

And God Laughs...

The Arthur Jones Autobiography

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“An open mind is not the same thing as an empty head.”

Anon.

In July of 1994, the Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation of the School of Medicine of the University of California, San Diego, held a two day symposium for medical professionals with an interest in the clinical treatment of chronic spinal pathology; a subject that is still one of the most controversial matters in medicine today. Is controversial for two reasons: first, because most cases of spinal pain will spontaneously improve almost regardless of the treatment utilized; second, because most cases of spinal pain can never be provided with a specific diagnosis, remain idiopathic, or pain resulting from an unknown cause.

Dr. Vert Mooney, an orthopaedic surgeon who has been using MedX equipment for several years for the rehabilitation of chronic cases of spinal pathology, with outstanding results, was in charge of that meeting and was largely responsible for the selection of the speakers; and while Dr. Mooney and I are in full agreement about the value of MedX equipment, we do not always agree on some other points. When I was first sent a list of the scheduled speakers, I told him that in my opinion several of the speakers should not have been included. I told him . . . “Why provide your enemies a podium for expounding even more bullshit? They do not ask, or even permit, any of our speakers to be a part of their meetings. While I understand what you are trying to do, are trying to give the impression that all sides are being fairly represented, I believe it is a mistake; all they will really do is confuse many members of the audience.”

Now, after the fact, Dr. Mooney apparently agrees with me.

Dr. Stanley Bigos, of Seattle, Washington, has built a worldwide reputation as an expert on the subject of spinal pathology as a result of one study that he published in a supposedly scientific journal some years ago. Called the ‘Boeing Study,’ because they used employees of the Boeing Corporation as test subjects, that study was an attempt to determine the relationship, if any, between lower-back strength and spinal pain. But in order to compare lower-back strength to anything, you must first be able to measure it; which, at the time this study was conducted, was simply impossible. Was impossible because there was then no tool that was capable of measuring lower-back strength.

Yet, based upon his reported results produced by this utterly stupid research project, Dr. Bigos concluded that lower-back strength was irrelevant, that there was no relationship between lower-back strength and spinal pathology. Even went so far as to imply that stronger subjects might be more likely to have lower-back problems.

During a private, one on one, conversation with Dr. Bigos, when I pointed out the fact that he could not have measured lower-back strength at that time, he said . . . “Well, we used the best tool that was available at the time.”

Then, when I suggested that it was not a good idea to fly before somebody had invented an airplane, he said . . . “We were not trying to measure lower-back strength.” Really?

Dr. Mooney believed, before the fact, that Bigos might learn something of value by listening to other speakers; but Bigos did not even bother to listen to the other speakers, left the meeting as soon as each of his presentations was finished.

I asked Dr. Bigos to pay me a visit in Florida for a period of three days, at my expense, and he agreed to do so although no date for his visit has yet been agreed upon; but, frankly, I will be very surprised if he ever does visit me. He asked me what I wanted from him, and I told him nothing, that he had nothing I wanted; all I wanted, I told him, was an opportunity to educate him, a chance to show him several things of great importance in his field that he is obviously unaware of.

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So far, he keeps falling back on the old bromide . . . “Show it to me in the peer-reviewed scientific journals, and then I will believe it.” But the very term ‘Peer-reviewed Scientific Journal’ is an oxymoron; those were the people who published his study without question.

A couple of years back, Dr. Michael Pollock, of the School of Medicine of the University of Florida, submitted a study to a journal edited by a long-time friend of his, Dr. Jack Wilmore, and they refused to publish it; because it showed an increase of 120 percent in lower-back strength as a result of only one brief exercise each week; which, they said, was impossible.

Dr. Wilmore then wrote Dr. Pollock a very condescending letter suggesting that he should consult with some of the real experts in the field of exercise physiology. The same supposed experts who brag about their results when they produce a strength increase of 25 percent as a result of nine exercises every week for a period of twelve weeks.

If you submit a paper that supports these supposed experts established opinions, it will be published without question, even when the same stupid ideas have already been published a thousand times by other people; but anything that tends to put the lie to their opinions will be rejected out of hand.

