

GEOFFREY WEXLER

BDS Sc MDS Sc LDS FRACDS Dip Orth RCS MSc ORTH
REGISTERED SPECIALIST
ORTHODONTIST

SPRING
2008

The Art & Science of the Smile

Photography

Eastman Kodak's Dental Radiology and Photography quarterly newsletter appeared in 1927 and assisted dentists with Kodak's "new" imaging technology for the next 60 years. It established photography as an indispensable but difficult to master dental tool. Today's digital dental photography is amazing, delivering near-microscope quality, low-cost images instantly; but it still takes some mastering.

Here are some tips on how to make it work for you and why you need it if you don't already use it.

Communication.

Would you buy dental text with no pictures? Imagine showing your patients their dental needs, a minute after they arrive, using "textbook" presentations of their images. Imagine showing your dental ceramist the nuances in your patient's natural teeth without the patient having to sit on his doorstep!

Lip positions at rest and on smiling are shown, the tooth colours, value, hue, saturation, translucency and the variations throughout the crown - all of the things you need to say, but where words fail. Only an excellent picture will do.

Records. Imagine having instant storage and retrieval of perfect images before and after all your treatments - better images than you can find in the best new textbooks. Images that you are proud to show to your colleagues and to your future patients - with consent of course! Images that will become an instant reference for all

recalls for the all the patient's life.

Medico-Legal Think about your patient, (or the ADA's CRO or a lawyer or a judge or your colleague for that matter) musing over your dental jargon and its translation into lay language. Words can't paint an image that does justice to your skill, training and excellent work - if only they could see what you were talking about!

the cost, it is possible to blitz those possibilities with standard cameras.

Further Learning is an unexpected benefit of viewing your excellent photos, because while you look over your images in the cool light of your office, you will see things in the case that you missed in the flesh. This will help raise your standard of practice and answer subsequent queries about

what is going on in the patient.

What do I need-

A "consumer" digital SLR camera (not compact), a 100 mm fixed focal length close-up lens - not zoom-macro - (see Fig 1.), a close-up twin flash (preferred to ring flash), two storage cards, two batteries and a storage / retrieval / viewing system in your surgery with file explorer or better picture database software. Canon or

Nikon are both good cameras.

Technique for Dental Pictures.

Amazing satisfaction and value will flow from your dental pictures once you have acquired an excellent, consistent technique and a standard repertoire of before-and-after shots. Discipline is needed over the years to stick to your standardised method. Your standard repertoire must cover all angles because one or two shots will not adequately illustrate a situation, but the total repertoire always does. Each picture needs to use standard settings of magnification, focal length,

Fig 1. Orthodontics greatly improved the overbite, exaggerated smile arc, and overjet, but so did changing from compact to SLR camera!

Before - 55 mm lens

After - 100 mm lens



How much easier would it present your point of view? Well, that's the efficiency of pictures to record that mass of information - instantly. Over the passage of time, neither you nor your patient can remember how things really were before you started. In law, memory counts for little, the documents are very powerful. You need to have them.

Marketing gurus told us long ago when exorbitantly expensive intra-oral cameras arrived, that even at huge prices, they were indispensable. Now, for a fraction of

angle and lighting. These conditions will reveal in graphic form the changes made just by your work. It is not until you have seen this phenomenon that you will understand the power of dental photography. This will raise the level of your enjoyment and satisfaction of doing your work.

Repertoire of Standard Shots will depend on your line of work. My set (Fig.3) has 12 images - many more than institutionalised orthodontic standards (Fig. 2) so it can properly display smile aesthetics and other standard views critical to the particular work. Books on dental Photography such as Bengel show the shots.

Smile photos (Fig 3) are so important but are often unfortunately omitted (Fig 2), leaving no record or appreciation of how dentistry or orthodontics improved or detracted from our patient's smile. Smile shots are: front-on-face smiling, close-up front-on smile with lips and commissures, ¾ front-on smile, ¾ close-up smile with lips and commissures. Other indispensable shots are overjet in occlusal mirror; occlusal plane with teeth apart. Current storage and retrieval systems make extra pictures so easy and quick to take, store and retrieve. The value of these extra smile images in the repertoire is beyond description.

