

# My First Half-Century in the Iron Game

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Having graduated from medical school in 1911, and following a year of internship, my father went to Panama in 1912; went there for the “big money,” since he was responsible for the support of eight other members of his immediate family, and because young doctors earned very little at that time. But, in Panama, the government was hiring doctors to treat workers who were building the Panama Canal, and was paying them a salary of \$150.00 a month; a very high salary at the time, a high salary justified by the fact that most of the people who went to Panama died there, died of Yellow Fever, Malaria, Amoebic Dysentery and a long list of other tropical diseases that were not clearly understood at the time.

The first Federal Income Tax law was passed on October 3, 1913, about a year after my father went to Panama, and this law required the payment of a tax of one percent (1%) of any annual net income in excess of \$20,000.00; thus, in effect, people who earned less than \$20,000.00 a year paid no income tax at all. So even people who earned more than eleven times as much as my father was paid in Panama were not required to pay income tax.

But, as they say . . . “Give them an inch and they will take a mile.” Once the politicians in Washington got their hands into the pockets of the public at large, there was no stopping them; for a while, during the Second World War, the maximum rate of income tax was in excess of ninety percent (90%). But, after all, any damned fool should be able to see that the politicians can spend our money much more wisely than we can . . . or so they would have us believe.

And so it goes, from bad to worse: having paid rather close attention to just what the government has been doing with our money for more than sixty years, I have yet to see anything that they have improved. The one possible exception being the national network of interstate highways, where we did, at least, get something of value in return for our money; but even there, when the situation is viewed in context, when the benefits are compared to their costs, it is almost certain that we got screwed again, since the highways that were built probably cost us at least ten times what they should have cost. Only this year, here in Florida, the state government paid a private company \$5,000.00 an acre to mow the grass near a highway, when a price of even \$500.00 an acre would have been ridiculously high. Hell, you could have bought the damned land for less than they paid to get the grass cut.

And just what the hell, you might be asking yourself, has any of this to do with the field of exercise? Quite a bit, as it happens. About 1957, when the Russians launched the first Earth satellite, Sputnik, the Federal Government immediately reacted with nothing short of outright shock; we were, they said, falling far behind the Russians in the fields of basic science. So, almost overnight, they created a whole new industry: scientific research. Thereafter, and for the next thirty-odd years, any damned fool with a Ph.D. or an M.D. degree after his name could get a government research grant for almost any project you could think of. And the fact that almost all of these projects were utterly worthless made no difference at all, since most of these researchers had no slightest interest in worthwhile results, were, instead, interested only in getting their hands on easy money.

It is no coincidence that almost all of the millions of research papers that have been published during the last thirty years end with the statement . . . “More research is required.” In effect: send us more money. If, instead, they ever admitted that a solution had been discovered, then they would have no excuse to ask for more money.

Hundreds of billions of dollars have been spent on such research, and more than ninety-nine percent (99%) of it was simply wasted. Results? Damned few, and none that justified their costs. Insofar as I am aware, none of the worthwhile things that have been discovered or invented during the last thirty-odd years were results of government-funded research; they were, instead, results of privately-funded research and development projects, situations where it was essential to compare costs to benefits.

Rather than dragging a research project out endlessly for years in order to assure a continued supply of government money, projects that are funded by individuals or companies must produce worthwhile results as quickly and as cheaply as possible; and the people in charge of these projects are concerned with results, practical results, meaningful results, things that can be put to good use.

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A second major problem with supposedly scientific research is the requirement to get it published in a peer-reviewed journal; which requirement produces an exactly opposite result from the stated purpose. Rather than assuring that anything published in a supposedly scientific journal is both true and important, it literally prevents the publication of anything new or important. After all, if it really is “new,” then it will fly directly in the face of the opinions of the supposed experts, will put the lie to their statements, will prove just how stupid they really are. But if, on the other hand, it is merely a restatement of the same bullshit that has already been published a thousand times, then it will be immediately accepted and quickly republished.

There are, at the moment, more than 8,000 supposedly scientific journals that are published in this country every month, which means that more than 1,000,000 supposedly new and important scientific discoveries are made every year in this country alone. And if you will believe that, then I have a bridge in Brooklyn that I want to sell you as an investment. “Trust me, I’m from the government, I’m here to help you.” Sure.