Directly contrary to Dr. Bigos’ stated opinions, there is a direct relationship between lower-back strength and spinal pain: as strength goes up, pain goes down, and vice versa. Yet, now, as a result of his study, thousands of physical therapists are convinced that strength-increasing exercise for spinal patients is of no value; while they continue to use a wide variety of treatment protocols that are of no value. As things stand at the moment, you would probably be better served by consulting with a Gypsy fortune teller than you would by going to a physical therapist if you have lower-back problems; the Gypsy, at least, won’t do anything to make your problems worse.

Somebody one said . . . “The good that men do dies with them, but the bad lives on forever.” Which may, or may not, be true; on that point I remain undecided. When I was a child, and for quite a while afterwards, most of the people that I knew had one or more ‘heroes,’ somebody that they admired very much, and I was no exception to that general rule; today, however, that attitude seems to have changed, most people now have become very cynical about any supposed heroes. Or, as somebody else said . . . “Even the Gods have feet of clay.”

And while it is certainly true that many of the people that I once admired so much turned out, upon closer examination, to fall short of the saint category, it is also true that others deserved my admiration. During the Second World War, for the first time in my life, I came into contact with many people who were bitter towards all medical doctors, and since their statements on the subject were directly contrary to my opinions at the time this led to more than a few rather violent arguments and several memorable fist fights; my opinions, of course, were based upon my own experiences with doctors, all of which were more than satisfactory, most of which resulted from personal observations of how my father practiced medicine.

But, as a child, I overlooked something that should have been obvious: apart from my father, my mother, my uncle, and two of my siblings, the only other doctors that I came into contact with were from out of town, none were in direct competition with any member of my family. During the years that I was growing up in Seminole, Oklahoma, I never met another local doctor, never even met any of their children; the doctors that I did meet during that period were usually from another state, or at least practiced quite a distance from where I was living. The only exception being a local dentist; but he, of course, was not in competition with any of my family members.

During following years, then having a very favorable opinion of the medical profession in general, I became friendly with a rather large number of doctors all over this country, and quite a few in other countries, and my experiences with those people were always more than satisfactory; many of them helped me and none of them hurt me in any way, and while I learned quite a lot from them some of them learned a few things of value from me, so my relationships with doctors always appeared to be satisfactory to all parties.

But, again, I overlooked an important point: in no sense of the word was I ever in competition with any of these doctors. But later, when I did become involved in the field of medicine, my opinions gradually changed; and something else changed as well, and it was not a change for the better. Today, a large part of the field of medicine seems to be driven primarily by money; making a reasonable living no longer appears to be enough, while many doctors appear to

“...And God Laughs”

The Arthur Jones Collection

be convinced that they deserve to be richly rewarded for their efforts. Which attitude is not limited to members of the medical profession, but does appear to be more common in that field than it is in general. In that respect, lawyers are far worse, but one outrage does not justify another. And, yes, a very large part of my own activities have been devoted to attempts to make money; most of which attempts failed miserably, but some of which were successful far beyond my wildest dreams.

But, in my case at least, my motivation was never a desire to get rich, and very little of what I have made was ever used to make my life easier, and frequently had a directly opposite result. To me, money has always been a necessary tool that was required to produce something that I considered to be a worthwhile development. Without exception, the money I have made was always poured back into my business; was frequently poured down the drain to no purpose, but was always intended to produce something of value for society in general. Which last statement is not intended to imply that I had no personal ambitions, because I have always been very ambitious; but does mean that almost all of my ambitions, if they could be attained, provided benefits for other people as well as for myself.

Some of my ambitions were results of personal interest in things that most people never even heard of, things that were not of any real value to society in general; were results of personal curiosity. But that is supposed to be, in theory at least, the essence of science: knowledge for the sake of knowledge, with little or no consideration of any practical applications, pure science. But that attitude also seems to have been perverted to an enormous extent during my lifetime; again by money.

