

**SHOULD PHILOSOPHY BE DISCARDED OR CLARIFIED? CLARIFIED!**

As previously indicated, the National Institute of Health has downsized chiropractic by classifying it as a sub-category of "manual healing" (along with massage therapy) and by refusing to recognize it as an "Alternative System of Medical Practice". All "alternative medical systems" share a vitalistic perspective. So does chiropractic. At least, a reasonable argument can be made that this is historically true for a large segment of the chiropractic community.

Whatever your position is relative to "chiropractic philosophy" (more accurately, philosophy of chiropractic) it is clearly critical to your future. I will continue the clarification process started by Dr. Winterstein, President of National College of Chiropractic. Dr. Winterstein appears to believe the chiropractic philosophical heritage should be discarded. I disagree. It should be clarified. You decide!

Dr. Winterstein recently addressed the long-running debate between chiropractors with, as he put it, a "philosophical framework which was metaphysical in nature vs. one which was physiologic in nature." He correlated metaphysics with religion and argued:

"All chiropractic colleges must come to institutional conclusions which simply agree to discard quasi-religious teachings in favor of currently credible tenants." (Sic) <sup>1/</sup>

**Metaphysics** is composed of two interconnected disciplines which address the following questions:

ontology - what is real?

epistemology - how do we know?

Dr. Winterstein has made a major step forward in what is often simply referred to as chiropractic philosophy by placing that philosophy into the appropriate philosophical category. However, I respectfully suggest that rather than discarding philosophy we should further define it, refine it and clarify its relationship to the world's religious, theosophical, alternative medical traditions, and science itself.

DD. Palmer asserted:

"I BELIEVE, IN FACT KNOW, THAT THE UNIVERSE CONSISTS OF INTELLIGENCE AND MATTER." <sup>2/</sup>

Western science in general, and organized biochemical medicine in particular, has claimed to

KNOW THAT THE UNIVERSE AND LIFE IS ONLY MATTER AND CAN BE FULLY EXPLAINED BY NATURAL SELECTION AND/OR BIOCHEMICAL PRINCIPLES OF SELF-ORGANIZATION.

Indeed, western scientists are spending billions of taxpayer dollars to establish that the ultimate explanation of human life and disease is in the "selfish" genes. (Billions of taxpayer dollars are being spent on the Human Genome Project.) This is the ultimate in reductionism. There is a personal choice to be made.

**DANCE or CHANCE?**  
(Sacred or Profane?)

Personally, I find the work of German biophysicists (Including at least one Nobel prize winner and work done at the Max Planck Institute.) and certain German naturopaths extremely interesting.<sup>3/</sup> At the risk of gross oversimplification, I will summarize five points which have emerged from this work:

1. "The cells of living organisms can store and emit light (photons), and this light controls vital processes. If this mechanism does not function correctly, the organism is diseased." (p. 171)
2. Light regulates the activity of enzymes and is superordinate to biochemistry.
3. The storage factor for this light phenomenon is thought to be the DNA molecule and that the light is, therefore, related to the function and regulation of DNA.
4. "Prof. Carlo Rubbia, who was awarded the 1984 Nobel Prize for his experimental demonstration of interaction bosons, emphasized in an interview at the beginning of 1988 that MATTER REPRESENTS ONLY PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE THE COSMOS." (p. 208)
5. THE UNIVERSE IS NOT LIMITED TO FOUR DIMENSIONS. The fifth dimension has been referred to by the German physicists as the "entelechal dimension" (See Aristotle & Hans Driesch below) and is thought to "contain(s) the possible organizational structures in the Cosmos . . . ." (p. 203-204)

Sounds like DANCE NOT CHANCE to me. Of course, others could reasonably disagree. As a prior professor of constitutional law, I cannot resist at least one introductory comment on the legal ramifications of this ontological issue. The first amendment prohibits Congress from making any "law respecting an establishment of religion". The problem is not really religion, it is establishment. That is, the first amendment should be extended to preclude the establishment of either the chance or dance ontological positions. Legally, this will initially be a tough sell. But, it is worth pursuing. This is not the time of place to pursue that objective.

Some of you may be thinking that we do not need to take any position on the chance or dance issue and that science, in fact, can start with a tabula rosa; without *a priori* assumptions. This is not the case, as has been argued in a truly important book - "*New Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science*". This work was published in 1994 by the Institute of Noetic Sciences founded by astronaut Edgar Mitchell in 1973. In the "Forward" it is stated:

". . . behind the methodology of science, underpinning all its findings and theories, were (are) a number of assumptions about the nature of the world and the way in which human beings can

understand it--ontological and epistemological assumptions--which were (are) neither articulated nor brought into question during the course of normal research. These (are) called the 'metaphysical foundations' [not to be confused with the kind of metaphysics found within the spiritual traditions] because they do not reside within the material world as such, nor can they be proven by empirical experiments, but they form the ground out of which all our conceptual ideas about the physical world arise." (Emphasis added--see p. x)

I disagree that the "spiritual traditions" can be so readily discarded. (Especially as that term is used by such authors as Huston Smith, Frithjof Schuon, and Seyyed H. Nasr.). Again, that issue is beyond the scope of this series of articles. I will, however, briefly touch upon the matter at several points in the series.

