

# Book Reviews

**How Medicaid Fails the Poor**, by Avik Roy, 48pp, paperback, \$5.99, ISBN 1-59403-752-3, Encounter Books, 2013.

This very short book makes a compelling case for the abject failure of the Medicaid system, beginning with the story of a 12-year-old boy who died with abscessed teeth.

He was on Medicaid, but no oral surgeon would take Medicaid in a timely manner. For a program that costs half a trillion dollars, one might expect better outcomes, yet studies have shown that patients on Medicaid often fared worse than patients who have no insurance at all.

Avik Roy describes Medicaid as being cards issued to patients that, because of the low payments to physicians, does not get them into a doctor's office. They are twice as likely to go to an emergency room for primary care as someone with no insurance at all, proving that Medicaid does not unclog crowded ERs.

Another fallacy is that Medicaid could keep people healthier by preventing disease. Just as fire insurance does not prevent fires, insurance cannot prevent illness. Instead, fire insurance protects us against catastrophic loss in the event of a fire, and so health insurance ought to protect us against catastrophic loss in the face of a major illness. However, it is hard to defend the concept of Medicaid preventing catastrophic loss in a patient who has no assets to lose.

The whole idea of Medicaid was to increase access to medical care for the poor, but Medicaid clearly does not accomplish this. The author states that it would be far better to find a way to fund healthcare for the poor without expanding the failed Medicaid program. He suggests that "there is a way to provide health coverage to the poor that truly protects them from medical calamities." He suggests setting up a direct pay or membership system where a primary care physician is given a fixed amount per month to be available to the patient.

My only disagreement would be in funding this through government. While it would be far less costly than the Medicaid system, it still presents a moral hazard in that there would be less incentive to improve one's financial state if getting a job would cause the monthly payment to his

physician to be cut off.

But it is quite clear that the Affordable Care Act, which will double the Medicaid rolls, will only make a bad system worse.

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**Aping Mankind: Neuromania, Darwinitis, and the Misrepresentation of Humanity**, by Raymond Tallis, paperback, 388 pp. \$19.95, ISBN 978-1-84465-273-0, Durham, UK, Acumen Publishing Limited, 2012.

*"The footprint is not the memory of a foot, except to an observer."*

*"A neural account of consciousness is a contradiction in terms."*

*"It was my brain made me do it, your honor."*  
—Raymond Tallis

An ominous pessimism is becoming widespread in our culture today. It assumes there is no significant gap between man and animals, and that we have no free will.

This leads to cynicism about life and to abandonment of the hope of progress. Its cause is the concern of polymath Raymond Tallis, a neurologist and retired professor of geriatrics at the University of Manchester. He is a philosopher, poet, novelist, cultural critic, and the author of several books, including *The Knowing Animal* and *Michelangelo's Finger*.

In *Aping Mankind*, Tallis says that two intellectual trends underlie this problem. The first is a Darwinian-inspired pessimism that he labels "Darwinitis." The second, which he calls "neuromania," uses brain science to explain our behavior, and claims that consciousness is identical with brain activity. He says these errors are especially important because they have disastrous consequences—they lead to all manner of "progressive" social policies that claim to be rooted in neuroscience.

While Darwinism claims to show how the organism *Homo sapiens* came into being, Darwinitis purports to explain everything about people in the biological terms of Evolution theory. It animalizes human behavior and humanizes animal behavior. But, as Tallis points out, human life changes independently of genes, so Darwinitis cannot account for our more

recent cultural evolution.

Tallis states that neuromaniacs employ a form of magical thinking. By using the latest functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scans, they have "discovered" the neural bases for: "altruism, borderline personality disorder, criminal behavior, decision-making, empathy, fear, gut feelings, hope, impulsivity, judgment, love [maternal, romantic, and unconditional], motivation, neuroticism, problem gambling, racial bias, suicide, trust, violence, wisdom, and zeal (religious)."

But what the scans in fact reveal is only an indirect measure of brain function—an increase in blood flow. Their accuracy and reliability are poor, and the use of correlations to show causation is problematic.