My attitude towards personal possessions apart from the tools required by my work has always been . . . “You have only one set of feet, so why do you need two pairs of shoes?” I have not purchased a new suit in more than ten years, have worn the same pair of shoes for more than three years, would have to borrow a tie if I felt it necessary to wear one, and believe that you should continue to drive the same car until it is no longer possible to get it repaired. Apart from books, I seldom buy anything for myself, no longer travel if I can avoid it and have almost become a hermit.

In an early chapter I remarked that this book is largely devoted to a long list of bad people and a few good people, and that is true; but it does not follow that I believe that most people are bad. Quite the contrary, I still believe that most people are good in every sense of the word; but I also believe that the majority of people, the good people, are seldom heard of. Perhaps they are smarter than I am, have enough sense to avoid attention.

Which, if true, produces a bit of a paradox: because, if you believe that you have something of value to say, just how can you make other people aware of those opinions while keeping them to yourself? I have seldom had sense enough to keep my mouth shut in many situations where opening it led only to trouble that probably could have been rather easily avoided by remaining silent; and this book may well prove to be nothing more nor less than another mistake similar to a long list of earlier ones. But none of these mistakes were ever results of attempts on my part to prove how smart I am, were usually proof of my continued stupidity; nor were they attempts to prove how dumb somebody else was, since I have at least learned just how counterproductive that always is. They were, instead, attempts to communicate; attempts to raise questions that appear to have been overlooked, to provide possible solutions that have not been previously considered.

The main thing that I have proven to my own satisfaction is the fact that I apparently do not know how to communicate with many people, am usually far more likely to insult them than I am to attract their interested attention; which has never been my intention. But there have been, at least, a few exceptions to that general rule; and these exceptions have been the only things that have provided me with much in the way of satisfaction throughout my life.

Dr. Vert Mooney has been such an exception: Vert did not initially approach me as a potential friend, if anything he viewed me as an enemy, because he had learned my opinions of some of his earlier work long before he ever met me, and these opinions regarding his earlier work were certainly not favorable. Vert was involved, together with Dr. Tom Mayer and several other people, with a supposedly scientific study that won the Volvo Award for Significant Scientific Discoveries in the field of spinal testing and rehabilitation, a study that was published in several long parts in *Spine*, one of the supposedly leading scientific journals. But the study was based upon the use of a tool that is nothing short of an outrage, a tool that provides none of the requirements for its intended functions, a Cybex machine that supposedly tests the functions of the lower spine.

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Suspecting, or at least hoping, that I could meaningfully communicate with Vert if provided with an opportunity to do so, I tried for several years to get him to pay us a visit so that he could see what we were doing; eventually, when he did come to see us, he did so primarily in an attempt to reassure himself that his opinion of me was valid, that I was either a fool or a fraud, or both.

But Vert proved to be an unusual man, in three respects: first, he was smart enough to recognize the truth when finally exposed to it, even though it was in direct opposition to his earlier opinions; second, he was honest enough to admit his earlier mistakes; third, he was brave enough to stand up in public and attempt to explain his own earlier mistakes to his peers. Any of those three characteristics, intelligence, honesty, or bravery, are rather rare; but finding all three of those characteristics in one person is rare indeed.

It now remains to be seen whether or not Dr. Stanley Bigos has any of those characteristics; so far I have seen none of them.

Fortunately, Vert is not unique: a growing list of such people have entered the scene during the last eight years; Dr. Brian Nelson, Dr. Michael Pollock, Dr. Ted Dreisinger, Dr. John Keeting, Dr. Michael Fulton, Dr. Thomas DeLorme and several hundred others have displayed similar characteristics.

During the now more than twenty-two years of our continuous research, a long list of other people made very significant contributions to our work; in no particular order of importance, these included: Don Stevens, Clay Steffee, Phil Sencil, Joe Thibodeau, Larry Evans, Dave Carpenter, Jay Graves, Inge Cook, Jakki Tucci, Charles Barth, Larry Gilmore, Ellington Darden, Ralph Cramer, my brother, Dr. W. E. Jones, both of my sons, Edgar and Gary, my former wife, Eliza, one of the only two honest lawyers I ever met, James Dougherty, Joe Cirulli, Jim Flanagan, Walt Anderson, Scott Leggett, Bryon Holmes, my nephew, Scott LeGear, Dick Wall, Scott Koch, Dr. Pierce Jones, Dr. Walt Simmons, Dr. Leslie Organ, Dr. James Warson, Dean Byrd, Ruth Griffiths, DeEtte Feurtado and literally hundreds of other people. Our results have not been a 'one man show' in any sense of the word. My apologies to many other people who should have been listed above; your contributions have not been forgotten.