References

Irfan, A. Dental Photography Quintessence 2004

Bengel, W. Dental Digital Photography, Quintessence 2006

Camera Kits

Canon 450D, MT24Ex Flash, 100mm F2.8 USM lens

Nikon D80, R1C1 Flash, 105mm 2.8 VR EFS lens

Support:

Dr Wexler is happy to advise on technique and equipment. Just call him.

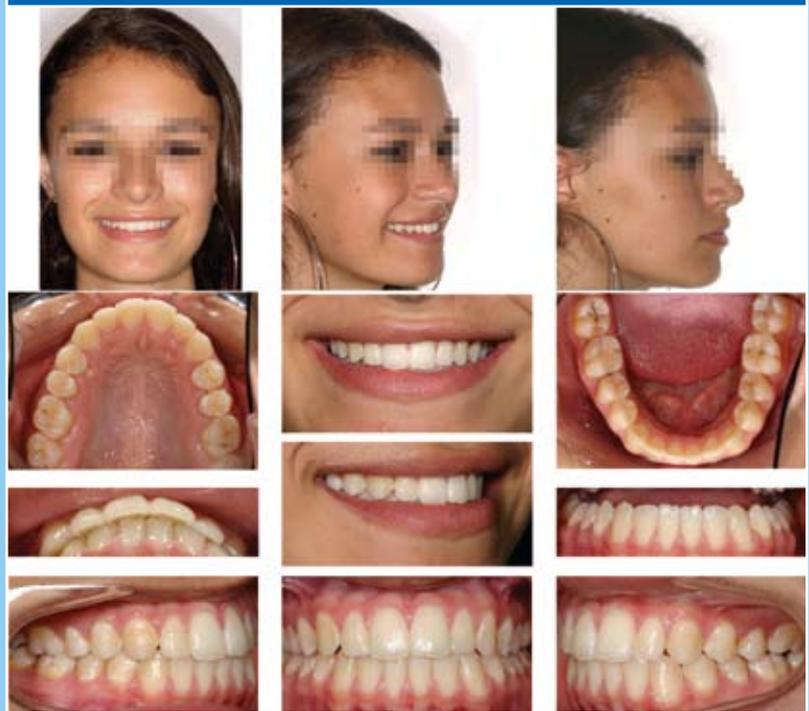
Dr Wexler has taught orthodontic photography for 8 years in the B.O.H. course, Uni. of Melbourne

He provides high quality orthodontic treatment including lingual concealed braces at Toorak & Frankston

Fig 2. Before Treatment. Standard Orthodontic set: Limited smile photos

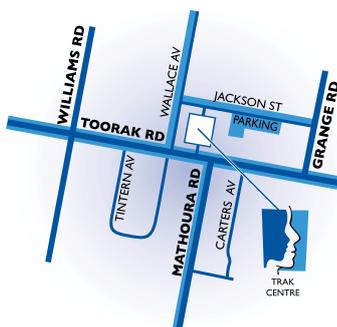


Fig 3. After Treatment. Extended Orthodontic set: Smile pictures dramatically improve the record



Next Issue will be on Lingual Invisible Braces

Orthodontic patient images in this newsletter were provided with consent.



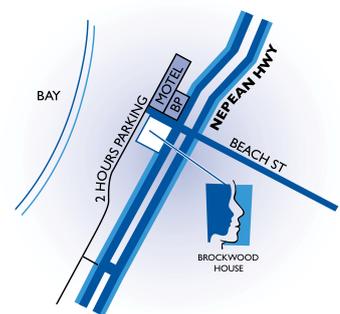
TOORAK
Level 4, Trak Centre
445 Toorak Road Toorak VIC 3142



GEOFFREY WEXLER
BDSc, MDClinDent, FRACD(S), DipOrth, RCSEd, RCSEdOrth
REGISTERED SPECIALIST
ADA
Australian Society of Orthodontists
Specialist Member

ALL APPOINTMENTS
(03) 9827 0188
www.drgeoffreywexler.com.au

Light blue indicates parking, but read restrictions before leaving your car



FRANKSTON
Suite 1, Brockwood House
424-426 Nepean Highway Frankston VIC 3199