IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Program Chair’s Final Report

The 36th Annual Meeting and Scientific Session of the International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantation is almost upon us. The content of our plenary sessions, major symposia, sunrise symposia and abstract sessions that will be presented in Washington DC in April is finalized and ready to educate, innovate and inspire you.

The program committee has worked hard to bring you the very best work from around the world while also preserving the uniqueness of the ISHLT as a truly international and multi-disciplinary society with a unified aim to improve outcomes for patients with advanced heart and lung disease.

This year will see a record number of more than 800 posters presented across our daily poster sessions. I would strongly encourage all members to make attendance at one or more of the poster sessions a priority in your meeting schedule. The level of interaction and resultant buzz achieved in a well-attended poster session is hard to re-create in any other format at our meeting and many of those presenting are early career clinicians and researchers who will form the future of our disciplines and our society.

We have hand-picked 284 members to act as poster champions to help generate the level of interest and interaction that the work presented as posters deserves. Please join our champions and demonstrate that you support our early career investigators in their endeavors by discussing their work in the sessions.

The 2016 meeting is one in which we aim to enhance your digital experience. The mobile meeting app will have enhanced capabilities this year including a more specific way to build your personal schedule, view presentation slides, engage with news & social media including our Twitter feed on the app home page.

The Annual Meeting only comes together because of the huge number of volunteer and Staff hours dedicated to the process over many months. I would like to thank all the program committee members for their generous support and staff for their expertise and dedication to the success of the Annual Meeting.

Andrew Fisher, 2016 ISHLT Program Chair

Disclosure statement: The author has no conflicts of interest to disclose.
How To Access Program Information

ISHLT is moving toward making the Annual Meeting a greener meeting. There are many ways to get more detailed information about ISHLT 2016 from digital sources.

**ISHLT 2016 MOBILE MEETING APP:**
Via the mobile meeting app you can explore the entire meeting by session type, day, target audience, or speaker. You can create your personal schedule for the meeting, take notes, share contacts, and access presentation slides, maps, as well as local and attendee information. You can also use it to access news and social media. The app is available for iPhone, iPod Touch, iPad, and Android. To install the App on your device, [click here](#).

**ISHLT 2016 FINAL PROGRAM EBOOK:**
Downloadable to any device, this book has it all, and we mean ALL, in a book format. This is the definitive record of ISHLT 2016 and contains everything that has traditionally been included in the printed Final program: committee rosters; council leadership rosters; award recipient lists; all presentation information, including abstract titles and authors; Academy scientific program schedules, meeting times and locations, continuing education credit information, meeting highlights, floor plans, list of exhibitors, Academy programs, corporate event and industry theater listings, and more! No photos, no color – just the all the information you ever wanted. For instructions to download to your device, [click here](#).

**2016 ITINERARY BUILDER and ABSTRACT VIEWER:**
Use this online tool to search or browse abstract presentations, invited lectures, meetings, and sessions by day, target audience, session type, title, author, keyword, etc. and create a personal meeting itinerary to sync to your calendar or mobile device. You can also click on the hyperlink for each abstract to view or print the full abstract, or add to your itinerary. To access, [click here](http://www.abstractsonline.com/pp8/#/3860).
Highlighted Sessions & Presentations

BASIC SCIENCE & TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH

WEDNESDAY

*Tissue Engineering for Dummies: How to Build a Heart or Lung*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 6
Doris Taylor

*Cell Manipulation for Transplant Tolerance*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 6
Joren C. Madsen

*Why to Biobank? How It Has Advanced Our Understanding of Transplant Immunobiology*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 20
Peter Heeger

SATURDAY

*The Influence of the Microbiota in Immunity and Transplantation*
Plenary Session
Jonathan S. Bromberg

*Precision Medicine in Organ Transplantation: Moving from Off the Rack to Bespoke*
Plenary Session
Alexandre Loupy

HEART FAILURE & TRANSPLANTATION

WEDNESDAY

*Advanced Plumbing: How to Manage Complex Connections in Adult Congenital Heart Transplant Recipients*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 5
Jonathan M. Chen

*DCD Hearts: An Additional Resource or the Answer to the Donor Crisis?*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 9
Kumud Dhital

*Deconstructing the Right Ventricle: An Overview of RV Structure and Function, Mechanical, Electrical, and Chemical Signaling*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 16
J. Eduardo Rame

*Management of Antibodies in Heart Transplantation: Insights from 2016 Consensus Conference*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 23
Jon A. Kobashigawa

**INFECTION DISEASES**

**WEDNESDAY**

*The Fungus Among Us: Scedosporium and Other Emerging Fungi*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 7
Orla Morrissey

*The Coming Apocalypse: Resistant Gram negatives and B. cepaciae*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 7
Shirish Huprikar

*The CMV Toolkit: What IS on the Horizon?*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 12
Robin Avery

*Donor Derived Infections: The European Perspective*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 26
Paolo Grossi

*The ABCs of NAT for HIV, HCV and HBV in Increased Risk Donors*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 26
Michael G. Ison

*The HIV-positive Donor: "Hope" or Havoc?*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 26
Emily A. Blumberg

**FRIDAY**

*Outbreak! Infection Clusters and the Transplant Center*
Sunrise Symposium 6
Barbara Alexander