But, unfortunately, these are still exceptions: while several thousand people now understand the value of what we are doing, and are applying this knowledge in very practical ways in their clinical practice, a far larger number of other doctors who are interested in this field still remain totally unaware of our discoveries and developments; continue to practice medicine using treatment protocols of no slightest value while ignoring something of very real value.

Attempts to communicate with people like Dr. Bigos are seldom successful, since they are seemingly unable, or unwilling, to learn anything; but such effort is not entirely wasted, since doing so does, at least, provide you with an opportunity to learn a great deal about the limits of arrogance and stupidity.

About seven years ago, Dr. Mark Brown, who is the head of the Department of Orthopaedics at the medical school in Miami, Florida, and a self-declared expert on just about everything, visited my facilities near Ocala in order to become familiar with our medical-testing machines; or so he said at the time. Shortly afterwards, however, he told a physical therapist who just happens to be a friend of mine that . . . "Arthur Jones is going to give me a lot of his new equipment, free; together with millions of dollars in research funds. Because, if he doesn't, he'll never be able to sell it to the medical community."

Later, in Miami, he went to great lengths in his attempts to get free equipment and research funds from me; continued even after I finally told him . . . "Mark, there are two reasons why I will not give you either equipment or research funds: One, you don't have anybody that is capable of performing meaningful research; and, two, you don't have anybody that is honest enough to be associated in any way with me, directly or indirectly. I don't need your endorsement and I don't want it. And you, Mark, are certainly not an exception." Had he said that to me I would have knocked him on his ass; but all he did was keep begging me for free equipment and money, neither of which he got.

Since then, however, I have noticed that he tends to avoid me during medical meetings; but I believe I know why, and if I am correct then it has nothing to do with either equipment or money. Perhaps he is afraid I will tell somebody about what he did while visiting my farm, something that at least has the potential to get him arrested. But any such

"...And God Laughs"

The Arthur Jones Collection

fears on his part are largely groundless, because I seldom mention the matter at all, and then only when speaking to either a small or a large group of people. And, after all, nobody forced him to do it; he insisted upon doing it.

In the state of Florida, bestiality, or sex between humans and animals, is a crime, and masturbation is certainly a sex act; so when Mark masturbated my adult male rhinoceros he was involved in bestiality, and while I, together with several other people, saw what he did we were merely witnesses not participants.

The practice of medicine is much closer to being an art than it is to being a science, and lingering superstitions are more the rule than they are the exception. One such myth concerns the lower spine, and just what occurs as you move into a fully-extended position; it is generally believed that full extension of the lower spine is potentially dangerous, because moving into that position is supposed to increase the pressure on the rear of the spinal disc. While, in fact, what actually happens is exactly opposite to the expected result; rather than reducing the disc space, full extension of the spine actually increases it. So it would reduce pressure on the disc rather than increasing it.

Any yet, in practice, millions of doctors have looked at billions of X-rays and failed to notice what actually occurs during full extension of the lower spine. Are they all blind? Or do they merely see what they expect to see? When I mentioned this to Mark Brown, in his office while he was trying to get me to give him free equipment and money, he said that such statements on my part were largely responsible for the fact that some people do not believe me. Told me that I was wrong; then added . . . "If that was true, then I would know it."

So I then asked him to select three X-rays of the lower spine from his own files, and he did; and when he looked at them on a light table it was immediately obvious, even to him, that I was right and that he was wrong. Whereupon, he said . . . "Have you published this yet, Arthur?"

And I told him . . . "Yes, Mark, I published it in my book, 'The Lumbar Spine;' so you will have to steal somebody else's work."

