

The 75th Diamond Anniversary of *Gastroenterology*: 1943–2018



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*Gastroenterology's Diamond Anniversary
1943-2018*

The year 2018 marks the 75th Diamond anniversary of *Gastroenterology* as the field's leading specialty journal. To celebrate this remarkable accomplishment, we are honored and humbled to oversee

a year-long celebration of accomplishments within the field of digestive diseases, as seen through publications in *Gastroenterology*. For this effort, we partnered with American Gastroenterological Association (AGA) leaders to create an engaging twelve-part series (the Diamond Dozen) regarding how our knowledge has changed for major digestive disorders. Some disorders, such as peptic ulcer disease, were well known in the journal's early years, but our understandings of their pathogenesis and treatment have been revolutionized in the intervening decades. Others, such as eosinophilic diseases and hepatitis C, were largely unknown when the journal started, but now they have established etiologies, diagnostic criteria, and treatments. For each section, we highlight major articles published in *Gastroenterology* which helped shape how we currently diagnose, understand and/or treat these disorders. The articles, authored by AGA Council members and subject matter experts, follow the evolution of publishing and research into disease discovery, pathophysiology, imaging and treatments over several decades. We are extremely grateful for the authors' enthusiasm and expertise in completing this considerable endeavor (Table 1).

To provide the appropriate context for these efforts, this article, the first in the twelve-part series, will briefly overview the journal itself: its founding, changing mission, history with the AGA, publication patterns, emerging influence, changing structures for editorial review, and editorial teams. We are deeply indebted to Dr Raj Goyal, Dr Bishr Omary and the team led by Dr John Fordtran for their recent detailed research into the histories of the AGA and *Gastroenterology*.¹⁻³ Their investigations, publications and data syntheses were invaluable sources for this summary and we refer interested readers to their in-depth writings for further fascinating details, as well as to the AGA's centennial history record.⁴

A Brief History of *Gastroenterology*

The Early Years

Although the AGA was created in 1897 as our specialty's first official medical society, *Gastroenterology* is neither the specialty's oldest journal, nor even the AGA's first official journal. The distinction of the oldest digestive specialty journal belongs to *Digestion*, which started as the German periodical *Archiv für Verdauungs-Krankheiten mit Einschluss der Diätetik* (approximately translated as the *Archive for Digestive Diseases including Diatetics*) and was published from 1895 to 1939. The journal was renamed *Gastroenterologia* during the years 1939–1968, before assuming its current title in 1968, a moniker it retains today. The distinction of the first official AGA journal belongs to the *American Journal of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition*, launched in 1934 by Beaumont Cornell, an internist and, conveniently, the owner of the Sandfield Publishing Company. After its first editor-in-chief passed away in 1937, Dr Walter Alvarez, the president of the AGA in 1928, assumed this journal's leadership until a disagreement regarding editorial autonomy with the publisher. This led the AGA to discontinue its relationship with the journal in 1942 and, in 1943, to launch *Gastroenterology* as the AGA's official journal, with Williams and Wilkins as the publisher and Dr Alvarez as its first editor-in-chief. Dr Alvarez, a native of San Francisco, California, spent most of his career at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. His research interests included food sensitivities, gastrointestinal motility, medical statistics and what have become known as functional bowel disorders.⁵ Cumulatively, he led the AGA's official journal for a total of twelve years: five as editor of the *American Journal of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition* and seven as editor of *Gastroenterology*. The journal's second leader, Dr Andrew Ivy, taught at Northwestern University, became president of the AGA in 1940, and was ultimately named vice president of the University of Illinois. Although never officially appointed as editor-in-chief, he managed the journal from 1950 to 1952. He helped negotiate the original journal's founding agreements between the AGA and Williams and Wilkins and correctly predicted that, through membership fees and advertisements, the journal

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0016-5085/\$36.00

<https://doi.org/10.1053/j.gastro.2017.10.019>

Table 1. Twelve Areas of Major Advances in Gastrointestinal and Liver Diseases, 1943–2018

