subscribers online. My two women fellows last year liked to leave gossip tabloids all over the Interventional Radiology reading room. One day when I was cleaning up the room (another section chief responsibility), I picked one up out of curiosity; my chairman walked in to find me reading about the weekly escapades of Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie. He noted, "This doesn't exactly inspire confidence in your leadership ability."

I am writing this editorial on an airplane. I found a *Field and Stream* someone left in the seat pocket in front of me. I used to read this magazine growing up in Hawaii when I still had time to fish for largemouth, smallmouth, and tucanare bass on Kauai. I think the

current issue has the identical articles I read as a teenager. One column I really liked in this magazine was called "Tap's Tips," written by H.G. Tapply. These were short tidbits of important and interesting techniques that all outdoorsmen (like me) couldn't live without, such as how to keep snow out of a gun barrel. I liked to read these even though I didn't own a gun and, well, I lived in Hawaii.

I decided the magazines that were most similar to *Seminars* were in the home improvement category. I actually subscribe to several of these magazines like *This Old House*. My house is older than I am, and as a result, in the past few years I've done quite a bit to bring it into the 21st century. I've refinished the basement, gutted and rebuilt two bathrooms, framed and finished walls, laid travertine tile floors, added attic fans and skylights, replaced nearly all the trim, closets, outlets, and lighting. Oh yeah, and when I say I did these things, I mean I literally did these things myself. If you're not impressed, you've never met my wife, who is damn near impossible to please when it comes to these projects. Like most wives, she works under the basic assumption that her husband is an idiot and problems that arise reflect my incompetence and waste all the valuable time she has spent designing the room. That being said, at this point, I am probably better qualified to be editor of *Family Handyman* than editor of this journal.

I think many of us are pretty good when it comes to building and fixing things. Then again, some of us are not. One of my partners likes to say things like, "This past weekend, we put in a new floating laminate floor in Brandon's room." This is the equivalent to an academic interventional radiologist stating, "I was present for the significant portions of the above procedure." What he really means is, "I watched someone put a laminate floor in Brandon's room while I stood nearby." When I tried to explain to him how to install a prehung door, the first question he asked me was, "What does *plumb* mean?" I told him to hire someone to do it instead and asked him to have some conversations with my wife about home improvement.

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Aortic Stent Grafts; Guest Editor, S. William Stavropoulos, M.D.

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Perhaps subconsciously, I got the idea for "How I Do It" from *This Old House*. Every month, they have a centerfold project complete with illustrations, materials, and methods. I read this section even when I know how to do whatever it is they are describing. I like to learn different methods of doing something. I also like it when I sometimes discover that my way is better. The penultimate page of *Family Handyman* lists humorous misadventures sent in by readers. I love this section because it is a "Morbidity and Mortality" section of

home improvement. I marvel at the stupidity of these tales; it always makes me feel better about the moronic things I've done myself. Maybe those of you who read the M&M section of this journal do the same thing.

I discovered that just about the only section of magazines that I never read is the front editorial. That doesn't bode too well for this piece.

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Editor in Chief