O'Clock Train," which, according to one showman, was seen as early as 1800-25. "What time does the three o'clock train go out?" "The three o'clock train?" the answer comes back, "Why, it goes out exactly 60 minutes past two o'clock."

The step-right-up pitch of the show's "Doc" was a powerful form of folk rhetoric. Witness this pitch from showman T. P. Kelley, from a biography by his son:

> "You are all dying, every man, every woman and child is dying; from the instant you are born you begin to die and the calendar is your executioner. That, no man can change or hope to change. It is nature's law that there is no escape from the individual great finale on the mighty stage of life where each of you are destined to play your farewell performance. Ponder well my words then ask yourselves the questions: Is there a logical course to pursue? Is there some way you can delay, and perhaps for years, that final moment before your name is written down by a bony hand in the cold diary of death? Of course there is, Ladies and Gentlemen, and that is why I am here."

Suggesting Reading

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McNamara, Brooks. Step Right Up. *Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1976.*

McNeal, Violet. Four White Horses and a Brass Band. *Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1947.*

Young, James Harvey. The Medical Messiahs. *Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.*

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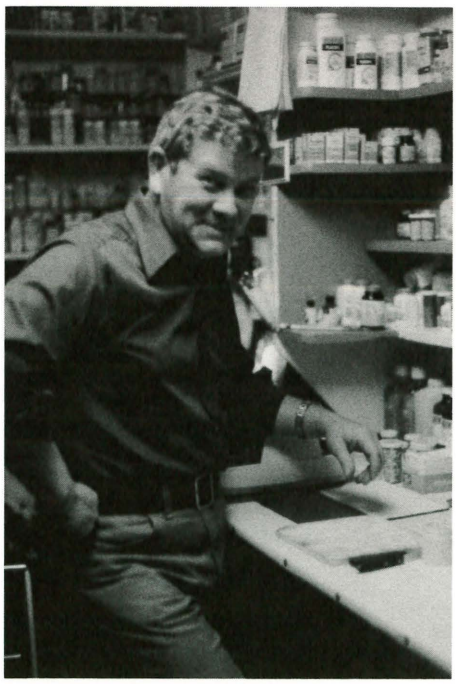
Healers, Curers, and Herbalists: Folk Medicine in America

Jack Santino

Disease, disorder, and discomfort, whether mental or physical, are inevitable. They must be addressed and alleviated, and people have invented elaborate systems for identifying, systematizing, and controlling them. These systems are most effective when they draw on a community's shared values, beliefs, and symbols. The tribal medicine man, the herbalist of folk societies, the doctors of contemporary America all do their jobs best when they understand that the faith their patients place in them and in their practices is derived from community-wide values and beliefs.

America is a complex land of many distinct ethnic communities, each with its own traditional medical beliefs, practices, and specialists. All people have home remedies. Who, in our society, for example, has not been told to drink ten sips of water or take some sugar or stare into a point of a knife to cure their hiccups? But when one *really* gets sick, he or she sees a doctor, a medical specialist who is legitimized by the authority of a formal organization, has earned a university degree, and has received practical training.



The country pharmacist knows his customers personally and dispenses concern and friendship along with medicine. Don Troutman, of Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, runs one of the oldest pharmacies in the United States. Photo by Barbara Reimensnyder for the Smithsonian.

Other societies rely upon oral tradition as the legitimizing agency. Among the Eastern Cherokee, there are seven medicine men who are traditional healers, and each has a specific area of expertise. Some are more knowledgeable about herbs, others about spiritual power. They are all medical specialists within their community, and all serve the double function of preventing and curing pain and illness, on the one hand, and of calming and reassuring their patients and the community, on the other. They rely on the time-honored beliefs and practices of their people, and they share those beliefs with the patients they tend. Together, patient and healer work on effecting a cure.

Medical healing is always part science and part performance. The scientific aspect is comprised of knowledge about the curative powers of plant and animal substances and other means of correcting physical and psychological disorders (for example, the use of splints to mend broken bones). When combined with the ability to perform healing rituals, the patient receives a sense of security

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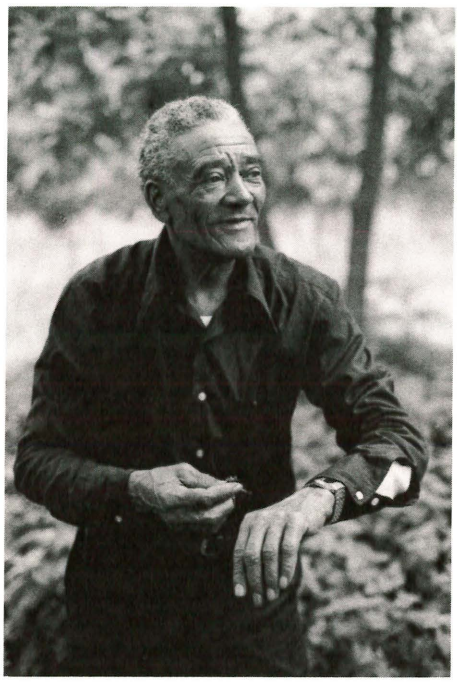

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1, 2 *In many areas, health specialists are also family and friends. John Lee is an herbalist, and his sister, Maude Bryant, is a midwife. They live outside Pittsbore, North Carolina, and they service other members of their family as well as friends and neighbors.* Photo by Jack Santino for the Smithsonian.

Photo by Glenn Hinson for the Smithsonian.

and faith that a cure is possible and forthcoming.

On the popular level, the medicine show "doctor" relied on folk humor, the verbal artistry of his "pitches," and entertainment to sell his products. Today, myriad over-the-counter popular medicine rely on slick and expensive media campaigns to convince us of their curative powers. The performance factor has been institutionalized in clinical medical practice as "bedside manner." The term itself is testimony to the need of the medical specialist to use the community's beliefs and symbols to create a receptive frame of mind and an attitude conducive to healing in the patient. The healers, curers, and herbalists who practice folk medicine teach us that the human being is a whole, integral being, and, consequently, that respect, trust, and faith must be mutually earned if curing and healing are to occur.

Suggested Reading

Hand, Wayland, ed. American Folk Medicine. *Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976.*

Sontag, Susan. Illness As Metaphor. *New York: Vintage Books, 1977.*

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American Indian Stereotypes

Rayna Green

This year at the Festival, Americans will see some venerable and wonderful North American institutions—a medicine show and a Caribbean-style Carnival. Some traditional aspects of these performances, however, will not be seen on the Mall because we have asked the performers not to show them. Rather than exercise a silent censorship, we decided to bring the discussion to you, the public, and explore a rare part of our national heritage that we do not wish to put on the Mall. We are speaking of ethnic stereotypes—here mainly of American Indians—that are often presented through acts and costumes in the entertainments we feature this year. Although certainly traditional and popular, and just as certainly often innocent and well intentioned, some aspects of the stereotypes disturb many people and, for this reason, we prefer not to present them. Our friends from the carnival and medicine show have agreed with this.

Medicine shows and carnivals did not invent Indian stereotypes. Stories, songs, jests, jokes, sayings and artifacts like weathervanes, cigar-store figures, dolls and paintings have been in wide circulation since the first Native American and immigrant American met. In cartoons, maps and travel book illustrations, the Indian Queen figure—a large, full-bosomed, naked, barbarous woman with her hand on a spear and her foot on the head of an alligator—was the symbol of the New World's promise and peril. Later, the Indian Princess figure—slimmer than her "Mother," draped in a classic gown,

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