

The American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology: Creation and Early Years

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American ObGyn 1850-1925

- Before the discovery of anesthesia during the 1840s, gynecology was mostly a medical specialty. In medical schools “Diseases of Women” was taught by the professor of midwifery, along with the “Diseases of Children”.
- Founding of the Woman’s Hospital of the State of NY in 1855 by J. Marion Sims (1813-1883) was a seminal event in the development and teaching of gynecological surgery. For two decades, the emphasis was on VVF repair, plastic vaginal operations, and ovariectomy.
- By the 1870s, professorships of gynecology were being established in the major medical schools and separated from Chairs of obstetrics.
- The widespread use of antisepsis during the 1880s opened up the field of abdominal surgery, attracting ambitious young men. The most influential was Howard A. Kelly (1858-1943) who trained in Philadelphia, but went on to establish the modern residency program at Johns Hopkins University during the late 1880s.
- Between 1890 and 1910, obstetrics was eclipsed by gynecology. By 1912, only 8 of 42 academic departments had joint Chairs of ObGyn.
- In urban areas, birth gradually moved from home to hospital after 1900. The availability of anesthesia, antisepsis and house staff increased the number and type of interventions, including cesarean section, performed by obstetricians.
- The prestige and scientific standing of obstetrics was boosted by academic leaders such as J. W. Williams (Baltimore), Joseph B. DeLee (Chicago), Barton C. Hirst (Philadelphia), Edwin B. Cragin (NYC), and Reuben Peterson (Michigan); they trained residents and wrote textbooks.
- All except Williams were surgically-inclined. They were unanimous in recognizing the need for joint training in obstetrics and gynecology, bucking the trend established by Kelly and his disciples. By 1923, 31 of 70 Chairs were combined.

National ObGyn Organizations

- From its onset, in 1847, the **American Medical Association (AMA)** had a committee on obstetrics and diseases of women and children.
- The **American Gynecological Society (AGS)** was founded in 1876 by 39 of the most prominent practitioners and professors.
- The **American Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (AAOG)** was created in 1888 by 40 physicians who considered themselves specialists but were not invited to join the AGS.

ABOG – 1927 to 1930

- The **ABOG** was the brainchild of **Walter T. Dannreuther** of New York City. He was its first president, and occupied that position until 1955.
- **Dannreuther’s** goal was to standardize OBGYN training and recognize publicly those who met those requirements.
- In 1927, he drafted a resolution to create a specialty board. This was approved by John Polak, president of the AAOG and was later ratified by the Association.
- Implementation required the support of the AGS and AMA, and was achieved over a three-year period.



Walter T. Dannreuther (1885-1960)

- MD 1906 Long Island Coll Med, Brooklyn
- Intern Jersey City Hospital
- Prof. GYN Postgraduate School/Hospital

ABOG – Announcement 1931

May 15, 1931.

To the American Gynecological Society:

Your committee, appointed to cooperate with the American Association of Obstetricians, Gynecologists and Abdominal Surgeons and the Section on Obstetrics, Gynecology and Abdominal Surgery, met with the committees of these organizations at Niagara Falls, Canada, on September 16, 1930, and organized the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

These three committees proceeded to organize as the directors of the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology, as follows:

Dr. Walter T. Dannreuther, New York, N. Y., *President*.
 Dr. Fred L. Adair, Chicago, Illinois, *Vice-President*.
 Dr. E. A. Schumann, Philadelphia, Pa., *Second Vice-President*.
 Dr. Paul Titus, Pittsburgh, Pa., *Secretary-Treasurer*.

Other members of the Board are:

Dr. Joseph L. Baer, Chicago, Illinois.
 Dr. R. D. Mussey, Rochester, Minnesota.
 Dr. E. D. Plass, Iowa City, Iowa.
 Dr. G. D. Royston, St. Louis, Missouri.
 Dr. J. C. Litzenberg, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Board has incorporated under the laws of New Jersey.
The purposes of the Board are:

First, To elevate the standards and advance the cause of obstetrics and gynecology.
Second, To determine the competence of specialists in obstetrics and gynecology.
Third, To grant and issue certificates, or other evidence of special knowledge in the field of obstetrics and gynecology to voluntary applicants and candidates therefor.
Fourth, To arrange, control and conduct examinations to test the qualifications of voluntary candidates.
Fifth, To serve the public, hospitals and the medical schools by preparing lists of practitioners who shall have been certified by the Board.

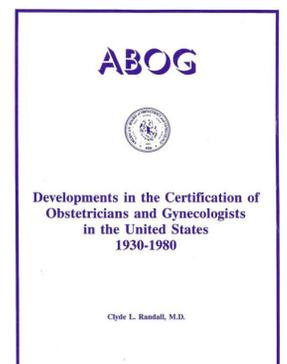
ABOG – Early Years

- In Feb 1931, 132 men and 1 woman were awarded certificates based on their achievements; 21 more men were grand-fathered later in 1931.
- Certification without examination was discontinued on December 31, 1931.
- The first written examinations were held in March 1931; 69 of 74 applicants passed the first oral examination in June 1931.

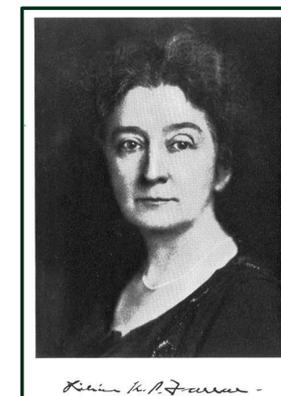


- ADAIR – Chicago
- BAER – Chicago
- DANNREUTHER – NYC
- LITZENBERG – Minneapolis
- MUSSEY – Rochester, MN
- PLASS – Iowa City
- ROYSTON – St-Louis
- SCHUMANN – Philadelphia
- TITUS - Pittsburgh

Year	ABOG-Certified	Women
1931	223	1
1939	968	28
1942	1431	43
1959	4718	162



1st Official History



Lilian K. P. Farrar (1871-1962)

- MD Cornell University, NYC, 1900
- Intern: NY Infirmary Women Children
- PG Study Paris/Vienna 1901-04
- Surgeon Woman’s Hosp NYC 1918-1935
- Asst Prof ObGyn Cornell
- 1st woman Fellow Am Gyn Soc 1921
- 1st woman certified by ABOG 1931
- 1st woman governor Am Coll Surg