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Answer to "Against Divisiveness" - letter of the 21 - Homeopathy Today (2001, May)
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Julian Winston

The editor replies

Since the springboard for this letter appears to be my editorial in the December issue of Homeopathy Today, I will attempt to clarify my position. The NCH Articles of Incorporation, Article 4, state that one of the purposes of the NCH is to "promote the art of healing according to the natural laws of cure from a strictly homeopathic standpoint," that is, "treatment according to the Law of Similars, the Single Remedy proven on human beings, and the Minimum Dose."

The word "homeopathy" describes a system which is based upon giving a remedy that can cause "similar suffering" in a healthy person.

My view of the homeopathic community around us is based on that defining principle. I attempt, at all times, to look critically at what we are doing and to ask if what we are seeing fits the definition.

It does not matter if someone says they are a homeopath. The question is, "is what they are doing consistent with the principles of homeopathy?" I will not deny that there are many ways to heal. I have said that over and over again in these pages. But as the magazine of the National Center for *Homeopathy* I believe that it is of great importance to reiterate the basics over and over again.

I have never intentionally belittled, demeaned, or "attacked" anyone in these pages. If some take my remarks as personal, I am truly sorry. I simply wish to look critically at all that which is called homeopathy and bring the ideas forward for discussion. I am not the only one in the world-wide homeopathic community who is doing so. My hope is that the discussion can take place within the pages of Homeopathy Today.

I do not wish to have a mud-slinging match in these pages as has been seen in the last few issues of the journal Links (published in the Netherlands), after George Vithoulkas spoke (intemperately, in my view) about some of the same issues I have brought up in my editorial.

I simply suggest that we look critically at the concepts that are "current" these days-- doctrine of signatures, analysis by kingdoms, anthropomorphic speculation, and all sorts of other theoretical models-- and hold them up to the unchanging principles. Do they fall within the model? Or do they fall outside? And, if they DO fall outside, there is nothing wrong with it, nor does it mean they are not valuable, but it behooves us to question them.

As for the book reviews...

I would gladly welcome reviews of the latest books from anyone who wishes to submit them. Usually, when I ask someone to review a book I am met with the lament, "Oh I'm so busy, I don't have time, etc."

A few years ago a reader asked "how come Winston writes so much? Why can't we see other authors?" The answer then was the same as now. I write because so few others do, and I have 40 pages to fill every month. Some articles do sit in the pile until I feel they are appropriate (e.g., an essay about flu received at the height of the flu season in February could not see print

till May or June--so I shelve it until the following flu season), or until I have enough room to put them in--based upon the space left by the regular columns (bless those who write them!).

The only thing I ask of any review is that it look at the work critically. That does not mean trying to find something bad-- just an analysis of the details of the work (e.g., what the author was attempting to do by writing it, whether the work achieved what it set out to do, etc.).

A few details...

"He states that Jan Scholten's work is not homeopathy because there are no provings--thus ignoring some dozen provings reported in Scholten's book. "

Yes. There are provings in the book. I am guilty of painting with a broad brush. To imply that all of his work is not homeopathy was inaccurate. That does not change the fact, however, that the book also contains much speculative information-- specifically about the nature of synthetic remedies (combining two, like Lithium and Phosphorus to yield Lithium phosphoricum-- a remedy that has had no provings).

"He states that there are insufficient cases of Ms. Herrick's remedies to place them in the repertory."

I did not say that in the book review. I said that the remedies should not be given more than a plain type entry until there is sufficient clinical data to give them a higher grade.

"Do provings become valid simply because they are old?"

No. Provings become valid because they can consistently be used to lead to cures based upon the law of similars.

"Why do numerous plant remedies have their aggravations at the exact hour when the species opens its flower (Pulsatilla at sunset, etc.). Why are so many of our remedies made from creeping plants found to have dreams or desire to travel?"

This is an unsupported "doctrine of signatures" argument. Pulsatilla flowers (at least the ones I have observed) open and close with the sun. When I took a photo of the plant for my slide show, the flower was fully open at 9:30 in the morning. There is only one climber /creeper in the repertory which has desire to travel--Curare. Of the other climbers/creepers (Gelsemium, Coccus, Clematis, Hedera, Ipomoea, Passiflora, Piper nigrum)--none have desire to travel in their provings.

"We hope we are wrong in supposing that all of these articles indicate a strong editorial conviction against and intolerance to hearing new concepts."

I have no problem with hearing new concepts. The history of homeopathy is FILLED with new concepts. And, if you take a look at the pages of Homeopathy Today, you'll find plenty of articles and seminar reviews that focus on or refer to such new concepts. It is only when esoterica is elevated to the level of "ultimate truth" that I begin to have questions.

"It would be a shame to allow this newsletter to devolve into partisanship and divisiveness which will only wound the community it exists to serve."

It will move in that direction only if people do not take part in the process.

I am always accessible. My e-mail is listed in each issue. That people who know me (including many of those who signed the letter) cannot take "pen in hand" (as it were) and communicate directly to me or write, as individuals, to Homeopathy Today disturbs me.

I was deeply dismayed by this letter-- both by the tone and by the fact that a number of those who signed it live overseas, do not subscribe to Homeopathy Today, have no idea of the

general content of the magazine, and apparently signed it based only upon seeing a copy of the editorial in question.

I believe if something is to be called "homeopathy" then the process should be anchored firmly in the homeopathic principles. It is as simple as that.

JW