

Dr. Steven Pray Publishes 400th Article

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Dr. W. Steven Pray, Bernhardt professor in the College of Pharmacy at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford for almost 40 years, recently published his 400th professional article.

Pray is believed to be one of the most highly-published professors in the history of SWOSU with four textbooks also credited to his name in addition to the 400 professional articles.

The majority of his articles have appeared in *U.S. Pharmacist*, where he has been the author of a monthly column since 1988. He has co-authored works with his pharmacist sons—Joshua and Gabriel Pray—and other SWOSU College of Pharmacy faculty members. *U.S. Pharmacist*, based in New York City, has a readership of over 100,000 pharmacists and health professionals. This body of work has as its main focus teaching pharmacists how to counsel patients with specific health conditions.

Other articles of Pray have appeared in *Hospital Pharmacy*, *The Diabetic Traveler*, *Diabetes Self-Management*, *Oklahoma Pharmacist*, *The National Pediculosis Association's Progress*, *Dental Hygienist News*, *Chain Store Age*, *Wellcome Trends in Pharmacy*, and *American Pharmacy*. Some of his articles have been aimed at an audience of physicians, such as those appearing in *Patient Care* and the *U.S. Gastroenterology Review*.

In recent years, Pray has written a series of related articles that have made him pharmacy's most widely published opponent of the age-old practice of medical quackery, now known more popularly as "alternative medicine." Pray said alternative medicine promotes a large group of products—herbals, homeopathics and dietary supplements (other than vitamins and minerals—which he said is all fraudulent because they are of unknown effectiveness and safety).

His articles on fraudulent products have appeared in such prestigious journals as *Pharmacy Review 2006* (London), *Pharmaceuticals Policy and Law* (Amsterdam), *Focus on Alternative and Complementary Therapies* (Great Britain), *The American Journal of Pain Management*, *The American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *The International Journal of Pharmacy Education and Practice*, *Drug Topics*, and *The Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association*.

In a highly unusual move, Pray was granted editorial space to explore the issue of fraudulent products in *Journal of Child Neurology*, a publication for physicians. This article was entitled, "Orrin Hatch and the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act: Pandora's Box Revisited." Dr. Pray explained the current lax legal climate in the United States that allows fraudulent products to be sold without any scientific testing.

His work in this area has engendered considerable controversy. He has received letters (signed and anonymous), e-mails, and phone calls from pharmacists and lay people who are in favor of fraudulent products and who take issue with his exposés. Nevertheless, Pray said he is committed to educating pharmacists and patients about the dangers of recommending and using unproven products and therapies.