Topic	Authors
A brief history of <i>Gastroenterology</i> and series overview	Richard Peek and Douglas Corley
Colorectal cancer: the polyp-CRC pathway, CRC screening, and introduction of quality standards	Paul Moayyedi and Andrew Chan
Gastroesophageal reflux disease and its complications; development of anti-secretory medications; peptic ulcers from pre to post <i>H Pylori</i> ; and emergence of eosinophilic esophagitis	John Kao, Joel Rubenstein, Ikuo Hirano, and Rhonda Souza
Inflammatory bowel disease: disease characterization, underlying epidemiology and biology, and evolution of treatments	Mark Silverberg and Uma Mahadevan
Celiac disease: history of diagnosis, development of diagnostic testing, molecular understanding, emerging treatment strategies	Joe Murray, Maria Oliva-Hemker, and Mark Frey
Viral hepatitis, hepatocellular carcinoma and liver transplantation	Ken Sherman and Vijay Shah
Functional bowel disease: development of definitions, pathophysiology and treatments	John Wiley and Lin Chang
Gastrointestinal complications of obesity and management of obesity	Dennis Black and Sandeep Gupta
Pancreatic adenocarcinoma, pancreatic cysts, and pancreatitis	Santhi Vege and Stephen Pandol
Gastric cancer: the evolution in understandings of etiologies, biologies and treatment. gastric metaplasia, differentiation, stem cells within cancer context	Linda Samuelson and Jason Mills
Microbial-host interactions for inflammatory bowel disease, functional bowel disease, obesity	Eugene Chang, Christopher Savidge, and Wayne Lencer
Development of endoscopy: fiberoptics, electronic chips, flexible endoscopy, endoscopic ultrasound, ERCP, and enteric-access surgical techniques	John DeWitt and Jacques Van Dam

could be self-sustaining. A prolific scholar, he was the most frequently cited scientist in the world from 1964 to 1971, per analyses of the Science Citation Index.

From its first year, *Gastroenterology* included 12 separate monthly issues; the very first issue was dedicated to William Beaumont (1785–1853), the US Army surgeon often credited as being the father of gastric physiology for his investigations into digestion. Dr Beaumont was renowned, in part, for anatomical studies of a man who developed a gastro-cutaneous fistula from a gun-shot wound; this served as a research portal into the human stomach. The first of eleven original articles in the first issue was “Prepyloric Lesions of the Stomach,” by Sara M. Jordan and Frank H. Lahey. Dr Jordan, a graduate of Radcliffe College and Tufts Medical School, was chief of gastroenterology at the Lahey Clinic from 1923 to 1959 and the first woman elected President of the AGA. Dr Lahey, a graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, was a surgeon who founded the Lahey Clinic in Boston, MA.^{6,7} Thus, both the journal’s early leadership and its first authors were an energetic and established group of academic gastroenterologists, interested in creating a forum for publishing and sharing high quality investigations into digestive disorders.

The Changing Mission of Gastroenterology

Gastroenterology’s goals changed as the AGA evolved from a self-selected group of research-focused US academics, into a diverse international association, without strict membership restrictions, of clinicians, researchers, trainees and policy-makers. The AGA’s initial membership was restricted to experienced researchers; a change to a somewhat broader membership criteria, in 1945, allowed persons with more limited research experience to be included. In 1968, the AGA changed to its current

configuration which provided membership for effectively all interested gastroenterologists and interested physicians and scientists from related disciplines such as pathology and surgery. In conjunction with its new membership, *Gastroenterology* evolved from a medium for publishing largely “insider research” through invited articles to a modern journal which evaluated and published investigator-initiated research as well as society-specific scholarly works such as clinical guidelines, scientific abstracts, and meeting proceedings. The subjects of published manuscripts similarly evolved from primarily descriptive clinical case series, to encompass modern epidemiological studies, experimental studies in gastrointestinal physiology, disease pathophysiology investigations, and treatment trials. As the membership broadened to include more clinicians, the journal incorporated clinical reviews, special issues focused on high-profile clinical and basic science topics, “Abstracts of Current Literature” (a precursor of the current “Selected Summaries” of gastrointestinal studies published in other journals), abstracts from society scientific meetings, and some core AGA society publications, while maintaining editorial independence. Editors continue to innovate with relevant new sections, including recent additions such as Dr Omary’s section for newer gastroenterologists (the Mentoring, Education, and Training Corner). The current Board of Editors is working to further incorporate other AGA activities into the journal, including coordinating with Digestive Disease Week review topics, publishing AGA-sponsored consensus conferences, and creating secondary uses for published resources.

Evolution in Size and Influence

The number of journal subscribers, volume of manuscripts submitted, and the journal’s reputation grew rapidly

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