

*Woke up, fell out of bed
 Dragged a comb across my head
 —A Day in the Life, The Beatles*

A Day in the Life (of an 80s Radiologist)

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I read those end-of-year, survey-type filler articles from lots of sites with detailed breakdowns of how Joe and Jane Average are doing. What do they do during the day? How do they view global warming? Personally, I hate them. How easy it is to lie, eh? And, who enjoys filling out those more than someone who is disgruntled? I understand the genre. I just totally disbelieve it.

I was thinking, for this piece, I'd do a typical day in the life of someone who does what we do, but back in the 80's, when radiology was a bit of a different field. Here goes...

0600. Wake up, quick shower, and get some coffee. Out to the car for the drive to the hospital.

0715. Arrive at hospital. Park in the (now-crowded) lower section of the lot (out near the railroad tracks). Damned administrators get the front spots near the hospital. Not a one of them here yet. Surgeons get the second tier of parking. Their spots are mostly full, also.

0730. Start reading the overnight chest films and the three CT studies from the ED. Busy night for the ED. Make four phone calls to the units about chest film findings, second cup of coffee, say hi to a few people wandering through the department to look at films. Curbside consult on an abdominal film — looks like a bowel obstruction and help get them on the schedule for a GI study.

0830. A bit late getting to the IR suite. Doing angiography today. Start with a run-off on an elderly patient. Did the prelim radiographs and

finally got access. Took way too long to time it out and then missed the lower calf on one side on the first attempt. Have to do it all over again. That puts a hurting on my schedule. Plus, held the groin for about a half hour and still oozing. Need to check them mid-day and tonight.

1230. Finish three arches, a renal for diagnosis (no stenosis) and help a colleague do an embolization of an active pelvic bleed. Break for lunch.

1345. The afternoon is crazy. One of the surgeons wants to see something a little better on an abdominal study from the day before. Spend 20 minutes getting subtractions done. Why can't these folks just make do with regular film? If only you could just have subtractions of everything, wouldn't that be novel? Oh, well. You can dream.

1730. Finish the scheduled patients. Have to get through these three add-ons. That's great; they are all short cases. Should finish early. Oops, fourth add-on. Well, not too late, anyway.

1945. Finished. Heading upstairs to see patients for the day. Fortunately, all the groins are dry and clean. Everyone should be able to go home tomorrow. Stop by to chat with a few of my colleagues in their offices. I pity the two folks reading chests today. With all the consults and a full hospital census, they might not get done for another hour. Sometimes, you just can't get ahead.

Times change, eh?

Keep doing that good work. Mahalo.

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