

## Introduction

The beaches and other attractions of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, are extremely inviting in November. Even without such allurements, many professional meetings thin out by the third day.

As he opened The World Federation of Chiropractic's conference titled *Philosophy in Chiropractic Education* in Fort Lauderdale on November 10, 2000 WFC President, Dr Bruce Vaughan, expressed confidence that the meeting was going to be so stimulating that it would keep everyone away from the beaches. It did, and participants were all there at the end of the fourth day as consensus statements were passed on key aspects of philosophy in chiropractic education and practice.

This introduction now gives a summary explanation of why the Conference was held, who attended, the program, the results and why this event was so timely and important.

### **BACKGROUND**

The World Federation of Chiropractic (WFC) called this meeting, co-sponsored by the Association of Chiropractic Colleges (ACC) and the US National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE), to seek consensus on the core beliefs and basic tenets of the philosophy of chiropractic and how to teach them to chiropractic students.

At a previous WFC meeting for chiropractic colleges, held in Manila in the Philippines in October 1998, two important trends in chiropractic education were evident. First, many new schools of chiropractic were opening throughout the world — in that year for the first time ever, there were more chiropractic schools outside the United States than within it. Second, there was widespread divergence between what was being taught on philosophy both in established and newer schools. Was the international growth of chiropractic education going to unify and strengthen the profession, or divide and weaken it?

The Manila Conference ended with a strong consensus that the WFC should now plan a meeting devoted specifically to the subject of philosophy. That was confirmed on a subsequent poll conducted by the WFC. It was immediately appreciated that, if successful, this would be a major academic and professional event. For success the conference would have to be well-attended and would require a much more substantial and sophisticated review of philosophy in chiropractic and health care

than at any previous meeting. Accordingly the WFC sought and received co-sponsorship from major partners, the ACC and the NBCE.

Dr David Koch, then President of Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, and Dr Reed Phillips, President of the Southern California University of Health Sciences (then the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic), were appointed Program Directors. The conference was planned by them, the WFC's Education Committee comprising Dr John Sweaney, Australia, Dr Gerard Clum, US, and Mr David Chapman-Smith, Canada, and an international advisory committee. There was wide consultation to ensure that leading and representative experts were chosen to prepare invited lectures. With one exception only, all those invited readily accepted the invitation to participate.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The names of those who attended the conference are listed in Appendix B. The meeting was principally for chiropractic colleges and other educational institutions, though was also open to chiropractic associations and individual chiropractors and students. Significant aspects of attendance were:

- There were representatives of the 36 chiropractic schools listed in Table 1. The only two accredited colleges worldwide that were absent were Macquarie University, Australia, and the Technikon Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Delegations from all 17 North American colleges, from the oldest (Palmer) and the largest (Life) to the smallest and newest (Bridgeport and Colorado), were joined by representatives from schools in 11 other countries — Australia, Brazil (2), Canada (2), Denmark, France, Italy, Japan (2), Korea, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom (4). Others present represented proposed schools in Costa Rica and Mexico.

- Other organizations represented included the accrediting agencies Australasia, Canada, Europe and the USA; the US National Board of Chiropractic Examiners; licensing authorities (the US Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards (FCLB) and the Canadian Federation of Chiropractic Regulatory Boards (CFCRB)); and major national associations (eg the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), the Canadian Chiropractic Association (CCA), the Chiropractors' Association of Australia (CAA), the Chiropractors' Association of South Africa (CASA) and the International

Chiropractors' Association (ICA)). Representatives from most of these organizations, and many other national associations, made presentations.

- Importantly, the full spectrum of the philosophy of chiropractic was represented and organizations were represented by their leaders. Therefore, for example, large US chiropractic colleges such as Cleveland College, Life University and Palmer University were represented by delegations led by their presidents, respectively Dr Carl Cleveland III, Dr Sid Williams and Dr Guy Riekeman. National associations from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Mexico, South Africa and the US were represented by their presidents, respectively Dr Lawrence Tassell, Dr Sira Borges, Dr Tim St Denis, Dr Enrique Benet-Canut, Dr Michael van den Bos, Dr James Mertz (ACA) and Dr Sid Williams (ICA, Past President).

In summary, if a new level of understanding and consensus on the philosophy of chiropractic was going to be achieved at the Conference, the right people were present to achieve this and make the consensus authoritative.

