

We Get Letters

"Nebraska Chiropractic Board Says NO to SCASA"

Dear Editor:

Once again, I must object to the manner in which Dynamic Chiropractic presents stories on the Straight Chiropractic Academic Standards Association (SCASA). Specifically, and most recently, I find your front page item, "Nebraska Chiropractic Board Says NO to SCASA," in the October 24, 1990 issue, to be a misleading and inflammatory editorial on the situation, rather than a true report of news.

While the item does contain certain factual accuracies and verbatim quotes, it is also specifically timed, titled (including highly unusual typesetting), and written to mislead objective readers into believing that SCASA is now no longer approved in Nebraska. In actuality, the proceedings of this hearing did not result in the disapproval of SCASA. There are still several steps before the recommended language could have such an affect and time before such could take place. At any point in this process the recommendation could be dismissed entirely. The chosen title for the article makes it sound as if it is unalterably done when the issue is not yet truly resolved. In addition, the main headline and even the continuation headlines are clearly designed to impress the reader with this wrong conclusion.

The copy consists mainly of excerpts from various individuals' testimony. In prefacing these excerpts, I cannot understand why "(i)t is important to remember that Nebraska has never accepted a student from a SCASA college for licensure" (*italics added*). That sounds like editorializing. The fact is that SCASA is currently approved and that approval is being threatened. Whether SCASA graduates have yet been licensed in Nebraska is not the issue and is not a result of the recommended regulation, and is not relevant to the story.

The final paragraph is written in a style which leads the reader to believe that the regulation will indeed eventually become effective with just a few steps when, in fact, the regulation may be rejected at any stage, even with the board's recommendation. It is quite arguable that it should be rejected in that the issues of diagnosis and patient safety have been confused, SCASA's position on patient safety being wholly in the best interest of the patient and its position on diagnosis (SCASA is wrongly labeled as anti-diagnostic repeatedly in your paper) is consistent with ensuring patient safety. I will be addressing this in an upcoming article for my column; however, it was addressed in my article, "Safe Practices," in the March 28, 1990 issue of Dynamic Chiropractic.

I feel it is important for you to present objective reports. Although retractions or corrections may be used in journalism, they rarely receive the same attention as a sensationalized headline and, with the profession having to create judgments as to what they feel worthy of support, just as with a courtroom jury, once they hear something, even if they're told to disregard it, they do not easily forget it. If it is skewed toward an inflammatory, negative, biased opinion, etc., then their judgements will also be skewed. Your paper has a responsibility to report facts correctly the first time.

James W. Healey, D.C.
President, SCASA
Princeton, New Jersey

As the Stomach Turns

Dear Editor:

When I last "tuned-in to" *Dynamic Chiropractic*, September 12, 1990, the great chiropractic powers were in the middle of a heated battle over the legitimacy of the Vertebral Subluxation Research Institute (VSRI). Act I depicted the Alabama Board of Chiropractic Examiners finding VSRI guilty of "bait and switch" tactics. The gloating adversary seized the opportunity to stir the pot. Act II, The Chiropractic Journal, September 1990, reveals that the Alabama decision has been reversed and thus gives VSRI the last laugh. I can't wait for Act III to begin.

This was just the latest in the game of "Point -- Counterpoint" that has led to the amazing saga of "as the stomach turns." It plays like a sick soap opera with an endless display of journalistic dribble all packaged nicely in twin, 48-page newspapers.

Issue after issue, we are confronted with an endless display of "mud-slinging." It's like two kids in a school yard having a fight while trying to muster up as much support as they can from the crowd.

I can't speak for the rest of the profession, but for me, I have just about had it. How dare you publishers inflict such intellectual slander on our profession. Don't you realize that we're choosing up sides even though some of you are professing "live and let live?" I find myself giving the patients in my practice and in my community the very best in chiropractic care while having to protect myself from my own profession. It appears that the power of the press and our First Amendment have made powerful tools to help split our profession.

I truthfully have no problem with journalistic endeavors, but to use them as sophisticated stones to toss at each other is an insult to the rest of us. Surely, the issues created by each camp are newsworthy; but, gentlemen, don't you think boxing gloves would be more appropriate?

I am fed up with our profession's powerful personalities, political persuasions, unethical practice managements, self-serving organizations, non-chiropractic experts, lobbies, and certain accrediting bodies that accredit political motives rather than health care, so I felt that I had to speak up.

I know there are thousands of us out there without voices but with consciences who detest this display of deceitful rhetoric. Tell us the truth as it was meant to be. Let us decide our opinions for ourselves. Keep your personalities out of our reading material and just maybe you may regain our respect. If this is not possible, then let me be the first to say, "print only 60,996 copies of *Dynamic Chiropractic* next issue and save a tree with my copy."

Sal Martingano, D.C.
Palm Bay, Florida

If You're Not into Patient Education, Try This ...

Thanks for the "Best Defense" articles in the August 29 and September 26, 1990 issues of *Dynamic*

Chiropractic. They are a real eye-opener for our patients. I put those articles and information on the Wilk et al. case out in the waiting room with a cover letter. You wouldn't believe the questions I get from the patients, and how angry some get over how the AMA has treated them.

For anyone not into patient education, you should try this, at least to build your practice. With very little effort you can turn apathetic, symptom-oriented patients into your best proponents.

*John Donner, D.C.
Furlong, Pennsylvania*

Guidelines for Philosophy

Dear Editor:

"The following is in response to Dr. J.F. Winterstein's article titled 'Philosophy for Chiropractors?' in Dynamic Chiropractic dated August 1, 1990, 8(16) pp. 29.

"In that article the author outlines some guidelines of what he believes the philosophy of the profession should give us, such as when to adjust young people, when to advise against other treatments or remedies, or when to include them. The author points out that above all 'the philosophy should give us a sense of logic, a sense of good and valid reasons for doing that which we do.'

"The basic premise of our profession is that this world, this universe, functions intelligently. When one looks at the whole picture, it is unreasonable to deduce that luck runs this world. This world operates by laws. Observing this degree of organization and balance in the world is what chiropractic has labeled 'Universal Intelligence.'

"The same is observed if one studies the human body. It too works in beautiful harmony -- all the parts doing their job to contribute to the good of the whole. If we take the relatively small example of digestion -- food enters the mouth and the stomach, and triggers an entire symphony of events. The body intelligently synthesizes and secretes literally hundreds of chemical enzymes, co-enzymes, hormones, bile, etc., in exactly the right quantity, the right quality, at the right place, and at the right time. This body can transform a peanut butter sandwich into insulin, heart cells, liver cells, and red blood cells. This is literally the creation of life -- all from a simple peanut butter sandwich. Now when this type of organization, cooperation, and synergism is observed, we must admit that this body functions intelligently and it is this intelligence that chiropractic has labeled as 'innate intelligence.'

"Innate intelligence merely refers to the organization and cooperation of all the parts of the body and the processes are regulated intelligently, not by luck.

"It is these observations which have formed the basis of our profession. It is a realization that the process and relationship of the body parts is highly complex and beyond our current capacity to understand the whole. All the scientists in the world cannot create one cell, or that which can be called life.

"If the baseball profession decided that pro-ball must now be played on roller skates, it would result in an entirely new game. Similarly, if we, as a profession, change our philosophy which is the foundation upon which this profession is built, then the result will be something that is not chiropractic."

