than I thought I would and spent more than I wanted to. The knowledge has kept me busy and out of trouble while the spending can still be justified as money well spent. The way I see it, there are worst things that I can be spending money on, such as drinking, gambling, or snorting coke off

background as an amateur photographer. If you think audio guys are an odd bunch, go hang out in photo forums. Photographic hobbyists obsess over methodologies, systems and outputs just as much as you guys do. Endless discussions on sharpness, resolution, tonal balance and contrast of lens and paper. Synergy between lens, film, chemicals and paper. Vibration isolation for tripods and enlargers. You have treble, mids and bass. We have highlights, mid tones and shadows. And like audio, we also have endless (and often more heated) debates about analogue

surprise on the similarities. There are differences though, and two stands out for me.The first is

advance black and white darkroom course right now at a local university and almost half the class

mechanics of the enlarger and lens, interaction between paper and different chemical combinations, contrast/density control, and mapping of tonal ranges from subject to film to paper is enough to make your head spin. But yet, the women in the course dive into all this with as much enthusiasm as the men.So what give? Women appreciate excellent musical presentations just as much as men. In fact, on average, women have better hearing than us and should be able to appreciate all the tweaks and voodoo magic that we obsess about. You can argue that women are more likely to be turned off by the shear amount of money required for a high-end system, but we all know (the smart ones at least) that amazing music can be reproduced on the cheap.The second difference I see between audio and photography is the issue of interpretation.

not talking about PhotoShop stuff where you cut and paste subjects, change their positions, size,

such as density balance, contrast, paper texture, grain resolution and tones to establish the emotion and character of a photo. I can take the same negative and reprint in five different ways, and each version still be considered correct. There are certainly wrong ways to create a photo,

obsessed with faithful reproduction. Systems that have their own colour, characters and

echelon of audio systems are more interested in the process than the results. What about objectives and taste?I just want to end off by describing one of the biggest milestones that I hit as a photographic hobbyist. It happened three years ago when I put my camera away and stopped

reading photo magazines for over six months. Up until that point, I read every magazine and drooled over ads for the latest and greatest. I constantly hung out at equipment stores and surfed on the net looking for bargains, for that new piece that will allow me to take better photos. After

I was concentrating on using what I had, instead of looking for that next upgrade, that I found

there yet with my audio hobby, but I do look forward to getting there.Gar.
