

Good Grief - The Story of Charles M. Schulz, Rheta Grimsley Johnson, Pharos Books, New York, 1989.

The Los Angeles Times, "Creator of 'Peanuts' Is Mourned Worldwide," February 14, 2000, Page 1.

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The Cincinnati Post, "The original little red-haired girl," Week of January 2, 2000.

ARS LONGA II

June 5, 2000

Stanley L. Block

In a paper with which I came to the Literary Club several years ago entitled Ars Longa, I wrote in an epilogue that Martin Fischer, a deceased member of the Literary Club, had once written, "observation, reason, human understanding, courage; these make the physician." I, on the other hand, observed that, "passion, rivalry, ambition, and occasional bouts of irrationality make the physician human".

I justified my position in the body of the paper by citing three illustrative instances from the long and sometimes stormy history of Cincinnati medicine. Well, I'm here to tell you that there is more! The aforementioned instances are not the rarity that some might think. The weird happenings, the wackos, and the loonies in the medical community of Cincinnati's past are far more numerous than we might like to admit. And thus I borrow an idea from Hollywood (which probably isn't a very good idea, but I am willing to risk it. After all, I risked presenting a paper on travel to the Literary Club and squeaked by, I think). I come with a sequel: Ars Longa II.

In fact, I think I may be at the beginning of an anthology: The Far Side of Cincinnati Medicine.

THE DUEL

Most of Cincinnati medicine begins with Daniel Drake, who, in 1805, became the first person to receive a medical certificate west of the Alleghenies. He had served a four year apprenticeship with Dr. William Goforth, an early pioneer physician in frontier medicine who awarded him the certificate. In my days at U.C.'s College of Medicine, Drake's certificate hung outside the medical auditorium. Today, it rests in greater safety in the Cincinnati Medical Heritage Center.

In the fall of 1805, Drake traveled by horseback to Philadelphia for more formal education and obtain a degree in medicine from the University of Pennsylvania Medical College, one of the few in the country; a school dominated by Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

Two of Drake's classmates in Philadelphia were Benjamin W. Dudley and William H. Richardson. They are the central figures in the tale I am about to tell. Dudley was a remarkable figure in the history of medicine in our region. Although less celebrated than Drake, his contributions as a surgical clinician and educator in Lexington, Kentucky rival those of Drake.

After Dudley received his degree, resolved to embark upon additional studies in Europe. In order to finance this venture, he left Lexington by flatboat for New Orleans where he purchased a cargo of flour; he then sailed to Gibraltar, and there, and in Lisbon, he was able to sell the cargo for a handsome profit. With finances secure, he made his way to Paris, medical capital of the western world in that era, where he spent some four years dissecting and observing surgical techniques and practice in the hospitals, clinics and laboratories of the French capital. Dudley also spent some time in medical study in London, and toured Italy and Switzerland before returning home to Lexington in the summer of 1814.

Within three years of his return, the Board of Trustees of Transylvania College in Lexington, recognizing that there was no medical college west of

the Alleghenies, decided to establish a medical department and invited Dudley to spearhead its development. Calling upon his classmates at Philadelphia, Drake and Richardson, Dudley opened the first medical school in the West in 1817 - Dudley in the chair of anatomy and surgery; Richardson in the chair of obstetrics; and Drake in the chair of materia medica and the medical department. There were two others on the faculty of five who do not figure in my story.

These fellows were strong-willed and competitive. All had fiery tempers. There were differences concerning medical practice; and, perhaps more to the point, there were struggles for political influence and power. Disputes often led to rancor; and rancor led, on at least one occasion to violence.

In 1818 a misunderstanding arose between Dudley and his colleagues over the postmortem examination of an Irishman, who had been shot and killed during a fight. The issues aren't germane. Vitriolic pamphlets were soon being circulated by Richardson, Dudley, and others criticizing each other's point of view. The personal attacks culminated in Dudley challenging Richardson to a duel. There is another version of the story that Dudley was actually offended by Drake and challenged him to the duel, but Drake refused to fight. Richardson then volunteered to take his place. This story has been refuted by good authority. Apparently Alban Goldsmith, a bitter enemy of Drake, invented the story in order to discredit him. I told you, these fellows weren't always "nice guys". All reliable evidence points to the fact that Dudley never challenged Drake; rather, it was Richardson who was challenged.