Tallis is alarmed because this neuro-evolutionary pseudoscience is moving from academics to the more dangerous areas of education, social policy, and politics. For example, in the courts of law, "neuro-law" is big business and getting bigger. It potentially eliminates criminal responsibility. "Neuro-lawyers" inappropriately use fMRI brain scans to argue that criminals are not accountable for their crimes.

In spite of the claims of Darwinitis and neuromania, Tallis writes, we humans are not merely exceptionally gifted chimps: we are fundamentally different from other animals. We are conscious beings, with selfhood, intentionality, and free will (and, consequently, personal responsibility). But how our consciousness developed has always been a mystery.

Tallis first shows that nerve impulses, the key processes in the brain, cannot cause consciousness. Nerve impulses consist only of waves of transient alteration in electrical potential passing along neurons. Whatever different energies land on sense endings, all are changed into the same electrochemical energy of nerve impulses.

He believes the development of consciousness began millions of years ago when, by way of Darwinian Evolution, we gradually became biologically different from other animals. Three major changes occurred. First, primates stood upright, and the resulting bipedalism liberated the hand. Second, the hand developed an opposable thumb, which transformed the primate

hand into a proto-tool. Third, the upright position placed primates above the world, so they could see it at a distance, which facilitated perspective. This combined in a special way with the liberated hand to create an important gesture that strengthened shared attention: pointing. Primates could use a finger to point and to draw others' attention to things by gestures.

Tallis says these three changes greatly facilitated our journey to self-consciousness, which he believes took place over some 5 million years. He states that we have inherited the cumulative progress of previous generations: it takes a newborn human infant around ten years to acquire the fruits of several million years of human development, and most of it is acquired in the first 2 years of life.

In the end, Tallis admits that there is nothing that can explain why matter should "go mental." No one knows why certain organizations of matter, such as humans, have developed consciousness and others have not. He believes that we must settle for ontological agnosticism.

But he warns that if we don't reverse the scientism that underlies Darwinism and neuromania, little by little "we arrive at lunacy." That his alarm is well founded is seen in recent news media reports. For example, on Mar 1, 2013, an article entitled "Brain Scan Reveals If You're Republican or Democrat" appeared on newsmax.com. Researchers in "neuro-politics" from both the University of Exeter and the University of California San Diego claimed that Democrats and Republicans use different parts of their brains when they make "risky decisions." And, on Mar 13, "Your Brain Scans Show Who You're Thinking About" appeared on businessinsider.com. A "cognitive neuroscientist" from Cornell University claimed that, by using fMRI scans, scientists can "even reconstruct videos of what a person has watched based on their brain activity alone.... This is the first study to show that we can decode what people are imagining."

Tallis says we should "be afraid, be very afraid" of this insidious, continuing destruction of our culture, indeed of civilization. We must begin by recognizing the seriousness of the problem. Only then can we work together to reverse it.

**Jerome C. Arnett, Jr., M.D.**  
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***The Dark Side of Charles Darwin: a Critical Analysis of an Icon of Science***, by Jerry Bergman, softcover, 270 pp, ISBN-13: 978-0-89051-605-8, Green Forest, Ark., Master Books, 2011.

More than 200 years after his birth in 1809, and 150 years after the publication of *The Origin of Species* in 1859, Charles Darwin is still considered one of the greatest scientists who ever lived.

The 100-plus biographies of Darwin published in English are all favorable, according to Bergman. But without disputing Darwin's many scientific accomplishments, such as his study of worms, or his reputation of being a kind and generous person and a model husband and father, Bergman focuses on the dark side of Darwin, in both his personal life and scientific work.

Darwin's work marked a critical turning point in science. For most of history, Bergman writes, science and religion were largely co-workers in exploring the material world. Scientists strove to demonstrate evidence of God's design and influence in nature. But after Darwin, the science establishment became militantly opposed even to the idea of design and purpose in nature. Darwin is said to have taught that "life had no plan, but turned instead to an infinity of expedients to cope with what nature threw at it."

