Mary Otto is . . .

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Former reporter for Washington Post
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What’s in the Book?

- Impact of Teeth on Appearance and Perceptions of Beauty
- History of The Science and the Profession
- Barriers to Access to Oral Health Care
- The Social Gulf
What do these three people have in common that gets them mentioned in chapter one?
“Photography and professional dentistry were born at precisely the same moment in history. The disciplines have enjoyed a complex and synergistic relationship ever since. Both, in their own ways, have built empires upon the smile.”
As soon as you get money that’s your way of saying “I’m here. I’ve come up. I’ve got my smile.” Mamé Adjei
Chapin Harris rode through the night. Behind him lay generations of honest tooth pullers and wandering quacks. Before him lay the new profession he was inventing... They set up their temporary offices in homes, factories, inns, and taverns. They brought out their dreaded instruments. They scraped, they drilled, they extracted... They were feared and often disparaged. There was no formal training. Anyone who called himself a dentist was one.
Low moments in dental history
Very low moments in dental history

Henry Cotton, MD

Virginia Woolf, author
A better moment in dental history

In the face of mass extractions, dentist and dental x-ray innovator C. Edmund Kells stood up for tooth preservation. In an address in 1920 before a national dental meeting in New Orleans, Kells called the focal theory “the crime of the age” and denounced the sacrifice of teeth “on the altar of ignorance.”
A turning point in dental history

“Dentists and physicians should be able to cooperate intimately and effectively. They should stand on a plane of intellectual equality.

Dentistry can no longer be accepted as mere tooth technology.”

William J. Gies, 1924
I think we are approaching another “Gies” moment in which the dental community must face some hard facts and ask itself how effectively the current system is improving the oral health of the American public.”

Marko Vujicic, JADA, March 2018

1. Consider dental care an essential health benefit for all age groups.
2. Define and measure oral health in ways that are meaningful and relevant.
3. Tie reimbursement, partly, to outcomes.
4. Get dentistry out of its care delivery silo... Engage the rest of the system to nudge people into dental care. Rise above scope of practice turf wars.
Essential benefit?
A look back

- Opposition to medical insurance
- Opposition to Medicare
- Opposition to dental group plans

“Low use is not the victim’s fault, but rather that of society.”

Max Schoen, DDS
Scope of practice turf wars

Tammi O. Byrd, RDH
CEO
Health Promotion Specialists
The Social Gulf

Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General

U.S. Public Health Service

Department of Health and Human Services
Remote Area Medical
Income disparities

2017 median annual income for US dentists: $151,440

Bureau of Labor Statistics

2018 Federal Poverty Guidelines

$25,100

Annual income: Family of four
The Social Gulf

“How often do you brush your teeth?” Whatever I say it’s not enough.

“Our office is conveniently located.” I’ve got to find a ride.

“We’re open 8:30 to 4:30.” I’ll have to ask for the day off.

“Medicaid reimbursements are too low.” The office staff makes me feel bad because I have Medicaid.

Medicaid patients no-show too often. They treat my kids like they’re dirty.