

Virginia Apgar '29


Spring 1962

Virginia Apgar has been given the Distinguished Service Award of the Amer. Soc. of Anaesthesiologists. Her achievements take her far afield—Los Angeles, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Cyprus, Athens, Rome, and London.

Spring 1963

The N. Y. Times ran a full page ad of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring." It quoted Virginia Apgar, among other eminent scientists, thus: "Genetic inheritance is the most valuable possession of the human race. This precious material was developed over millions of years of trial and error. Now Miss Carson shows us clearly that in one short speck of time, a quarter of a century, we have been racing towards a potentially irreversible situation which threatens to do away with, or at least alter, life as we know it now. Can we be intelligent, discriminating and courageous enough to meet this challenge? Thank you, Miss Carson, for opening our eyes."

Summer 1964

 Dr. Virginia Apgar, director of the National Foundation of March of Dimes' division of congenital malformations, received an honorary degree of Doctor of Medical Sciences this June from the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania. Jimmy was cited for her "outstanding work in public health and medical education."

JAN 1930

Virginia Apgar is a medical student at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University.

MAY 1934

Virginia Apgar received her M.D. in June from the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. On October 1 she began a two-year internship at the Presbyterian Hospital, New York.

AUG 1939

Margaret Brent

NOV 1949

The biggest scoop I've been able to dig up for some time concerns Dr. Virginia Apgar who has been appointed to full professorship, Dept. of Anesthesiology, Columbia U. C. of Physicians and Surgeons. Jimmy is the first woman to be appointed full professor at Columbia.

Jimmy was in attendance during a serious operation Marjorie Tuck Bodel had. Jimmy writes that "it's not often I give a patient eight transfusions during one operation, as we did to Marjorie." Dr. Apgar reports that the patient is completely cured.

FEB 1950

Congratulations to Virginia Apgar upon her recent appointment as professor of surgery at Physicians and Surgeons. We hear she's the first woman so appointed? How about it, Dr. Apgar?

MAY 1950


ED. NOTE: Our apologies to all concerned for the inaccurate repetition in the February Q. of the note about Dr. Virginia Apgar. As correctly stated by your scribe in the November Q., Virginia is the first woman to be appointed full professor at the C. of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia U. She is working in the Dept. of Anesthesiology.

SPRING 1960

The Blackwell Award, established in 1949, goes each year to women physicians who have made significant contributions to medicine. It is named after Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to receive a medical doctor's degree and founder of the New York Infirmary, which is staffed by women physicians. Virginia's mother and her cousin, Winifred Shaw (MHC '26), attended the ceremony.

Jimmy is chief of the division of congenital malformations for the National Foundation, with headquarters in New York, and is the creator of the Apgar Score, a method of evaluating an infant within 60 seconds after birth. In February she was interviewed by Patricia McCormack of United Press International, and the story appeared in the New York World-Telegram. On the subject of birth defects, she said, "Birth defects are the largest single unmet childhood medical need today. About 250,000 children are born each year with some birth defect." She stressed the need for a long-range program of scientific research into the problem.

WINTER 1958

 You never know where '29 will turn up next. An Associated Press story last August quoted Showman Mike Todd as giving special credit to our Jimmy Apgar for her work in saving the life of the premature baby born to his wife, Liz Taylor, screen star. Todd said Dr. Virginia Apgar "worked over the baby for 14 minutes before she hollered. Those were the longest 14 minutes of my life." The story went on, "Dr. Apgar is a resuscitation specialist. She breathed life into the tiny infant." Jimmy is professor of anesthesiology, Columbia University, and clinical director of anesthesia, Presbyterian Hospital, New York City.

[Notices from issues of
The Mount Holyoke Alumnae
Quarterly]