

Meet the ASA President



George L. Gerton, PhD

Dr. George Gerton has been at the University of Pennsylvania for over 35 years. During this time, much of his research has focused on male reproduction and fertilization. He has specifically focused on sperm structure and function (motility and fertilization) and spermatogenesis. Within the Center for Research on Reproduction and Women's Health, he serves on the Executive Committee and coordinates the seminar series and annual research retreat. For over 10 years, Dr. Gerton has been involved in environmental health through Penn's Center of Excellence in Environmental Toxicology (CEET). He currently serves on the Executive Committee, is a member of the Internal Advisory Committee, co-director of the Career Development Core, and leads the Reproduction, Endocrinology, and Development Affinity Group of CEET. Dr. Gerton lectures on endocrine disruption and male reproductive toxicology in undergraduate, graduate, and medical school courses and co-directed a course for 4th year medical students for a number of years.

Hanging Out with Dr. George Gerton

Sue O'Sullivan, Executive Director of ASA, interviewed Dr. Gerton and here is what we learned:

Growing up, did you always aspire to be a researcher?

Funny you should ask. Over the course of this past year, I have been looking back in time to figure how I ended up as a researcher. I recall that in seventh grade, my science teacher saw something in me and he allowed me to use the teacher's prep room attached to the classroom as my own laboratory. I had a microscope that I used to observe pond water; it was at that time I saw my first paramecium and amoeba. Later, I checked out a book full of experiments for kids to try written by Don Herbert who had a television series from 1951-1965 called "Watch Mr. Wizard". I learned how to make culture plates with Jell-O and tomato soup as the growth medium. I grew all sorts of molds and bacteria, which was pretty cool for a 12-year-old to experiment on his own. Later, in college, I did independent study in the field. I analyzed song sparrow responses to calls from males invading their territory (actual me with a tape recorder). Then, after I got the bug for developmental biology, I investigated the effect of ultraviolet light on sea urchin embryos.

How often do you have to explain what Andrology is to your friends and family?

Not too often because I generally express what I do as "Andrology, the science and medicine of male reproductive health." I find that people respond in two ways: they are either too embarrassed to pursue a further description or they are completely captivated to learn more about sperm and reproduction.

What is the biggest challenge you are currently facing?

Scarcity of research funding – a problem we all face.

Do you have a hobby?

I found that genealogy is interesting because you can blend history and science to find out more about your family and yourself. DNA genealogy has opened a lot of doors to find ancestors and living relatives but it also can present some unexpected surprises!

What would be the top two songs on your play list?

I have two major playlists I have created but I do not have specific favorites. Some of the folks in my playlist are instrumental guitar performers like Peppino D'Agostino, Christopher Parkening, Tommy Emmanuel, and Leo Brouwer. Vocalists I am enjoying these days are Heather Maloney, Joan Shelly, James Taylor, and Cat Stevens. It is a pretty eclectic mix.



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Hanging Out with Dr. George Gerton continued

What do you hope to accomplish for the Society this year as President?

We are a society in transition. We need to pivot and move in a direction that creates a more stable and progressive association. I would like members to challenge the ASA leadership to provide more value for the members. We need to make certain that we look for new ways to keep clinicians, researchers, and associate members engaged with the ASA. We are trying to improve communications with the membership, provide more content beyond the annual meeting, and create opportunities among members so we can enhance professional collaborations and support our members at all stages of their careers. We hope to do this through better use of social media, webinars, and video content. This will take time but these are steps we need to take to stay relevant.

Who do you turn to for advice?

As one would expect, I have relied a lot on past presidents and active members who have invested a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into the ASA over the years. I have also been fortunate this year that our committee chairs have really taken on some important tasks and, as a result, they have given me important advice and insights. Importantly, our association management team at Veritas is imparting many great ideas and advice for all of the committees and Council. Veritas is also providing us with many new services such as the capacity to record our annual meeting, host webinars, and conduct business through regular video conferencing.

Do you have a mentor?

With regards to leading the ASA this year, I have learned a lot from observing and working with past presidents and other society leaders. We are fortunate that we have many members from a variety of professional backgrounds with leadership qualities. I am lucky that my presidential term has been sandwiched between that of Kirk Lo (Immediate Past-President) and Mike Palladino (Vice President/President-Elect); the two of them have provided me with valuable guidance over the course of this year.

Can you think of a memorable or significant moment at the ASA?

The experience that has been most memorable for me was the initiation of the Whova meeting app at the 2019 ASA meeting in Chicago. I led the implementation of this tool for our meeting and I was surprised at the support from Council to getting this started. Most rewarding was how quickly the attendees adopted the program and began to interact through Whova weeks before the meeting took place. We will, of course, be using Whova app at our next meeting and will be implementing more features of the platform for attendees to use.

