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Posted by: malcolm | Monday, 18 July 2011 at 05:53 PM

I have some friends who are relatively respected in fine B&W printing. They tested a Zone VI print washer and had the water running at first. Then, let it sit overnight. They then did residual fixer tests of different areas on the prints. The tests showed the bottom of the prints(at the bottom of the washer) to have more fixer still in them than a the top of the print. NO indication of fixer settling, but the prints did test this way. Starting the water again washed prints clean in a half hour.
Don't know why the prints tested this way - maybe how the water circultion moves?

Posted by: Daniel | Monday, 18 July 2011 at 07:05 PM

Dear Malcolm,

Hahaha! Reminds me of a truly classic (sic) final exam in Classical Mechanics, when I was at Caltech.

Instead of handing out test questions, the professor pulls a quarter out of his pocket and spins it on the table. "Describe the motion," he says, and walks out.

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Dear Daniel,

Not entirely sure what was being tested there, from your description. Assuming the water was run enough at the beginning that the tank was pretty uniformly full of fresh, non-fixer-laden water, what you were seeing the next morning was differences in how different parts of the prints washed in those first few minutes of running water.

Remember, as my experiment above showed, diffusion moves very slowly.

It's not really an issue. No one makes a print washer that is supposed to wash each part of the print at exactly the same rate. They're only supposed to insure that after the mandated wash time, all parts of the print have sufficiently low residual fixer levels. If some part of the print happened to get five times as much washing as as necessary and another got merely just enough, no one cares.

pax / Ctein

Posted by: ctein | Tuesday, 19 July 2011 at 03:26 PM

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