

# ANESTHESIOLOGY

## Wood's and Guedel's Legacies Return to the Heartland

### Reflections from Coleman and Moon

George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H.

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Nestled in America's Heartland, the State of Indiana celebrates among its native sons at least seven of anesthesiology's greatest pioneers. Remarkably, two of these are museum-linked Hoosiers who migrated to opposite coasts, Paul M. Wood, M.D. (1894 to 1963, fig. 1) to New York in 1913 and Arthur E. Guedel, M.D. (1883 to 1956, fig. 2) to California in 1928. Celebrated as the “motorcycle anesthetist” during World War I, Dr. Guedel is best known today for his eye signs of etherization, for popularizing cuffed endotracheal tubes, and for his eponymous laryngoscope and oropharyngeal airway.<sup>1</sup> On the opposite coast, after an apparent heart attack in 1931, Dr. Wood donated his collections of books and apparatus to form his namesake library and museum in New York. Then, during World War II, he served as secretary of both the American Board of Anesthesiology and the American Society of Anesthetists (now Anesthesiologists, ASA), as well as the latter's librarian-curator and business manager for *ANESTHESIOLOGY*.<sup>2</sup>

Storage crises forced the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology (WLM) to move multiple times. When Wood's heavy collections overloaded weight-bearing floors in 1952, the New York State Society of Anesthesiologists failed their building inspection on West 11th Street in Manhattan. A disgruntled Dr. Wood carted heavier items 50 miles north to his Highland Falls garage, near West Point.<sup>3</sup> Less than 4 yr later, a hospital expansion forced that New York society and its tenant, the WLM, to relocate two doors away, to even tighter accommodations. During all this instability, both native Hoosiers, Drs. Guedel and Wood, respected each other—from opposite coasts. These two inventive anesthesiologists enjoyed vintage anesthetic apparatus and shared a mutual friend and colleague in anesthesia

## ABSTRACT

Pioneering anesthesiologists Paul Wood, M.D., and Arthur Guedel, M.D., were Hoosiers who migrated from America's Heartland to opposite coasts. Dr. Wood moved east to New York in 1913; Dr. Guedel, west to California in 1928. By 1962, each pioneer had been honored with a namesake anesthesia museum. Fast-forwarding 55 yr, two young anesthesia historians, California's Jane Moon, M.D., and Pennsylvania's Melissa Coleman, M.D., met at the 2017 International Symposium of the History of Anesthesia in Boston. Today, these women are chairs of the Wood Library-Museum's Archives and Museum Committees, respectively. As the newest authors of “Anesthesiology Reflections,” Drs. Coleman and Moon leave their coastal states semiannually for board meetings at the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, returning as legacies of Drs. Wood and Guedel...back to the American Heartland.

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apparatus manufacturer Richard von Foregger, Ph.D., of Roslyn, New York. Fortunately, most of Wood's displaced anesthesia collectibles could be shifted to storage at the Long Island boat house of generous but ailing Foregger. Unfortunately, Foregger's death in 1960 was followed by his widow's eviction of Wood's collections from the boat house.<sup>4</sup> Within 2 yr, Stanford University's Anesthesiologist-in-Chief, William Neff, opened the Guedel Center in San Francisco, California, out of the Morf Firm's medical billing office, as a museum and library memorializing Guedel.<sup>5</sup> So by 1962, Drs. Guedel and Wood had each been honored on opposite coasts with rudimentary namesake anesthesia museums: the Guedel Center in San Francisco and the WLM, divided between upstate and downstate storage sites in New York.

