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# HINDSIGHT

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Jay Enoch's Column:

**A Fascinating and Charming Editorial by John Swartzberg, M.D.,  
In the *Wellness Letter*, Volume 20, #5, February 2004, p. 3.  
School of Public Health, University of California at Berkeley  
Reproduced with Oral Permission of J.S., Chair, Editorial Board**

John Swartzberg, Editor of the *Wellness Letter* at Berkeley, saved my life twice. The first time we met I was in hospital where my treatment by others was frankly not being handled very well. He came to the case as a consultant. He properly diagnosed my Legionnaires Disease well before the laboratory determination was made, in fact, I was already home from the hospital when the confirmation of his diagnosis was received. Not surprisingly, I selected him as my internist in subsequent years. On a second occasion, he insisted that urologists pursue further an anomalous PSA reading when they twice said I was normal. Once again, John was correct. He has since left practice for an academic career. We remain good friends.

Here, I reproduce with his permission, a very fine and brief editorial addressing a bit of medical history which he recently wrote in his column, "*Speaking of Wellness*". The editorial was titled,

***"A Doctor for all Ages."***

"Would you like to have a doctor who:

- believes that your emotions are important and always takes time to talk with you,
- extols the benefits of moderate exercise,
- selects his assistants on the basis of their sunny nature,
- recognizes the importance of a healthy diet,
- consistently recommends the least invasive therapies,
- is recognized as the greatest authority worldwide?

Such a doctor, you might think, would have been trained in some very up-to-date medical school. But, actually, this was Moses Maimonides, who died exactly 800 years ago. Most such anniversaries go uncelebrated, but maybe we can learn something from this one.

"Maimonides was born into an educated Jewish family in Córdoba, Spain, which at that time was part of a flourishing Mediterranean culture ruled by Muslims.

Throughout his long and prolific life, Maimonides moved from one land to another – Morocco, Palestine, Egypt – often fleeing persecution or war. He turned down a job as court physician to Richard the Lionhearted, the English monarch and crusader. Eventually Maimonides settled in Cairo, where he opened a flourishing practice.

“He was chief physician to the sultan of Egypt, his harem, and his numerous children. “My duties to the sultan are very heavy,” he wrote. Finishing his work at the palace, he rode home to his waiting room, which by then was filled with a “mixed multitude.” He relates that he would then “dismount from [his] animal” and wash his hands – another sign of his wisdom in an era that knew nothing of germs. Then he would eat his one meal of the day and set to work. He also found time to write. Among his books were one on asthma (he understood that climate and environment played a role), another on hemorrhoids (he suggested sitz baths and oils, rather than surgery, which no doubt the patient was relieved to hear), and a kind of “physician’s desk reference,” listing drugs and their uses. A rabbi and philosopher as well as a doctor, Maimonides is famous for his treatises on Jewish law.

“We’ve made a lot of progress since that day, of course, and not all of this great physician’s advice would be acceptable now. But he gave us the timeless gift of his belief in rational inquiry, humanity, and common sense. He thought medical practice should be “inspired with soul, filled with understanding, and equipped with the gift of keen observation and compassion.” Words as useful to our era as to his.”

“For Maimonides’ biography, I [Swartzberg] owe thanks to Dr. Steven Simon and his article in Archives of Internal Medicine, September 13, 1999, and to Dr. Steven Nuland.”

J.M.E.

#### Excellent website on antique spectacles:

Retired ophthalmologist David Fleishman, a very enthusiastic collector of antique spectacles, has been working diligently for the last few months assembling an educational website on the history of spectacles. It was recently launched with the URL [www.antiquespectacles.com](http://www.antiquespectacles.com). The paragraphs below in quotation marks, which David recently sent for inclusion in Hindsight, describe this extensive and interesting website.