Bergman states that Darwin's motives were not primarily scientific at all, but were religious. "In Darwin's own words, his goal in developing and establishing his theory was like committing a murder." What he wanted to destroy was the most common basis for believing in God—the argument from design, sometimes called the cosmological or teleological argument. He spoke about "converting" others to his view, and spoke of obtaining "confessions of faith." This seemed to be the purpose of his vast correspondence—an exchange of more than 14,000 letters with some 1,800 correspondents. This was also the goal of his leading allies, for example Thomas H. Huxley ("Darwin's Bulldog"). Huxley knew of "no plausible hypothesis on the mechanism of change," yet supported Darwin because he was "a staunch advocate of scientific naturalism."

The suppression of dissidents (which is so powerfully shown in Ben Stein's movie *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*) began even before the political war against the creationists was largely won by Darwinists, writes Bergman. Those who had widely divergent theories about possible mechanisms of evolution presented a united front against creationists.

While jurists and many religious authorities have asserted that evolution and theism are compatible, Bergman states that "the most eminent life scientists of our age agree, and have expressed themselves in the strongest terms on

the matter, that a clear unbridgeable contradiction exists between Darwinism and theism." He quotes Cornell University biology professor William B. Provine to the effect that Darwin understood that if natural selection explained adaptation, the "argument from design was dead and all that went with it, namely the existence of a personal God, free will, life after death, immutable moral laws, and ultimate meaning in life." Bergman apparently thinks that scientists who proclaim the compatibility of evolution and religion may be doing so hypocritically, out of fear that they will lose their federal funding.

Darwin insisted that evolution was random and undirected, and understood very well the implications. Bergman quotes a study of 149 leading biologists of whom 90 percent believed that evolution has no ultimate purpose or goal except survival, and that humans are a cosmic accident existing at the whim of time and chance.

Darwin's health was poor. After age 28, he largely lived as a reclusive invalid, detailing his sufferings in extreme detail in his diary. He apparently suffered from agoraphobia and a panic disorder, and many disabling physical symptoms including vomiting and tinnitus. Inner conflict about the truth and implications of his evolutionary theory may have been important contributors, Bergman writes.

One of Darwin's least appealing personality traits was his passion for killing animals. Bergman states that he kept a detailed ledger of the birds that he had shot, and also used poison, hammers, or rocks. In addition, he greatly enjoyed vivisection of animals.

Bergman discusses at great length the question of whether Darwin plagiarized his evolutionary theory. All of the ideas credited to Darwin had been discussed in print by others before him, including his grandfather Erasmus Darwin, whose major influence Darwin never acknowledged.

Almost all of Darwin's field samples were collected when he was very young. At age 22, when he was a divinity student, he was appointed to the position of naturalist on *HMS Beagle* on its expedition to the Galapagos Islands, more because of his social status than his skills. He did not label the collection site of any of his specimens because he did not think it was important. As the *Beagle* crossed the Pacific, he ate the tortoises and threw the carapaces, the most obvious clue to the adaptive radiation of the species, into the sea. The 80 mammals and 450 birds that he presented to the zoological society had to be identified and cataloged by experts.

According to references Bergman

cites, Darwin even had difficulty telling the finches apart, mixed up the samples collected from various islands, and did not recognize the significance of the shape of their bills, so often cited as evidence for evolution. Darwin apparently wasn't thinking about the development of his evolutionary theory during this voyage; most of his notes concerned geology.

In Darwin's time, there was no knowledge of genetics, much less of cellular biochemistry. He recognized that, as the French scientist Hugo DeVries noted, natural selection could explain only the survival of the fittest, not the arrival of the fittest. To explain the source of new genetic information needed to produce the variation on which natural selection could work, Darwin advocated the idea of pangenesis, which can be traced back to Hippocrates circa 400 B.C. This is basically a form of the Lamarckian idea of the inheritance of acquired characteristics, though at one point Darwin dismissed Lamarck's ideas as "rubbish."