What keeps you awake at night?

My biggest concerns are to keep the members engaged in the Society and make certain they view our annual conference as "The Andrology Meeting" to attend. We need to make certain that we develop a diverse society with regards to professional and social/racial/ethnic backgrounds. It is essential that we build new non-dues and non-meeting registration revenue streams beyond our membership. As we approach our 50th Anniversary in just five years, I would like to see the ASA be the pre-eminent Andrology organization in the world.

To you, what distinguishes the ASA from all other medical societies that have focus in men's health?

By far, the factor that distinguishes the ASA from other men's health organizations is our balance of members from the clinical and basic science. That said, we are at risk of losing members that see benefits in focusing their involvement in mostly clinical societies or basic science organizations. It is important that we seek ways to expand our membership and provide valuable opportunities for collaboration and mutual learning. Scientists must be exposed to the pressing concerns for clinical practitioners, and physicians need to be aware of the developing investigational approaches for diagnostic and therapeutic advances.



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ASA 2020 Late-Breaking Abstracts

ASA will be reopening abstract submissions from January 6th until January 24th, 2020 at 5pm EST.

These will only be considered for Poster Presentations.

Please Note: Those representing late-breaking abstracts are not eligible for travel assistance or awards at the meeting unless they had another abstract entered during the regular submission period.

ASA Elections

Mark your calendars - the ballot for the 2020 elections will be emailed to all ASA members on January 15, 2020. Be sure to vote in this important election.



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APRIL 25 - 28, 2020 • LOEWS PHILADELPHIA HOTEL • PHILADELPHIA, PA



ASA 2020 ANNUAL MEETING Personalized Reproductive Medicine for the Male: From Bench to Bedside

Co-Chairs: Polina Lishko, PhD and James F. Smith, MD, MS

April 25, 2020

- **ASA Translational Symposium**
(Incorporating the Basic Science Workshop and Clinical Symposium)
**Advances in Clinical and Laboratory Techniques for
Obstructive and Non-Obstructive Azoospermia Patients**

April 25, 2020

- **Andrology Lab Workshop**
**Prognostic Values of Semen and Sperm Testing for
Assisted Reproduction**



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Named Lecture Highlights:



Emil Steinberger Memorial Lecture: The Regulation of Sox9 Expression in the Initiation and Maintenance of Gonadal Fate
Robin Lovell-Badge, PhD, The Francis Crick Institute, United Kingdom



Women In Andrology Lecture: Fundamentals of Cell Signaling Down Under
Kate Loveland, PhD, Monash University and Hudson Institute of Medical Research, Australia



International Lecture: CRISPR/Cas9 Genome Editing and its Application in the Study of Fertilization
Masahito Ikawa, PhD, Osaka University, Japan



AUA Lecture: Bringing it All Together: Precision Medicine in Male Infertility
Kathleen Hwang, MD, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, USA



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Andrology Spotlight

Alexander Yatsenko, MD, PhD

ASA and Andrology strongly support public education to raise awareness about advancements in the etiology, diagnosis and treatment of male reproductive health concerns. However, a recent publication in Andrology paints an alarming picture of the significant disparity in public awareness, medical evaluation, and funding of research of male reproductive health relative to its general health and societal significance (De Jonge and Barratt, 2019). The paper, entitled 'The present Crisis in Male Reproductive Health Care: An Urgent Need for a Political, Social, and Research Roadmap,' noted the "...clear and dangerous deficits in the public awareness and governmental support of male reproductive health care."

As part of broad efforts to draw attention to male reproductive research relevant to public health, Andrology also published a manuscript by Gianfrilli et al. entitled 'Risk Behaviors and Alcohol in Adolescence are Negatively Associated with Testicular Volume: Results from the Amico-Andrologo Survey.' This study aims to "increase awareness of male reproductive health at an early stage, as well as providing novel data sets for study." Together, these manuscripts reflect the broader efforts of ASA and Andrology to promote and confront the generally poor societal awareness of male reproductive health and cutting-edge research that has tangible impacts on public health. Specifically, the Gianfrilli et al. paper reports results from a surveillance program established and conducted under the support of the Italian Society of Andrology and Sexual Medicine and the Italian Ministry of Health. The program surveyed students in their final year of high school and includes relevant demographics, health history, health risk behaviors, sexual activity, and andrological concerns and components. The major association reported in their study is an association between health risk behavior and testicular hypotrophy. Also, study noted that "only 11.6% of the adolescents had previously been treated for andrological disorders, even though 34.6% had an abnormal examination in the study." This finding highlights an urgent need for better education of healthcare practitioners and the public as a whole about the importance of reproductive examination and treatment at an early age for male reproductive health in adulthood.