**Table 1**  
**List of Chiropractic Schools Represented**

Anglo-European College of Chiropractic, <i>UK</i>	Northwestern Health Sciences University, <i>USA</i>
*Australian College of Natural Medicine, <i>Australia</i>	Palmer College of Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>
Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College, <i>Canada</i>	Palmer College of Chiropractic West, <i>USA</i>
Cleveland Chiropractic College - Kansas, <i>USA</i>	Parker College of Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>
Cleveland Chiropractic College - Los Angeles, <i>USA</i>	RMIT University, <i>Australia</i>
Centro Universitário Feevale, <i>Brazil</i>	Sherman College of Straight Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>
Colorado College of Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>	Southern California Health Sciences University, <i>USA</i>
European School of Chiropractic, <i>Italy</i>	Technikon Natal, <i>South Africa</i>
Hanseon University, RMIT Chiropractic Division, <i>South Korea</i>	Texas Chiropractic College, <i>USA</i>
Kansai College, <i>Japan</i>	Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, <i>Canada</i>
Institut Franco-Européen de Chiropratique, <i>France</i>	*Universidad Estatal de Ecatepec, <i>Mexico</i>
Life Chiropractic College West, <i>USA</i>	*Universidad Mundial-Escuela de Quiropráctica, <i>Costa Rica</i>
Life University, <i>USA</i>	Universidade Anhembi Morumbi, <i>Brazil</i>
Logan College of Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>	University of Bridgeport, College of Chiropractic, <i>USA</i>
McTimoney Chiropractic College, <i>UK</i>	University of Glamorgan, <i>UK</i>
National University of Health Sciences, <i>USA</i>	University of Southern Denmark, <i>Denmark</i>
New York Chiropractic College, <i>USA</i>	University of Surrey, <i>UK</i>
New Zealand School of Chiropractic, <i>New Zealand</i>	Western States Chiropractic College, <i>USA</i>

\*Proposed schools

## **PROGRAM — GOALS, CONTENT AND METHODS**

The full program can be found in Appendix A. Day 1 (Friday) was essentially a separate meeting — a pre-conference forum on new and emerging chiropractic schools internationally, and on distance learning technology. The next three days (commencing Day 2 — Saturday) represented the *Conference on Philosophy in Chiropractic Education*. Its goals and methods of instruction were:

### **Goals**

- To review the roles of philosophy and belief systems in the healing arts generally and in chiropractic education specifically.
- To seek a consensus on whether the chiropractic profession needs a common conceptual framework and, if so, on what that conceptual framework is.
- To review current course content on philosophy at chiropractic colleges.
- To produce draft consensus guidelines on the role and methods of teaching philosophy in chiropractic education.

### **Methods**

- An international forum that brings together experts in philosophy and education from inside and outside the chiropractic profession and clinicians from private practice.
- Pre-meeting course materials, including formal papers from invited speakers.
- Three days of presentations, panels and workshops with a strong focus on interaction and practical application.

### **Content**

For the full program see Appendix A. Summary highlights were:

- The presentation of impressive, formal lectures on philosophy not only in chiropractic but also in complementary and alternative medicine, medicine, and science generally. Keynote addresses were on the role of philosophy in the healing arts by Kenneth Schaffner MD PhD, Professor of Philosophy and Medical Humanities, George Washington University, Washington DC, and the role of philosophy in complementary health care by Ian Coulter PhD, Health Consultant, RAND Corporation, formerly President, Canadian

Memorial College of Chiropractic, and author of the text *A Philosophy for Alternative Care* (Butterworth Heineman 1999).

Other lectures explored vitalism (David Peters MD), the nervous system (Howard Vernon DC), the therapeutic and non-therapeutic approaches to chiropractic (Joseph Keating PhD and Thom Gelardi DC, respectively), the importance of belief in health care (Michael Goldstein PhD), philosophical conflict between chiropractors and their patients (Jennifer Jamison MD) and the philosophical basis of condition-centered (Marion McGregor DC), vertebral subluxation-centered (David Koch DC) and patient-centered (Meridel Gatterman DC) care. The texts of all these lectures appear in this book.

- Presentations by educational and professional leaders from all world regions on the significance of philosophy in chiropractic education and practice, and on current content and methods of teaching philosophy in their chiropractic schools. The names of the individuals making these presentations appear in the program for Day 3 (see Appendix A). Their presentations, with the exception of the important survey of US college curricula by Brian McAulay DC PhD and Greta Naylor RN RM DC — which revealed widespread variation in the content and methods of teaching philosophy —, are not included in this publication. However, they are recorded and available from the World Federation of Chiropractic on the audiotape record of the Conference.
- A closing address by John Astin PhD, Assistant Professor, Complementary Medicine Program, University of Maryland School of Medicine, and a major figure in the US health care system's move towards integrated health care. Dr Astin confirmed renewed philosophical and scientific interest in the concept of vitalism and encouraged the chiropractic profession to engage the medical profession and others in a dialogue that would lead to a changed and improved philosophy of health care throughout the health care system. (For Dr Astin's address, see page 157.)

At this meeting various speakers spoke of the new level of disenchantment with the limitations of the biomedical model, and the current move within health care to adopt the philosopher Engel's biopsychosocial model, which views health in physical, social, psychological and spiritual terms. (See, for example, Dr Schaffner's comments on pages 18-22.)

After the above information had been heard and considered, there was a final day of workshops and discussion in breakout and plenary sessions leading to the general consensus statements on philosophy in chiropractic education given on the next page.

