

Research and Publication in Photographica World

Research

This first section is mainly for the benefit of those who are new to research, though it should also serve as a handy reminder for the more experienced.

The process of research is one which uses your own knowledge and skill to convert information obtained from **sources** into some form of tangible **output**. So we need to understand what form these sources and outputs can take. Effective researchers make use of as many kinds of source as possible, so it may be useful to list some of the most often used to sources; use this as a checklist, and ask yourself how the quality of your research might be improved by using a source that you had not previously considered:

Sources

People

Manufacturers' staff

Designers

Dealers

Users

Journalists

Other collectors

Contemporary Records

Libraries and museums

Books, journals, reviews, and newspapers

Correspondence

Manufacturers' documents

Films

Later Writing

Collector's books and catalogues

The Internet

General history

Local studies

Economics

... and the Objects Themselves

Internal evidence

Experiments

Images of objects

One of the common barriers to progress is the fact that much of the information required for the research may be in a foreign language. Whilst ideally there is no substitute for a personal ability to speak the language, or a collaborator who can do so, it is well worth considering the use of machine translation to help you. Many researchers have a smattering of German, French or whatever but feel insufficiently confident to dive into much foreign-language material. Machine translation tools are widely available on the Internet, and whilst they seldom do tremendously well with technical material, a combination of your own subject knowledge and a machine translation, plus some common sense, can allow you to make remarkable progress.

Outputs

As well as an article for PW, you may wish to use your research in other forms. For example:

- Talks at meetings
- Articles elsewhere or in other languages
- Books

- TV and video
- A website
- CD-ROM

All of these may record and communicate the results of your work, but they have very different needs. The ideas may need to be expressed differently, the supporting material may need to be organised very differently, and of course different kinds of media can present different types of information more or less effectively. When doing the research and gathering information, a clear idea of the eventual form of output is a great help as it allows you to make sure that you capture the materials you will need for your eventual presentation.

Keep notes

It may seem obvious, but from the very beginning of your research it is vital to keep notes not only of what you find but of where you found it. As time passes, the source of some vital "fact" can all too easily be lost. Then when you find another version of that truth, how do you make a judgment as to which is right? When you are near the end of writing it all up, how will you construct the list of references and acknowledgements if you didn't keep notes right from the start? How you keep notes is entirely a matter of taste, traditionally many people used small record cards to keep track of all their sources; nowadays a list or database on a computer is a common way to do the same thing.

Primary vs. Secondary sources

One of the weaknesses of much research offered to PW is its reliance entirely on secondary sources. Secondary sources are usually books or articles written by other researchers who themselves (we hope) have actually looked at original information, interviewed those involved, investigated the workings of a camera, and so on. Reliance on secondary sources will weaken your research partly because you risk copying and even amplifying errors made by previous workers, and partly because it is much more difficult to add value and publish something new if you don't go back to primary sources. Most research will use secondary sources, but this needs to be controlled; every piece of work ought to contain some element of novelty which probably means some use of primary sources.

Copying without acknowledgement is plagiarism

Another reason for keeping notes of sources is that it is necessary to acknowledge the use of other workers' results. Particularly if you quote verbatim from other material, you must say where it came from.

Cross check facts

Many apparently obvious facts become far less obvious on closer inspection. As far as possible, check facts from multiple sources. Make and explain your judgments so that readers can understand how reliable particular pieces of information actually are.

Your audience

The purpose of the piece you are writing is to deliver information about a **topic** to an **audience**. You therefore need to think about the topic (of course) but also about the audience. You would not write the same article for PW as you would write for either a

popular audience or for academics. The possible topics for PW articles make a long list:

- cameras
- accessories
- manufacturers and designers
- technology (chemical, mechanical, optical, ...)
- books and journals
- hypotheses
- ideas
- images
- photographers
- social history

and there are doubtless others.

The craft of writing is to convert your subject knowledge into a form which will best communicate it to your chosen audience. The more you think about your audience and their needs, the more successful your communication is going to be.

Style in PW

Photographica World aims to maintain a uniform style throughout its text and adopts certain conventions across all issues. These are designed to help the reader and maintain legibility. Authors are encouraged to follow the styles below - otherwise the editor will use his judgement.

General

Photographica World is intended to be relatively serious - the text of main research articles should be written formally without colloquialisms or abbreviations. Although articles are not subject to peer review before publication, authors should be confident about the accuracy of their work. Correspondence columns and one or two regular slots are encouraged to be more informal and humour is welcomed. Debate is encouraged.

Words and phrases

The following are adopted throughout the journal in preference to alternatives:

rollfilm - not roll film

35mm - not 35mm.

50mm f/2.8 (etc) - not 50/2.8 or f/2.8 50mm or f2.8 or f.2.8 or F2.8 ... or anything else

5x4 – not 5 x 4 (etc.)

Sizes, dimensions and numbers

Photographic history is filled with sizes and dimensions. To minimise confusion and conform to ISO practice the point (.) is generally left off dimensions, for example: **5cm** not 5c.m. or 5cm. Where identical dimensions are given the second only carries the unit, for example: **2x2 inches** or 2x2cm not 2cm x 2cm. Inches are generally

written in full, for example as above and not ins. Centimetres are abbreviated as above.

