

Keywords: Medical practices; Osteopathic profession; Medical doctors; Empirical pharmacology; Drugless modalities; Spinal meningitis

at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in Kansas City, Missouri, but only completed his first year of schooling due to his frustration with the redundancy of medical education at the time. In 1864, Dr. Still lost

Introduction

The osteopathic physician examines, diagnoses, and treats patients according to these principles. While Osteopathic Medicine was conceived fairly recently, its history is rich and thought-provoking. The history of the osteopathic profession is central toward understanding the current state of osteopathic medicine and is thus taught as part of the osteopathic medical school curriculum. In fact, osteopathic medical students are often tested on the history and philosophy of osteopathic medicine, and are encouraged to integrate osteopathic teachings into their approach as clinicians [1]. The rest of this chapter offers a concise history of osteopathic medicine. Much of the information we present here is derived from and elaborated on in much greater detail in Norman Gevitz's book, *Osteopathic Medicine in America*, a must-read for anyone interested in learning more about the osteopathic profession. Dr. Andrew Taylor Still was the founder of osteopathic medicine. Osteopathic medicine was born in a time when many different approaches to medicine existed, some of them more rational than others [2]. Indeed, common medical practices during this era included bloodletting and pharmacological use of toxic chemicals such as mercury and arsenic.

Discussion

Most of the drugs that are widely available today either had not been discovered or were not commonly recognized in Dr. Still's day. For example, Bayer did not patent aspirin until 1899, and it was not until 1935 that the first antibiotics became widely available. Thus, it was only natural that other schools of medical thought sought to challenge orthodox practice. Homeopathy, one of the largest of these alternative schools, rejected common medical practice and instead based its remedies on empirical pharmacology and the concept of like cures like, which stated that a drug whose physiological effects were most aligned with those of a particular disease could then be used to treat said disease. As much as 15 percent of the total U.S. physician population at this time adopted unorthodox approaches such as homeopathy. Perhaps also surprising is the fact that medical doctors during this time did not receive four years of schooling at an established medical school like they do today. Usually they were trained first through apprenticeship under a licensed physician. Some would then elect to study in a medical college where they received brief schooling. Still first began studying medicine as an apprentice under the direction of his father, who was a physician as well as a preacher and missionary [3]. During his apprenticeship, he treated Native American patients in the Kansas Territory. He then served in the Civil War as a surgeon. Later, he attended medical school

1874, I ung to the breeze the banner of Osteopathy, wrote Dr. Still. For many years, despite Dr. Still's successes in practice, his philosophy was rejected by many of his friends, relatives and colleagues. Even when he attempted to present his ideas at Baker University in Baldwin, Kansas, a school that he and his family had helped to found, he was denied. He eventually settled in Kirksville, Missouri, a small town with a population of 1,800 [7]. However, because the patient population of Kirksville was limited, Dr. Still took his practice all around the state in order to make ends meet and support his wife and children. rough seemingly miraculous treatment of diseases via osteopathy, Dr. Still began to gain a reputation as the so-called lightning bone-setter, and people began to travel many miles hoping to be cured of various ailments. It was becoming obvious that Still needed to establish a permanent place of practice. In 1889, Dr. Still opened an in rmary in Kirksville, and in 1892, he founded the American School of Osteopathy in order to share his osteopathic manipulative treatments with others. In addition to learning to perform osteopathic manipulations, the rst students were intensively trained in anatomy, which was central to Dr. Still's philosophy [8]. e ASO was revolutionary not only with respect to its status as the rst school of osteopathic medicine, but also