

MEET GUEST EDITOR

Robert John Aitken, Pro Vice Chancellor Faculty of Health and Medicine and Laureate Professor of Biological Sciences

Affiliation: University of Newcastle NSW, Australia

Major Research Interests: The cell biology of mammalian germ cells with particular emphasis on the molecular mechanisms that regulate the functionality of spermatozoa and oocytes, the manner in which these cells interact during fertilization and the impact of these cells on the long term health trajectory of the offspring.

John Aitken's research career began with a PhD in reproductive biology from the University of Cambridge under the supervision of RV Short. Following post-doctoral positions at the Institute of Animal Genetics, University of Edinburgh and the University of Bordeaux, he accepted an invitation to join the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, where he managed two WHO task forces within the Human Reproduction Unit dealing with different aspects of human fertility control. In 1977, he joined the Medical Research Council's Reproductive Biology Unit, University of Edinburgh, to establish a research group in gamete biology with clinical outreach into male infertility.

In 1992, John was awarded an Honorary Professorship within the Faculty of Medicine of Edinburgh University and in 1998 he received an ScD degree from the University of Cambridge in recognition of his research contributions to gamete biology. In the same year he moved to the University of Newcastle, NSW, as Chair of Biological Sciences and, later, Director of the ARC Centre of Excellence in Biotechnology and Development. He is currently Laureate Professor of Biological Sciences, Pro Vice Chancellor of the Faculty of Health and Medicine and Co-Director of the Priority Research Centre in Reproductive Science. His main areas of interest focus on infertility and fertility regulation, particularly in the male. John has published over 500 research articles, given more than 350 invited lectures and filed 12 patents. His work has also been cited >26,000 times giving him an h-index of 87. Since arriving at the University of Newcastle he has generated ~\$40 million in research income and has been continuously funded by the Australian Research Council and the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Examples of major awards include the Bruce Stewart Memorial Lecture (American Society of Reproductive Medicine), the Amoroso lecture (Society for the Study of Fertility) the Jennifer Hallam Memorial Lecture (Family Planning Association of the United Kingdom), the MJ Edwards lecture (Australian Birth Defects Society), the Founders Lecture (Society for Reproductive Biology), ST Huang-Chan Memorial Medal (University of Hong Kong), the 2005 Scientist-of-the-Year award (Hunter Medical Research Institute), the Inaugural Dame Anne McLaren Memorial Lecture (Fertility 2009 Congress), the Yanagamachi Lecture (University of Hawaii), the IJA lecture (European Academy of Andrology), the Ian Johnston Memorial Lecture (Fertility Society of Australia), the Simmet Prize (International Congress on Animal Reproduction), the John Hughes Memorial Lecture (International Congress of Equine Reproduction), the Sex-in-3 cities lecturer (Society for Reproduction and Fertility) the Robert Edwards Memorial Lecture (Association of Clinical Embryologists). In 2012 he was named as the New South Wales Scientist-of-the-Year.

John has been elected a Fellow of the Society for Reproductive Biology, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Royal Society of New South Wales and the Australian Academy for Health and Medical Sciences. He is also a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and President of the International Society of Andrology.

Relation to AJA:

The *Asian Journal of Andrology* is currently the highest rated scientific journal operating in the field of Andrology. In the space of a few short years the journal has become a major outlet for research articles, reviews and opinion pieces in andrological science. It has also pioneered the generation of a series of popular 'Special Issues' that provide a snapshot of current knowledge to researchers wishing to understand the state-of-the-art in a wide range of fields from testosterone supplementation therapy to sperm cell biology. Importantly this magnificent journal has as its Editor-in-Chief, Professor Yi-Fei Wang, one of the most highly-respected articulate, sagacious, erudite andrologists in the world. It has been a great honour to work with Professor Wang and his dedicated hard-working team, particularly Danqing, in the production of this volume. On behalf of all the participants in the International Symposium of Spermatology, I express my sincere thanks to the highly professional team at AJA.