**MECHANICAL CIRCULATORY SUPPORT**
WEDNESDAY

Alternative Approaches to Recurrent Bleeding - Octreotide, Hormonal Therapy, Etc
Pre-Meeting Symposium 1
Nir Uriel

DEBATE: Minimally Invasive Implantations is the Procedure of Choice
Pre-Meeting Symposium 22
Jan Schmitto & Daniel J. Goldstein

THURSDAY

ABSTRACT: HeartMate 3 Fully Magnetically Levitated Left Ventricular Assist Device for the Treatment of Advanced Heart Failure - 1 Year Results from the CE Mark Trial
Opening Plenary
Thomas Krabatsch

FRIDAY

Flow, Shear and MCS Coagulopathies: Mechanisms, Design Implications, Next Steps
Sunrise Symposium 1
Mark Slaughter

Smarter Pumps: Hemodynamic Monitoring and Physiological Control
Sunrise Symposium 1
Francesco Moscato

SATURDAY

ABSTRACT: PREVENTion of HeartMate II Pump Thrombosis Through Clinical Management (PREVENT)
Plenary Session
Simon Maltais

NURSING, HEALTH SCIENCES & ALLIED HEALTH

WEDNESDAY

Genomics: A Crash Course
Pre-Meeting Symposium 14
Edward Cantu, III

Behavioral Genetics: Is There a Future for Personalized Medicine to Support Patient Self-Management in Transplantation?
Pre-Meeting Symposium 14
Sabina De Geest

DEBATE 3: Substance Use: It’s OK To Dabble
Pre-Meeting Symposium 19
Mary Amanda Dew & Jay Baumwol

PATHOLOGY

WEDNESDAY

Pre-Meeting Symposium 21: Unraveling “Chronic Rejection” in the Heart
M. Elizabeth H. Hammond; Manon Huibers; William M. Baldwin, III; Martin J. Goddard; Sonja Schrepfer

PEDIATRIC THORACIC TRANSPLANTATION & HEART FAILURE

WEDNESDAY

Pre-Meeting Symposium 13: Child’s Play: Infectious Risk After Transplant During Everyday Life
Michele Estabrook; Nicolaus Schwerk; Marian G. Michaels; Shirish Huprikar; Nancy P. Blumenthal; Lara Danziger-Isakov

Pre-Meeting Symposium 27: VAD in Patients with Congenital Heart Disease
Jennifer Conway; Charles E. Canter; Leigh C. Reardon; David Crossland & Heather J. Ross

SATURDAY

Sunrise Symposium 11: Controversies in Pediatric Heart Failure
Robert E. Shaddy; Robert G. Weintraub; Elizabeth Blume; Anne I. Dipchand

PHARMACY & PHARMACOLOGY

WEDNESDAY

Hepatitis C Medications - New Armamentarium Has Arrived!
Pre-Meeting Symposium 28
Adam B. Cochrane

Chronic Hepatitis C Candidate - Timing of Intervention
Pre-Meeting Symposium 28
Paolo Grossi
PHARM

SATURDAY

Physiotherapy Considerations in the Ambulation of ECMO Patients
Sunrise Symposium 10
Kate Hayes

Genetic Predictors of Medication-induced Adverse Effects
Sunrise Symposium 12
Christina Aquilante

Therapeutic Gene Modulation - What Can We Learn From CF?
Sunrise Symposium 12
Denis Hadjiliadis

PULMONARY HYPERTENSION

WEDNESDAY

Shrinking with Age: The Role of Telomerases in ILD and PH-ILD
Pre-Meeting Symposium 4
Leann Silhan

Monitoring and Therapeutic Options for Pulmonary Hypertension in Left Heart Disease
Pre-Meeting Symposium 10
Raymond L. Benza

BPA vs PEA: Selection Criteria for the Appropriate Use of Balloon Pulmonary Angioplasty
Pre-Meeting Symposium 18
Elie Fadel

The Pathobiology of Inflammation in Pulmonary Hypertension
Pre-Meeting Symposium 25
Marc Humbert

Combination Therapy in PAH: What Do The Clinical Trials Tell US?
Pre-Meeting Symposium 29
Paul A. Corris

PULMONARY TRANSPLANTATION
**WEDNESDAY**

*The Future of Lung Preservation Techniques*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 3
Gregor Warnecke

*Heart-Lung Transplantation is Dead - The Right Ventricle Will Remodel*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 11
Walter Klepetko

*Cell-based Therapy for CLAD - Current Evidence and Future Prospects*
Pre-Meeting Symposium 24
Cesar Keller

**FRIDAY**

*When is Malignancy a Contraindication To or Indication For Lung Transplantation?*
Sunrise Symposium 3
David Weill

**SATURDAY**

*Integrating Quality of Life and Survival Outcomes in Lung Transplantation*
Sunrise Symposium 9
Roger Yusen

**JOURNAL OF HEART & LUNG TRANSPLANTATION**

**FRIDAY**

*Symposium 30: JHLT & ISHLT: The Year in a Capsule*
Mandeep R. Mehra; Eugene C. DePasquale; Andreas Zuckermann; Howard J. Huang; John Dark; Ranny Goldwasser; David Morales; Bradley Maron; Myung H. Park
Get More Out of the Meeting with Tweeting! Use hashtag: #ISHLT2016

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The modern way to stay connected at the 2016 ISHLT Annual Meeting is to follow us on Twitter - the online social network that connects you to news, stories, pictures and conversations that you’ll find interesting.