Pangenesis posits that each and every part of an organism produces "gemmules" during every stage of the organism's development from embryo to adult. This means that every developmental stage is subject to environmental modification. After being modified, gemmules are released from the cell and travel in the circulation to the gametes. Thus, gametes were viewed as a collection of gemmules derived from somatic units. Modified gemmules could be transmitted to the parent's offspring, and could even be passed in a dormant form to show up in subsequent generations.

Darwin knew of course that surgical alterations were not heritable, but could not explain what kind of environmental modifications could be inherited. Nor could he describe how gemmules were modified, how they were "thrown off," or even what they were. He became extremely angry, however, when his cousin Francis Galton empirically disproved pangenesis by transfusing blood from one type of rabbit into another to see whether the differences could be passed on to the offspring. The evidence notwithstanding, a number of evolutionists still considered pangenesis to be a viable theory for decades.

Although Darwin opposed slavery, his work gives clear evidence that he considered Europeans to be superior and certain other races to be biologically inferior. He also believed that women were less evolved than men. Bergman details how Darwinism formed the basis for the eugenics movement, although

Darwin did not support the more brutal and coercive forms of eugenics, which were manifested in extreme form in the Holocaust.

Bergman shows how Darwin's ideas have had a powerful and pervasive—and many would argue highly destructive—influence on our culture. It is also Bergman's view the scientific basis was anything but sound to begin with, and is far from "settled."

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***The Signature in the Cell: DNA and the Evidence for Intelligent Design***, by Stephen C. Meyer, hardcover, 611 pp, \$28.99, ISBN 978-0-06-147278-7, New York, N.Y., Harper Collins, 2009.

Author Stephen Meyer first came to media attention with the firestorm of controversy that met publication of his article on Intelligent Design in the peer-reviewed journal, the *Proceedings of the Biological Society of Washington*, housed at the Smithsonian Institution. The editor of the journal, evolutionary biologist Richard Sternberg, was censured for poor editorial judgment, although the article had passed the normal process of peer review. He was demoted, and his career at the Smithsonian ruined. Benjamin Stein recounts the story in his movie *Expelled*.

In *The Origin of Species*, Charles Darwin argued that natural selection acting upon random variations could explain how living things appear to have been designed. He did not, however, attempt to explain how living organisms came to exist in the first place. It was the question of the origin of life that aroused the interest of Meyer when he was a young scientist working for a multinational oil company in 1985.

As a former physics and geology student, Meyer knew very little about DNA. He attended a conference about the "DNA enigma"—the fact that its coding sequences contain information comparable to that in computer code. This suggests the existence of a programmer—a designer.

We learn in basic physics and chemistry that there are two entities in the universe, matter and energy, which are neither created nor destroyed—at least, not since the Big Bang, although they are interconvertible according to Einstein's equation  $E=mc^2$ . But there is a third entity, Meyer points out—information. Information is created, and is destroyed.

Explanations for an observed phenomenon are generally of three types, Meyer observes: necessity, chance, and design.

Chemical reactions occur through necessity, i.e. the laws of physics. Such reactions may occur in a certain way, i.e. amino acids linking up in one sequence rather than another, by chance.

A stream flows down a mountainside by necessity. The distribution of rocks on the bottom of the stream occurs by chance.

On the other hand, the configuration of rocks at Stonehenge is recognized to have occurred because of design. Information that we see in computer programs is there by intelligent design. The occurrence of design implies the existence of intelligence.

If we see an array of letters or numbers or marks, how can we determine whether they are random sequences, say caused by those proverbial monkeys hitting keys on a typewriter, or the product of intelligence? Meyer discusses this at great length, including the concept of available "probabilistic resources."

Meyer describes how the sequence of DNA bases codes for amino acids. One set of three bases can code for one and only one amino acid, although a particular amino acid can be specified by more than one codon. This is the alphabet. Does the arrangement of the codons spell out something like a Shakespearean play, or is it just a set of incredibly fortunate bingo calls?

