

BOOK REVIEW: FROM SPECTACLE MAKING TRADE TO SCHOLARLY PROFESSION, A HISTORY OF OPTOMETRY IN THE UNITED STATES

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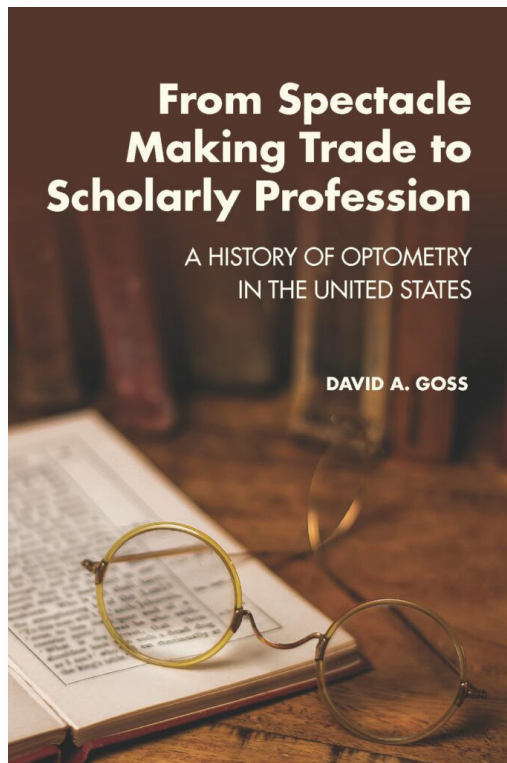
ABSTRACT

From Spectacle Making Trade to Scholarly Profession, a History of Optometry in the United States. David A. Goss. Forest Grove, OR: Pacific University Press, 2022. ISBN-13: 978-1945398063. 368 pages. Paperback.

INTRODUCTION

This insightful romp through the history of optometry in the United States by Dr. David Goss takes its readers on a journey through the first six centuries of optometry and the development of vision care. It follows the maturation of optometry as a profession to the frontline of vision care as the profession exists today. The book was first published by Pacific University Press in 2022 and consists of seven chapters split into two parts with an additional four appendices. Despite its length of 343 pages, it is a quick read. The first part covers the overall history of the profession, starting with its origin in Europe, while the second part covers aspects of the development of optometry as a scholarly profession in greater detail. The appendices cover details such as listings of optometry schools in the United States, the changing optometry student body, optometric periodicals and the history of optometry books.

Part One starts by giving us a view into the origin of spectacles circa 1286 in Northern Italy with the publication of the first known book on the subject of optometry written in 1623 by Benito Daza de Valdes. Next, the book explores the history of optometry in the United States from colonial America to present day. The book then covers the development



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of optometry from a trade to a profession: through the development of the examination fee as proposed by Charles Prentice, efforts to achieve licensure in the late 19th century, legal challenges and the formation of optometric associations.

Later chapters explore the challenges faced by the profession to expand scope of practice and recognition of optometry as a specialized health care profession providing comprehensive eye care. This is perhaps the most valuable part of the book as many newer graduates may be unaware of how hard previous generations of optometrists had to fight for professional recognition.

Lastly, the book has a thorough review of the development of optometry as a scholarly profession and covers such topics as the development and evolution of optometric education, the changing demographics of optometry students and optometric publications e.g., periodicals and books. Included in this section is a number of interesting appendices providing information on such topics as the number of optometry school graduates compared to the U.S. population, the percentage of women among entering optometry students, and the racial diversity of optometry students.

In summary, this book provides valuable context on the development of optometry as a profession with a detailed look at the development of the profession within the United States. I would highly recommend this book to optometry students and anyone in the optometric field interested in the development and evolution of the profession.