

ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Choleric Temperamental Education for 1893 Classes by “Masters of Anaesthesia”



Flemish artist Maerten de Vos' spear-wielding *Cholericus* (1583) reminds us that a **fire**-like patient of “choleric” temperament commanded the hot, dry “yellow bile” humor linked by ancient Greeks with elemental **fire**. By 1893 at Chicago's Post-Graduate School of Anaesthesia (PGSA), professors were tutoring future “Master of the Science of Anaesthesia” candidates to anticipate that a choleric patient's anesthesia might comprise—what today's anesthesiologists would characterize as—(1) a swift induction, (2) a risk for heart-depressing anesthetic overdose (termed “concussion” by the PGSA), and (3) a stormy emergence. PGSA founder and secretary, Professor Samuel J. Hayes, D.D.S., M.S.A., taught that choleric patients might resist preanesthetic calming. Dr. Hayes also used the journal that he edited, *The Dental and Surgical Microcosm*, as a primer for teaching PGSA students about the dangers of cardiovascular “concussion” from anesthetic overdose. (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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