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How Rockefeller Created the Business of Western Medicine

As an alternative medicine practitioner I have a lot of conversations with patients who are disenchanted with the current Western medicine system. This disenchantment is both related to the quality of care they receive and also the way in which the business of Western medicine is conducted. This post is a brief historical look at the business of Western medicine. This article will not directly address aspects of patient care, instead it will focus on the origins of our current medical business model.

As someone who has been practicing medicine for over 10 years, I try to keep an open mind and appreciate both the good and bad that coexist in the Western system. In order to understand our current medical system it is helpful to take a look back at the history of medicine in the America. The business story of Western medicine, in the modern sense, starts with John D. Rockefeller (1839–1937). Rockefeller is “widely considered the wealthiest American of all time, and the richest person in modern history.” Rockefeller is probably most famous for securing a monopoly in America’s oil market, but many people haven’t heard the rest of the story.



By the turn on the 20th century, Rockefeller controlled 90% of all petroleum refineries in the America through ownership of the Standard Oil Corporation (later split into Mobil, Chevron, Exxon, etc.) Concurrently, around 1900, the science world was getting excited about new “petrochemicals” and the ability to create a variety of new of compounds from oil. Some of the first products derived from petrochemicals were plastics, but organic chemists knew that oil had the potential to create far more than plastic toys.



During this same era (early 1900’s) scientists were doing groundbreaking work to understand the basic mechanics of life and human health. It was during this time that most of the essential vitamins were discovered, including B1, B2, Biotin, [Vitamin C](#), [Vitamin A](#), [Vitamin D](#), etc. By identifying these vitamins science took a huge step forward and enabled simple vitamin remedies to cure conditions that were cause by vitamin deficiencies (such as scurvy and rickets). And of course, scientists were also involved in research to re-create synthetic versions of these vitamins in a laboratory. In 1935, Vitamin C became the first vitamin to be

artificially synthesized in Switzerland. Rockefeller was smart enough to see this as a big opportunity, with the possibility that vitamins and medications could be developed from petroleum. He saw the chance to control and monopolize multiple industries at once: petroleum, chemical and medical. And

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of course, petrochemicals were ideal from a business perspective because they could be patented, owned and sold for high profits.

But there was a big problem with Rockefeller's plan. Natural and herbal medicines were very popular in America during the early 1900s. Almost one half the medical colleges and doctors in America were practicing holistic medicine, using extensive knowledge from Europe and Native American traditions. Rockefeller knew that to get total control of the medical industry he would have to expunge the competition. Rockefeller's first move was to use his vast wealth (from oil) to purchase part of the German pharmaceutical company I.G. Farben. (look up Farben's involvement in WWII). Now that he controlled a drug manufacturing company he could move forward with his plan to eliminate the competition.

In the early 1900's there were a variety of doctors and healing modalities in America. Some of the medical specialties included chiropractic, naturopathy, homeopathy, holistic medicine and herbal medicine. To eliminate the competition Rockefeller he hired a contractor named Abraham Flexner to submit a report to Congress in 1910. This report "concluded" that there were too many doctors and medical schools in America, and that all the natural healing modalities which had existed for hundreds of years were unscientific quackery. The report called for the standardization of medical education, whereby only the AMA (another monopoly) would be allowed to grant medical school licensure in the U.S.

Certainly, Flexner's report did have some valid points, but unfortunately the motives for the report were entirely driven by Rockefeller's desire for complete control of the medical system. Based on the report, congress acted upon the Flexner's recommendations and changed laws related to medical practice. Incredibly, allopathic medicine became the standard modality, even though at the time its main treatment methods were blood-letting, surgery (quite barbaric at the time) and the injection of toxic heavy metals (lead and mercury) to supposedly "displace disease"!

With new laws in place, Rockefeller teamed up with Andrew Carnegie and started funding medical schools all over America on the strict condition that they only taught allopathic medicine. Through the power of their huge "grants", this powerful team systematically dismantled the previous curricula of these medical schools, removing any mention of the healing power of herbs or natural treatments. Teachings on diet and other natural (non-drug) treatments were also completely removed from medical programs.



After removing traditional medicine from medical schools, Rockefeller made sure to secure his monopoly by launching a targeted smear campaign against his competitors. Homeopathy and natural medicines were discredited and demonized through the newspapers and other media of the time. Some doctors were even jailed for using natural medicine treatments, including treatments that had been used safely and effectively for decades before. In a very short time, medical colleges were all homogenized.

All the students were taught the same allopathic system and medicine was now defined as a process of prescribing patented drugs. "A pill for an ill" became the mindset of American medicine.

One shocking fact that I found while researching this post was that Rockefeller didn't stop at U.S. borders. He actually went into **China** to spread Western Medicine. Upon hearing this I actually got chills down my spine! Rockefeller wasn't content with just wiping out traditional medicine in America, he saw a bigger market on the other side of the world and wanted to remove Traditional Chinese



Medicine from China! Luckily, his venture in China mostly failed and the practice of Traditional Chinese Medicine was preserved for centuries to come. To quickly summarize what happened in China: The China Medical Board (CMB) was created in 1914 by the Rockefeller Foundation (RF) and provided with a \$12 million grant. The RF's goal was to "modernize medical education and to improve the practice of medicine in China". They started by building a hospital in Beijing (Peking Union Medical College, opened in 1919), but they were unable to expand to other locations (as planned) due to mounting expenses.

In short, the diligent work of Rockefeller and Carnegie was a smashing "success". They crushed the underfunded, grassroots competition and created our current medical system. This system continues today wherein "Big Pharma" makes large "donations" to medical schools in exchange for teaching the medical students to use their patented drugs. As part of this system, many alternative treatments are criminalized. For example by law, it is illegal to treat cancer with any modality except chemotherapy, surgery or radiation. It is actually a criminal felony for a medical practitioner to treat cancer with anything but these three modalities. Why is this the case? Follow the money. The average cost of cancer treatment is \$150,000, so clearly Rockefeller and his precedents were keen to keep the monopoly on this one. And of course, the American Cancer Society was founded by none other than John D. Rockefeller in 1913.



Hopefully this post will shed a bit of light on the history of our current medical system. At the very least we can all be less surprised when "patients" are treated like "customers" and when medications cost thousands of dollars per month. We should also not be surprised we are faced with the fact that the COST of medical care in America rated #1, yet the QUALITY of our medicine care is rated at #37, just below Costa Rica! [1, 2]. Unfortunately, these are the natural effects that occur when our medicine system is run like a

mega corporation instead of a service to the people.

On a final note, you may notice that there are no grainy black & white pictures of John D. Rockefeller in this post. Perhaps you can guess why – all images of Rockefeller are all "owned" and their use must be paid for. The monopoly stands. In closing, below is a picture of Rockefeller Center, NYC:



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