

In-Vitro Fertilization The Pioneers' History

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Edited by Gabor Kovacs , Peter Brinsden , Alan Decherney
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In-Vitro Fertilization The Pioneers' History

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Preface

The 40th anniversary of the birth of Louise Brown, the first baby in the world to be born after conception in vitro, seemed to us and to Nick Dunton at Cambridge University Press, to be the ideal time to produce a book on the history of in-vitro fertilization (IVF) worldwide. Our aim has been to invite friends and colleagues from many different countries to write their own personal views on how IVF developed in their own countries or regions. Other authors were asked to review the stories behind other topics, like the early history leading up to human IVF, scientific and pharmaceutical developments, ethical and legal challenges, and how parents and children have fared after treatment by IVF.

This is a collection of personal anecdotes from many colleagues who were there at or near to the beginnings of human IVF, which we intend should inform and entertain future generations of clinicians and embryologists on the origins of our specialty; it is not intended as an academic historical work. We have been very fortunate in attracting some of the very best known names in our specialty to contribute to this book, which, we

hope, will particularly attract the readership of the younger generation of physicians, scientists, nurses, counselors, and other members of IVF teams worldwide. Without a volume such as this, much of the early history of IVF will be lost, as many of the first or early generation of IVF specialists who have contributed chapters are nearing the end of their careers.

We regret that we have been able to have contributions from only a small number of specialists in our field. There are many more of our international friends and colleagues from whom we would also like to have received their personal recollections, but space precludes us including everyone – we hope that omission from our list of eminent authors will not cause offence!

If any of we Editors of this volume are still around on the 50th anniversary of Louise Brown's birth, perhaps we should then produce an updated and enlarged edition. We are certain that there will be many, some as yet undreamed of, advances during the next ten years in IVF and the assisted reproductive technologies that will bear recording.

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