Once the biological system exists, it replicates itself. How did the first self-replicating system come about? We now recognize that the very simplest living cell is immensely more complex than Darwin could possibly have understood.

Every cell represents a chicken-and-egg phenomenon. Before there was a living cell, there had to be the first self-replicating molecule. What are the candidates? It cannot be DNA. DNA is the template for its own replication, but it cannot replicate without DNA polymerase and about 20 other enzymes. DNA contains the information needed for building enzymes and other proteins, but cannot itself synthesize them. Protein synthesis requires messenger RNA, transfer RNA, and elaborate machinery made of proteins.

What is needed is a molecule that has both enzymatic functions and information storage functions. Scientists hoped that certain types of RNA would satisfy these requirements. According to the RNA-first model, an RNA ribozyme arose in a prebiotic soup. First, there were chemical

reactions occurring by necessity between precursors that just happened to be present under a set of physical conditions favoring their reaction. Chance variations in the process occurred, and natural selection eliminated less survivable variants. Eventually, more efficient and more complex systems emerged.

Meyer notes, however, that RNA building blocks are hard to synthesize and easy to destroy. Additionally, ribozymes are poor substitutes for proteins. Naturally occurring RNA molecules can perform only a small handful of the thousands of functions performed by proteins. Most importantly, Meyer concludes, the RNA role does not explain the origin of genetic information, that is the sequence specificity in the “DNA enigma.”

Intelligent design is kept out of school curricula on the basis that it is not a scientific theory. Meyer provides a lengthy discussion of how to determine whether or not a theory is scientific. While theories that can be subjected to experimental proof or disproof are scientific, neither evolution nor Intelligent Design can meet this criterion. Instead, they must be evaluated by a process that determines what constitutes the best explanation—rather like in a murder investigation. I found Meyer’s book to be as engaging as a good whodunit.

In his 12 years as a college professor, Meyer found that it was easier to understand the scientific theory if one could follow the historical progression of thought that lead to his formulation. Thus, he chose to present his case for Intelligent Design in the context of historical and personal narrative. There are excursions into information theory, the philosophy of science, cellular biology—and even law. The notion of what is science has legal implications, as in the 2005 Dover trial, in which Judge John E. Jones, III, ruled that a Pennsylvania school district could not tell its biology students about a book in the school library that explained the theory of Intelligent Design. The decision was based on witnesses testifying to the establishment view that Intelligent Design is not science by definition. Therefore, it must be religion. Therefore, censorship in academia is justified or even required, the court decided.

Meyer makes no secret of his Christian faith, or about whose signature he believes to be in each and every living cell. He makes a strong case, however, that the theory of Intelligent Design is about science, and he presents a number of questions that must be answered by any theory concerning the origin of life. He also makes a dozen predictions inspired

by Intelligent Design that scientists might investigate.

The book has a decent index and 85 pages of endnotes. There are many useful schematic diagrams, very helpful in understanding the biochemistry. It is valuable for its readable review of the chemistry of life even if for no other reason.

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***The Liberty Amendments—Restoring the American Republic***, by Mark Levin, hardcover, 272 pp, \$26.99, ISBN 978-1451606270, Threshold Editions, 2013.

Radio commentator Mark Levin’s newest book proposes 11 amendments to our Constitution but does not call for a Constitutional Convention. The process is spelled out in Article V of the Constitution, which provides that “Congress...on the application of the legislatures of two thirds of the several states, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments...”

Levin proposes repeal of the 17th Amendment, which crippled federalism and destroyed most of the states’ power; term limits for members of Congress and Supreme Court justices; a super-majority override of Supreme Court decisions by Congress or the states; a taxation limit; a spending limit; a curb on federal bureaucracy; promotion of free enterprise by stopping abuse of the Commerce Clause; strengthening of property rights; granting states authority to directly amend the Constitution; granting states authority to check Congress; and provision of a photo ID for voting.

The proposals have much to recommend them. It will take consideration by those of us who care for the future to test their strengths, discover possible weaknesses, and propose changes, just as those who wrote the Constitution, Federalist, and Anti-Federalist papers tested their ideas by thinking them through in conversation.