Why Twitter?
Twitter allows you to use 140 characters to put down your thoughts in a message. It also lets you follow other Twitter users, and retweet interesting content. You can begin conversations with other users by typing their Twitter handle (person’s user name) for example, @person. We highly encourage you to join our online conversations as we keep you up-to-date with the latest news, meeting information and events taking place at this year’s meeting.

We will be Tweeting before, during and after the Annual Meeting in Nice, France, using the hashtag #ISHLT2016.

If you already have a Twitter account, go and Follow us now! (@ISHLT or https://twitter.com/ishlt). If you want a Twitter account, you can easily go to www.twitter.com and create one for free! If you don’t have an account and choose not to create one, you can still search for #ISHLT2016 on Twitter and read what is posted.

The Power of the hashtag
In the Twitter world, a pound sign (#) is called a “hashtag”. It is a keyword tag for the tweet allowing other followers to find it. Just by simply hashtagging #ISHLT2016 you are following the trend and enlightening other followers on content associated with the 2016 Annual meeting.

Looking to learn more about Twitter, Twitter lingo and how to use it? Below are some great links for you to look at:

http://usat.ly/1bBzXEO
http://read.bi/1d15Qpn
http://twiends.com/how-to-twitter

WARNING: Once you get the hang of it, Twitter is entertaining, informative and addicting. Have fun and tweet away!
7 Super Tips That Will Make You a Tweeting Pro

1. If you reach the max 140 characters in your tweet, try abbreviating words to make more space for your message.
2. Found a tweet that you found interesting? Go ahead and retweet it (RT)! Doing so will allow you to re-share the tweet, giving credit to that source or follower.
3. Keep it professional and respectful. Stay away from foul language and thoughts. Remember, Twitter is a public forum. Once you say it online, it’s hard to take it back.
4. When creating a message, don’t overuse hashtags. 2 or 3 are enough for your message.
5. Be sure to give credit where credit is due. Always make sure to credit the person you are paraphrasing or the source you are quoting.
6. There will be a ton of eyes on your content. Be sure to Tweet accurate information for them to follow.
7. Let the world know who you are by showing your personality through each tweet!

Disclosure statement: The author has no conflicts of interest to disclose.
Top 5 Reason to Visit Washington, DC

5. The Attractions!
USA’s capital city has it all: world famous museums (many of them free), historical monuments, the Library of Congress (largest library in the world), the National Zoo, beautiful parks including the Tidal Basin with its gorgeous cherry trees and beautiful memorials lining its shores, and much more.

4. The Food!
Bring your appetite – Washington, DC has a lot of unknown, off-the-beaten-path places to eat with plenty of restaurants packed in the tiny district. Bakeries and coffee shops are easy to come by. With a mixture of inhabitants from countries all over the world, the DC cuisine reflects an international flavor sure to please anyone’s palate.

3. The Weather!
With historical temperatures during the last week in April of around 70˚ F (21˚ C), springtime in Washington, DC is a glorious time of year to visit.

2. The Tours
One of the best ways to explore and learn about Washington DC is through a guided tour. See the sights, visit the museums and monuments, experience the culture, and maybe even run into a ghost or vampire - the choices are endless and the memories will last a lifetime. To learn more or to sign up for a tour, visit http://washington.org/.

And the #1 reason to visit Washington, DC in April 2016:

1. The ISHLT Annual Meeting!
Each day is packed with valuable educational content (28 Pre-Meeting Symposia, 12 Sunrise Symposia, 3 Concurrent Symposia, 52 Concurrent Oral Sessions, 12 Mini Oral Sessions, and 3 Poster Sessions), giving you ample opportunities to learn about current practices, emerging technologies and medical advances related to heart and lung transplantation and advanced heart and lung disease.

CME, ABTC and ACPE credit will be offered!

In addition, networking opportunities abound at the ISHLT Annual Meeting. Get to know your peers, uncover ideas, spark inspiration, collaborate, and help others!

Remember – pre-registration ends April 8 so don’t delay, register today!
Procrastination, Preparation, Practice and Presentation to Present like a U.S. President, not a Presidential Candidate

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There were the PRs for all in Prague and Montreal and last year, we encouraged you to let your presentation Purr in San Diego and was carried with Elegance and Style in Nice.

This year it is time again to prepare to deliver a good speech or make a great presentation, let's again refer to the January 2012 ISHLT Links, Issue 8, Volume 3, On Teaching and Learning. From this article, take note of the following points: 1) the one who learns the most while sharing knowledge is the teacher or presenter, and 2) when teaching, presenting your poster, delivering your lecture, or writing your paper, you should ask yourself, "What do I want the intended audience to know five years from now?" Perhaps better advice can be found in the rules for posters and presentations. Finally, the best advice for the success of ISHLT 2012 in Prague is in the June 2011 ISHLT Links, Issue 1, Volume 3 article, On to Prague, from our Program Chair, Stuart Sweet: "brevity and clarity will be key, particularly in oral presentations."

PROCRASTINATION
Whatever means you have used to overcome procrastination, now is the time to prepare but be mindful of Benjamin Franklin's quote, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail." You will also find more of his wise words on procrastination in January 2012 Vol. 3, Issue 8, Quotable Quotes.

