BOOK REVIEW: CAROL B. PRATT: PACIFIC UNIVERSITY'S ORIGINAL OPTOMETRIC GENIUS BY DAVID A. GOSS AND SCOTT E. PIKE

Hilary Gaiser, O.D., MSc

Associate Professor of Optometry
New England College of Optometry
Boston, MA

gaiserh@neco.edu

10.14434/hindsight.v56i1.41590

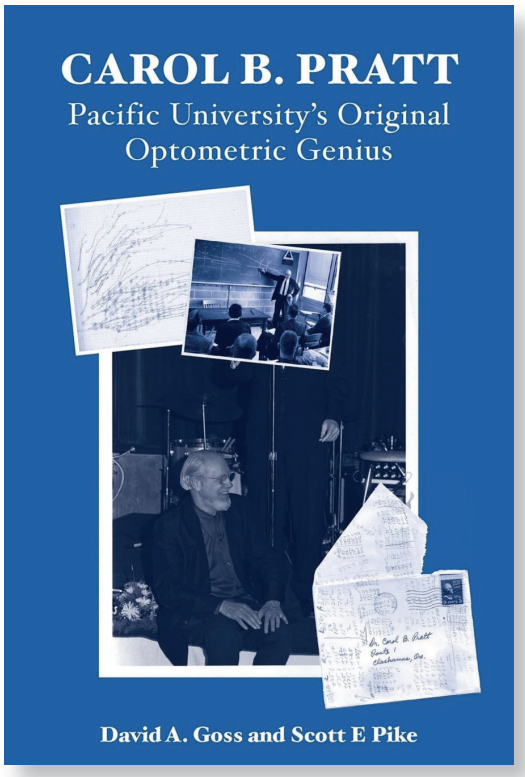
ABSTRACT

Goss David A., and Pike Scott E. Carol B. Pratt: Pacific University's Original Optometric Genius. N.p., Bee Tree Books, 2023. ISBN 978-1-945-39814-8. 113+13 pages. Paperback.

INTRODUCTION

This book is a memoir of one of Pacific University's significant founding faculty members, Carol B. Pratt, O.D., Ph.D. The text covers the development of Dr. Pratt's innovative optometric testing, nearpoint visual function analysis, and original research. It is divided into six chapters and six appendices and spans 113 pages.

In chapter one, a biographical sketch, we learn about Carol B. Pratt's educational history from his initial start doing opticianry work in his father's optometry practice, to studying with Charles Sheard while earning his Ph.D. in biophysics at the University of Minnesota. It was during his time in Minnesota that he met his future wife, Carol Adams, leading the two to become known amongst friends as "Carol A." and "Carol B." in order to avoid confusion. While teaching at the North Pacific College of Optometry (NPCO), Pratt earned his optometry degree remarkably in only one year. Later in 1945, Dr. Pratt became the first optometry professor at Pacific University during which he also carried the responsibilities of dean for the first two to three years.



Goss David A., and Pike Scott E. Carol B. Pratt: Pacific University's Original Optometric Genius. N.p., Bee Tree Books, 2023. ISBN 978-1-945-39814-8. 113+13 pages. Paperback.

Chapters two and three detail Dr. Pratt's unique optometric examination routine and his methods of analyzing accommodation and convergence test findings. Initially starting clinical practice with an exam similar to the Optometric Extension Program's (OEP) 21-point exam, Dr. Pratt went on to develop an exam that would be "first rate" without retinoscopy, as he found he was not as good at retinoscopy as he would have wished—a feeling that may resonate with some optometry students today!

In addition to his teaching and patient care responsibilities, Dr. Pratt also conducted research on myopia and astigmatism and served as a mentor for many student research projects. These topics are detailed in chapters four and five. One of his most interesting projects was coming up with a unique method for measuring aniseikonia. While Dr. Pratt was a prolific researcher, he published only one paper in an optometric journal; fortunately, this book serves as a reference to highlight some of his significant scientific work.

Chapter six stands as a testament to his legacy through a series of stories, tributes and perspectives. Dr. Pratt was a man of great intellect and inventiveness, known by one of his former colleagues as "Mr. Optometry."

This book would be of interest to any current and former Pacific University student or faculty member, as well as those interested in unpublished research on nearpoint visual function.