In making his argument Levin has avoided dogmatism. He has also provided a clear and concise retrospective on important aspects of the Constitution as it is written, as it was intended, and as it has been twisted and warped by judges, the executive branch, and Congress, to enable them to do all they can to shred our freedoms and crush us.

Many people have told me that things that I envisioned were impossible, that they would never happen, and that I should give up. I did not. I made them

happen, so they were possible. Levin will face the same negativity, but restoration of our Constitution is possible, and we can make it happen.

His burning language, used in unflinching defense of the truth, is one of my favorite things about Mark Levin and all his writings. Those who have made an art form of taking offense when truth is spoken will find no poltroon here.

Missing from our Constitution is an effective method of removing and effectively punishing those who flout it. Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Sen. Harry Reid, among others who have violated their oaths of office, have expressed utter contempt for the Constitution they took a solemn oath to preserve, protect, and defend. In amending the Constitution, I would like to see far more supple and effective methods of prosecuting those such as Reid and Pelosi who so cavalierly trample our liberties and so arrogantly violate their oaths of office.

The first chapter sets out the case for the amendments. It’s an easy case to make. Levin invokes Alexis de Tocqueville, 19th-century author of *Democracy in America*, who noted, “It is new in history to see a great people turn a calm and scrutinizing eye on itself.” Levin correctly identifies philosophers, experts, and academics as the originators of the schemes forced on us by a “delusional governing elite.” However, as we examine the state of our nation, he expects us to rally to our own salvation. It is not a millisecond too soon. Levin sums up our fiscal situation with another apt selection from de Tocqueville: “In democratic societies...there exists an urge to do something even when the goal is not precise, a sort of permanent fever that turns to innovation of every kind. And innovations are almost always costly.”

Each chapter addresses one of the 11 amendments, setting out the text of the proposed amendment, and then providing valuable historical perspective on the original intent of the Founders and Framers, including illuminating quotations. He describes what went wrong, when, and how. There is cause enough to hang some statist for treason, such as President Woodrow Wilson (p.150).

Horrifying as the truth is, Levin’s hostility to tyranny comforts as well as invigorates, and lets me know others think as I do. He writes, “The Statists have constructed an all-powerful central government, unleashing endless social experiments.... The federal branches have used judicial review, congressional delegation, broad abuses of the Commerce and Takings clauses, and the power of the purse... to commandeer the sovereignty of the

states and the citizenry...now consumed by an elephantine array of federal laws, regulations, and rulings, which torment, coerce, obstruct and sabotage the individual's autonomy." It is so satisfying to have someone else point out the vacuous compositeness of some of the most ridiculous rulings of the Supreme Court, as if they had been asked to rule on the emperor's nakedness, and were swearing to high heaven that he was wearing ermine robes in spite of the evidence of everyone's eyes.

It seems little remarked that our government constantly toys with us. Levin addresses this in his remarks about the amendment to grant the states authority to check Congress, quoting Thomas Jefferson: "The instability of our laws is really an immense evil." We should "provide in our constitutions that there shall be a twelvemonth between... ingrossing a bill and passing it." Levin then describes the nightmare process by which the Frankenstein monster of the "Affordable Care Act" was created.

I wish I could read this book to those who may not heed my pleas to buy it, read it, study it, think about it, and then act on it. We are at a dangerous transition point. Gen. George Washington said on Aug 27, 1776: "The time is now near at hand which must probably determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves... consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer or die."

This easily readable book is a call to action for us to restore our Republic by acting through our state legislators.

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***Do You Believe In Magic? The Sense and Nonsense of Alternative Medicine***, by Paul A. Offit, M.D., hardcover, 322 pp, \$20.52, ISBN 978-0-06-222296-1, New York, N.Y., Harper Collins, 2013.

On Jan 9, 1928, Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels delivered a lengthy speech, "Knowledge and Propaganda." In that speech he said, "Propaganda stands between the one and the many, between the idea and the world view. Propaganda is nothing other than the forerunner to organization. Once it has done this, it is the forerunner to state control. It is always the

means to an end."

