



forum

VOLUME 9, NUMBER 6

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1999

While Some Wave Their Jack, I Prefer to Drink Mine

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Long before retiring to Durango, Colorado, John T. Headington, MD, published his important article, "Transverse Microscopic Anatomy of the Human Scalp," in 1984. Headington proposed the new terms *follicular unit* and *perifolliculum*. He defined the term follicular unit as "the pilosebaceous unit structure as disclosed at the **middermis** of the scalp." Dr. Headington noted, "The follicular unit of the adult human scalp usually consists of two to four terminal follicles and one or rarely two vellus follicles, the associated sebaceous lobules, and the insertions of the arrector pili muscles of the terminal follicles." He further noted the follicles are normally anterior and the sebaceous lobules are posterior in a cephalocaudal distribution at the middermal level. He defined the perifolliculum as "the investing adventitial stroma of the pilosebaceous unit." The structural components of the perifolliculum consist of small collagen fibers interspersed with a network of delicate elastic fibrils. The perifolliculum also contains the perifollicular vascular plexus and the perifollicular neural net. The interface between the fine adventitial collagen of the perifolliculum and the coarse reticular dermal collagen is usually sharply defined at the

middermal level. At high dermal levels, particularly at or near the plane of the papillary dermis, the distinction between adventitial collagen and the reticular collagen may appear blurred. At superficial dermal levels, there usually is a confluence of the outer sheath epithelium of two or more follicles so that a single island of epithelium will encompass all follicular infundibula. "Follicular canals may or may not join each other, although it is

terminal follicles." Removal of the epithelium from African American donor tissue provides a beautiful example of the follicular canal. The pigmentation persists in the cone shaped canal after the removal of the

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We must be careful in our interpretation of the literature and our expansion of definitions based on scientific methodology. Such efforts will reduce the level of confusion for both experienced and new hair restoration surgeons.

common to find two or three hair shafts within a single canal at the level of the infundibulum. The vellus follicle of the follicular units (usually only one) may remain separate or may be joined to the confluent infundibula of the

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