Unfortunately, people like Mark also appear to be more the rule rather than the exception. Dr. Michael McMillian, from the Department of Orthopaedics in the medical school in Gainesville, tried to convince me that he had invented perpetual motion the first time I met him; and while he has repeatedly denied this while discussing the matter with other people, he is not brave enough to deny it to my face.

During that initial conversation with him, he told me that he had invented the best-possible exercise machine for rehabilitation of injured knees; which, to me at the time, was a very surprising statement, because we had been working on that same problem for more than fifteen years and still did not even understand all of the problems that were involved. So I asked him just what kind of knee machine he intended to build. And he said . . . "Negative only; the subject will never lift the resistance during the exercise, will, instead, merely lower the resistance, thereby performing negative-only exercise."

So I then asked him . . . "What kind of a motor do you intend to use to lift the weight? Before the subject can lower it, something or somebody has to lift it."

And his immediate response to that question literally stunned me; because, with an arrogant smirk on his face, he said . . . "No motor; instead, we will use a counterweight." His facial expression as he said that obviously indicating his thoughts as he replied: "Boy, don't you feel stupid now that you know my secret? Don't you wish you had thought of that?"

So I said . . . "My God, Mike, do you understand just what you have done? You'll be the richest man in the world. You'll get the Nobel Prize at the very least."

Whereupon he said . . . "I will? Do you really mean it?"

And I said . . . "Of course I mean it, you're simply not thinking far enough ahead; you don't yet understand all of the implications of your discovery. Just think about it a minute: you have solved the world's energy crisis; no, more than that, you have invented perpetual motion."

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And he said . . . “Why? I don’t understand what you mean.”

So I said . . . “Yes, Mike, a counterweight can certainly lift the weights in the exercise machine; but what lifts the counterweight? The counterweight will have to be heavier than the weight being lifted, and if it is heavier then it will lift the weights; but having lifted the weights, the counterweight will have to be removed from the machine so that the weights can move back downwards in order to provide negative resistance for the exercise. Then, when the weights reach the bottom position, you will have to put the counterweight back on the machine again in order to lift the weights back into the top position; and so on. So, without a motor to lift the weights in the first place, you will need somebody to put the counterweight onto the machine in order to lift the weights and then remove it after the weights have been lifted; if not, then you have perpetual motion. No, more than that: you not only would have perpetual motion but you would then be taking power off of perpetual motion, and that would solve the world’s energy crisis.”

And, guess what? A few years later, when he finally got around to trying to build such a ‘perfect’ exercise machine, he did use a motor. He took a very early model of a Nautilus leg-extension machine, a machine invented by me about twenty years earlier, added a second small weight stack and a motor to lift the weights and then announced that he had the perfect knee machine. Then, later, in an attempt to prove the superiority of his machine by comparing its results to those produced by other types of exercise, he said it was better because it increased knee strength by six percent while other exercises increased strength by only four percent.

Well, in fact, an increase in strength of only six percent would be an outright failure; any increase of less than sixty percent would be a very poor result, and we frequently see strength increases of several hundred percent.

Yet Mike apparently still believes that his utterly ridiculous machine is going to make him both rich and famous; but he did, at least, give me an opportunity to get in on his great discovery, an opportunity that I was too stupid to take advantage of. Having been given a research grant of \$50,000.00 by the government in order to develop his Earth-shaking discovery, he suggested to me that I could actually develop the machine for him while paying the costs of such a development and that he would keep the money from the research grant; but he would, he said, then share the credit with me. Well, somewhere along the line, I may have run into a few offers that were worse than the one he made, but if so nothing springs immediately to mind.

Having encountered such obvious stupidity, a question unavoidable arises: just how did such a person ever get into medical school?

Then we come to Richard Lieber, a Ph.D. now involved in research in association with a major medical school in California; a man so stupid that I find it surprising that he can tie his shoes, yet a man who considers himself to be the world’s leading expert on the subjects of medical testing and rehabilitation. Lieber first contacted me by writing a letter that accused me of outright fraud; a letter that said . . . “I hope nobody is dumb enough to believe any of your statements; because, what you are suggesting is both stupid and dangerous.” Or words to that effect. He also sent copies of that letter to several doctors who have been directly associated with our research for many years.

