

Foreword



In 1979 I delivered the Commencement address to Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. My remarks, framed in the blended styles of Jonathan Swift's "Modest Proposal" and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, pretended to impart 20 years of retrospective to the Class of 1999. Ironically, two decades have passed since that day of pomp and circumstance at the Academy of Music, a score of years that now brings the College to its Centennial celebration. And what a century of history it has been!

In 1899 two newly trained osteopathic physicians from the Midwest introduced a new school and philosophy of medicine to a city known as the birthplace of American medicine. Philadelphia's rich legacy of health care started in 1751 with the founding of the nation's first hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital. With the opening of the University of Pennsylvania's Medical Department in 1765, the city also assumed the lead in medical education. By the time Drs. O. J. Snyder and Mason W. Pressly first advertised the Philadelphia College and Infirmary of Osteopathy, a well-established medical culture was already in place.

Philadelphia's first osteopathic institution fought its battles and, in time, proved its efficacy. From its inception, the College championed the notions of holistic medicine and preventive health care, which since have become accepted goals for the medical profession at large as it approaches the 21st century. Through struggles to obtain specialized training, DOs have also earned recognition beyond the sphere of primary health care.

Despite criticism from my fellow MDs, I lectured on pediatric surgery at PCOM's 48th and Spruce Streets campus in the 1950s, and in 1976, began rotating osteopathic surgical residents through the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's training program in pediatric surgery. PCOM graduates proved to be among the best. Without a doubt, in the 100 years now being celebrated, PCOM has earned its position among those institutions that have assured the preeminence of American medicine.

C. Everett Koop, MD

Former US Surgeon General