Photographic plate sizes may be given in dimensions or as words, for example, **6½x4½ inches** or **half-plate**. Care should be exercised when describing British and American equipment and Continental European equipment - the former should be described with **Imperial** measurements, the latter in **metric** - unless there is good reason to do otherwise.

Within the text numbers - other than measurements and currency - up to one hundred and major whole numbers should be written out. Percentages should be kept in words. Use the following as guides:

One, two, ten, thirty, **forty-five**, ninety-nine, one hundred, ten thousand, **one million**; £1, \$100, €450; 5 inches, 2.75cm. **Ten per cent**, seventy-three per cent. Tables of numbers should be in numerals. **Use tables** to present a lot of information more clearly.

Hyphens. These are used frequently to join linked words, for example, eighty-two, half-frame, quarter-plate, and their use is encouraged to aid legibility.

Layout. Single spaces between sentences, single spaces between paragraphs.

Writing on computer?

Photographica World prefers electronic submissions. 3½ inch disks, CD-Rs and any form of recordable data DVD suitable for a PC are all acceptable, and text may also be e-mailed. Large amounts of data such as pictures are best combined into a ZIP file and sent using www.mailbigfile.com - a free service. Text can be sent using any standard word processor package, for example, WordPerfect 5.1, Ami Pro, MS-Word, Works or Write; always save it as an ASCII file (plain text) as well. The .RTF format is very useful, most word processors can both read and write it, so if in doubt please do use it. Whatever the file type, please do not attempt to format for publication. Minimum formatting for clarity is preferred, single column.

Footnotes: No footnotes are permitted - all remarks and side-issues should either be dealt with in the body text, or left out.

References: Normally we prefer a source list with brief guidance as to what sources contain what kind of information. However, if formal literature references are needed, they can be marked in-line in the text (nn) thus in parentheses. Supply a corresponding list of references in normal text at the end.

Illustrations: Approximate positions of illustrations can be indicated in the text as [fig nn] thus in square brackets. These markers will be deleted during page layout, so do not refer to illustrations by number in the text - we do not normally use figure numbering. Include a corresponding list of captions in normal text at the end of the document. Verbose captions encouraged - you can often put significant parts of the body text into the captions. No embedded images in the document. Illustration filenames should match the numbering.

Apple Mac floppy disks cannot be read, though CDs and DVDs produced by Macs are OK. Mac-specific format files are usually unreadable - always tell us what software was used to produce a file, and stick to universal formats - plain text, .DOC

and .RTF for writing, .TIF and .JPG for images. Hand-written or typed text is, of course, still accepted.

Illustrations

Photographs of cameras and other equipment in PW need to look good, and be easy for the editorial team to handle. We are looking for good clear record shots without technical defects – artistic and pictorial values are secondary to clarity and precision. Aim for pictures that show what you want the reader to see, clearly, without clutter or excess. Have clean backgrounds, good lighting, and sharpness throughout the depth of field needed to see the subject.

Digital files from digital cameras are best – use as little compression as possible, preferably none, and supply TIFF or minimally compressed JPG files, on CD or online as described above. The image size should be a minimum of 1.5 Megapixels – more if the image will need any cropping. It is safest and best to send the original unmodified camera files, and let us do any necessary cropping and other adjustment here. We can also accept film images of course, preferably using colour negative film, 100 ISO speed or less (certainly not more than 200 ISO). Slow monochrome film is also acceptable if necessary; transparencies are also useable, but need very careful attention to exposure and lighting contrast to produce good results. Send prints in the range 4x5 inches through to 10x8 inches to be used as a guide, numbered on the back to match captions in your text; send the negatives as well, for scanning; all will be returned.



Photo - Eric Lock

Examples: A good one

Light, uniform, un-distracting background

Even lighting

Good viewpoint

Clear and sharp



Photo - John Marriage (not my best work!)

Examples: A bad one

Messy background

On-camera flash gives bad reflections

Poor overall lighting

Viewpoint not as informative as it could be

Taken with a wide angle lens – some distortion

There is nothing that can be “done in the computer” that will bring the second picture up to the standard of the first.

Crisp photocopies of original adverts or line illustrations are acceptable.

Give an illustration source in the usual reference style or a photographer’s credit where appropriate - even if the photos are all by you.

The editor can assist in locating illustrations. However, it is the author’s responsibility to ensure that s/he has copyright clearance for the reproduction of any image; we do not normally pay reproduction fees. Images found on the web or in modern books can be assumed to be the copyright of others unless specifically identified as copyright-free. Images in much earlier printed works (e.g. nineteenth century books) are usually by now in the public domain.

References

These should follow the usual Harvard system, e.g.:

Books: Brian Coe (1978), *Cameras, From Daguerreotype to Instant Pictures*, p. 22

Articles: Vanessa Toulmin 'The Fairground Bioscope' in Colin Harding and Simon Popple (1996) *In the Kingdom of the Shadows* pp.191-203

Confused?

If the above seems daunting, don't worry! The editor will put any text into the house style. Remember that the content is the important part. It is the editor's job to create the style. The editor will also aim to keep in touch during the production process, so that you as the author know what is going on.

If you have any questions or need advice please contact the editor.

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