At any rate, at the appointed hour, at dawn, the two good doctors, Dudley and Richardson, met on the field of honor. Pistols were selected; the chair of surgery and the chair of obstetrics at the first college of medicine west of the Alleghenies, counted out the agreed upon paces, wheeled, raised their guns and fired. Obstetrics (that is, Richardson) missed. Surgery's Dudley, on the other hand, hit the target. With a cry of pain, Richardson went down, his trousers

stained with blood. His aides rushed to his side, and ripping open his trousers exposed a gaping wound in Richardson's groin.

For the laymen in the audience: the groin is not a good spot to get hit! Not only is it dangerously close to one's private parts, but a lot of other, equally important anatomical stuff, particularly blood vessels, runs through that small triangular area that we call the femoral triangle or the groin. Indeed, Dudley had, indeed, struck one of Richardson's femoral vessels. Expert anatomist that he was, Dudley quickly recognized that Richardson was in trouble - big trouble! He was bleeding to death!

According to reliable accounts "Dudley asked permission to intervene". I can fantasize the encounter: Dudley to Richardson who is lying on the ground bleeding to death, "I say there, old man, you have a nasty wound there, mind if I stick my thumb in your groin?" At any rate, Dudley, the surgeon, ligated the vessel in short order, thus saving Richardson's life. Former classmates and contentious colleagues became lifelong friends after the near fatal duel.

Moral of story: If you have to engage in dueling, be sure your opponent is an outstanding anatomist and surgeon whose commitment to his oath Hippocrates exceeds the extent of his cholera.

Shots rang out on the field of honor.
 All thought Doc Richardson was surely a goner!
 But lo, as they watched,
 A tamponade to the crotch!
 A life saved, Ben Dudley - it's your Bonheur!

NECROSPELEOLOGY

One of Daniel Drake's sisters, Virginia, was married to Joseph Nash McDowell, an eminent physician in his own right. He graduated from the aforementioned Medical Department of Transylvania College in 1825. Soon thereafter he held the chair in anatomy at his alma mater. Later he held a similar post at

Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, but he stayed only one term and then returned to Lexington.

In 1831, McDowell joined his brother-in-law, Daniel Drake in the newly established Medical Department of Miami University at Cincinnati, and subsequently became professor of anatomy at the Cincinnati Medical College, another of Drake's enterprises. When the Cincinnati Medical folded in 1839, McDowell and his family departed Cincinnati for St. Louis and set about organizing a faculty of medicine under the charter of Kemper College. It became the first medical college to be successfully established west of the Mississippi, the predecessor of today's School of Medicine of Washington University in St. Louis.

McDowell was a superb anatomist and an amusing and entertaining lecturer as well. He was the idol of his medical classes. A pupil of McDowell's, in a remembrance stated that he "made even the dry bones talk". But this paper is not about superb lecturers or medical organizers; it is about the far side of physicians.

McDowell fits the bill. He was vain and impetuous. In conflicts with colleagues (and there were many) he was full of invective and ridicule. Shortly after establishing his medical school in St. Louis, a rival medical school was launched under the aegis of St. Louis University, a Jesuit school. McDowell was incensed. Already harboring strong anti-Catholic sentiment - he was an aggressive champion of the Know Nothing Party - McDowell had made many speeches on behalf of the anti-immigration and the anti-Catholic sentiments of the party. In response to the opening of the rival Jesuit school, he delivered a number of vituperative public lectures against the Jesuits. Soon he was convinced that the Jesuits were angry with him - probably a correct assessment. However, McDowell was seldom given to moderation. His concern about the good brothers went, shall we say, into orbit. McDowell became convinced that the Jesuits were out to assassinate him. He armed himself; and had a brass chest protector crafted (the forerunner of

today's bulletproof vest) which he wore at all times when out and about St. Louis.

When he had sufficient funds to build a new medical school he had it built with the Jesuit threat in mind. It was a fortress - a huge windowless octagonal stone building. And his personal residence, across the street from the school was similarly constructed. It was so well fortified, that it was used as a military prison during the Civil War. Despite these peculiarities, McDowell was highly successful during his years in St. Louis prior to the war with a busy private practice as well as his academic activities at the school.

He was, regretfully, pro-slavery so that when the War began, he took up the Confederate cause, gathered up a cache of weapons, including cannon, and embarked with some of his students of like mind via steamboat for Vicksburg where he delivered the ordinance to the Confederate Army. In 1862, he eluded the Union blockade and went to Europe where he was warmly received by the Universities of Edinburgh and Paris. He claimed that he was on a secret mission for the Confederacy. This was probably fantasy. No credible historical information has ever been found to substantiate his claims.