According to the famous Irish Playwright and Critic, George Bernard Shaw, Mark Twain is the "American Voltaire" who taught Shaw this great piece of wisdom: "Telling the truth’s the funniest joke in the world." This American Voltaire was subjected to procrastination, all the time: "I was born lazy. I am no lazier now than I was forty years ago, but that is because I reached the limit forty years ago. You can’t go beyond possibility."

PREPARATION
Knowing these basic rules for being prepared will make you aware of your allotted time (see Vol. 3, Issue 1, Rules of Engagement). Within this allotted time, your presentation is to comprise no more
than 75% of the total time for you to speak. Why? You want your presentation to be memorable. To be memorable, find a way to captivate and/or involve the audience. Involving the audience is easier than captivating them. Save time for questions and answers and invoke the Chinese proverb "Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand."

While preparing, ask, what will my audience gain by this slide? What will my presentation lose? Be aware how the audience divides their time between you and the screen. Slides can interfere with the audience-lecturer relationship. What happens when the lights are dimmed? It induces sleep! With this thought, remember-NEVER read from your slides!!! They are there to enhance and clarify, not duplicate, not become a substitute and certainly, not distract. The slides are to supplement not prompt your talk. What you say must differ from what the audience reads, so keep your slides simple and direct. Each slide should convey one idea, have one diagram or contain one or two pictures. As a gentle reminder: Living by slides could lead to dying by slides.

Finally, do not use a pointer. The audience is distracted when you turn away, and the microphone may lose your voice. If there are multi-screen projections, the pointer is seen on only one. Using the mouse is an alternative, but you have to look at the screen, thereby you lose eye contact. Instead, build pointers into your slides-arrows on a photo, underline a key part of a table, encircle the data you are referring to, etc.

**PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE**

During preparation, be self-critical and practice. Videotape yourself. Your goals are to liven up your presentation, so practice being dynamic, informative, interesting and persuasive. Consider your presentation as a performance (although tempered with the notion that you are not competing for an academy award!). Study the mannerisms of great lecturers or your favorite speakers. To be an effective lecturer, you must plan, begin, and think about your audience.

While practicing your speech, vary your sentence length. Use short action verbs and short crisp sentences. Long complex words are more difficult to pronounce correctly in front of 2000 people. Use rhetorical questions (frequently more informative) rather than making declarative statements. Be aware of your tone of voice, variations in volume, and appropriate gestures. **Do not speak in monotone.** Vary your vocal inflections from loud to soft and from a high to low pitch. Paradoxically, the audience pays closer attention when you become quiet or soften your voice. Convey the idea to the audience that there's no place you'd rather be than talking about the topic you are enthusiastically delivering free from any distraction. Passion—and commitment to the subject—matter most when giving a presentation.

**PRESENTATION**

Before the session starts, always check the podium and, ideally, talk to the projectionist, if there is one. Will they display your opening disclosure slide? What mechanism advances the slides (mouse, button, keyboard)? Who controls the lights? Is there a timer controlled by the Chair? Doing all this ahead of time makes you look professional and avoids embarrassing pauses and gaps.
Remember to stand upright. Don’t lean on the lectern (unless very drunk from the night before) or stand still for a long time. Walk around, and consider standing in front of the lectern instead of behind it. Use hand gestures economically and be careful about swaying or using bizarre or repetitive gestures.

And remember, appearance is important. The old adage applies here, especially for us silver-tongued, graying bunch: "We may not be any good, but at least we try to or think we look good." In other words, dress to impress! During your presentation, smile, make eye contact and choose your mood. You know your topic, so show passion for it. Bring enthusiasm and delight to the subject!

Quick helpful tips:

- Begin your presentation by introducing your topic. - Introduction
- Approach and means to support or refute your topic. - Methods
- Talk about your topic by giving details and various means of supporting your topic. - Results and Discussion
- Finally, summarize your topic. - Conclusions

Simply put, Tell the audience what you will say, then say it and repeat what you have just told them. Keep your messages clear and simple. Most importantly DO NOT EXCEED YOUR TIME LIMIT by cramming too much material in your presentation. Know your time limit—this applies just as much during hours as after.

With these points in mind, you are now on the road to a great formal presentation. Through repetition and review you will know your topic better than most—if not the entire—audience, therefore you must keep your presentation simple, especially simple from your point of view.

Finally with repetitious repetition:

1. Keep it simple
2. Know your time limit and stick to it
3. Include full disclosures at the beginning and references at the end
4. Leave time for questions

Oh and did we mention, PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!

This article has been modified from other versions which initially appeared in the March 2012 and 2015 issues of the ISHLT Links Newsletter, Procrastination, Preparation, Presentation, Prague and the April 2013 and 2014 issues, etc. etc. We thought we would assist the procrastinators, then again maybe NOT by putting in this issue.

