

Announcement

The PVM History Initiative of the PVRI

"Declare the past, diagnose the present, foretell the future."

—The Father of Medicine himself, Hippocrates (460-357 BC),
who gave us the Hippocratic Oath

While the Pulmonary Vascular Research Institute (PVRI) has always been, and remains, dedicated to the cutting-edge present and future of our field, I am proud to announce a new History Initiative that will also recognize the long and amazing past of pulmonary vascular medicine (PVM).

As our understanding of PVM increases by leaps and bounds in this Information Age, it becomes ever more important to increase our understanding and appreciation of our field all the way back to the legendary Shen Nung, the Father of Chinese Medicine, who lived c. 2800 BC, or roughly two millennia before Hippocrates.

Pulmonary vascular medicine is of course of relevance to all people everywhere, and the critical advances in our field have occurred in all lands. The intent of our PVRI History Initiative is not merely to compile names and dates and chronologies of achievement, it is also to glean nuggets of wisdom with which all of us might enrich our present and our future. Here are its seven key features and functions.

1. Maintain a History Initiative website where scientists and scholars of PVM can share information, interact with each other, and contribute original articles.
2. Encourage research projects on the history of PVM. This includes our establishment of a Research Fellowship for the history of pulmonary hypertension and pulmonary vascular medicine.
3. Reprint milestone historical articles and books that played an important role in the development of our current concept and understanding of PVM. These publications will include authentic papers with commentary detailing their value in the research, diagnosis and treatment of pulmonary hypertension.
4. Presenting history in terms of individuals with whom people can identify, as opposed to relating it in terms of huge impersonal events, makes it more human and easier to grasp. So we will establish a "Who's Who in Pulmonary Vascular Medicine[®]," a biographical index or database of people past and present who increased

or enhanced our knowledge and understanding of PVM. Each biography of 500-2,000 words will include the person's life highlights, main achievements and milestones, and major publications. This biographical index will be hosted on the PVRI website's special historical section, while selected articles from it will be published in *Pulmonary Circulation*.

5. Commission and encourage the writing of biographies and autobiographies of PVM scientists living and deceased. Where possible, this will include interviewing scientists about their careers and achievements, as well as their reflections and predictions.
6. Establish a new image archive of historical artifacts or objects relating to PVM. This includes images, graphs, diagrams, instruments, and any other materials that have been used to increase our understanding of PVM. For this image archive, we are looking for images with commentary and references.
7. Regularly publish original articles and biographies in a special section of our quarterly journal, *Pulmonary Circulation*. In the next issue, Vol. 1, No. 2, we will feature a paper on the discovery of the pulmonary circulation by Ibn al-Nafis, who accurately described the pulmonary circulation in the 13th Century, daring to correct Galen's earlier error. This will be followed in subsequent issues by papers on such 16th-Century physicians as Michael Servetus, Realdus Columbus, and others (Figure 1).

Whether you are an established or younger scientist working in PVM today, or a professional in the History of Medicine, we welcome your research or review articles on the ancient and modern history of pulmonary vascular medicine.

We also invite you to discuss this project with us, welcome your comments, and sincerely hope you will join us as both a frequent contributor and a regular reader of our History Initiative.

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“When hearing something unusual, do not preemptively reject it, for that would be folly. Indeed, horrible things may be true, and familiar and praised things may prove to be lies. Truth is truth unto itself, not because crowds of people say it is truth.”

—Ibn al-Nafis (1210-1288), in his *Sharh’ al Qanun*

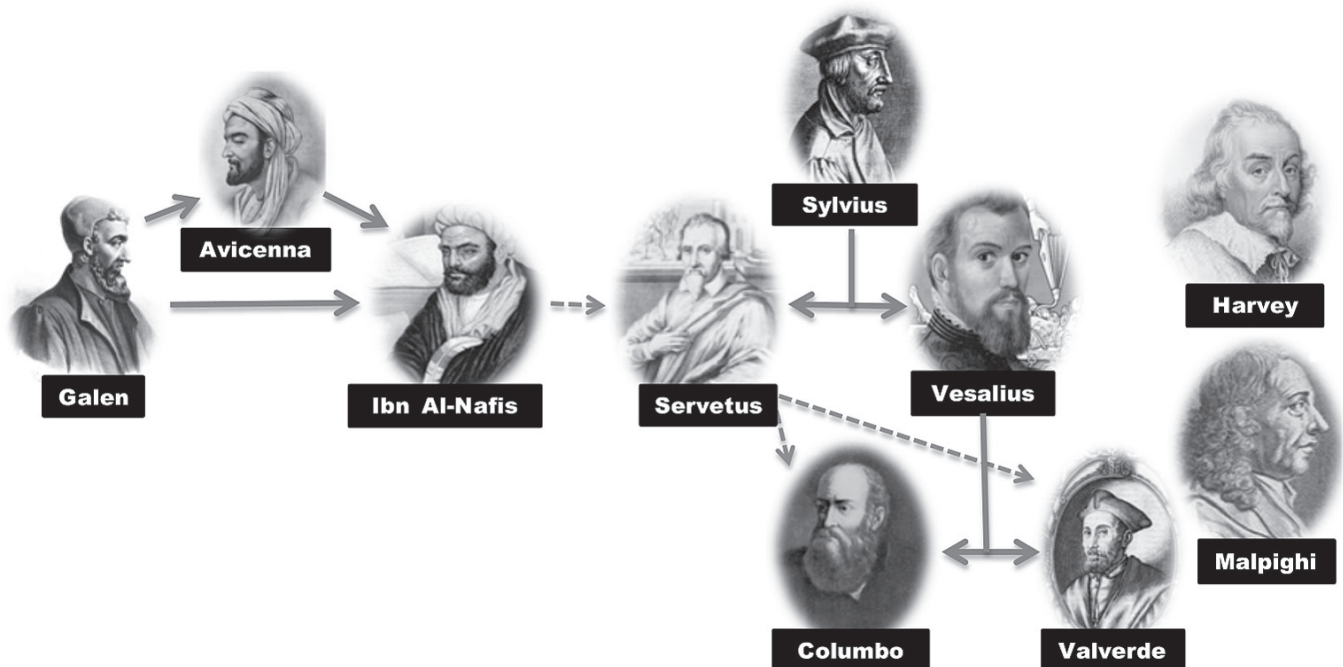


Figure 1: The main players in the description of pulmonary circulation from antiquity till the end of the 17th Century (solid arrows represent direct influence, dotted arrows represent doubtful or partial influence).

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—Ghazwan Butrous