

Part 1: Universal/Innate Intelligence – Does It Matter? Absolutely!

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“I believe, in fact know, that the Universe consists of Intelligence and matter....”

D.D Palmer (1910 quote), see: Wardwell, W.I., *Chiropractic, History and Evolution of a New Profession*, Mosby, 1992, p. 180.

“All matter ... exists because of its organization. And its organization is the result of a principle at work – an intelligence.”

Douglass Gates (1987), as quoted in Wardwell, p. 181.

...in the individual morphogenesis and above all in the embryonic growth an enormous organizing faculty and synchronization in time and space is required and this simply demands a vast amount of controlling intelligence.

Durr et al, ed., *What is Life? Scientific Approaches and Philosophical Positions*, World Scientific, 2002, p. 10.

“... science is *never* done without an indissoluble link between theory and fact. Facts are made by the theoretical spectacles one puts on (the expressions is Kuhn's) just as much as theory is shaped by the results of empirical observations.” (Emphasis in original)

Stein, W. and Varela, F.J., ed., *Thinking About Biology*, Santa Fe Institute, 1993, pp.1-2.

The authors of “*Thinking about Biology*” suggest that biology should be thought about at three levels of analyses; *macro-*, *meso-*, and *micro-*. They recognize that the *macro-theory* level involves philosophical assumptions and abstract theoretical principles. I will refer to the *macro-level* as a “paradigm”. *Meso-* and *micro-level* questions and hypotheses will be addressed in subsequent articles.

Walter Wardwell is owed the most sincere thanks of all chiropractors for his book about chiropractic history (cited above). However, that does not mean we all have to accept his critique of the *macro*, or philosophical, principle of Universal/Innate Intelligence. Wardwell, and those chiropractors who take the same position as he does, are entitled to their “spectacles” but they are not entitled to a legal monopoly for their position.

Wardwell et al. raise three primary points relative to “innate”. First, D.D.’s ideas were derived, in part, from his “spiritualism and theosophy”. Second, the idea of “innate” is not a testable proposition.

Third, the proposition of innate as an organizing principle should now be expressed as “homeostasis”. (Wardwell, p. 181.)

I will return to the first objection after addressing the point about “homeostasis”. As recognized by Wardwell, Walter Cannon coined the word homeostasis in 1939. It is obviously appropriate to explore the similarities between the concept of innate and homeostasis but that is not a sufficient reason to necessarily change the terminology. Indeed, chiropractors should assert some primacy with respect to the concept.

More importantly, the concept of “**innate -- self-organization**” is a broader, more fundamental, concept than homeostasis. The term reflects a broad philosophical principle operating at the *macro-level*. Homeostasis is a more limited concept that should be considered at the *meso-level*. As far as I am concerned, a more important analogy for innate is the concept of **dynamic regulation** developed in the book *What is Life? I will return to this subject in “Part 2 – The Power that Makes (Organizes) the Body, Heals (Regulates) the Body”*.

Parallel Paradigms

Early in the 20th Century, the logical positivist philosophers argued that all truth/knowledge claims must be based upon either such statements as $2 + 2 = 4$ or they must be testable propositions.¹ All other statements or propositions were declared to be matters of mere opinion that did not count as “knowledge”. The logical positivist position reigned supreme in Anglo-American philosophy of science until the 1970-1980s. Many leading scientists and philosophers are now challenging the hegemony of the positivist position.

How can we proceed with the enterprise of science, or the pursuit of “knowledge”, if we do not limit knowledge claims to the testable? (See fn. 1) Oxford scholar, Imre Lakotas (writing in the 1970s & 1980s) has provided a way out of this dilemma. In effect, he basically asserts that all scientific paradigm (*or macro-level*) claims relative to the workings of the material universe, and life, are theory laden, metaphysically and worldview conditioned, limited, fallible and **NOT** subject to experimental testing.

Per Lakotas, the issue at the *macro-level* becomes whether the paradigm produces *meso-level* and *micro-level* research hypotheses and questions. (I am adding the *macro/meso/micro* terminology to the Lakotas position.) **That is, is the paradigm fruitful? Is it productive?** Lakotas concludes, in effect, that paradigms should co-exist as parallel paradigms so long as they are productive as to researchable hypotheses/questions and the persons espousing the paradigm are doing so with integrity.

Now to the objection that D.D. based his concept of “innate” on spiritualism and/or theosophy. Simply put, you have to get your basic philosophical assumptions about the nature of ultimate reality (ontology) from somewhere. Theosophy is not my cup of tea, but so be it. (Personally, I start with “In the beginning”.) The point, to use Lakotas, is that the concept of innate leads, among other things, to the theoretical proposition that the organization of living forms cannot be understood from merely inspecting the parts; it leads to a holistic perspective. It is scientifically fruitful to address the concepts of organization, embryonic development and the regulation of health status from the perspective of an intelligent process - a process of dynamic regulation - a holistic perspective.

I am not saying that individual chiropractors (or groups) should be precluded from choosing a “bio-mechanical”, or physical therapy, set of spectacles. Simply, that in doing so they have made a choice and the practice rights of other chiropractors should not be limited by that choice. The bio-mechanical perspective misses the much bigger picture of dynamic regulation - Universal/Innate Intelligence. In addition, one has to ponder why a person would choose to study a curriculum of about 4800 hours to become a glorified physical therapist when, at least in California, the physical therapy license only requires the completion of about 1400 hours.

Legal Implications

It is important for chiropractors to recognize that the Wardwell, et al, perspective on “**innate — self-organization**” has helped define the legal strategy taken in a series of prior cases and legislative and governmental hearings relative to the practice rights of chiropractors. Whatever merit that tactic might have had prior to the 1980s it is no longer adequate. The recognition that scientific/medical paradigms can co-exist as “parallel paradigms” opens the door to frame due process and equal protection arguments on behalf of chiropractors that have not been raised in the past.

Chiropractors need to recognize and defend their heritage. Of course, there was more than one “school of chiropractic” in the early years. Indeed, the California Chiropractic Act specifically prohibits discrimination against “any school of chiropractic”. I will return to that subject in a subsequent article.

¹ The logical positivists, towards mid-century (20th), changed from verifiability/testability to the proposition that statements are only meaningful (count as knowledge) if they can, in principle, be shown to be falsifiable.