

Letter from the Publisher



In 1969, it was very difficult to concentrate on college studies while campuses were being overrun by demonstrations and student sit-ins. The fervor of fighting the draft and opposing the Vietnam War led to constant disruption in academic life. Of course, violent protest was not limited to antiwar activities. Rebellion against authority became pervasive – distrust of the government, corporations, banking, and the military became a universal mantra. Students for Democratic Society and other radical groups sought not only the end of the war but justice for all oppressed parties. Corporations and banks were thought to be as much to blame as the government and military for seeking hegemony not only in Southeast Asia but globally. Students wantonly called for justice and bankrupting corporate America. Bringing a bank or a corporation to its knees was considered an end by the radical group the Weathermen.

Eventually, the US retreated from Vietnam, President Nixon resigned, and Lieutenant Calley was scapegoated for the brutal slaughter of villagers. The college students who protested grew up, quietly gave up their communes, and joined the media or became partners in Wall Street law firms or investment houses. The Draft closed shop, college campus life centered once again on football and fraternities, and Woodstock and free love became a distant memory.

Of course, the explosion of promiscuity had unintended consequences: the AIDS epidemic. Now the same college students who demonstrated against the war were demanding federal funding to find a cure for this medical scourge. How mainstream and corporate and Wall Street we had become in just a few decades after 1969! Yes, there were a handful of anarchists still lingering on college campuses, but most of the Students for Democratic Society were now generous university donors and patrons of the arts.

This year we have a 40-year celebration of those Vietnam demonstrations and calls for the fall of corporate America. Wait ... oh, no ... corporate America *has* been brought to its knees. The Students for Democratic Society, the Weathermen, Abbie Hoffman, the radicals and hippies, the students taking over college presidents' offices, and the student unions have won! Those evil banks and bad, bad corporations, and Wall Street and greedy presidents and speculators have all been toppled. It's a 40-year celebration

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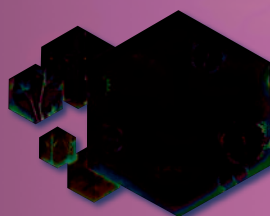
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of the '60s demonstrations for the overturning of Corporate America, and finally the radicals have their day in the sun. Time to celebrate!

It's a darned shame that those college radicals are now the college presidents, corporate CEOs, investment bankers, legal partners, military consultants, and hedge fund managers. How were they to know that they were calling for their own downfall 40 years hence?

It gives new meaning to "watch what you wish for," doesn't it?

Complementary and Holistic Medicine

One of the most difficult issues that policymakers, scientists, and philosophers share in examining alternative medicine is what to call it. Health practitioners, doctors, educators, and consumers can never seem to agree as to what name we should give this discipline, or collection of disciplines. Generally, it is a dualistic concept – "allopathic" or "conventional" medicine is considered mainstream, while "naturopathic," "complementary," "eclectic," "natural," "traditional," "homeopathic" and, more recently, "functional" and "integrative" medicine are considered alternative.

The debate over what term should be used is fraught with polemics, epistemology, etymology, and personal preferences. While there are many words offered on the topic, there is usually little light shed on why one name should be used rather than another. Some parties seek to depart from "alternative medicine," claiming that the very name is pejorative and by definition perpetuates the dualism and contrariness of the two forms of medicine. Seeking to elevate the stature of alternative medicine, some writers label it "functional medicine" – as though conventional medicine did not study functionality. Some conventional MDs have claimed holism for their activities, distinguishing themselves from their colleagues by indicating that their practice addresses the whole person, rather than its parts. Policymakers in Washington have politicized "complementary and alternative medicine" (CAM) to denote the umbrella term for the alternative medical field. Naturopathic doctors who are graduates of accredited four-year naturopathic colleges have created a legalized licensure for naturopathic medicine. Running contrary to the licensed NDs are the unlicensed practitioners who, by and large, acquired their education through unregulated correspondence schools. At the extreme end of the spectrum are renegade MDs who were educated in university medicine but have turned away from conventional practice and engage in unapproved cures for cancer, arthritis, cardiovascular, and mental health conditions. Some in the scientific medical community have labeled such treatment as quackery; alternative medicine has come under scrutiny and attack for harboring questionable treatments.

Vincent Di Stefano prefers the terms *holism* and *complementary medicine*. He has been a primary developer of complementary medicine in Australia for the past three decades. As the founding editor of the *Journal of the Australian Natural Therapies Association*, Di Stefano has had the opportunity not only to examine what term should be used for this form of medicine, but to understand the dynamics and principles of its practices. To that end he has published his book, *Holism and Complementary Medicine: Origins and Principles*, to analyze the duality that exists between biomedicine and complementary medicine. In it he offers the perspectives of practitioners who describe complementary medicine not so much as a specific therapy as a way to understand the whole patient, to consider treatments that are adaptive to the intrinsic healing process of the patient. Where a conventional approach might be to offer a drug after establishing a specific disease diagnosis, a complementary approach considers how the healing mechanisms are disturbed, how the mental and physiologic processes are not acting in concert, what stresses are not being dealt with, and how treatments need to be congruent with the patient's overall functioning.

Di Stefano examines the historical perspectives and provides many of the roots of holistic and complementary medicine from the practices of ancient Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Arab physicians. While science made great strides in understanding fundamental molecular and biologic mechanisms, it often sacrificed understanding the whole person in developing contemporary biomedicine. Di Stefano's work offers a strong argument that academic medicine's demand for double-blind evidence negates the importance of healing the whole person. No drug or surgical therapy by itself is the end-all to healing. Complementary medicine demands a greater degree of physician understanding of the patient for the healing process to be complete.

Vincent Di Stefano writes in this issue of the *Townsend Letter* about holism and complementary medicine.

Jonathan Collin, MD

Holism and Complementary Medicine: Origins and Principles by Vincent Di Stefano. Allen & Unwin, 83 Alexander St., Crows Nest, NSW, Australia 2065; 61-2-8425-0100. Softcover; c. 2006; 205 pages. www.allenandunwin.com.

