

"Dear Abby"

ADVICE FOR THE LOVELORN -- ADVICE ON CHIROPRACTIC?

Editorial Staff

On Tuesday, December 18, 1990, as millions of readers opened their newspapers to tune in to "Dear Abby" for the latest pearls of wisdom from this "sage of the ages" there was (jubilation!) a chiropractic first. The entire subject matter for Abby's column was devoted to the topic of chiropractic and chiropractic educators.

This terrific form of PR (more than 95 million readers daily in over 1,200 news media) came about when chiropractic student, Carolyn McMakin of Portland, Oregon took the time to pen her discouragement at the cynical outlook much of the public reserves for the chiropractic profession to internationally syndicated, advice columnist, Abigail Van Buren.

Owing to the "court of public opinion" for perpetuating the "quackery myth" concerning chiropractic, this student's letter was targeted at the ideal source for dispelling ill-fabled chiropractic labels. Known for her scrupulous judgement, Ms. Van Buren decided to set the record straight concerning the education and efficacy of chiropractic. She contacted Charles F. Downing, D.C., the president of the American Chiropractic Association.

Dr. Downing reviewed the letter in question, then sent "Abby" a letter himself. His letter, carefully and succinctly outlined the quality and standards of a chiropractic student's education. His letter delineated how and why world health care cost researchers and government-funded commissions have endorsed the legitimacy -- indeed, the preferable benefits of chiropractic health care.

You could almost hear the precise, machine-gun fire as Dr. Downing picked clean the last vestiges of doubt about chiropractic and "quackery." He elevated chiropractic with panache, via the news of the recently published, widely acclaimed, study by Meade et al. in the British Medical Journal.

He disclosed the stringent administration of chiropractic examinations of doctors seeking licensure, and how the totality of their knowledge in areas of human health and biomechanics is superior. In summary, Tuesday, December 18 was chiropractic in one of its finest hours.

Thank you, Carolyn McMakin for caring enough to write the letter that triggered it all. Thanks to Dr. Downing and the American Chiropractic Association for representation of which we can all be proud. And thanks, "Abby," from the over-64,000 members of the chiropractic profession.

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