“Almost 720 years ago the first simple pair of eyeglasses was invented. The name of the artisan from Pisa, Italy who devised them has remained obscure yet this was an achievement of monumental significance for mankind that has had an incalculable impact. They were certainly one of the most important inventions of all time. Although it has been relatively unknown to the general public, the evolution and development of spectacles over the past seven centuries qualifies as a long, quite fascinating journey through history, whose impact deserves to be better recognized and more widely appreciated. David A. Fleishman, M.D., retired ophthalmologist from Massachusetts, has built an educational website with the help of over one hundred noted experts in the field of spectacles from all over Europe, the Far East, and the

United States. This new website reviews the subject of Antique Spectacles and Other Vision Aids and is filled with interesting text along with wonderful and abundant imagery.

“The core of this new website is Eyeglasses through the Ages, a history paper with over 60 colorful images attached, which adds ‘life’ to this amazing story. There is a list of all the World’s Public Collections where groups of spectacles can be seen including hyperlinks to all those institutions which have websites. There is a Timeline of Development, a Guide to Assist in Identification, a Glossary, Educational Games, Key Translations, and many other relevant pages. Obviously, nothing is being bought or sold for the website is not commercial. The introduction explains the purpose in this website. There is a Virtual Museum page which will become an ever-expanding organized group of exceptional images aimed at drawing much attention and interest.

“The defined goals are: 1. To educate interested visitors to the website. 2. To increase public awareness and thereby nurture a deeper appreciation in general. 3. To complement the other websites which have information on this topic. 4. To attract the newest generation of collectors (who may wish to join the only Collectors’ Clubs, the Ocular Heritage Society and/or the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors’ Club). 5. To provide a forum where scholarly people can have a dynamic exchange of information and ideas.

“This website is dedicated to an Honor Roll of Distinguished Persons, twenty-two individuals from eleven countries who were the true pioneers of this hobby. A Newsworthy page will list recent books, upcoming meetings and exhibits, new discoveries, and other important news related to this subject. Information is also being gathered relative to over twenty key subtopics which will become add-on pages in the future. Visit [www.antiquespectacles.com](http://www.antiquespectacles.com) and enjoy an entertaining experience regarding something that is worn by a majority of people around the world yet is taken for granted by almost everyone.”

This website includes items that are of potential interest to the idly curious as well as items that the serious scholar of spectacle history may find helpful. With regard to the latter, there is a list of 47 references and recommendations for further study. These references include books, articles in various periodicals, pamphlets, and websites. Most of the publications are in English. The dates of publication range from 1904 to 2003.

There are various pages not mentioned in Fleishman’s abstract above, such as a page on the depiction of spectacles on coins, tokens, and medallions. Much of the emphasis on the website relates to the collection of spectacles. On a page providing a “guide to assist in the identification of antique spectacles” there are examples of the lens shapes, bridge designs, temple designs, and temple endings that were characteristic of various periods from 1730 to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A page on preserving and restoring ophthalmic antiques gives contact information for the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors Club, which will be publishing a third printing of *Restoring Ophthalmic Antiques*, by Ronald J.S. MacGregor.

The Links page of this website appears to be under continuing construction. At present, there are links to the websites of two ophthalmic collectors groups, the Ocular Heritage Society and the Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors Club. However, there are numerous links on other pages of this website.

There are various tidbits of information on the website. For example, there is a six paragraph biography of Matthew W. Dunscombe (1841-1918), along with a three paragraph description of his spectacle collection. Dunscombe is described as “the world’s first great collector of antique and unusual spectacles.” He was an English optician. He is said to have “combined scholarship and research with sound commercial sense.” He published a book entitled *Vision and Spectacles* in 1875, as well as a catalog of visual aids. He was one of the founder members of the British optical Association in 1895. He was one of the founders of the Kryptok Company in 1905, along with Borsch of Paris and Meyrowitz of New York. In 1861, Dunscombe purchased a collection of about 50 spectacles, and by 1897, the collection had grown to 250 items. The Dunscombe Ltd. company passed out of the hands of his descendents in 1971, but there are establishments which still use the name.