## **OUTCOME AND CONSENSUS STATEMENTS**

It was agreed that, to retain its identity, the chiropractic profession did need a common conceptual framework based on a shared philosophy. The prime responsibility for attaining that goal lay with all chiropractic colleges worldwide. On Monday November 13, 2000, to the considerable satisfaction and excitement of the participants, the foundation for delivering that conceptual framework in chiropractic education was articulated and agreed upon in the series of consensus statements found in Table 2.

These comments may be made on key concepts underlying these consensus statements and accepted by the Conference:

- Study of the discipline of philosophy, including the philosophy of chiropractic and its place within the wider context of the philosophy of health care, should be an important component of the curriculum in all chiropractic education.
- Principles traditionally emphasised in the philosophy of chiropractic, including holism and vitalism, have continuing validity and importance. (This was emphasized by Dr Peters from the UK, who had argued convincingly that “Science is preparing the basis for a new Vitalism”, and Dr Astin from the US — see their lectures). Equally, however, newer principles such as the biopsychosocial and evidence-based models of care, had validity and importance for the philosophy of chiropractic.
- All philosophy, including the philosophy of chiropractic, is an activity rather than a body of knowledge or doctrine, and necessarily involves critical analysis and evolution of thought.
- All chiropractic students, and therefore the profession and the philosophy of chiropractic, would profit from an understanding and consideration of various models of chiropractic health care, including the biopsychosocial, condition-centred, evidence-centred, patient-centred and vertebral subluxation-centred models.

The Fort Lauderdale Conference, and the above consensus statements, focused primarily on the importance of the philosophy of chiropractic for chiropractors and their patients. However, in his closing keynote address, Dr John Astin from the University of Maryland School of Medicine emphasized a wider context. The chiropractic profession should be articulating its own philosophical approach to all stakeholders in the health care system, thereby influencing the philosophy of all health care.

**Table 2**  
**WFC/ACC Philosophy Conference — Consensus Statements**

1. A shared approach to health and healing, based upon a shared philosophy of chiropractic, is important for the identity and future of the chiropractic profession.
2. Chiropractic is a unique discipline, but exists as part of a broader entity, the health care system. Accordingly, the discussion of philosophy as a discipline and the philosophy of health care, as well as specifically the philosophy of chiropractic, should be important components in every chiropractic curriculum.
3. The philosophy of chiropractic should be taught and developed in a manner that is intellectually defensible in the discipline of philosophy.
4. Principles from philosophical schools of thought that were discussed at some length at this meeting in the context of the philosophy of chiropractic included:
  - Conservatism
  - Holism
  - Humanism
  - Naturalism
  - Vitalism
5. Other philosophical ideas that were presented at the meeting, but for which there was insufficient time for extended discussion included American pragmatism, complexity theory, critical rationalism, ethics, logic, mechanism, post-modernism, reductionism, sociology of the professions, and systems theory.
6. Models of health care discussed at the meeting, and offered for consideration in chiropractic education, included the:
  - Biopsychosocial model
  - Condition-centered model
  - Evidence-based model
  - Patient-centered model
  - Vertebral subluxation-centered model
7. With respect to the Association of Chiropractic Colleges' Paradigm of Chiropractic put before the meeting by the ACC, it is appropriate that the philosophy of chiropractic is presented as a core component of the foundation of the chiropractic paradigm of health. This philosophical foundation may be further understood in light of the above statements.

*(For the ACC Paradigm see page 168.)*

In this way the chiropractic profession can and should shift the health care system in general to a more holistic, biopsychosocial model in which good clinical care must address the whole person. This should be the basis for the integrated health care system of the future, in which chiropractic and other complementary and alternative health care should be equally available as medical care.

## **CONCLUSION**

Delegates left the Fort Lauderdale Conference confident that the fundamentally important role of philosophy in chiropractic education and practice was far better understood and agreed. The one goal of the meeting not realized was the development of guidelines on methods of teaching philosophy. Many good and provocative ideas were advanced by college representatives on Day 3, but there was insufficient time to achieve consensus statements on teaching methods.

Finally, the other major achievement of the conference, commented upon by many at the meeting and in subsequent media coverage, was its demonstration that the chiropractic profession can work in a united manner to achieve consensus on even the most divisive subjects. The ACC had partly demonstrated this at the level of North American colleges when it developed its 1996 Position on Chiropractic signed by all North American college presidents. In Fort Lauderdale the WFC and the ACC now provided a forum for challenging but respectful discussion that led to a consensus among representative leaders of the international profession on the most contentious subject of all — the philosophy of chiropractic.

In a brief but powerful opening address, which you will find immediately following this introduction, WFC President, Dr Bruce Vaughan, had suggested that “the three major enemies of the profession today are discord, discord and discord”, and that discord in the philosophical base of chiropractic underlay the discord in clinical approaches and political organization. In the name of the World Federation of Chiropractic, Dr Vaughan called for mutual respect and harmony. To standing applause at the end of the conference, Dr Vaughan thanked the profession’s leaders for delivering just that in Fort Lauderdale.

David Koch DC  
Reed Phillips DC PhD

*Program Directors*

John Sweaney DC  
Gerard Clum DC  
Mr David Chapman-Smith  
*WFC Education Committee*