Disclosure statement: The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.
ISHLT NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

IMACS Registry Meeting

The ISHLT Mechanically Assisted Circulatory Support (IMACS) registry is up and running! IMACS is an international registry comprised of patients from around the world who have received durable mechanical circulatory support. The registry is open to all hospitals/countries that wish to participate in IMACS, with (limited) automatic data transfer from INTERMACS, EUROMACS and J-MACS into IMACS. Please visit the ISHLT IMACS website at http://www.ishlt.org/registries/mcsdDatabase.asp for more information. In addition, we will be covering the IMACS registry in detail, along with the research proposal application process and the statistical support provided for approved research proposals, at the annual ISHLT meeting on Friday, April 29th from 12:00pm – 2:00 pm (EST) at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park, Harding Meeting Room. To reserve your spot for the IMACS meeting, please go to https://ishlt.wufoo.com/confirm/2016-imacs-meeting. We encourage all centers that have interest in joining IMACS to send a representative!

ISHLT Award Winners & Grant Recipients

Congratulations to Sir Roy Calne on being awarded the ISHLT Pioneer Award, and Adrian & Jean Kantrowitz, who will be receiving the ISHLT Lifetime Achievement Award. We would also like to extend congratulations to the winners of the abstract awards, grants & scholarships, and travel awards that will be announced during the Plenary Session on Saturday, April 30.

Click here to see a full list of the awards that will be presented during this session.

Pre-Meeting Registration Deadline

If you are planning to attend the ISHLT 36th Annual Meeting and Scientific Sessions, or one of the 2016 Academies, please keep in mind that the deadline to pre-register is Friday, April 8, at 11:59 PM EDT. Registrations received/postmarked after April 8 will not be processed and such registrants must go to Onsite Registration to register for the meeting. Higher onsite registration fees will apply. Fees for onsite Annual Meeting registration will be $350.00 more than the early bird fees, and fees for onsite Academy registration will be $100.00 more than the early bird fees. Avoid long lines and additional costs by registering NOW.

Register for the Meeting

Annual Meeting Website
A Final Summation of the U.S. Presidents for the ISHLT

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There have been 43 U.S. Presidents inaugurated as 44 times with a median and mean age 55 ± 6.3 years, range [42 (Teddy Roosevelt – youngest inaugurated and Kennedy age 43 – youngest elected) to nearly 70 (Reagan, 16 days shy of his 70th birthday)]. Grover Cleveland was notable for being the only one elected for two consecutive terms, as the U.S.’ 22nd and 24th President. Also, Cleveland was the only multimillionaire from the reconstruction era. There are many ways to organize and characterize the U.S. Presidents. In an effort to reflect on and summarize the journey to the 36th Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C with America’s leaders through all issues of Volume 7 of the Links, let’s examine some interesting and meaningful characterizations that might provide us some insight on leadership for the ISHLT. Obviously, as an International Society, we have had different presidents from different nations as well as female presidents and deservedly so in the ISHLT. If you include the number of U.S. vice presidents for 227 years in contrast, all 90 presidents and vice-presidents have been male and all but one (incumbent, Barack Obama) were white with a variety of backgrounds.

By all accounts, America’s inimitable leader, Abraham Lincoln, who emerged from a single-room log cabin in the backwoods of extreme poverty with virtually no education and the first U.S President born west of the Appalachian Mountains, has been consistently ranked among the greatest of all U.S Presidents. He broke through a sea of less than mediocre and conflict-averse leaders, at a time of civil unrest, who led us in preserving the Union during the Civil War, proclaimed the emancipation to end slavery and delivered his famous remarks at Gettysburg. Lincoln stands out in this second era of Presidents (1850 – 1897), who collectively rank among the worse, the poorest and least likely to live past age 70 with rapid turnover in office. The first 12 presidents who make up the first era were integral in expanding the United States from the original English Colonies to the Pacific coast. This revolutionary group collectively rank among our best Presidents with George Washington and Thomas Jefferson towering above others. The first six were among the founding fathers and possessed an aristocratic heir in the new democracy. It was these genius and bold visionary founders who declared their independence in the quest for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness and conceived of the U.S. Presidency and made it strong and independent. Andrew Jackson broke this Virginian and Bostonian rule who defined the first rags to riches story with minimal education and became the fifth wealthiest President. This revolutionary and expansionist group is also collectively ranked amongst richest and with a slow turnover serving as President over a 61-year time frame (1789 – 1850) vs the 47-year time frame of the second era. (see figure) Of note, in a society of the self-evident truth that all men are created equal, 12 of the first 18 presidents were slave owners and some tried to protect it. Although Van Buren, William Henry Harrison, Andrew Johnson and Grant at one time owned slaves, they didn’t own any as President. John and John Quincy Adams, Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan and Lincoln never owned slaves.
While more than half the Presidents were born or elected from a state from the original thirteen colonies and another 11 east of the Mississippi River, it wasn’t until Herbert Hoover, the first President born and elected from a state west of the Mighty Mississippi, nearly 140 years after Washington was elected. Since Hoover in 1928, eight of the last 14 Presidents were from this region with three from Texas, two California, and Obama of Hawaii was elected from Illinois. Some of our Presidents came from very poor and middling conditions and some had very little to no formal education, most notably George Washington with no education consistently ranks amongst the greatest and the second wealthiest worth over half a billion dollars. Other Presidents of wealth and privilege lend to another categorization. From *The American President* by the Kunhardts, there is a group with family ties including: John Adams and John Quincy Adams, William Henry and Benjamin Harrison, Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, George Bush and George W Bush. John F Kennedy is categorized here, his wealth, privilege and family influence positioned him as the wealthiest valued over a billion dollars, followed by the Roosevelts together nearly 200 million, the Adams and Bush families of near equal worth of around 40 million then the Harrison’s. Half the Presidents are worth 10 million dollars of more while the poorest eleven are worth a million or less. Six of the poorest served between 1857 and 1881, a tough time to be Commander-in-Chief with Lincoln and Grant among the poorest. Perhaps after all it pays to be President of the U.S., most were multi-millionaires. The most recent Presidents from the New Frontier and Technology era are worth no less than 7 million dollars each.

