

We would like to thank Drs. Mariani et al. for their letter which highlights important papers on sentinel node imaging and intraoperative guidance. These papers are noteworthy scientific contributions that continue to have had a significant impact on the clinical practice of nuclear medicine.

Despite their obvious scientific and clinical relevance these papers were not included in the 60th anniversary supplement because they did not meet our criteria to choose the limited number of publications that we could highlight in the supplement (see also introduction of the supplement). Since we had to select papers from several thousand publications, we had to use straightforward and objective criteria. We therefore decided to select the three most frequently cited original publications per decade plus one original publication per decade which was selected by six teams of editors (one team per decade).

As all approaches to quantify and rank “scientific impact” our criteria to choose manuscripts are to some extent arbitrary, and results would have been somewhat different if we would, for example, have selected 2 papers per 5-year interval or the 25 most frequently cited papers for the whole 60-year period, etc. Nevertheless, we believe that our approach is reasonable because the overall number of citations of scientific papers has significantly increased over the years and selecting the most frequently cited papers published over a period of 60 years would have biased against older publications.

Furthermore, the number of citations is a reasonable indicator of scientific impact but far from perfect. Therefore, we also believe that selecting also one high-impact paper per decade by the editors is a reasonable compromise between completely objective criteria (i.e. select the 4 most frequently cited papers per decade only) and a more subjective selection of four papers by the editors.

Since we fully agree with Mariani et al. on the importance of sentinel node imaging, we would like to thank them again for their letter which nicely complements the papers in the supplement.

Sincerely,

Wolfgang Weber and Johannes Czernin