The World’s Finest Public Collections page contains a listing of 88 public collections in 17 countries. There are web links to 73 of the entities listed. One of the listed collections is the Ohio State University College of Optometry collection of spectacles of famous persons. The “American Optometric Association Museum” (ILAMO) in St. Louis is listed, as is the Museum of Visual Science and Optometry at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.

The author of this site, David Fleishman, is to be commended for his hard work and dedication in constructing it.

D.A.G.

### Most Important 20<sup>th</sup> Century Optometry Books:

We sent out a survey with Hindsight several issues ago. In the survey we asked members of the OHS what you thought were the most important optometry books of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The survey was also sent to all members of the Association of Visual Science Librarians (AVSL). This question was discussed at the annual meeting of the AVSL in December, 2002, and one of the members sent us the list of 19 books that they mentioned at their meeting as having merit for inclusion. In addition, we sent an email asking the question to the members of Binocular Vision and Perception Educators Special Interest Group via that group’s listserve (BVPE-L). And we also sent the question to the faculty of one optometry school by email. We received a total of 21 responses, 16 of which were from persons in the United States. We wish to express our thanks to the persons who responded to the survey. Numerous books were listed in

the 21 responses. The book that was listed most frequently (ten times) was Clinical Refraction by Irvin M. Borish.

Before listing all the responses to the survey, we would like your input again or your responses if you didn't happen to respond the first time around. Are there any books that were overlooked? Are there any books that you would elevate from single nomination to multiple nomination?

*Listed on two or more surveys:*

The books which were listed on two or more returned surveys were as follows (in alphabetical order):

**A**

Amblyopia, Shapiro

Applied Concepts in Vision Therapy, Press

**B**

Binocular Anomalies: Diagnosis and Vision Therapy, Griffin and Grisham

Borish's Clinical Refraction, ed. by Benjamin

**C**

Clinical Management of Binocular Vision: Heterophoric, Accommodative, and Eye Movement Disorders, Scheiman and B. Wick

Clinical Management of Strabismus, Caloroso and Rouse

Clinical Ocular Pharmacology, Bartlett, Jaanus, et al.

Clinical Optics, Fannin and Grosvenor

Clinical Procedures for Ocular Examination, Carlson, Kurtz, Heath, and Hines

Clinical Procedures in Optometry, ed. by Eskridge, Amos, and Bartlett

Clinical Refraction, Borish

Contact Lens Practice, Mandell

**D**

Dictionary of Visual Science and Related Clinical Terms, Cline, Shapiro, Hofstetter, Griffin, Berman, and Everson

Dynamic Skiametry, Sheard

Dynamic Skiametry in Theory and Practice, Cross

**E, F**

Fundamentals of Cosmetic Dispensing, Dowaliby

**G, H**

How to Develop Your Child's Intelligence, Getman

How to Succeed in Optometry, Barstow

**I**

Introduction to Modern Analytic Optometry, Lesser

**J, K, L**

Legal Aspects of Optometry, Classé

Legalized Optometry and Memoirs of its Founder, Prentice

**M**

Mirrors, Prisms, and Lenses: A Textbook of Geometrical Optics, Southall

**N**  
Notes on a Dynamic Theory of Vision, Harmon

**O**  
Ocular Accommodation, Convergence, and Fixation Disparity: A Manual of  
Clinical Analysis, Goss  
Optics, Fincham and Freeman  
Optometric Management of Nearpoint Vision Disorders, Birnbaum

**P**  
Primary Care Optometry, Grosvenor  
Physiological Optics, Sheard  
Physiological Optics, Zoethout

**Q, R**  
Refractive Anomalies: Research and Clinical Applications, ed. by Grosvenor and Flom  
Researches in Binocular Vision, Ogle