As far as college education and careers, eleven Presidents held no undergraduate college degree. However, the college degree does set the Presidents apart from the general population especially today, 24 have a degree from a private undergraduate college while nine possess one from a public college. Fifteen attended Ivy League schools, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Columbia and Penn. Nixon attended Duke for Law, Hoover attended Stanford for Engineering and Kennedy attended Stanford for Business. Grant and Eisenhower graduated from West Point Academy and Carter graduated from the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Most Presidents studied law but few practiced law. Lincoln was an exception, he combined the practice of law as a small time politician. Many were Generals, mostly prior to the 20th Century, the only General afterwards was Eisenhower. Although, well over a third of the U.S. Presidents were military leaders which included a dozen generals and a half dozen others of a lesser rank, the American Presidency was the first leadership office created based on the consent of the governed and independent of the preferences of blood lines and conquests. Of the Generals elected President, only Jackson and Eisenhower were revered generals that came close to standing in the heroic image as the first U.S President, General George Washington. However, Jackson’s unbridled ferociousness reduced his stature leaving only President Ike more like Washington than any other President. All in all, such military leaders were above politics and represented honor and duty rather than barter and compromise. With their first-hand experience in war, they were likely less willing than civilians to commit to any battle, they acted with military restraint. Among the other generals, General Grant was one of the greatest military leaders who proved to be a failure as a President. He was too inexperienced and unfocused to stand up in the tradition of George Washington. On the other hand, it was Lincoln and FDR with essentially no military experience who were the greatest war time leaders and have been included with Washington as the top three U.S. Presidents.
Other careers held by the Presidents included: a Political Theorist (Madison), a College Chancellor (Fillmore), a Tailor (Andrew Johnson), a Classics Professor and University President (Garfield), Teachers (Arthur, McKinley and Harding), an Author/Historian (Teddy Roosevelt), a Professor, PhD graduate and University President (Wilson), a Newspaper publisher and Insurance Salesman (Harding), a Geological Engineer (Hoover), a Farmer, Bank Clerk and Haberdasher (Truman), a Store Clerk and Peanut Farmer (Carter), and a Famous Actor (Reagan). Career politicians included Van Buren, Buchanan and Lincoln. Polk, Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson were politicians for all their adult lives. The American Presidency further subdivides the Presidents into the Compromise Choices: Pierce, Garfield, Harding and Ford; those with An Independent Cast of Mind: John Adams, Taylor, Hayes and Carter; Happenstance: Tyler, Fillmore, Andrew Johnson, Arthur, and Truman; Executive Vision – The American Way: Jefferson, Coolidge, Hoover and Reagan; Executive Vision – The World Stage: Monroe, McKinley, Wilson and George Bush; Expanding Power: Jackson, Cleveland, Teddy Roosevelt, and Nixon and The Balance of Power: Madison, Polk, Taft and Clinton. Regarding their personal styles, Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Wilson, FDR and Reagan were great communicators. Polk, Truman and LBJ lacked great oratorical skills. While Polk may have been the most organized, FDR thrived under chaos. Reagan was disconnected from the day to day operations of his administration, however he possessed dynamic magnetism with the people.

Among the most positive qualities, the best American Presidents had a strong vision for the country and humanity. The Presidents were pragmatic and realistic politicians who could lead public opinion to get things done. There were flexible for the changing needs of the common good and national interests to improve life for all Americans. They had enough foresight to see the great challenges and responded to these challenges. If they lost their creative flexibility or tried to manipulate rather than lead, they would get into trouble. Their great courage and skill as leaders give them the ability to be responsive to the challenges faced during their times. Some of the negative qualities included that some were slaveholders but most importantly the Presidents have been slow to respond to the great diversity of America. It wasn’t until World War I when there was presidential support of woman’s suffragette. It wasn’t until Harry Truman, 80 years after Lincoln that a civil rights agenda was developed. Perhaps being a great public leader doesn’t equate with being a role model in the private life of a President. FDR, JFK, LBJ and Bill Clinton come to mind.

Finally, an analysis of their causes of death sheds some light of the effect of health care in America for the last two centuries. All Presidents uniformly were among the survival of the fittest to get to their position in life and elected to public office. The Table shows a reduction of infection as a cause of death probably related to improvements in sewage and sanitation as the United States shifted from an agrarian society to an advanced industrialized society. Increasing attention to personal hygiene, vaccines and antibiotics may have also contributed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause of Death</th>
<th>1789-1850</th>
<th>1850-1897</th>
<th>1897-1960</th>
<th>1960-2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infection</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiac</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebral hemorrhage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVA</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although westernization and more of a sedentary lifestyle may have contributed to more strokes over time, the reduction of cardiac and infectious causes of death with increased longevity and more time in the post Presidential years may be the result of advanced modern medicine in the face of rapid pace technological advances and a fast paced lifestyle. The life span of our revolutionary Presidents may be the result of a selection process aided by ambition and wealth in a genteel and rustic society. Guiding values and principles coupled with an undying ambition are the marks of great leaders. Not only can they lead, they are insightful enough to be led.

