

Reconciling destructive intent with truth and reality

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Narrative: It should not surprise us that over the past 40 years several authors have been notable in the strident condemnation of Chiropractic and its foundational premise. Among these have been Homola, Edzard Ernst, and Joe Keating Jr.

What is surprising is the identification of the several Chiropractors who hitched their wagon to this wave of bitterness including Australian Keith Charlton.

Chiropractic historian Simon Senzon has now published the incestuous networks formed by this academic echo chamber which cited each other, formed invalid argument, and grossly misread evidence.

As McCoy is now demonstrating, it is time for these papers to be effectively culled from the Chiropractic literature as they fail to demonstrate responsible scholarship and can not be reconciled with the reality of an evidence-based discipline.

Indexing Terms: Chiropractic; publication; research; subluxation.

Introduction

Matt McCoy has been reporting the truths uncovered by Senzon through his doctoral work funded by the Foundation for Vertebral Subluxation Research (FVSR). This Journal carried Senzon's thesis on its web pages but it drew little interest, which is a shame as it is rather erudite, even though its methodology is complex. Senzon pushes the boundaries of the quantitative analysis of selected literature. In his defence I would suggest it is only through such novel approaches at which Senzon excels that we may finally come to understand why our profession has been behind the 8-ball for far too long.

This complexity is where McCoy comes to the fore, taking Senzon's core findings and creating digestible truths for us. We are thankful for McCoy's focus on this important content even though we no longer carry Senzon's thesis (1) on this site as McCoy is now running with it and frankly, Senzon's lack of appreciation for our support has finally worn thin.

... The world's first case report on subluxation was written in 1676, 350 years ago, as reported by the meticulous research of historian Gary Bovine ...'



Indeed, he asked us in the first instance to not make any reference to his work and to not make it available to you. Of course we ignored this given he undertook his research in an Australian university which is generously funded by the Australian taxpayer to facilitate such research. Hence our right and duty to report.

Why does this matter?

It matters because Senzon has provided McCoy with the evidence for the claims he has advanced over some time. We can no longer obfuscate anti-subluxation rhetoric now that we know its origin with precision. And one of Australia's own is complicit; Keith Charlton being an author on the paper Senzon found to be most discredited of all, yet paradoxically the most influential in damaging all that Chiropractic represents.

It disappoints me that one person could actually think it OK to pay forward such damaging drivel.

And in turn this brings us full circle to the core question of 'who are we' and of course, 'why does it matter who we are'?

These are the critical questions of our time.

As an educator of Chiropractors I was bound to teach what Charlton and Keating published if only to give it context and limit its intellectual vandalism. I will not cite it here for to do so would only increase its count in some bloody index that suggests it is a more important paper than it is.

I can't deny it is important because the citation data shows that it is. But I can dismiss it as a damaging incoming missile from miserable people, one of whom subsequently suicided.

In the bigger picture Charlton and Keating's paper is akin to how our profession was attacked through Homola's rubbish, and in a larger arena how the perpetually dejected Ezard Ernst wrought so much opprobrium on our beloved discipline.

What are you going to do about it?

As Editor of these pages I would like ask you to support us by adding your email at the bottom of our landing page to ensure you receive the notice of each new issue. It costs you nothing but 30 seconds of your time now, yet helps us both. We are increasing our publication frequency and a simple, obligation-free 'sign up' is a good way to make sure to remain current with the most important papers now being published to enrich our profession. Your email address is secure.

It would also be good if we can start to push back against at those academics wielding power with little responsibility. Here I think of Matt Fernandez who recently promoted an 'Expert View' of low back pain (2) which did not mention the role of Chiropractic. Nor did he include Chiropractors in his list of recommended experts to assist. Yet he is the putative head of the Chiropractic program at Central Queensland University. Really?

I'm proud to stand up for the evidence-base role of Chiropractic in managing patients with low back pain, as all Chiropractors should be.

Good things

As a life member of the Australian Chiropractors Association I have a vested interest in what it is doing and more important, where it is taking us. This month I found President Chow's most recent report to members highly appropriate if not an inspirational summary of all the good that our

profession deserves. Well done Billy. When I see the breadth of activity being undertaken by our peak representative body, I feel both calmed and optimistic for our future.

I would ask you too, please, to be calm and optimistic. As Senzon shows, we can dismiss Charlton and others who have advanced fanciful ideas attacking our foundational premise. One day in the future I shall publish his letter to the Vice Chancellor of Central Queensland University on my appointment as foundation Professor for Chiropractic in that Institution in 2011. Like the VC of the day, and me, you will cringe in embarrassment of the length to which some of our profession will go to in order to advance their own agenda and eat their fellows.

In contrast, here is a short checklist of good things we can celebrate:

- ▶ The first university-based program of Chiropractic education to serve India is commencing,
- ▶ The Australian Chiropractic Association membership has passed the 3,000 mark
- ▶ The Australian Chiropractic College is growing, delivering now from a campus in Adelaide and a new campus in Melbourne,
- ▶ The Australian Spinal Research Foundation has again this year attracted many solid research proposals seeking funding,
- ▶ This Journal's new sister-relationship with The United Association for Applied Kinesiology (UAAK) and their journal Applied Kinesiology (Ukrainian),
- ▶ RFK Jr being positive for Chiropractic, and
- ▶ Discovering that the world's first case report on subluxation was written in 1676, 350 years ago, thanks to the meticulous research of historian Gary Bovine.

The few remaining deniers of subluxation are intellectually impoverished and incapable of accepting the evidence in front of them. Something to discuss another day.

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