**S, T**  
The Optometric Profession, Hirsch and R. Wick  
Treatise on Physiological Optics, Helmholtz

**U, V, W, X, Y, Z**  
Vergence Eye Movements: Basic and Clinical Aspects, ed. by Schor and Ciuffreda  
Vision of Children, ed. by Hirsch and R. Wick  
Vision: Its Development in Infant and Child, Gesell, Ilg, and Bullis  
Vision Screening for Elementary Schools: The Orinda Study, Blum, Bettman, and  
Peters  
Visual Analysis, Manas  
Visual Optics, Emsley  
Visual Optics and Sight Testing, Laurance

*Listed on one survey:*

The books which were listed on one returned survey were as follows (in alphabetical order):

**A**  
Adler's Physiology of the Eye, ed. by Hart  
Applied Refraction, Jaques and Crow  
Atlas of Primary Eye Care Procedures, Fingeret et al.  
Automated Static Perimetry, Anderson and Patella

**B**  
Basic Clinical Science Course – 12 volumes, American Academy of Optometry  
Binocular Vision, Pickwell and Evans  
Binocular Vision and Ocular Motility: Theory and Management of Strabismus, von  
Noorden

**C**  
Clinical Low Vision, Faye  
Clinical Management of Myopia, Grosvenor and Goss  
Clinical Uses of Prism, ed. by Cotter

Computer Applications in Optometry, J. Maino, D. Maino, and Davidson  
Contact Lenses, Phillips and Stone  
Contact Lens Practice, Ruben and Cruillion

## **D**

Diagnosis and Management in Vision Care, ed. by Amos  
Diagnosis and Management of Ocular Motility Disorders, Mein and Trimble  
Diagnosis and Management of Special Populations, ed. by D. Maino  
Dictionary of Optometry, Millodot  
Duke-Elder's Practice of Refraction, Abrams

## **E**

Essentials of Low Vision practice, Brilliant  
Eye Care for Infants and Young Children, Moore

## **F**

Foundations of Sensory Science, ed. by Dawson and Enoch

## **G**

Genetics for Primary Eye Care Practitioners, Fatt, Griffin, and Lyle  
Guide to Occupational and Other Visual Needs, Holmes, Joliffe, Gregg, Cameron,  
and Blyth

## **H, I, J, K, L**

Lens Power in Action, Kraskin  
Low Vision Care, Mehr and Fried  
Low Vision: Principles and Practice, Dickinson

## **M**

My Fifty Years in Optometry, Fitch

## **N**

Neuro-Optometric Rehabilitation, Padula

## **O**

Ophthalmic Lenses, Dioptric Formulae for Combined Cylindrical Lenses, The Prism  
Dioptry, and Other Optical Papers, Prentice

Optics in Vision, Obstfeld

Optometric Instrumentation, Henson

Optometrist's Manual, Brown

Optometry, Edwards and Llewellyn

Optometry, Littlefield

Optometry: Professional, Economic, and Legal Aspects, Hofstetter

## **P**

Pediatric Optometry, Rosner

Physiological Optics – 3 volumes, Le Grand

Physiological Optics, Southall

Practical Applied Optometry, Skeffington

Procedure in Ocular Examination, Skeffington

Public Health and Community Optometry, Newcomb and Marshall

## **Q, R**

Refraction and How to Refract, Thorington

Rx for Success

**S**

System for Ophthalmic Dispensing, Brooks and Borish  
System of Ophthalmology, ed. by Duke-Elder

**T**

The Fine Art of Prescribing Glasses, Milder and Rubin  
The \$100,000 Practice, Levoy  
The Principles of Ophthalmic Lenses, Jalie  
The Refraction of the Eye, Hartridge  
The Story of Optometry, Gregg

**U, V**

Vision of the Aging Patient, ed. by Hirsch and R. Wick  
Visual Imagery: An Optometric Approach, Forrest  
Vision and Visual Perception, Graham

**W, X, Y, Z**

Your Child's Vision, Kavner

Please send your comments on this list and/or the books therein to: David Goss,  
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D.A.G. & D.K.P.

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