

SYNCHRONICITY MAGAZINE



Mark A. Silberstein
Editor of
Synchronicity Magazine.

Welcome to our third supplement in City On Topic. This issue of Synchronicity looks at the world of health. This issue will compare socially acceptable medicine to more alternative methods and challenge the notion of what the general idea of 'health' actually means. Our feature looks at a scientist who has made a career out of challenging alternative medicinal beliefs. Trying to get an interview with the quirky Goldacre is task all of its own, being the busy man he is he replied with a 700 word directory, which can be sampled on our blog version. Our art piece is on art that doesn't need to be seen to be enjoyed, held at the NHS Moorfields eye hospital. Country In Focus looks at Italy as it is a country that has an exceptionally high life expectancy. The health issue will be continued at synchronicitygroup.net, with more pieces examining the different views of health. if you want to contact us, please see our blog and contact details at www.synchronicitygroup.net, on [Facebook/synchronicitymag](https://www.facebook.com/synchronicitymag) and on [Twitter @Synchro Mag](https://twitter.com/SynchroMag).

Furious crusade against bad science

Ben Goldacre, medical doctor and Guardian journalist is the father of "Bad Science" a collection of books, hundreds of articles and videos with one goal: challenging myths, rumours and shady businesses in the medical world.

The cases he debunks and attacks generally fall into two categories. People who prey on the ignorance, spirituality or hope of customers with alternative medicine, de-toxes and other remedies which rely on "energies" or "ancient" techniques without bothering to apply any science to their methods at all. And pseudo-scientists who either use fancy sounding terms just complicated enough for the average person to be impressed, but not confused or doctors who either refuse to admit they are wrong or simply don't care or understand the consequences of their trade.

De-tox and alternative medicine:

Goldacre: "My views on detox: meaningless, symbolic, gimmicky shortlived health gestures with a built-in expiry date."

A sub-culture in itself, alternative healing gets an almost neutral treatment by Goldacre, he simply pits them against science and most of the techniques fall apart. He has a recipe for debunking anti-toxin foot baths (pictured) using a-level chemistry. He sums up most beneficial effects from these ideas as either placebo effect, the body sorting itself out without help or psychological theatrics.

Nutritionists, cosmetics and vaccinations, Goldacre: "They like to make health claims about their products, which often turn out to be unsupported by the evidence. Regulating that mess would be tedious and long-winded." What is the difference between oxidation and oxygenation, do you believe



Photo: Aqua detox uk

antioxidants are good for you, yet can't explain why? From parents being misled about their children's health to directly scared by medicine this is what brings Goldacre to the boiling point most. Misunderstandings can be harmless, but when it comes to medicine and health it can be fatal. Goldacre has been involved numerous lengthy battles with for example nutritionist Gillian Mckeith who describes his work as a bunch of lies.

By Christian Jensen



Photo by Moorfields eye Hospital

Moorfields Eye Hospital shows the world's only collection of art for the blind. The unique exhibition consists of more than 20 pieces that appeal to the tactile sense and makes a bold statement that sight is not essential for enjoying art.

Different materials and vivid colours are used to make the artwork appeal to all senses. One painting shows a woman in a black gown, but upon touching it

Seeing is believing? Blind Art Exhibition

also reveals the velvet texture of the garment. On another painting brush strokes can be felt through the thick layers of paint where the drip technique was used. Exhibition Organiser, Rick Feegrade spoke about how the artworks can't be compared to conventional museum or gallery exhibits. He said: "There is an appreciation for some kinds of art because of the skill in scale and in detail that only somebody with a 100 per cent vision can paint and convey but this type of art can be enjoyed by [blind] people and people with sight alike."

The collection might help patients recover from their illnesses, rather than just being a collector's multi million pound investment. Research suggests

that art in hospitals has a calming effect on patients and can even reduce the length of stay and use of some medications. Patients at Moorfields Eye Hospital have said that the artworks have taken their minds off their medical appointments.

The collection was donated by the charity Blind Art and was on view at London's art fairs and at the New York Public Library before finding a permanent home at Moorfields Eye Hospital. Charity Founder, Sheri Khayami, has been visually impaired since childhood. She started collecting art by both sighted and visually impaired artists to promote that a lack of sight does not have to mean exclusion from the domain of visual art.

By Aurelia Seidlhofer

Country In Focus: Health and longevity in Italy



Photo by Mircea Turan

Ruggero Galtarossa is from a small city in Northern Italy called Padova. He is 22 years old and has been living in London for two and a half years. He is in his third year studying journalism and sociology for a BA joint honours degree.

Italians are credited with having an exceptionally high life expectancy. We talked about a special village in the North of the country called Stoccardedo which has 400 citizens who do not suffer from heart disease or diabetes and live into their 90s.

Although Galtarossa, hadn't heard of it before it turned out to be only about 100 kms from his city and he discovered that things aren't always what they seem.

Q. Stoccardedo's 400 inhabitants are all related with the same last name Bau. What do you think though about the fact that they all arrived there 800 years ago from Denmark? The fresh air, water, lifestyle and Mediterranean diet is credited with being the cause for the longevity for Italians is that a fair description of your city?

A. It was 800 years ago so they would have had time to get used to proper food, the weather and Italian lifestyle so it doesn't make a difference. It sounds like we all live in the countryside which isn't the case. My city is small it is not a metropolis. I am not saying that Italians are lazy but we don't have the same lifestyle as here in London. Having a family there is do-able, there are not huge differences from the suburbs and the city centre

where you work. You don't have to rush the whole day, I mean you could do that here in London but it is more problematic. If you don't want to live in a rush then it is not so bad living there. Talking about food within Italian life there are some traditional recipes which are very good. We call it poor food it is not very sophisticated a lot of soups and traditional chicken. We've got some hills surrounding the city where we have barbecue food and we have a traditional type of pasta which I think is very good and from Padova.

Q. What is eating out like in Italy? Is there a lot of obesity there?

A. A lot of people ask me here if I go to Italian restaurants in Italy, I find it very funny because yeah we don't really have any other restaurants and it is the same with my family we just eat Italian food.

I just discovered, I would call it, foreign food when I came to London. I mean we do have some Chinese restaurants and maybe a couple of Japanese restaurants but for example we have like three McDonalds and only teenagers hang out there because they think it's cool because it is 'American'. Compared to London there are fewer obese people. There is a relationship between obesity and fast food that is obviously not just me saying that, it is a fact.

Q. How has your diet changed since living in London? And do you notice the difference of how and what people eat here?

A. It has changed so much it has gone bad. This year I would say that I made

"We have like three McDonalds and only teenagers hang out there because they think it's cool because it is 'American.'"

some improvements I started cooking more unlike last year where I would eat once a day. I generally I like to cook but I am lazy. I lost a lot of weight which I would say doesn't really happen when Italians come to London. As I said we have healthy food in Italy and then we come here and you hang out with people and just happen to eat anywhere, eating at KFC and McDonalds becomes a habit and if this becomes a regular thing you could eventually end up becoming obese.

In my case I have never really liked fast food, in my family we have never really gone to say, McDonalds when I see families eating there for me it is very weird. For me fast food is not real food and my diet has changed because my mom is not here so she cannot cook for me. But if you are asking me if I eat different stuff I can cook Italian food so at my place the most exotic thing I cook is chicken curry. When it come to fresh food I try to buy seasonal food from the area or food from New Zealand. The outcome of cooking food here is not the same as the ingredients are obviously different than at home.

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