AsMA Journal Covers, A History - By Pamela C. Day, B.A., Managing Editor

As some of you may know, we are embarking on a new adventure with the journal. After years of planting my feet firmly in the ground and not wanting to change the journal title, I have been overtaken by events and am now willing to jump on board. My hesitance in the past had as much to do with card catalogues and library shelves as it did with any other reason. But now that everything can be searched with Google, Bing, or whatever, card catalogues are not quite as important. I never even liked the name of the journal, but it had already changed twice before, and the entry in Index Medicus is getting quite long! So the thought of a fourth name was staggering. The new journal title will be *Aerospace Medicine and Human Performance* and will launch in January 2015.

So, as I prepare to undertake a complete overhaul of the journal, including the new title, new focus, new layout, and new cover design, I thought it might be interesting to trace the history of the journal’s covers and names.

The cover of our journal has changed quite often over the years, but nothing compared to JAMA, which for almost 50 years put wonderful works of art on its cover. When I think about journal covers, JAMA always springs to my mind. To me it was a great example of what could be done with what is otherwise a pretty boring thing, a journal cover. I say ‘was’ because earlier this year, JAMA abandoned its remarkable artful cover with its thought-provoking commentaries by M. Therese Southgate, M.D., relegating the art to an interior page, and thus joined the ranks of pedestrian text-heavy journal covers like NEJM. [For a great OpEd on this I refer you to: http://www.jeffreymlevinemd.com/jama-redesign-removes-cover-art/] As an artist, I so loved the artful covers that I collected them along with the commentaries and kept them in a file in the office for years. I was so thankful when they published some of these in books so I could toss the papers away! But I digress.

In 1930, *The Journal of Aviation Medicine* was first published. It had a very simple text cover with highlights of the articles published inside (Fig. 1). I’m sure that in 1930, there were not a lot of graphic-style medical journal covers. This cover lasted until 1944, with one slight change to the title text in 1943 (Fig. 2). It was published quarterly.

![Fig. 1. First journal cover, 1930-1942.](image1)

![Fig. 2. Cover 1943-44.](image2)
From, 1945-1957, the cover used a stylized graphic (Fig. 3) and the color was a kind of reddish brown until 1955 when the alternating colors brown, green, blue, orange, grey, and red were introduced. The journal was bi-monthly at this time.

Fig. 3. Cover 1945-57.

In 1958 the ‘cloudy’ cover was introduced (Fig. 4). It was printed in alternating colors of pale blue, green, pink, grey and burgundy. Highlights from the table of contents were sometimes printed on the cover. In 1959, the name of the journal was changed to Aerospace Medicine to coincide with the renaming of the Association as the Aerospace Medical Association.

Fig. 4. Cover 1958-62.
In 1963 the size of the journal changed from 6.25” x 9.5” to 8.25” x 11” to accommodate the increasing number of articles being published, and the cover changed substantially—photos and figures from articles and news items were featured on the cover along with highlights of the table of contents (Fig. 5). This cover style lasted through 1974. Changing the cover art every month was labor intensive, so it was decided that the next cover was one that wouldn’t change every month.

In 1975 a more ‘artistic’ cover was introduced—it featured a futuristic plane along with an astronaut encircled by the symbols for the planets (Fig. 6). It was approved by the AsMA Executive Committee and was tied to the next change to the journal’s title, from *Aerospace Medicine* to *Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine*. Below is a bit of the Council proceedings that led to the name change (1):

**EARL T. CARTER, M.D., PRESIDENT, 1973-74:** We are in the midst of an economic crisis. This is not a cry of alarm based on imagination. We are in trouble. We must solve the problem. We set up an Ad Hoc Committee headed by Ken Johnson to study the economic problem of the Journal and our Annual Meeting. This committee has done a tremendous job. Dr. Marbarger and Dr. Goodwin are permanent members of this Committee and the other members will be appointed by the President of the Association. We have appointed a new advertising representative, William McCausland, who is under contract for 1 year. The advertising income is crucial. It has to be built up. It is indeed a difficult problem. We have a relatively small circulation. We are in the midst of ‘throw away publications’. It is very difficult to compete with these ‘throw aways’ for advertising income. Our journal is called AEROSPACE MEDICINE. The word 'Space' consumes the whole title. This has become a problem of definition. I am going to make a proposal today to change the name of our journal. [Aerospace Medicine. 1974; 45:907.]

[Regarding] Second, the Constitution: At the Council meeting on Nov. 15-16, 1973, the name of the Association's official publication was considered at length. It was the consensus that the name AEROSPACE MEDICINE was unintentionally misleading to a considerable number of those who were not thoroughly familiar with the aims and objectives of the Association. To a large number of people, the term "aerospace" immediately brings to mind only the somewhat exotic and unusual field of space
exploration (Apollo program, lunar landings, Skylab, etc.); unfortunately, far too few realize that conventional aviation, commercial and general aviation are also included in the term "aerospace." It is believed that correction of this misunderstanding is of particular importance in informing potential advertisers of the scope of the interests and activities of the Association. To remedy this apparent confusion, the following is recommended:

1. Amend Article II of the Constitution, Objectives and Purposes, the last paragraph to read as follows: "To accomplish the foregoing objectives, this corporation may establish regional committees and shall have power to carry on research, issue publications (including a journal to be called AVIATION, SPACE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MEDICINE), establish training courses…”(1). (Motion made, seconded, and amendments to Bylaws and Constitution approved.)

It is somewhat ironic that we are now changing the name of the journal again because the previous name change did not capture the essence of the Aerospace Medical Association journal. It turns out that adding ‘environmental’ to the title had different connotations in 1975 than it has today and we have found ourselves receiving manuscripts outside the realm of the journal’s scope.

A new cover for Aviation, Space, and Environmental Medicine was inaugurated in January 1975 (Fig. 7). It was designed by Donald E. Paglia, M.D., who was both a professor of surgical pathology at UCLA and an artist with an atelier in Sherman Oaks, CA. The design was chosen by the Executive Committee from the 13 entries in a Journal Cover Contest.
Dr. Paglia’s design combined a representation of Earth with progressively bluer bands of color leading from Earth's atmosphere into space. These elements were crossed by a sine wave representing a continuum of the scientific specialties involved in aerospace medicine and their areas of interest from the earth to the stars. The wave, in deep space, "crosses the constellation of Orion, the Hunter. Its crossing is in the same direction taken by his arrow in pursuit of the unknown since ultimately that is what research is all about," in the words of Dr. Paglia (3).

So it seems we have been opting for a new journal cover about every 10 years. In 1994 I hired a design firm (Rings Leighton) to help create a new look for the journal that would rebrand it and make a coordinated campaign for publicity materials. The final design used a NASA photo of the earth from space with the sun bursting across the sky (Fig. 8). We used a similar image to create folders, press releases, and brochures.
It took a little longer to redesign the cover last time. I again hired a designer (Todd Witiak) to create a journal cover that would reflect the diversity of our association and coordinate the design with membership brochure materials (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9. Cover 2007-2014.

The new journal, while it will have a new cover design and page layout, will continue to carry on the volume numbers begun back in 1930, dating back to the days of Dr. Bauer and his colleagues (2). I have to say I am not tired of the “old” cover yet, but I am ready to see what happens next!

References

