

Dr. Oz Audience Down 50 Percent - So We're Halfway There



By Ana-Marija Dolaskie — September 15, 2015

Healthcare experts across the nation are weeping in unison over the return of the Dr. Mehmet Oz Show, because it's beginning its seventh season Monday and neither facts nor ethics can stop it.

The news is not all bad, though. To say his show and reputation have taken a hit, thanks to the American Council on Science and Health [spearheading a nationally publicized effort to get him removed from the faculty at Columbia University](#) [1], would be an understatement. According to Nielsen ratings, The Dr. Oz Show averaged 3.8 million viewers in 2011-2012 but viewership plummeted to 1.8 million for the season that ended in May.

We're halfway there, people. Only 1.8 million to go! Cue our happy dance again.



The Council's media director did not approve this image.

Credit: ACSH

We're dancing because we've taken issue with his tactics for years: After becoming America's Doctor, courtesy of Oprah Winfrey's television show, he transformed himself from a respected cardiac surgeon to a peddler of useless supplements and junk science. The council's Dr. Josh Bloom has taken on Oz's quackery many times. You can read those [here](#). [2]

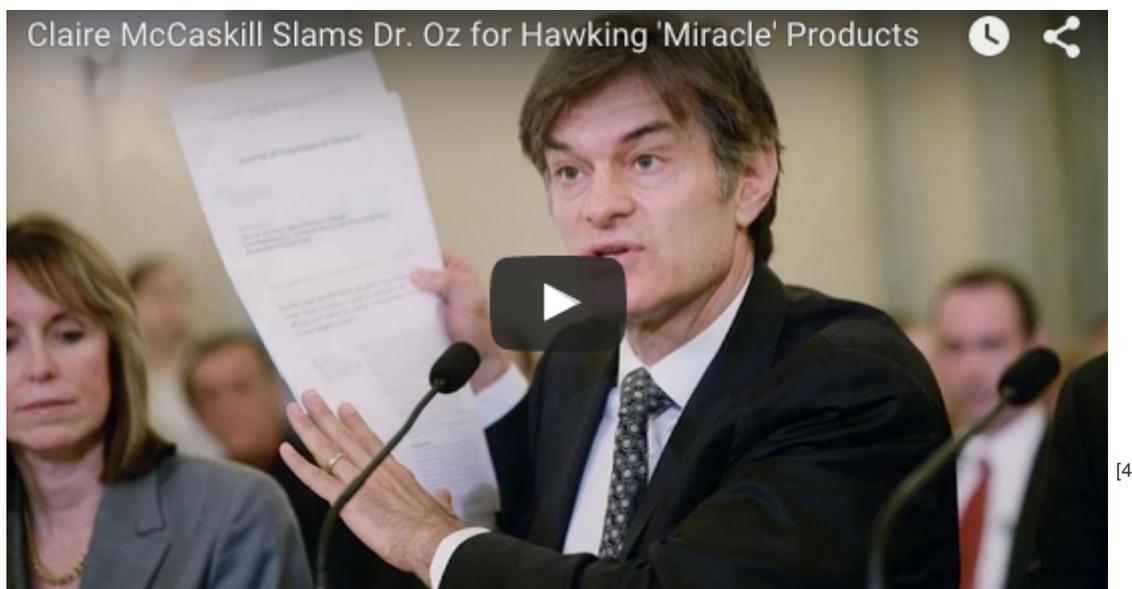
So when one-time ACSH trustee Dr. Henry Miller, a highly regarded Research Fellow at the Hoover Institute, came up with the idea to [write a letter](#) [3] to Dr. Lee Goldman, the Dean of Faculties of Health Science and Medicine at Columbia University, he called on others at the Council and we were happy to help.

The letter, co-signed by a number of prestigious physicians, had three others from the Council, including Dr. Gilbert Ross, our senior director of Medicine and Public Health, and current trustee Dr. Jack Fisher. The letter strongly suggested that Oz be stripped of his privileges at Columbia University and it struck a chord with the scientific community, who had been waiting for someone to finally note the obvious about the harm Oz was doing to public acceptance of science.

What followed was an outpouring of criticism for the show, with hundreds of healthcare experts nationwide speaking out against Oz's "health miracles." Dr. Oz fired back by noting that all of his detractors were in league with well-established science and therefore not to be trusted. An Oz-friendly producer at Good Morning America even crafted a hit piece on *us*, but while his audience plummeted after that, ours has gone through the roof.

Evidence-based outreach is back in fashion, it seems.

But that wasn't our first success in getting out the word that his "miracle vegetable" claims had gone too far to be allowed. Let us not forget this [little gem](#) [4]:



In June of 2014, [Sen. Claire McCaskill summoned Oz](#) [4] to be an expert witness about bogus weight loss and supplement claims. Dr. Oz did not know that *he* was the one to be scrutinized for the fraudulent claims he has made on his show about supplements like *Garcinia Cambogia*.

Oz has been trying to piece his reputation back together while on hiatus. He hired a "fact checker" ([though it was the anti-science zealot from Consumer Reports](#) [5], so there's more work we need to do) and made "Dr." tiny in his title. He says he has sworn off the questionable diet aids that made him rich.

The upcoming season of The Dr. Oz Show is all about 'healing thyself', proclaims Oz. Some of the hard-hitting topics will include:

- Why your brain craves happiness and mental balance, with Dr. Sanjay Gupta
- Getting things done, with productivity guru David Allen
- Finding headspace: meditation made easy
- Cutting through the "busy" to find work/life balance, with Lynette Khalfani-Cox
- How to unplug to replenish your spirit, with Susan Cain

Not included this season are the more in-depth episodes:

- Why I lied about miracle weight loss drugs
- How I got rich from Garcinia Cambogia
- Suspect health advice: Why you shouldn't listen to me!
- Why it was wrong for Wikileaks emails to expose my ties to industry groups
- Yogic flying and you

We hope there won't be a Season 8, but if there is, perhaps he will run out of evidence-based studies to ignore and tackle the serious health issues, like what officially killed his credibility.

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[1] <http://acsh.org/?s=Oz+letter&cat=0&x=15&y=25>

[2] <http://acsh.org/page/2/?s=dr.+oz&cat=0&x=26&y=26>

[3] <http://www.vox.com/2015/4/16/8423867/dr-oz-letter-columbia>

[4] <http://acsh.org/2014/06/senator-claire-mccaskill-sets-trap-lizard-oz-stumbles/>

[5] <http://acsh.org/2015/06/dr-oz-hires-a-back-up-md-dont-expect-much-of-a-change-though/>