To aid the ASA and Andrology in promoting greater public awareness, the society membership, as the world-wide experts in this field, must themselves remain aware of the cutting edge. Please consider reading these and other articles published in our society's journal to arm yourself with knowledge to educate the public and raise awareness and funding for research addressing male reproductive health issues.

De Jonge, C., and Barratt, C.L.R. (2019). The present crisis in male reproductive health: an urgent need for a political, social, and research roadmap. *Andrology* 7, 762–768.

Gianfrilli, D., Ferlin, A., Isidori, A.M., Garolla, A., Maggi, M., Pivonello, R., Santi, D., Sansone, A., Balercia, G., Granata, A.R.M., et al. (2019). Risk behaviours and alcohol in adolescence are negatively associated with testicular volume: results from the Amico-Andrologo survey. *Andrology* 7, 769–777.

ASA Movers and Shakers



Congratulations to Gail S. Prins, PhD, who received an American Urological Association 2020 Presidential Citation for leadership, determination and success in advancing the breadth of urologic research and advocacy.

Presidential Citations are presented to individuals deemed to have significantly promoted the cause of urology. Each recipient is chosen by the AUA President.

Do you know a member who deserves to be recognized? Let us know! Email us newsletter@andrologysociety.org



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Career Opportunities

We are excited to launch the new ASA Andrology Career Center [webpage](#). Members receive a discount for posting jobs on this new platform. Visit the platform to sign up for alerts or post career opportunities.

University of Washington | Director, Global Health Family Planning Innovation Program

The Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Global Health at the University of Washington are recruiting a full-time (100% FTE) Director of a new Global Health Family Planning, Innovation Program. This faculty position will be at the Associate or full Professor with tenure rank. The successful applicant must qualify for an appointment to the full-time faculty position at the University of Washington at the Associate or Full Professor level commensurate with qualifications. For the complete job posting, visit andrologysociety.careerwebsite.com



Interested applicants should submit your cover letter and CV on Interfolio by clicking this [link](#). Please send inquiries by email to Ms. Bowden at bowdec@uw.edu.



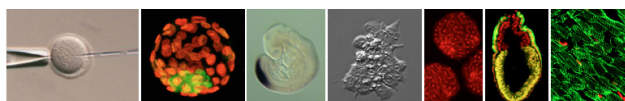
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa | Developmental and Reproductive Biology Graduate Program

The Developmental and Reproductive Biology (DRB) [Graduate Program](#) at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is seeking enthusiastic and talented students interested in obtaining MS and/or PhD degrees in developmental and reproductive biology.

The DRB program is affiliated with the Institute for Biogenesis Research (IBR) and is housed in the Department of Anatomy, Biochemistry and Physiology at the John A Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawaii. The University of Hawai'i at Mānoa is ranked in the top 250 universities in the world and has a proven track record of providing exceptional training involving elements of didactic learning, research, mentoring, and career development to graduate students. The John A. Burns School of Medicine School is ranked 41 in "Best Medical School: Research". For the complete job posting, visit andrologysociety.careerwebsite.com.

Applicants interested in the program will have to meet admission requirements for a MS or PhD by the DRB Program and University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Graduate Division as defined [here](#). Graduate Assistantships covering tuition fees and a living allowance are available on a competitive basis.

For inquires, please contact Dr. Monika Ward (mward@hawaii.edu).





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Training Opportunities

If your group has any training opportunities, or if you are aware of opportunities elsewhere that you would like to have included in future newsletters, please contact Ki Aston (kiaston@utah.edu).

Membership

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support over the past twelve months. We appreciate all of your contributions to the ASA. Your involvement is important and very much appreciated.

Are you current with your dues?

We remind everyone that our membership year now runs from July 1 to June 30. We know people have busy lives, so we wanted to you to know that you can log on and see if your membership is active so you can take full advantage of the growing list of ASA benefits, including reduced registration rates for the upcoming meeting in April 2020.

It's time to renew your membership for ASA!

If you know that your membership with ASA has expired, instructions to renew your membership today are presented below, along with an ever-growing list of membership benefits.

[Renew Membership](#)

Username: Email Address On File with the ASA
Default Password: ASA2019!

ASA Membership Benefits:

- A subscription to the internationally recognized journal, Andrology (valued at \$240).
- Reduced registration fees for the Annual Meeting, Testis Workshop and Andrology Lab Workshop. As a member, you'll be the first to receive abstract submission information, meeting programs and registration forms.
- Access to an online members only section, offering continuing education and dues histories, online dues payment, a bulletin board, and a searchable membership directory.
- Membership consists of Active, Associate, Life, Trainee and Emeritus Members as these classes are defined by the [ByLaws](#).
- ASA individual members automatically become International Society of Andrology (ISA) members.