After the Civil War, this peculiar man returned to St. Louis, but casting his lot with the Confederacy had alienated him from nearly all his friends and patrons. His eccentricities became more evident. As a professor of anatomy he was familiar with the illegal practices often employed for the acquisition of cadavers for medical study - grave robbing.

As I have already observed, McDowell carried his fears to the extreme. He became obsessed with the fear or the "resurrectionists" and over time developed an elaborate, albeit completely wacko, defense; namely, cave burial (thus the term for this section: necrospeleology). If the body, McDowell argued, were placed in an alcohol filled coffin and secretly taken to a cave where it could be suspended from the ceiling, it would be preserved forever, and safe from any desecration by the feared grave robbers. During a bout

of severe illness, believing himself near death, McDowell called his personal physician and oldest son to his bedside in order to obtain their pledge that they would carry out the scheme and bury him in Mammoth Cave; thus it came to light.

As Henry Clay, who knew McDowell well, once said, "There never was a greater mind than McDowell's, or one so totally disabled by eccentricities".

A firebrand named Joseph McDowell
Wore a gun and a Know-Nothing scowl.
With an affect mercurial
And weird notions on burial,
He was a homerun that curved away foul!

MED/STAR WARS

Daniel Drake, along with Coleman Rogers and Reverend Elijah Slack established the Medical College of Ohio in 1819. It was Cincinnati's first school of medicine; only the second west of the Alleghenies. Unlike other medical schools in the country, its existence was not under the charter of a college or university; its charter came directly from the State of Ohio through a legislative act. Drake gave the college its first home, in a large room over his father's store on Main Street. The faculty consisted of Drake and three other professors. By today's standards, that's a puny faculty; but in those times the foremost medical school in the country, the University of Pennsylvania, had but six.

But even these four - Drake; Slack, professor of chemistry; Jesse Smith, professor of anatomy and surgery; and Benjamin Bohrer, professor of materia medica - could not get along with each other. Smith, in particular, did not like Drake. Quarrels were not private in Cincinnati. Smith's antagonism for Drake aroused the ire of David Burnet, brother of Cincinnati's mayor Isaac Burnet and Drake's friend. In August 1821 a notice was posted on a bulletin board in front of Johnson's grocery store on Main Street, signed by Burnet that referred to Dr. Smith as a "scoundrel, liar, poltroon and coward". That degree of insult

demanded a response! Jesse Smith challenged Burnet to a duel. Unlike the duel cited earlier in this paper, this one was averted through the intervention of their mutual friend William Henry Harrison.

Rancor, however, continued, particularly between Drake and the others. In March 1822, at a meeting of the faculty of four, with Drake presiding, Dr. Bohrer resigned, leaving three voting members. Smith then moved and Slack seconded a motion that Drake be dismissed from his post. Drake, founder and chairman of the school, had to call the question and the motion carried two to one. Drake left the chair, the house and the college that he had founded.

He related the episode in a pamphlet entitled: "A Narrative of the Rise and Fall of the Medical College of Ohio", a satirical piece which, probably correctly, identifies the problem as one of rivalry and struggle for power and control.

The school continued despite Drake's departure. At times, it even thrived. Drake, on the other hand, withdrew to nurse his hurt pride and to nurture vengeful desires. In 1831, nine years after his departure, Drake suddenly resurfaced in the destiny of the school he had founded. An announcement appeared in the Western Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences as follows: "The Board of Trustees of Miami University, beg leave, respectfully, to announce that they have established, in Cincinnati, a Medical Department, which will go into full operation the ensuing Autumn. The following gentlemen compose the faculty: Daniel Drake, M.D. Professor of the Institutes and Practice of Medicine, and dean of the Faculty. . .etc."

Drake was establishing a rival school in Cincinnati in order to defeat those who had ousted him from the Medical College of Ohio. He had assembled as distinguished a group of physicians as could be found in the United States - George McClellan and John Eberle from Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, James Staughton from Columbia University in New York, Thomas D. Mitchell, a distinguished Philadelphia chemist and pharmacist, Joseph N. McDowell, his brother-in-law

whose story has already been told, and John Flournoy Henry, a graduate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, who had seen military service with William Henry Harrison in the Canadian campaigns, had practiced medicine in Kentucky and served in the US Congress as a Representative from a Kentucky district.

Drake was a great educator, an influential medical journalist, possessed a brilliant mind, and was a true scientist whose curiosity knew few limits; he was, however, a poor politician and a poorer manipulator (the latter two probably go hand in hand). The professors and faculty of the Medical College of Ohio were initially thunderstruck. They perceived what a threat the new Miami Medical posed to their existence. To oppose the school was futile, but they quickly realized that if you can't beat 'em, you join 'em.