Fortunately, early in 1960, ASA President Dr. Leo Hand had offered to shelter Wood's New York collections in the air-conditioned basement of ASA's one-story headquarters in Park Ridge, Illinois. Also, *ANESTHESIOLOGY* had published the debate between Dr. Hand's ASA presidential predecessor, Dr. Daniel Moore, and Stanford's Anesthesiologist-in-Chief, Dr. William Neff, about permanently housing the WLM outside Chicago, Illinois.<sup>2</sup> Pleading not to “bury the Library-Museum in suburbia,” Dr. Neff had recommended relocating the WLM from New York to San Francisco. In counterpoint, Dr. Moore had advocated constructing a permanent WLM building next to ASA's in Park Ridge, citing the proximity of the expanding O'Hare Airport, the economy of being annexed to ASA's headquarters, and the hope of honoring namesake Paul Wood, while he was still alive. Dr. Moore had prevailed, and a two-story WLM annex was erected next to the one-story ASA headquarters building. In

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**Fig. 1.** Paul M. Wood, M.D. (1894 to 1963). Founder and namesake of the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Dr. Wood died at his New York home while finalizing the move of this East Coast museum in 1963 from New York to Illinois. After occupying two successive addresses in Chicagoland's Park Ridge, the gallery and offices of the Wood Library-Museum are now part of the American Society of Anesthesiologists' headquarters complex in Schaumburg, Illinois.



**Fig. 2.** Arthur E. Guedel, M.D. (1883 to 1956). To honor this pioneering anesthesiologist, the Arthur E. Guedel Memorial Anesthesia Center was founded posthumously in 1962 in San Francisco, California. In 2015, this West Coast museum was transferred to the Archives and Special Collections of the University of California, San Francisco, California, where Dr Guedel had collaborated in research projects.

May of 1963, while preparing to drive his automobile on its fourth WLM-linked roundtrip from New York to Illinois, Paul Wood died unexpectedly. So ironically, the November 1963 formal opening in the American Heartland of the WLM took place without its founder.<sup>3</sup>

Fast forward 54 yr to a bus that was shuttling conventioners to the Ether Dome in Boston, Massachusetts, from the 2017 International Symposium of the History of Anesthesia. Sitting side by side onboard, two young strangers struck up a conversation. Pennsylvania's Melissa L. Coleman, M.D. (fig. 3), and California's Jane S. Moon, M.D. (fig. 4), discovered swiftly that they shared more in common than a passion for both anesthesia's history and the legacies of Wood and Guedel. Both women had studied Spanish as their foreign language, attended Ivy League colleges, and worked or studied in *two* foreign countries before graduating from medical school. Their husbands shared remarkably similar personalities and interests. Each woman had a pair of children of similar ages and temperaments. And each had a fashion-designing sister.

So how do these alter egos, Drs. Coleman and Moon, differ? Dr. Coleman describes herself as a "small-town girl." She was raised in Pennsylvania's Strausstown (population: 400), college-educated at Cornell in New York's tiny Ithaca, and medically educated at Pennsylvania State University, Hershey, Pennsylvania. Coleman's interest in history was

sparked by childhood visits to nearby Civil War battlefield at Gettysburg and to countless historical sites, ranging from Virginia's Williamsburg to Massachusetts's Old Sturbridge Village. Initially drawn to studying the sciences and to serving humanity, she focused on a medical career after watching a televised presentation on obstetrical complications in Africa. She earned grants from the Kienle Center, Hershey, Pennsylvania, which funded her studies in Uganda as well as in Ecuador. Offering "immediate gratification through its fascinating blend of physiology and pharmacology," anesthesiology was "love at first rotation" for Coleman. After completing her medical degree, anesthesiology training, and pediatric anesthesia fellowship at Pennsylvania State University, Hershey, Dr. Coleman serves there today as an assistant professor. Interestingly, she has tinkered in anesthetic apparatus design as had her idol, the late Paul Meyer Wood, M.D.<sup>3</sup> The 2013 Roderick Calverley Fellow in the History of Anesthesia, Dr. Coleman has served several years as a WLM trustee and as chair of the WLM Museum Committee.

In contrast to her, Dr. Jane Moon (fig. 2) has mainly been a "big-city girl." In Los Angeles, California, her high school history teacher—thespian trained at Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey—inspired her historical pursuits. After graduating *magna cum laude* from Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, with an A.B. in history and literature, she taught history at a private high school in Dallas, Texas.