The point of the "New Metaphysics" is to "reintegrate consciousness" (MIND) into science. It could be encapsulated by asking **1) HAS "MIND" EVOLVED FROM MATTER, 2) IS "MIND" EMERGING (UNFOLDING) IN CONJUNCTION WITH MATTER (Basically, the Bhuddhist position and that of Varela, Thompson & Rosch in the book "The Embodied Mind".), or 3) IS "MIND" UNFOLDING WITH, AND (IN PART, OR OTHERWISE) ANTECEDENT TO, MATTER?** Reasonable minds can differ in their response to these questions. But, no one response should MONOPOLIZE the marketplace of ideas, or, more particularly, the health care marketplace and governmental funding stream. Personally, I affirmatively respond to the third question. We need to support each others right to their opinion.

What about the chiropractic Big Idea - "The Power that Makes the Body, Heals the Body". The proposition that this "power" exists and is an element of, or derived from, Universal Intelligence is an metaphysical position and defensible as such.

However, the contention that said "power" "operates" only, or even primarily, by and through the nervous system is a factual hypothesis which must be answered by evidence introduced in accordance with scientific principles and methods. Acupuncture, ayurveda, phytotherapeutics, homeopathy and the findings of the German naturopathic community cited above challenge the "nervous system only" position. Furthermore, so do the claims of the world's traditional religions. The following is a list of several positions on what the basic Life, Vital, or Organizing Force of matter and healing is:

Acupuncturists:

Chi - energy, information, love, compassion, mind, etc.. (Now identified to be, at least in part, electromagnetic energy.)

The Hindu Tradition:

Prana (breath) and/or energy bodies (soul?) - Chakras and the Nadis. (Nadis are similar to the meridians of the Chinese system.)

The Bible (New International Version) - Job 34: 14-15 states:

"If it were his ("God's") intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust."

Aristotle:  
The "Soul" or entelechy.

Hippocrates:  
Vis medicatrix naturae. (Of course, the allopaths pay lip service to this proposition.)

Samuel Hahnemann (Founder of homeopathy):  
Vital Force.

Hans Driesch  
(1892- A German zoologist who is referred to by many modern biologists as having been the last "vitalist" of the modern era.): Vital Force. Following Aristotle, he referred to it as entelechy. (Please note the use of this expression by the German naturopaths referred to earlier in this article.)

Contemporary biologist Rupert Sheldrake and others:  
Morphogenetic Fields. [Others have contended (pejoratively) that this position is the same as claiming the soul to be the formative agent.]

Organicism and structuralism:  
Emergent causation related to the ideas of chaos theory and dissipative structures.  
(These positions are, in a sense, actually contrary to vitalism.)

This is not the time to abandon our vitalistic heritage. The key is to clarify both our metaphysical assumptions and their relationship to the scientific enterprise.

We need to clearly and articulately discuss our differences of opinion on these matters among ourselves with other health care practitioners and the general public. We should take note of the fact that a federally funded researcher at Bastyr University (A leading Naturopathic College in the U.S.) who is also a "visiting scientist/senior fellow in the University of Washington's Department of Physiology and Biophysics" recently stressed in an interview reported in "Alternative Therapies" that naturopaths had recently realized that it (they) had made a mistake by having "moved away from (our) vitalistic roots."<sup>4/</sup>

To reiterate, it is critical to clearly **DISTINGUISH WHERE THE METAPHYSICS ENDS AND SCIENCE BEGINS**. In my opinion, our vitalistic metaphysical heritage, properly construed and expanded, should be a key element in the establishment of chiropractic as a primary alternative to allopathic medicine. This will be the focus of future articles in this series. In the next article I will address the issue as to whether chiropractors are primary care physicians or portal of entry physicians and whether the Wellness paradigm necessarily suits the purposes of all practicing and future chiropractors.

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<sup>1</sup> Winterstein JF. The Search for Intra-Professional harmony, *Journal of Chiropractic Humanities*, Vol. 6 No.1, 2-10.

<sup>2</sup> As quoted in Wardwell WI. *CHIROPRACTIC: History and Evolution of a New Profession*. Mosby Year Book, 1992. at 180. This book should be read by every chiropractor and in your waiting-room.

<sup>3</sup> See particularly, Hans Brugemann (Ed.) *Bioresonance and Multiresonance Therapy*, Haug International, Brussels, 1990-1992, 171-248.

<sup>4</sup> Leanna Standish, ND, PhD *From Neuroscience to Naturopathy*, *Alternative Therapies* 2(5): at 85