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The Smithsonian, The Reflecting Pool and The ISHLT

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As we near our upcoming ISHLT Conference in Washington, D.C., excitement grows among all attendees regarding the upcoming events and learning opportunities. Now, let’s consider the conference as a metaphor for the Smithsonian Institute. Founded in 1846, the Smithsonian Institute is the world’s largest museum and research complex, comprising 19 museums and galleries and nine research facilities [1]. Interestingly, the Institute’s vision is “shaping the future by preserving our heritage, discovering new knowledge, and sharing our resources with the world,” which is strikingly similar to the vision of ISHLT. Our goal is also to discover new knowledge with research and share resources in an International fashion [1].

Commonly known simply as the “Smithsonian,” this world-renowned museum and research complex features a bountiful of stimulating origins of man and offers an abundance of opportunities showing us from whence we’ve come and where we’re headed; for example, the Latino Center, Center for Earth and Planetary Studies, and the Collection of Photographs of Women Pilots just to name a few. In attending ISHLT, we will discover a dazzling array of interests to intrigue the imagination, similar to a trip to the Smithsonian. We will be able to simultaneously trace the history of MCS and transplant and get a glimpse of the future. Strolling through the ISHLT conference center, we may note that the “Mini Oral Abstract Sessions” are taking place while the “Great Debates in MCS” are being presented down the hall. As “Heparin Monitoring” is being presented in one room, the “Future of Lung Preservation Techniques” is being discussed in another, mirroring the great Smithsonian’s ongoing discovery of new knowledge. In the same way that the Smithsonian shapes the future, ISHLT offers an “Academy Master Class in Heart Failure” and “Cardiac Transplant Medicine” to teach those eager to be a part of the future of MCS and transplant. Keep in mind as we discover, trace, stroll, network and learn with the freedom of scientific inquiry from the 36th ISHLT meeting, there are great monuments and a younger version of city akin to Greece, Rome, London and Paris combined providing us a backdrop for liberty and justice for all.

In conclusion, take advantage of this opportunity to explore the many offerings of the ISHLT Conference as you would a Smithsonian museum – and take the time to explore the Smithsonians themselves!

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References:
Hamilton and Alexander Hamilton: Grace notes from history

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I recently had the pleasure of getting to know one of the founding brothers in a most enjoyable fashion. I read the book, Alexander Hamilton by Ron Chernow, and saw Lin-Manuel Miranda’s mostly rap musical, Hamilton.

Chernow’s book is a 700 plus page, 10 pitch opus that’s well written; it’s a big, savory book. Reading this book was a pleasure, and Chernow’s style allows the reader’s psyche to wrap around Hamilton’s as he wove his way through the landscape of early America. Hamilton was a founding brother: a charismatic autodidact who shaped a progressive world. He was handsome, fluent in French and upwardly mobile. No wonder he was so attractive to men and women.

And the musical? Truly, saying that I “saw the musical” doesn’t quite describe the experience. Last Wednesday my family and I sat in second row orchestra seats at the Richard Roger’s Theater in New York, watching a matinee performance of Hamilton. I bought tickets directly from the theater months before the entire world discovered the musical and now insist on paying three times the theater box office price. We came upon Hamilton while cruising You-tube, catching Lin-Manuel singing the opening song at a 2009 White House poetry jam when it was still The Hamilton Mixtape and not a fully formed musical story, just a conglomeration of songs that Lin birthed after reading Chernow’s novel. We watched this recording half a year or so before the play hit Broadway. This bit was breathtaking, and yes, we were stopped in our tracks. My sons played it over and over, until they could recite the lyrics, with the right inflection and rap beat. That song spawned an investigation of Hamiltonian history, which of course dovetailed into the history of the United States.