*Do You Believe in Magic?* is propaganda.

It begins on the front flap of the cover: "A half century ago, acupuncture, homeopathy, naturopathy, Chinese herbs, Christian exorcisms, dietary supplements, chiropractic manipulations, and ayurvedic remedies were considered on the fringe of medicine." Curiously, he left out osteopathy. The thesis continues: "Alternative medicine—an unregulated industry under no legal obligation to prove its claims or admit its risks—can actually be harmful to our health." Dr. Offit may be unaware that humankind in general, and physicians professionally, have an obligation to not defraud, and that there are remedies of law and of conscience.

It is amazing to reflect on the degree of success the propaganda of Rockefeller's "pharmaceutical investment business" had achieved between 1913 and 1963. After the oil cartel was broken up in 1911 by the U.S. Supreme Court, citing corruption and racketeering, John D. Rockefeller turned to "philanthropy," starting the Rockefeller Foundation in 1913. This global business venture existed to fund investments in the pharmaceutical industry. Cleverly, all donations were made to medical schools and hospitals that promoted and sold the patented products. The propaganda machine really fired up after the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic, and monopoly building was pursued aggressively. Competition arose in Germany in 1925 with I.G. Farben (Bayer, BASF, and Hoechst), and a territorial division was completed on Nov 29, 1929. The "health insurance" industry was then developed to selectively finance the market of legal drug users. So, by 1963 I regularly heard comments about the dangers of chiropractic, osteopathy, "voodoo" practitioners, and other quackery.

After that, I went to college, became a scientist, went to medical school, became a physician, and started to treat patients. I never stopped using scientific principles—based on which I along with thousands of my colleagues sought ways to avoid modern patent medicines. Interestingly, John D. Rockefeller's father was an M.D. with a reputation as a "quack," who sold patent medicines in the 19th century.

Dr. Offit writes an entire book, not to promote something about which he is knowledgeable, but to demean and ridicule methods about which he knows little. He surrounds himself with certified experts: a physician who runs a lab that focuses on clinical pharmacology of new drugs to treat childhood cancers; people

associated with the National Science Foundation; self-styled "Quackbusters"; the chair of the National Cancer Institute Biobanking Ethics Working Group; a lawyer from the Food and Drug Administration; a vaccine researcher and promoter; academic pediatricians; and so on.

Seven parts and 12 chapters crescendo to the epilogue, "Albert Schweitzer and the Witch Doctor: A Parable." Again, with no research into the subject Offit wants to debunk, he begins in sympathy with the growing distrust of modern medicine. But his sympathetic posture ends abruptly when he links Linus Pauling to the purported dangers of vitamins, and then laments the failure of the government to annihilate the supplement industry by regulation.

The middle six chapters attack personalities and practitioners. Finally, in chapter 11, we are given a look behind the curtain (he even quotes *The Wizard of Oz* on p 228) to see how the illusion of healing has been maintained by practitioners through the centuries—the Placebo Effect!

In chapter 12, Offit cites four proscriptions: 1) do not fail to recommend conventional therapies that are helpful; 2) do not promote potentially harmful therapies without adequate warning; 3) do not drain patients' bank accounts; and 4) do not promote magical thinking.

Is that the reason to write a whole book?

In 1913, newly discovered but unpatentable vitamins competed with patented medicines for the public's money. In 2013, that competition survived in spite of a century of negative propaganda. People do not trust officialdom, and still want a personal relationship with a healer who treats the whole person.

Now "ObamaCare," in one great stroke, wants to use the force of government to capture an economic market where economic chicanery has failed for more than a century—and by the way to destroy the independent profession of medicine, and the ability of physicians to go outside the accepted treatment dogma.

This is of course a battle for money—but it goes beyond that. To get the money, the new mandarins need to ridicule and marginalize the world view of dissenters. Their propagandists, like Offit, serve the agenda of total central government control over medicine.

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