

Would The Last Naturopath To Exit Please Turn Out The Lights?



By *Hank Campbell* — September 13, 2015



Britt Marie

Hermes. Credit:

[Naturopathic](#)

[Diaries](#) ^[1]

People who like alternative medicine are always pleased when someone mainstream embraces their field, because it legitimizes their belief system.⁽¹⁾

Alternative medicine is an easy narrative. Since it mostly requires belief, anecdotes are enough and recommendations needn't be bound by double-blind clinical trials. Want to believe that mimicking a symptom wards off a disease? Find a homeopath. Want to believe touching joints will prevent polio? Find an osteopath, [in their words](#) ^[2], "a parallel branch of American medicine" that just happens to posit that holistically moving body parts will cure and stave off disease. Just about any title with -path on the end of it is going to mean they think some aspect of real medicine is a scam.⁽²⁾ The Wild, Wild West of alternative belief systems about medicine makes it easy to enter and therefore difficult to leave to pursue a mainstream career.

That's why it is rare to see a naturopath be shocked at how peers treat people under the guise of medicine and call out the field. Britt Hermes, a homeopath and alternative medicine proponent, [did just that](#) ^[3]. She became alarmed by the anti-science rhetoric coupled with dangerous practices. She went into the area because she was, she said, an idealist who truly believed that nature could cure a lot of things. Other naturopaths were instead often promoting a world view.

[In a Vox article](#) ^[4], Julia Belluz interviews Hermes, who is frank in her concern that states like Vermont and Oregon will allow naturopaths to act like primary care physicians. It's a fascinating read because Hermes clearly cares about helping people - and she felt like many others in the field did not.

The good news is that Hermes has not become disillusioned with helping people. She is now in a

graduate science program in Germany.

NOTES:

(1) See: Oz, Dr. Mehmet, though after the 18 months he has had, [thanks to the American Council on Science and Health criticizing his anti-science beliefs](#) ^[5], homeopaths may encourage him to go back to real medicine.

(2) Whereas real science and medicine is a lot less militant. Famed anti-science evangelist Dr. Joe Mercola gets about 25 percent more readers than the site I founded, Science 2.0, but science does not have rabid defenders the way homeopathy and anti-vaccine proponents do. Every time we are critical of him, his hordes gather at the Captcha to bemoan that I must be a corporate shill for drug companies because I don't sell supplements on the Internet. But Science 2.0, with 75 percent of his traffic, only has 3 percent of his revenue, so being on the anti-science side is where the money is.

On the upside, the FDA has never had to warn Science 2.0 about spouting nonsense the way they have Mercola.

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[1] <http://www.naturopathicdiaries.com/>

[2] <http://www.osteopathic.org/osteopathic-health/about-dos/what-is-a-do/Pages/default.aspx>

[3] <http://www.naturopathicdiaries.com/getting-rabbit-hole/>

[4] <http://www.vox.com/2015/9/2/9248713/britt-hermes>

[5] <http://acsh.org/?s=Oz+letter&cat=0&x=19&y=36>