

## Giants in Chest Medicine



### Arthur P. Wheeler, MD, FCCP

Gordon R. Bernard, MD  
Nashville, TN

Art Wheeler, an Eagle Scout at the age of 16, has been a community servant all of his adult life. He was a doctor for all seasons in that he was a superb clinician, investigator, writer, leader, and most of all an outstanding teacher. He was a multiengine, instrument-rated commercial pilot, and also has a long list of awards documenting the respect and appreciation he garnered in each of these categories. Some I would like to highlight include: the Cohen award for ability and compassion (University of Maryland); the Hillman, Morgan, University, and Reiss awards for teaching (Vanderbilt University); the Friend of Nursing and Nursing Team awards; and a continual listing in the Best Doctors in America.

Dr Wheeler graduated with honors from the University of Maryland in 1978 and attended medical school at the University of Maryland, finishing in 1982. From there, he began his residency in internal medicine at Vanderbilt University, completing it and moving on to become chief resident in 1986. He went on to train in pulmonary and critical care medicine under Kenneth Brigham, himself a giant in chest medicine. Ultimately, he was invited to remain on the faculty at Vanderbilt, where he rose to the rank of Professor in 2011.

During his time at Vanderbilt, I worked with Art and as a team we explored the role of cytokines and the arachidonic acid cascade, especially tumor necrosis



Arthur P. Wheeler, MD, FCCP

factor- $\alpha$ , thromboxane, and prostacyclin in the response to endotoxin in sheep. He soon developed an interest in studying these same mediators and related compounds in humans with sepsis and ARDS with an eye toward identifying potential new treatment options for these syndromes that carried a substantial morbidity and mortality. Such randomized prospective interventions as cyclooxygenase inhibition with ibuprofen in sepsis, n-acetylcysteine/procysteine as potential free radical scavengers in ARDS, low tidal volume ventilation in ARDS, optimal fluid management strategies in ARDS, and antibodies to tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$  in severe sepsis, along with many others, were explored. He was even successful in leading other intensive care leaders at Vanderbilt to participate in a cluster-randomized trial of chlorhexidine bathing of intensive care unit patients to prevent infection.

Perhaps Dr Wheeler's greatest legacy is his love of nurturing and developing young scientists and practitioners. His chief residency at Vanderbilt was only the beginning of a lifelong odyssey dedicated to teaching. Over his career, he published 167 original works and 17 book chapters and delivered 315 invited lectureships. He coauthored "Critical Care Essentials" with John Marini, first published in 1989 and that underwent three additional editions, the last of which was published in 2010. They were coauthors, not

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR/AFFILIATIONS:** Gordon R. Bernard, MD, is from the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine.

**FINANCIAL/NONFINANCIAL DISCLOSURES:** None declared.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** See interview of Dr Wheeler online at [journal.publications.chestnet.org](http://journal.publications.chestnet.org).

**CORRESPONDENCE TO:** Gordon R. Bernard, MD, Room T-1208 Medical Center North, Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, 1161 21st Ave S, Nashville, TN 37232; e-mail: [Gordon.bernard@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:Gordon.bernard@vanderbilt.edu)

Copyright © 2016 American College of Chest Physicians. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

**DOI:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chest.2016.02.645>

coeditors—it is unusual in this day and age for a standard textbook to be authored by only two people. This extraordinarily popular book was a “must-read” for students, residents, and all others interested in the safe and effective practice of critical care medicine. Dr Wheeler pioneered the development of a critical care nurse practitioner service at Vanderbilt that has become a model for the nation as the country continues to try to deal with the shortage of critical care physicians. Over the years, I have had the privilege of reviewing the course evaluations sent in by students and residents after a training rotation with Dr Wheeler. Not just once, but dozens of times, the evaluation contained a comment something like: “Dr Wheeler is the best teacher I have had in my entire life.” Need anything more be said?

### Suggested Readings

Wheeler AP, Hardie WD, Bernard GR. Studies of an antiendotoxin antibody in preventing the physiologic changes of endotoxemia in awake sheep. *Am Rev Respir Dis.* 1990;142:775-781.

Wheeler AP, Jesmok G, Brigham KL. Tumor necrosis factor's effects on lung mechanics, gas exchange, and airway reactivity in sheep. *J Appl Physiol.* 1990;68:2542-2549.

Hardie WD, Wheeler AP, Wright PW, Swindell BS, Bernard GR. Effect of cyclooxygenase inhibition on amphotericin B induced lung injury in awake sheep. *J Infect Dis.* 1992;166:134-138.

Wheeler AP, Hardie WD, Bernard GR. The role of cyclooxygenase products in tumor necrosis factor alpha-induced lung injury in awake sheep. *Am Rev Respir Dis.* 1992;145:632-639.

Bernard GR, Wheeler AP, Arons MA, et al. A trial of antioxidants n-acetyl cysteine and procysteine in the acute respiratory distress syndrome. *Chest.* 1997;112:164-172.

Bernard GR, Wheeler AP, Russell JA, et al. Effects of ibuprofen on the physiology, lactic acidosis and survival of sepsis syndrome. *N Engl J Med.* 1997;336:912-918.

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) Clinical Trials Network. Ventilation with lower tidal volumes as compared with traditional tidal volumes for acute lung injury and the acute respiratory distress syndrome. *N Engl J Med.* 2000;342:1301-1308.

The National Heart Lung and Blood Institute Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) Clinical Trials Network. Comparison of two fluid management strategies in acute lung injury. *N Engl J Med.* 2006;354:2564-2575.

Rice TW, Wheeler AP, Morris PE, et al. Safety and efficacy of affinity purified, anti-tumor necrosis factor-alpha, ovine fab for injection (CytoFab™) in severe sepsis. *Crit Care Med.* 2006;34:2271-2281.

Marini JJ, Wheeler AP. *Critical Care Medicine: The Essentials.* 4th ed. Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott, Williams and Wilkins; 2010.

Noto MJ, Domenico HJ, Byrne DW, et al. Chlorhexidine bathing and healthcare-associated infections: a randomized clinical trial. *JAMA.* 2015;313:369-378.