



From the Senior Editor

In my opinion, hugging has become over-used. This “act of physical embracing between two humans” is becoming a cultural norm, even sometimes to include a peremptory buss on the cheek. Not so long ago, a hug was used sparingly-- perhaps only following a difficult moment at a funeral. It seems that Americans now hug for increasingly-frivolous reasons. Has it lost its impact? Today’s citizen must make a split-second decision before a greeting: Firm hand-shake? Hug? Kiss? All three?

Nevertheless, when, following the delivery of his new prosthetic eye, a 300-pound man with tears welling in his eyes asks for a hug (that is: “stands, arms open, waiting for someone to aid this overwhelming experience”), I happily perform any/all as necessary rituals. Analytical? Perhaps, but I also cherish safety.

The point here is other than a complaint about changing social customs; it is to remind us how our work-- the product of oculiaristry-- can sometimes transcend description and make such an impact on patients and families that our own reaction must reflect their emotional experience.

The *Journal of Ophthalmic Prosthetics* provides a venue to record and share many of the unique experiences associated with our profession. Looking back eight years ago to my first Senior Editor’s Message, and reflecting on the value of our Journal and our Society, I still believe: “What is the point of having experience, knowledge, and talent if we do not share them? It is the giving and sharing of information that connects us with others in our profession. Ultimately, our patients are the beneficiaries.”

Many people come together for these collective purposes; those who *really* deserve a hug helped in generating this journal, including our writers and the Editorial Board; our wonderful ASO President Carol O’Neill and the Board of Directors. My sincere thanks also go to our publisher and our advertisers for assisting *this* output, *this* issue.

This is my final term as your Senior Editor. Quoting another Virginian, Thomas Jefferson, “There is a fullness of time when men should go, and not occupy too long the ground to which others have the right to advance.” Now feels the right time. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you. I have tried to uphold and move forward the standards established by those formerly in this post. I have learned a great deal.

Of all the names on thank-you pages from the past eight years, the most obvious addition is that of my wife, Aileen, who has helped me greatly along this journey.

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