

**Ruby, A. (2018). Comment on McGovern & Schlaff (2018). Fertility & Sterility Dialog.**

Sperm donor anonymity: a concept rendered obsolete by modern technology.

Inklings

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Authors:

Peter G. McGovern, M.D., William D. Schlaff, M.D.

Abstract:

The use of donor sperm began as a medical practice with a level of secrecy bordering on shame. In the United States, donor sperm insemination was first performed by Dr. William Pancoast in 1884 at Thomas Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia. The patient was never told, and it is unclear whether the husband was completely informed as to exactly what was occurring. This was done to prevent “irreparable harm” to the resultant child and the marriage. The case was not published until 1909, 25 years later.

[Read the full text here.](#)



Fertility and Sterility

Editorial Office, American Society for Reproductive Medicine

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4 Comments

**Alice Ruby**

over 2 years ago

Thank you for raising this important issue! As the pioneers of open-identity sperm donation, The Sperm Bank of California is always glad to see the ART community discussing these concerns. I am writing to offer a correction to one of your citations. The article listed in citation #5 is not from 2016. That article and the comments about The Sperm Bank of California are actually quite outdated--the article is from 2002. The Sperm Bank of California has not contracted any always-anonymous donors since 2014. For the past few years all of our new donors are participating in our Identity-Release(r) Program (agreeing to release their identity to donor-conceived adults) and since 2016 we no longer offer the anonymous donor option to new families (only to parents who already have a child from an anonymous donor who wish to use the same donor for siblings). Anyone interested in how our open-identity program is working may find more information in this article published in F&S last year:

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