A group of trustees met with Drake in order to work out a deal. His terms: fire Jesse Smith and Elijah Slack, the culprits who had voted his dismissal. The trustees agreed.

The men that Drake had announced for the Miami Medical were now brought in to merge with the faculty of the now-united schools. The question of a chair for Drake proved to be a difficulty in the negotiations. Although Drake's specialty was medical practice, that chair was held by John Moorhead in the Ohio College. Although Drake knew that Moorhead was an enemy, Drake had not specified his dismissal. What is more, Moorhead was a popular teacher, a respected practitioner, and unanimously supported by the trustees of the Ohio Medical. Drake, mistakenly, agreed to Moorhead remaining in his chair of medical practice. A new position was created for Drake - a chair in clinical medicine.

The threat of rival schools was thus averted; Drake was again teacher at the school he had founded; the trustees were relieved; all seemed well. Drake had won a battle; he had taken revenge against Smith and Slack. Drake, however, lost the war.

Think about it (obviously Drake didn't). The Ohio faculty was a cohesive group that had done everything

in its power to block Drake before finally conceding to a merger. They certainly resented the intrusion of Drake and the Miami contingent. They might be divided on other matters; they were united on the merger issue and perceived Drake as the enemy. On the other hand, the Miami contingent was not a group at all. They had never been associated with each other; they had no working alliance with each other. Each had their own agenda; not necessarily in that of the school or of Drake. It was easy for the Ohio group to divide and conquer the Miami group. The Ohio group under Moorhead quickly recognized this and set about to isolate Drake.

They were successful. By the end of the 1832 session, Drake realized that he had once again been outmaneuvered. He resigned his chair to spare himself another expulsion. In the Med/Star Wars Drake proved to be no Luke Skywalker. The force was not with him. Alas, the troopers of Darth Vader triumphed!

In Daniel Drake's bio, it's clear
 He's a renaissance man without peer,
 But in collegial relations
 He met ired, frustrations.
 He was lacking in "Moxie", I fear.

HE PUT HIS MOUTH WHERE HIS MONEY WAS

"Affection by Consensus" is an old medical idea. Aretaeus, the Cappadocian, around the First Century A.D., probably introduced the concept; and it has stood the test of time. The notion is built on the medical truism that a disorder in one organ or system may produce dysfunction in another organ or body system unrelated to the first. For example, arthritic changes in the lower spine may result in little or no back pain but can cause severe, intermittent muscle spasms in the lower leg and feet. Now keep this concept - affection by consensus - in mind while I tell you about a second medical concept; namely, allopathogenesis. Contrary to Hippocrates and his followers who believed that disease was an internal matter, an imbalance of humors or bodily juices, allopaths believed that disease resulted from an invasion of the body from something outside. The oldest allopathic idea, of course, was that the

outside force was an evil spirit. But after we finally gave up animism, some still held to the notion that some outside pathogen was responsible for disease states. What that "something else" might be, was the conundrum. Some thought it was foul air or miasma; others thought it was some other pollutant. When microorganisms were finally discovered and linked directly to disease; that is, when the germ theory of disease was proven, the allopathic concept was vindicated.

Now combine the germ theory of disease (allopathogenesis) with the concept of affection by consensus and you have a third medical concept: focus of infection. This concept proposes that a germ invades the body and sets up housekeeping in one of the body's nooks and crannies. Rather than producing much trouble at its home site, it does its dirty work at some distance site through toxins or an allergic reaction or some other yet-to-be-determined mechanism. The nooks and crannies are such places as the nasal sinuses, the teeth (or rather the tooth socket), and the cecum, which is a cul-de-sac in the gut at the point where the small bowel hooks on to the large bowel. The appendix hangs down from this cul-de-sac.

Now I have used a number of precious minutes detailing this because Focus of Infection is at the heart of this final story. Today the concept has limited application. In the early nineteenth century, largely through the efforts of Henry A. Cotton, an enthusiastic proponent, it was adopted by the general medical profession. Regretfully, since then, it has been involved from time to time to explain almost every disease that has a relatively high incidence and for which we do not have another rational etiology. Rheumatoid Arthritis and Multiple Sclerosis, for example, were at one time suspected of resulting from a focus of infection.

And of course the paradigm was applied to the most common psychotic disorders for which we have no other explanation; namely, manic depressive illness and schizophrenia. Throughout most of this century, the majority of unfortunates with these chronic, devastating disorders were housed in state hospitals.

