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In this editorial J. Winston gives the background on the discussion, explains why it will not be continued in Homeopathy Today – it threatens a fruitless squabbling – and refers to a positive example of a dialogue (Roger Morrison / Steven Olsen The doctrine of signatures, revisited).

In the added message he regrets the resignation of Barbara Osawa and Peter Wright as editors of Simillimum and values their work.

Julian Winston

Cracking open a can of worms...

In the May 2001 issue of HT there appeared a letter ("Against Divisiveness") signed by 21 people that was critical of my editorship and the supposed "fundamentalist" stand I was taking when I questioned some aspects of homeopathy we encounter these days as "non-homeopathic." The next few issues had some letters speaking to these issues and in the October issue, Andre Saine wrote a lengthy reply ("Homeopathy versus Speculative Medicine"). In the April/May 2002 issue of HT, Roger Morrison replied to Andre's October missive with a long letter ("On Experimentation, signatures, and remedy favorites") which was, in turn, replied to by Dr. Saine ("Drawing a line in the Sand") and that, in turn, replied to by Dr. Morrison ("Reach for the Olive Branch"). It was at this point that the NCH Board of Directors and I decided to end that debate which, it appeared, could go on forever.

But the issues themselves remain very much alive within the homeopathic community, and I believe that to avoid discussing them in some form would be detrimental to the community-- after all, HT is one of the few journals that aims itself at the whole community-- seasoned practitioners, beginning practitioners, licensed and un-licensed, lay folks of all ranges of expertise, rank beginners, and those with just a passing interest.

The debate I wanted to cut short was that about the specifics that were brought up in the series of articles mentioned above. We could have an interminable "he said..." I did not say..." dialogue from which nothing is learned.

In 1888 Dr. James Compton Burnett entered into a correspondence with an allopath, "Dr. T. A. K." in which Burnett presented fifty reasons why he was a homeopath. The dialogue was published as a book and is still in print 114 years later.

I recently received a letter from Steve Olson, ND directed to Roger Morrison, MD. I passed the letter to Roger, and Roger sent me the reply. The dialogue reminded me of the give and take in Burnett's book, and I asked the two correspondents if they would be willing to have the dialog in these pages. It is NOT about specifics, but about the general issue of reliability and trust in "signatures." Although each can see the point of the other, neither is moving far-- but the dialogue is a good example of the issues we face.

So... I'm going to take a chance and air the issues within these pages. I hope we can all learn something from it.

J.W.

News from HANP

As we go to press we learn that Barbara Osawa and Peter Wright, the editors of the HANP journal Simillimum, have resigned their positions, in a good part because of the very debate

that is referred to in this editorial. I believe the journal was growing under their leadership and although I can understand the pressures that were brought to bear on them, I am saddened to see them leave. I can only hope that the journal will find as capable hands to run it.

Julian Winston