My response? I sent him a copy of several medical publications based upon our many years of research, publications that he was previously unaware of, together with a very calm letter that extended him an invitation to visit us, at our expense, so that he could learn for himself just what we were actually doing. And, eventually, he agreed to come here for a visit.

But when he did he purchased a first class ticket at our expense, and I am reasonable sure that he never traveled first class either before that or after that, and then learned absolutely nothing in spite of several days of attempts on our part to educate him. He simply refused to believe, for example, that muscles have friction; having already been provided with dozens of demonstrations that were so simple that they should have been obvious to a goat, he asked me . . . “Give me another example of a situation where friction tends to hurt you in one direction while helping you in an opposite direction.”

So I then said . . . “If it has both mass and motion, then it has friction; and since a muscle has both mass and motion it is certainly not an exception. But, until and unless you clearly understand the effects of friction in muscles, it will be impossible for you to understand muscular function.”

“...And God Laughs”

The Arthur Jones Collection

A friend of mine who heard his question later remarked . . . “I have grandchildren who are smarter than that, and they are retarded.”

Friction in a muscle reduces your strength while you are lifting a weight, but increases your strength while you are lowering a weight; thus any attempt to provide a meaningful test of strength while using a dynamic testing procedure is an exercise in futility at best; your test results will always be biased by muscular friction to such an extent that they are meaningless. Scientists have been looking at clear examples of muscular friction for more than fifty years, yet failed to even notice it or at best did not understand just what they were seeing. Eventually, I suppose, after some long-haired, dope-smoking, scrawny, jogging Ph.D. finally gets around to noticing it, and publishes that observation in some medical journal, then at least a few other scientists might start to believe it; but, in the meantime, they are not even aware of it. For them, apparently, the simple laws of basic physics do not even exist; they probably believe that the term ‘physics’ alludes to something intended to loosen your bowels.

So my attempts to communicate with such people have certainly not always been very productive, but they just as certainly taught me a lot about themselves.

The worst of the lot of supposed ‘experts’ is probably Dr. Alf Nachemson of Sweden; who, among other things, is an editor of the European edition of the medical journal ‘Spine,’ and is also very influential in the selection of the winner of the annual Volvo Award for meaningful research on the subject of spinal pathology. I also invited Dr. Nachemson to visit us in order to see for himself just what we are doing, to visit at our expense; but he refused to come, instead wrote me a brief letter that said . . . “You do not have to use your machine in order to measure spinal strength.”

Oh! Then just what, Dr. Nachemson, would you suggest using as a tool for that purpose? A typewriter? A coffee percolator? A lawn mower? There is no other tool capable of measuring spinal strength, and I can demonstrate that to the clear satisfaction of a rabbit; but perhaps you are not as smart as a rabbit, and you damned sure don’t know anything of value related to your claimed field of expertise.

Dr. Tom Mayer, another self-proclaimed expert, is probably just about as bad; he conducted research with Cybex machines that provide none of the requirements for meaningful testing of spinal strength; but they are, at least, consistent, since everything they do is wrong, utterly stupid. They ignore the effects of gravity, the effects of friction and the effects of stored energy, and do not provide the total isolation of the body parts being tested that is required for any meaningful protocol of testing. When I attempted to explain these simple requirements for meaningful testing to Dr. Mayer, he accused me of being condescending; when, in fact, I went to great lengths in my attempts to avoid any such impression on his part.

And these are the supposed ‘leaders’ in this field. But, then, millions of people followed leaders like Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, so I guess we should not be surprised. Frankly, at this point in my life, I don’t believe I could be surprised by anything; pissed off, disgusted, irritated, yes; but surprised, no. But if any of these people ever do decide to surprise me, then about the only way they could do so would be by coming to their senses; perhaps that would surprise me.

Eventually this will change, but I do not believe it will change significantly within my remaining lifetime; and while I sometimes still feel that getting widespread recognition for the results of my work would be very satisfying, I also remember that any such previous attention has usually provided more in the way of problems than it did in the way of benefits.

So I guess we will just have to see what we see; or, as the Jews say . . . “Man plans, and God laughs.”