**Fig. 3.** Melissa L. Coleman, M.D. An Assistant Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Pennsylvania State University, Hershey, Pennsylvania, Dr. Coleman is the Museum Committee chair, a trustee, and an “Anesthesiology Reflections” author for the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois. Dr. Coleman is a third-generation disciple of pioneering anesthesiologist, Paul M. Wood, M.D.



**Fig. 4.** Jane S. Moon, M.D. An Assistant Clinical Professor of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, University of California, Los Angeles, California, Dr. Moon is an Archives Committee chair and “Anesthesiology Reflections” author for the Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois. Dr. Moon is a third-generation disciple of pioneering anesthesiologist Arthur E. Guedel, M.D.

Her life changed after her uncle, who lived nearby, experienced a motor vehicle accident and a prolonged stay in an intensive care unit. Visiting him convinced her of how much she felt “at home in the hospital setting.” After returning to Los Angeles, she completed her medical doctorate, anesthesiology residency, and critical care medicine fellowship, all at the University of Southern California. As “a procedural field that offered the opportunity to care for critically ill patients,” anesthesiology was immediately appealing to Dr. Moon. And rather than focusing on pediatric patients as had Dr. Coleman, Dr. Moon started treating the largely geriatric population at the Greater Los Angeles Veterans Administration Medical Center. An assistant clinical professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, Dr. Moon has won both the C. Ron Stephen Essay Contest (2017) and a Paul M. Wood Fellowship (2018). She now serves as chair of the WLM Archives Committee and as chair of the California Society of Anesthesiologists’ Committee on the History of Anesthesia in California. After consulting with former trustees of Guedel’s namesake museum, Dr. Moon has penned several publications about Arthur Guedel and considers herself a proud part of his historical legacy.

In my opinion, the readers of *ANESTHESIOLOGY* should reflect on how, back in 1962, on opposite coasts, there were two Hoosier-linked anesthesia museums in the United States: California’s Guedel Center and New York’s WLM. These onetime coastal historical legacies of Drs.

Arthur Guedel and Paul Wood are well reflected today in the vignettes of Drs. Jane Moon and Melissa Coleman, respectively. As I retire from authoring “Anesthesiology Reflections” after penning 563 of them, please join me in welcoming these younger scholars, who can offer the readership fresher ink. And when these two anesthesia historians leave their coastal states semiannually to attend WLM Board meetings in Illinois, Drs. Coleman and Moon will be reflecting their share of the legacies of Hoosiers Wood and Guedel—legacies that have swung full circle...and returned to America’s Heartland.

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The author declares no competing interests.

### Correspondence

Address correspondence to Dr. Bause: 5247 Wilson Mills Road, No. 282, Cleveland, Ohio 44143-3016. UJYC@aol.com. *ANESTHESIOLOGY*’s articles are made freely accessible to all readers on [www.anesthesiology.org](http://www.anesthesiology.org), for personal use only, 6 months from the cover date of the issue.



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## ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

## Byline Backstory No. 11: Something Old, Something New—Antiques and Resuscitations Bond a Future Curator's Family with the Muse of Anaesthesia



To thank me, an Ursinus College senior, for sending her a Christmas card from Scotland the year before, Ramona, an Ursinus junior, found me late in 1976 in our Pennsylvania college's only computer room. I was immediately enchanted. Luckily, she followed me to Baltimore, garnering her postgraduate social work degree the year before I earned my M.D. at Johns Hopkins. Ramona encouraged my interests in traveling (*left*) and collecting antiques (her Eucaine bottle find, *lower right*), both of which I use curatorially to this day. We married in 1980 and never questioned my choice of anesthesiology as a medical specialty—particularly after the Muse of Anaesthesia guided my at-home and then in-car resuscitations of our septic newborn Colin (*upper right*). Today, both Colin and his younger brother Evan are employed in the computer world—fitting work for men whose parents first met in a computer room. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists' Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

*George S. Bause, M.D., M.P.H., Curator Emeritus and Laureate of the History of Anesthesia, Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology, Schaumburg, Illinois, and Clinical Associate Professor, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.*