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BOOK REVIEWS

May/June 2003

A Spectrum Of Healing In Future Medicine

by Clyde B. Jensen

Future Medicine: Ethical Dilemmas, Regulatory Challenges, and Therapeutic Pathways to Health Care and Healing in Human Transformation

by Michael H. Cohen

(Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), 367 pp., \$57.50 (cloth), \$24.59 (paper)

Described by its author as the third in a “trilogy” of books pertaining to complementary and alternative medicine, *Future Medicine* contemplates the emerging regulatory and ethical implications of spirituality in health and healing. As a religious scholar and director of legal programs at Harvard Medical School’s Division for Research and Education in Complementary and Integrative Medical Therapies, Michael Cohen demonstrates in *Future Medicine* his expertise, passion, and courage to address this delicate and timely topic.

Cohen acknowledges that there are continua (hierarchies, spectra) in such areas as health care and healing, law, and ethics that range from simple to complex, internal to global, and primitive to advanced. Man’s growing comprehension of life must be accompanied by constant shifting to the more advanced portions of the healing, regulatory, and ethical continua.

The author describes four continua. (1) He begins with a description of psychologist Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs, which range from the primitive physiological needs for food and rest to the more advanced needs for self-fulfillment, self-actualization, and personal transformation. (2) Based upon Maslow’s continuum, Cohen then develops a hierarchy of regulatory needs for complementary and alternative medicine. These range from the more basic needs of controlling fraud and assuring quality to the more advanced needs of integrating conventional and complementary medicine and transforming society’s expectations of health and healing.

(3) Cohen examines the subset of complementary and alternative therapies referred to as energy medicine and describes the seven energy fields and energy bodies said to be associated with energy healing. He then illustrates how these energy bodies can be viewed as a source of information concerning a continuum of abilities ranging from basic physiological to more advanced spiritual and transformational. (4) Finally, he constructs the “spectrum of healing,” a continuum of conventional and complementary therapeutic modalities that range in efficacy from healing the more basic physical and emotional illnesses to the more advanced spiritual and self-

actualization challenges.

Upon developing these continua, Cohen is then able to make comparisons between them, speculate about their role in future medicine, and pose provocative questions concerning the ethical and legal issues that will emerge from them.

Future Medicine is organized into three parts containing eight chapters. Part 1 describes the legal and ethical considerations of complementary and alternative medicine on patient care while developing the human needs and regulatory continua. Part 2 gives an enlightening overview of energy healing. It then develops the energy field and healing continua while describing the legal and ethical considerations that may be associated with that modality in the future. Part 3 applies the continua and their related concepts to legal and ethical issues related to death and to reproduction.

Each of the eight chapters begins with two to three case studies, which the author adeptly uses to illustrate the pertinence of the legal and ethical issues he describes, and ends with a summary. The book is well documented with a bibliography that lends itself to convenient cross-referencing to textual citations.

Future Medicine makes at least three valuable contributions to the integration of conventional and complementary medicine. First, as was the principle intent of its author, the book identifies many of the legal and ethical issues that will emerge in the future as complementary and alternative medicine assumes a more prominent role in the mainstream of American health care.

Future Medicine implies that conventional and complementary health care may not be two divergent forms of health care, but rather, similar forms of health care functioning on different parts of a health care continuum. In addition to the regulatory and healing continua described in the book, continua can be described for such health care parameters as prevention, acute and chronic therapy, diagnostics, health care education, and scope of practice. As health care providers, consumers, and policymakers better understand the relative positions of complementary and alternative medicine and conventional health care on the various health care continua, they will become more capable of appropriately integrating them.

Future Medicine emphasizes the importance of the spirit in healing and health. All of the health and medical education institutions with which I have been associated advocate the value of holistic health care. Each demonstrates the significance of physical and emotional health through their education, research, and patient care activities. In the absence of tangible data evidencing the physical basis of spirituality, however, all are reluctant to embrace spiritual medicine in either the classroom or the clinic.

While *Future Medicine* poses far more questions than it answers, and its questions are largely confined to the legal and ethical considerations that will accompany the growing integration of complementary and alternative medicine into American health care, it is nevertheless a bold if not brilliant step. I am grateful to Michael Cohen for his contribution.

Clyde Jensen is a medical educator and research consultant who holds a doctorate in physiology and pharmacology. He is the president of Continuum Biomedical Consultants in Portland, Oregon, and the only person to have held chief or senior executive positions in colleges of allopathic, osteopathic, naturopathic, and oriental medicine.

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