In our region, the place was Longview Hospital. It was here that the story unfolded. The protagonist is someone whom I have already introduced at the beginning of this paper, Dr. Martin Henry Fischer.

He was born in 1879 in Kiel, in Schleswig-Holstein. He immigrated to America when age 6 and grew up in Chicago. After completing extensive medical study and occupying a variety of academic appointments, he assumed the post of professor of physiology at the College of Medicine in Cincinnati at age thirty-one. He became a legend at the college during his forty years of service. He was a scientist, an historian, a lover of fine art, and a devotee of elegance. His department which occupied the south wing of the second floor of the old Medical College on Eden Avenue reflects something of the man. The corridor leading to the lecture room and laboratory contained large wood panels in bas relief depicting scenes from the history of medicine that Fischer commissioned. The lecture hall contained five magnificent stained glass windows, each with a medical motif. At the front of the hall, on either side of the dais at which Fischer lectured were cabinets and porcelains, recreating a fifteenth century apothecary shop. He loved literature, was a long-time member of the Literary Club, and served as its president.

He was, however, a maverick throughout his long teaching and scientific career. He began his scientific work writing about colloids - they are a non-crystalloid state of substances, the stuff of which gelatin is made. As a result of his early work, he held to a theory that all living matter from amoebae to man was essentially colloidal. He was alone among physiologists and chemists in holding to this theory. Time has proven him wrong.

He was more in error in his unqualified support of the focus of infection theory. Fischer was convinced that the theory explained the etiology of a variety of illness. Getting rid of the focus of infection would cure the disease; eliminating possible sites of a focus would prevent disease. One couldn't do anything much about nasal sinuses; but teeth and cecums were another story. Together with a colleague who served as an

attending and researcher at Longview, Dr. J. Rosenow, Fischer set about stamping out mental disease. A surgical team, on a weekly basis, operated upon Longview patients and removed their cecums. The total numbers are not available, but the numbers were considerable. Similarly, the dental surgeons began a campaign of complete extraction of all teeth, followed by scraping of the empty teeth sockets down to the jaw bones. It was, indeed, medical madness that continued for a number of years.

I met Dr. Fischer for the first time as a freshman student at the College of Medicine. I have already described the setting of that lecture hall. The room was bathed in multi-colored light streaming through the magnificent stained glass windows of the east wall. Fischer, impeccably dressed, stood between the cabinets containing the collection of apothecary jars. His voice was not strong, somewhat slurred and from time to time he would remove a linen kerchief from the breast pocket of his well tailored coat and put it to his mouth. Of course I had seen this gesture with napkins at the dining table; I had never seen it with a handkerchief during a lecture. I thought, at first, that it was the ultimate in gentility.

Alas, such was not the case. I soon learned that there was another explanation for this repetitious speaking gesture. Dr. Fischer practiced what he preached. So convinced was he of the reality of the focus of infection, that he had all of his teeth pulled in the fashion that I described above as a preventive measure. Of course, when you remove the teeth and the sockets, you have removed any possible anchor for false teeth. There isn't enough of a base for them to stay put. The repetitious handkerchief gesture was the only discreet way that Dr. Fischer had for pushing his false teeth back into place. Too soon they were slipping once more.

To rephrase an old saw: Fischer put his mouth where his money was!

To Martin, the balance of health, forsooth,
Lay at the root of a malevolent tooth.
Pull out the mischief!

Then use a kerchief,
To avoid any hint of seeming uncouth!

EPILOGUE

Thus ends my sequel to Ars Longa.

Physicians, as a group, have many accomplishments for which they can be justly proud. Reminding ourselves that we can also be quite loony and off the wall has its upside. Such reminders may keep us humble; and there is much to be said for humility.

Sir William Osler, that very wise physician, wrote to his fellow physicians in his Aeguanimitas, "The Art of Detachment, the Virtue of Method, and the Quality of Thoroughness may make you students, in the true sense of the word, successful practitioners, or even great investigators; but your characters may still lack that which can alone give permanence to power - the Grace of Humility."

OZ@C

Oz at One Hundred

June 12, 2000

Robert C. Vitz

When informed that I would be presenting the paper at the annual picnic, I had every intention of presenting another Otto Steinbrecher case, primarily because Ed Burdell keeps nagging me about my alter ego masquerading as a private detective. Rest assured, Otto is working on a case, but at the moment he is having difficulty solving it - a serious embarrassment for any fictional detective. Thus, I turned to a very different subject, part biography and part literary criticism, with a smidgen of autobiography.