

(Least) Complicated*

Walking the tightrope between being a current MSII medical student and a Naturopathic Doctor is a delicate balance. I never know whether my career as an expert in alternative medicine is going to be a blackball or a gold star because of the very mixed opinions people have about my former profession in the medical world. My plan, heading into my new field was not to tell anyone my (second) degree when I started (my third degree) at [UNECOM](#) last summer, but it was announced in orientation so my cover was blown.

Being a ND in general is pretty complicated - working outside of insurance in most states is a financial challenge for patients and doctors, and public knowledge about the profession is highest on the west coast of the US and Canada, and in more affluent areas of the east coast. Many people look back blankly when I tell them what kind of medicine I practice(d). People who know the field have reactions that are pretty love/hate. Lots of lovers, quite a few haters, and lots of quiet converts who realize that, as one anonymous Twitter medical student said in my recent [Twitter Flaming](#) on the topic: people who are interested in alternative medicine are usually trying to take care of their health and make themselves feel better.



I have recently been made aware of a woman who attended a west coast naturopathic medicine college who has turned against the profession "with an inside view" and who is engaging in aggressive muckraking. She is getting recognition and validation as an "insider" to naturopathic medicine as she did complete our 4-year postgraduate degree. [She has started a petition](#) to defame the profession worldwide. Big media like [Forbes](#) has jumped on the "tin foil hat" bandwagon and is supporting her claims that botanical medicine, nutrition, mind/body practices, and orthomolecular medicine are invalid and not evidence-based sciences. The [American](#) and [Canadian](#) Federal Naturopathic Associations have both started a [counter-petition](#) against the [muckracking](#) efforts.

The unfortunate thing is she lives outside the US and is not accountable for US or Canadian slander laws. What she is doing is poignantly effective because she has inflamed the haters. One doctor in particular is a physician and educator with the influential [Doctors in Training Boards Exam Review Series](#). He has a large Twitter following and has enthusiastically joined in the slander of the naturopathic profession. I worry about how his "expert" personal opinion will effect future generations of physicians who have not considered their professional opinions of naturopathic medicine due to lack of exposure.

All of this is personally upsetting for me. It is a complicated turmoil of emotions, injustice, pride, and frustration that mixes my own choices with a very clear working knowledge of the weight that "the big lie" technique can carry in the world of propaganda. All of this comes at a time when "Functional Medicine" and "Integrative Medicine" are the new darlings of allopathic medicine alongside epigenetics and the microbiome.

Newsflash: [Functional Medicine](#) and [Integrative Medicine](#) ARE evidence based Naturopathic Medicines, researched by and for NDs originally.

[Naturopathic Doctors](#) are systematically being defamed and slandered while our actual practice techniques are being picked up and renamed and celebrated for their effectiveness.

I feel helpless in the face of this complicated adversity. I made my personal choice to add an osteopathic medical degree to my knowledge base because there was more to medicine I wanted to know - pharmacology, emergency medicine, psychiatry, and other facets of transgender medicine I needed additional training on. I know the great value of naturopathic medicine and so do a great number of North American consumers. I suppose I need to trust that the greater good will prevail in the end...but that may not help me or my career path when I am placed in a hospital as an MSIII or resident with an attending who hates everything alternative and naturopathic medicine stands for.

- this is [an Indigo Girls song](#).

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