A very high percentage, probably more than ninety percent, of all of the research that has been performed in the field of exercise was devoted to aerobic exercises, and even to this day students who are working towards a degree as an exercise physiologist are forced to study things that are not only worthless but are not even true, while learning absolutely nothing about the actual cause and effect relationships that are involved in meaningful exercise. The rare exceptions to this general rule, and they are damned rare, are people who were self-educated by their own experience; anything of value that they know they did not learn in school, and some of the things that they were taught are downright dangerous.

Twice a month I am the principle speaker during a day-long medical seminar at the School of Medicine of the University of Florida in front of a large audience of people who are supposed to be experts in the field of exercise, medical doctors, physical therapists, chiropractors, exercise physiologists, athletic trainers and a long list of other specialists, and, over the years, I have steadily reduced the level of my presentations to the point that they are now somewhere between a Kindergarten level and a second grade of grammar school level, and they are still far over the heads of most members of my audiences. Which is not intended to imply that most members of the audiences are stupid, since, in fact, on the average they are probably far above an average level of intelligence; but it is intended to mean that they know little or nothing about exercise, and that most of the things that they believe they know are simply wrong. The primary problem being the fact that they have been reading, and believing, things that have been published in supposedly scientific journals.

In order to communicate anything of value to such people it is unavoidably necessary to point out the fact that their opinions and beliefs are utterly wrong, almost without exception; and it does not make communication easy when you are required to point out the fact that the person you are talking to is ignorant at best and stupid at worst. Starting a conversation with a Catholic by stating that the Pope is a fag is usually a better way to start a fist fight than it is a way to communicate meaningfully. Which, again, does not mean that I am biased against fist fighting: at least they know what you mean when you punch them in the nose. As the kindness expert said as he hit the mule in the head with a club . . . “First you have to get their attention.” Or, as a friend of mine says . . . I don’t care what the problem is, the solution is violence.”

Just how much, if anything, that any of the tens-of-thousands of supposed experts that I have addressed during the last twenty-five years have learned I cannot say; but I, at least, have learned a great deal, have learned just how uninformed, or misinformed, almost all of these people are. In general, they not only do not understand the actually quite simple laws of physics but are not even aware of them; if you even mention the word “physics” they usually believe that you mean something intended to loosen your bowels, a laxative. Which might be amusing if it was not so scary, so potentially dangerous.

While I cannot claim to have discovered any basic law of physics, I can truthfully point out the fact that I am the first person in history to clearly understand just why such physical laws must be understood in order to understand muscular functions. Muscular function is influenced by gravity, by friction (friction within the muscle itself) and by stored energy, and, until and unless these factors are clearly understood and applied, then it is simply impossible to understand muscular function. Yet, apart from research conducted or funded by me, nobody else on the planet has ever considered any of these factors while trying to conduct research in the field of exercise; the unavoidable results being literally thousands of published studies that are nothing short of outright bullshit.

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Then, of course, the published results of these utterly stupid research projects are taught as established facts to hundreds-of-thousands of poor fools who have been misled into believing that they are being educated; when, instead, they are being brainwashed into believing things that are untrue at best and dangerous at worst.

Both for the purposes of rehabilitation and, more importantly, for prevention of injuries, together with help for a long list of other medical problems, exercise is undoubtedly one of the most important factors in medicine today, or could be, and should be; but it never will be until the subject is widely and clearly understood and applied, and these is no slightest indication at the moment that such an understanding will be reached anywhere in the near future.

But, please, do not blame me for the current mess in this field; instead, place the blame where it really belongs, on the heads of beaurocrats in both the government and in academia, most of whom could not find their own ass if given twelve attempts, with a large sign pointing at the target, with a bright light illuminating it, and with an Indian guide leading them by the hand. Such people are never the solution; usually are the problem. If you even attempt to tell such people about something that is "new" to them, and anything of any value will be new to them, count on it, their typical response is usually something along the following lines . . . "Oh, where did you read that?"

Which, when translated into English, comes out as . . . "Which long-haired, dope-smoking, scrawny, jogging Ph.D. published that in which peer-reviewed journal?" Smirk, smirk.

And, while I do not always give in to my better instincts, I have been known to put one thumb behind such an asshole's adams apple, grab him "por sus cojones," as they say in Spanish, drag him out into the nearest alley and "explain things" to him; that is, kick his ass. Which, of course, teaches him nothing apart from a bit of future caution, but does make you feel much better for several days afterwards. Meaningful communication is difficult with anybody, and simply impossible with many people; so at least learn not to waste your time trying to communicate with fools. Or, as it says in the Bible . . . "Cast not pearls before swine."