

OSTEOPATHY FROM THE ORIGIN 'TILL NOW

The evolution of the Osteopathic treatments and how the perception of it by health care professionals has changed.

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The term «*Osteopathy*» was born in the not too distant 1885, but the use of this new medicine it is dated long time before.

The founder of the Osteopathic science is A. T. Still; he wrote in his autobiography: «*I do not consider to be the author of this science, no human hand has placed its laws; **I do not ask no greater honor than to have discovered that***» because, as he writes: «***the mechanical principles on which Osteopathy is based are as old as the universe***».

(Autobiography, A T Still, 1897)

The mentioned principles which form the foundation of the philosophy of Osteopathic medicine are:

1. the body is a unit;
2. the body possesses self-regulatory mechanisms;
3. structure and function are reciprocally interrelated;
4. rational therapy is based on an understanding of body unity, self-regulatory mechanisms, and the interrelationship of structure and function.



After participating as a doctor during the American Civil War and after conducting in-depth studies about hypnosis and alternative psychiatric treatments; he will say that **in 1874 the whole truth housed in his mind**. In that year, he realized that the principles of osteopathy were real.

Despite of the term Osteopathy was coined in 1874, Dr. Still continued to be named: «*bone fitter*» until 1890.

Dr. Still started from the analysis of the structure and the arrangement of the masses of the body in space, in order to be able to guess where the first cause of a postural alteration of a patient could be present.

The study of the structure of a patient relies heavily on the first principle of Osteopathic philosophy.

As a unit, the study of the posture reveals adaptations caused by remote trauma or injuries and how they are passed on the whole organism.

The practice of the not yet defined Osteopathy aroused much criticism from the exponents of traditional medicine during the times of dr. Still too. Although the early studies of dr. Still about non-conventional therapeutic approaches are dated back to 1855; in 1874, when he proposed his findings at the Baker University, Kansas, he was excommunicated from the Methodist Church in Baldwin City and accused of witchcraft.



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY, KIRKSVILLE, MO.
(See page 88.)

The true recognition of his work took place in 1892 with the opening of the first school of Osteopathy: «The American School of Osteopathy (ASO)»

However, the most significant gift that dr. Still has given to the scientific community is to have laid down the first firm principles of Osteopathic medicine. **He did not place constraints which might limit the scope of Osteopathy.**

Over the years, thanks to advances in the study of neuro-physiology and thanks to the work of the students and successors of Still, Osteopathy has had the opportunity to grow and expand its horizons.

Many scholars have considered the idea of applying the principles to multiple systems, not just to the articular one.



One of the most acclaimed follower of Dr. Still was W. G. Sutherland. Direct student of Dr. Still, he decided to apply the principles to the human skull, sensing that the cranial sutures would allow the skull bones to be expressed in a rhythmic movement of expansion and reduction.

The scientific community does not gladly accept these new theories, in fact, they appear still controversial. Many to disagree with Sutherland were the same osteopaths fellows, who are used to the study and care of **Osteopathic Dysfunction.**



The studies and the innumerable tests that Dr. Sutherland performed have left a large footprint for a matter which is still evolving.

The cranio-sacral matter has found positive results in many areas. One of the most frequent where Osteopathy is in high demand is in pediatrics.



The results obtained with the cranio-sacral Osteopathy in pediatrics is due in large part to the fast direct student of W. G. Sutherland: V. Frymann.

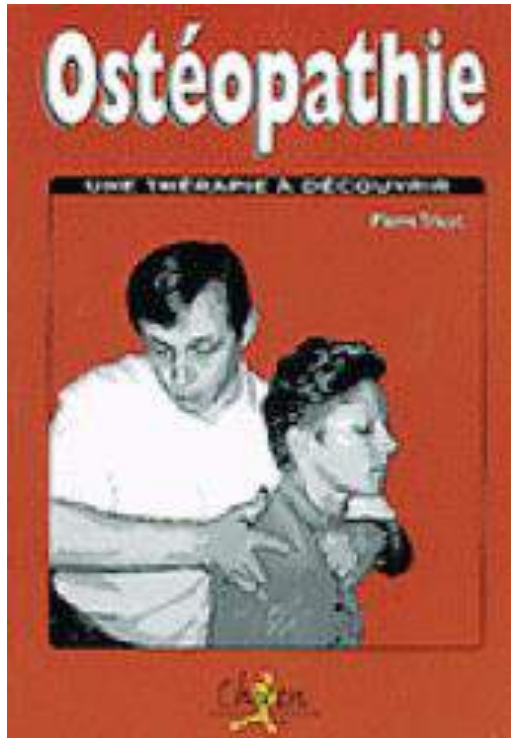


This internationally renowned osteopath helped to spread the principles of osteopathy around the world, making the osteopath as a figure of real support for communities which have accepted this medical science.

Although the cranio-sacral matter is one of the most reliable osteopathic theories, it remains the focus of much criticism. **Sometimes traditionalism protects us, other times it makes us fools.**

The osteopathic innovation does not stop there. Some osteopaths have decided to apply the principles of dr. Still to other human tissues, deepening the studies.

P. Tricot has applied the principles of Dr. Still to the study of fascia, the membranes which provide sliding planes in the body allowing the movement.



Tricot found that these tissues express, also, a rhythmic movement, which is expressed in two dimensions with a stretch and a return. Tricot discovered, moreover, that it was possible to perceive this movement through palpation and to study the directions.



Another osteopath who has helped to increase osteopathic knowledge is J. P. Barral. He has focused his studies on the visceral anatomy. According to the Still's principles, the function of an organ is in close relation with its anatomy.

What has changed over time and caused a dysfunction, could have provoked alterations of the physiology of an organ and impairments of its function.

Nowadays, osteopathy cares millions of issues in the world. Osteopathy is a medical science now accredited in a lot of European countries, throughout Australia, in many parts of Asia and in the North America.

The position of the Italian government about the recognition of osteopathy is explained by the article 7 of the law n. 3/2018.

Now Osteopathy is identified as an independent profession, however not established, so the Government has not set osteopathy and osteopaths yet.



The real problem we are facing today is the same as osteopaths have lived at one time:

the personal interests which have opposed the accreditation of osteopathy, have also motivated the growth.

Thanks for the attention.