Hamilton is not a “musical.” Yes, it has many elements of a “classic” musical, with a strong overture that introduces the main characters and sets the stage, with repetitive and catchy musical themes that become a character’s signature, with lively action, brilliant staging and with a “truly grand” grand finale. However, it is an elevated and inspired modern opera. Lin-Manuel weaves the Chernow novel, his inspiration, so neatly into the Libretto that there’s arguably no need for a more definitive read. The musically inclined may wish to forego the book, however I would entreat them not to. The composite experience is part history lesson and part modern application. My sons, husband and I have a renewed appreciation for a timeless man who was often the “smartest in the room,” even in the presence of such founding brothers as Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and, yes, sadly, Burr. As I’m the lone reader of the Chernow novel in our family, I’ve found myself providing the back-story to events portrayed on stage. The musical Hamilton takes a few grace notes with history, enough to make the story and the action on stage propel forward in a more interesting fashion.
Take, for example, Alexander’s wife, Eliza, the love of his life (though not the only love of his life) and her sister, Angelica. Both Lin-Manuel and Chernow show that Angelica and Eliza were founding sisters, in the thick of the revolutionary zeitgeist. Both authors captured their love triad. Lin has Angelica introduce Eliza to Hamilton at “A Winter’s Ball.” Effective drama, though not quite the scene that Chernow portrays in his book. Alexander and Eliza’s romance begins in Morristown in 1780, when Eliza, daughter of prominent and wealthy senator Philip Schuyler, arrives with military escort to stay with relatives. Their paths cross and cross again, and with more intended meetings within a month they are betrothed. Eliza’s stunning, intelligent, and well-read sister, Angelica, whom Hamilton later meets, was already married. In the musical version, Angelica, as the oldest daughter of a father who “has no sons” understood that her only job was to “marry rich.” In reality, Philip Schuyler sired three sons and five daughters. Marriage into this large family gave Hamilton a currency that he’d been longing for his whole life: instant legitimacy of social position, instant family loyalty and potential wealth, though Hamilton never tapped this latter aspect of the Schuyler clan, desiring instead to prove and live by his own worth. Alexander’s relationship with Angelica fed a part of him that his steadfast, practical, unintellectual and in some ways naive Eliza could not. However, Chernow writes, “their shared love for Hamilton seemed to deepen their sisterly bond.” It’s this bond and the duality of Hamilton’s attraction and loyalty that Lin-Manuel brings up to contemporary speed, demonstrating that Alexander was not an easy man to live with or love. But Lin-Manuel advances the women’s view, by making the story as much Eliza’s and Angelica’s as it is Alexander’s. Lin-Manuel’s point and Chernow’s, are aligned: those were difficult times, and daughters of a political activist, a couple of scholars, a French Marquis, and a poor orphan immigrant “comin’ up from the bottom” made a remarkable difference by plotting a new course for the world. As Hamilton, in his final moments, sings, “America, you great unfinished symphony, you sent for me!” The multi-ethnic casting of Hamilton is a not so subtle message to the young that we all may have our place in history, no matter what our color, sex, country of origin or breeding (rich or poor, ill-bred or well-bred).

There’s more. Another juicy bite of the book reveals that Theodosia Prevost, the future wife of Aaron Burr, while still wedded to a British officer, provides sanctuary to the run-away bride of Benedict Arnold after she aids her traitor husband in escaping Hamilton and the other young Americans. This is the same Theodosia that Burr sings about so sinuously and the “mother’s name” he invokes so tenderly to his newborn daughter of the same name. Lin-Manuel made Burr (and all the key players) likeable and human, affording them a dimension that history books cannot. By providing a deeper level of detail, Chernow conveys the potent limitations that are imposed by human weakness despite overall strength.

Another point that resonates is that Hamilton taught himself about the world’s great financial systems, even before there was a United States, well before there was a position as Secretary of the Treasury to enjoy the fruits of this education. He longed for a cause and a reason to be alive. He wrote volumes when others wrote sentences. He wrote “like he was running out of time.” Hamilton’s musical signature is “One Shot:” he understood that he had only one shot, one opportunity that he shouldn’t, couldn’t throw away. He took advantage of opportunity and more: he created opportunity so that he could auspiciously excel. Despite this brilliant drive, he also had an inopportune facility for disassembling his own success. Take, for example, the Reynolds affair and its aftermath, and his denouncement of President John Adams, both portrayed in the play; there are other incidents
portrayed in the book, made less impactful by indulgent Hamilton supporters, such as his resignation from Washington’s service as his personal secretary with Washington’s subsequent rebuffed attempts at reconciliation. The man Hamilton was not easy.

But a word about Burr. His anthem is, “The Room Where it Happens,” laying bare his long desire to be a part of the key decisions, the back-room deals, the inner circle. He wasn’t, not even when elected vice president, just missing the presidency as Hamilton endorsed his long-time political rival, Jefferson. Burr, too, was handsome, scholarly, orphaned, ambitious, but as principled and outspoken Hamilton states, “No one knows what you believe.” Hamilton found him unprincipled. Three years later, Hamilton campaigned against Burr in his attempt to win the New York gubernatorial election. This was enough. This was the culmination of thirty-years-worth of being cut off, cut down and cut out from that inner circle, in Burr’s eyes. There were more perceived slights that Hamilton refuted, but how could Burr let it go? Hamilton responded, in kind. For Hamilton, the duel was a gentlemanly way of settling conflict, of putting to rest an insult. He intended to throw his fire to honorably satisfy the challenge. As Chernow writes: “wars, like duels, were honorable rituals, conducted by gentlemen according to sacred and immutable rules.” Though as younger men, both Burr and Hamilton expressed disdain for the brutality and primitivism of dueling, they, as many in their day, lived by the ancient tenet that it’s better to be brought home on your shield then arrive home alive without one.

The final scenes of the play, the death of Hamilton’s young son by a duel, and Hamilton’s own death, are unimaginably sad. The haunting (truly) ballad sung by Angelica, “It’s Quiet Uptown,” says it far better than I can write here. Lin-Manuel understands. My sons noted, after the show, how sad the end was. They got the gift of understanding. In addition to a long view of the revolutionary war, the birth of our country and the entwining lives and tangled webs of a handful of patriots, they got the gift of Lin-Manuel’s and Chernow’s art.

Since the show, I’ve periodically checked for tickets (yes, it’s well worth seeing again) but direct box office sales are sold out. Tickets are only available through resale with a very stiff mark up. As you’re waiting for ticket prices to settle or for perhaps the traveling show to make its way to your town, pick up Chernow’s book and read it. Neither book nor musical will disappoint.

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