

Less Than Human is a physician's experience navigating the abusive and corrupt academic, political and legal systems to succeed in medicine. Issues presented in this book also spillover into many aspects of our society.

Less Than Human

By James Gannon MD

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LESS THAN HUMAN



JAMES GANNON MD

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Less than Human

Prologue

Much of the examples contained in this book focus on experiences and analysis prior to the first edition release in 2015 and most of that content remains relevant today.

This story is based on experience. With the exception of references from public domain the names are excluded to protect anyone from personal harm.

I do not claim to be perfect or that mine is the only side of the story. I stand before you a sample of human imperfection, but still try to leave the world just a little bit of a better place than I found it. It is common to belittle those who complain about abusive systems and decry those persons as weak and failures. I am a success within the system, yet can describe serious, unaddressed issues in the education, healthcare, media and political systems, which essentially encompasses any hierarchy that extols absolute responsibility on persons who have no actual authority and allows those in positions of power to avoid accountability. Those observations were true with my original edition and remain true today. My efforts as a physician help lives on an individual level but I hope this document makes people think and initiate positive changes on a systemic level in our healthcare, education and political-media systems beyond the agenda-driven propaganda existing today. I wish this could be a story about amusing medical anecdotes, but medical practice has been so overwhelmed by economic, media, political and legal factors that no mention of medicine can be made without reference to such factors and how they impact the healthcare field.

Part 1:

Getting There

Chapter 1

A Calling

Everyone has some calling of benefit to the world, and one needs to pursue that calling. I have found the hard way that holding one's self back from trying is worse than any failed attempt at accomplishment. For example, if one fails to become an engineer due to not being able to handle the profession's mathematic rigors, one still at least has exposure to higher math and a better respect for the profession. Also, the alternate degree pathways for those who drop out of engineering still can be quite lucrative. One teacher called it "the sieve of engineering and the trampoline of accounting." Point was, many engineering "drop-outs" still have something to break their fall, and they do well in life. In contrast, if one decides not to advance academically or attempt some other life venture for fear of failure, then those opportunities are lost.

The proper amount of fear can prevent you from doing something stupid and potentially dangerous, but too much fear can be self-destructive.

Finally, I recall a chemistry book in which each chapter had a brief page of successful people relating a chemistry story. More than one of those stories mentioned how Organic Chemistry ("O-Chem" in school jargon) was the stumbling block leading to a change in degree major. If memory serves correct, one became a very successful biologist, another became a very successful computer artist modeling science topics, and a third became a technical writer. Hence, these are people who have adapted to an educationally adverse situation and still became quite successful. My point is this: Failure is guaranteed if you do not try- you must try.

At some point in life, a calling grabs you. Sometimes it is how you picture yourself in the world, other times it is a nagging restlessness that indicates you are not in a position to just stop and feel self-fulfilled. What are your innate talents and are you using them? How do you define your contribution in society and how do you become that definition? Not all roads lead to your goals, and along the way are many diversions, pitfalls and fears. Attending college and professional school in the United States is huge money and even with achieving a successful degree, the venture can carry a crippling cost. Of course, the bone-crushing student loan debt hurts a bit worse when certain politicians want to use your tax dollars to give criminals a free college education, which is what you leveraged your entire financial future upon. When you are done with college, there is no guarantee of a certain job or social status, which makes you wonder if you did the right thing.

Yet, investing in yourself is always the right thing, because what you are is the only thing some thief or government bureau cannot take away from you. Try to meld your skills and knowledge with your inherent talent. Sometimes fear of failure is paralyzing, but it must be overcome. You may not have things work out as planned, but something will work out; put your faith in God, not man. If you think of your formal and informal education as developing and honing your personal human skill set, you will be prepared to adapt and improvise to changing situations better than if you are just looking for one specific role out of your training. I once saw a motivational plaque on a wall stating, *Luck is where preparation meets opportunity.* You cannot guarantee luck, but you can “be prepared.”

Chapter 2

Higher Education

Unfortunately, much of the education system is more of an antagonistic challenge than a training process. Some assignments and exams appear designed deliberately tough so that everyone fails and only the good will of the professor, via the class bell curve, rescues you from disaster. Such an academic system seems harmful, because you never feel you really learned anything; you just feel you got through it. Also, rather than developing collegiality in mastering the material, often each student is pitted against the others. The education process is more like martial arts sparring training than a teaching process; perhaps one should consider higher education sort of a mental sparring match.

You must learn to teach yourself, to be an initiator, not a sponge. I have observed that a young mind does absorb information much like a sponge but often does not grasp the significance of the information. As we age, we more fully synthesize information and grasp the meaning, but do not as readily absorb such quantities of information as when we were young. Such a situation indicates inherent ways in which the brain functions and implies proper utilization of those abilities at the ideal time can optimize the learning process.

Yet, the academic system often skips the process of teaching you how to become a self-learner and hopes such abilities will magically come to you one day. I had a philosophy teacher state, "I cannot teach you how to think, but I can teach you to think." At another time, a physics instructor stated, "I cannot teach you to think, but I can teach you how to think." Hence, the right combination of art and science, abstract reasoning, and

concrete calculations of physical relationships seems to be able to bridge the gap between teaching someone to think and teaching them how to think.

Primary education could perhaps better utilize the brain developmental timing discordance between concrete and abstract learning to maximize the ability of young people to memorize many languages and facts and a bit later use those known facts of knowledge in teaching abstract math concepts. For example, arbitrary learning of physics waveforms and nuances of light diffraction means nothing to a lot of people, and is not necessary for learning music and art. Yet, at some point, teaching waveform physics in the context of musical string instruments and optics as related to photography, art and vision may increase the appreciation of both art and science and add interesting concrete examples to formerly abstract ideas.

Regardless whether your education is a nurturing or challenging process, you must press on, for you have a calling.

For a few students, the pressure of higher education becomes too much and they kill themselves. As one person stated to me, "Suicide is a permanent answer to a temporary problem." You do not need perfection for success. For example, I had a situation where I was doing well in a class and the final exam was the day before Thanksgiving. When you work in a grocery store, getting the day before Thanksgiving off would require divine intervention, which did not happen. As I was about to ask the teacher if the final exam could be taken at a different time, another student beat me to the same question. Yes, it was an example of a teacher being antagonistic to students who actually worked their way through college. The professor's answer was that "no exceptions" were to be made, and the time stated was the only time to take the

final exam, period. I could not take the final exam. By my calculations, even if I got a zero on the final exam, the calculated grade result would be at least a D and most likely a low C, because I had good grades going into the final exam. The unexpected happened. Not being able to take the final exam, I received a grade of “Incomplete” for the entire quarter of class. Yes, attending every lecture and having A’s or high B’s on all but one exam is Incomplete by academic standards. I later became aware that by school policy all “Incomplete” grades eventually became an F.

Another time, I signed up for a class that was a basic electric circuits course, which was redundant given classes I had before in trade school, but the junior college would not accept my trade school circuits courses as meeting the requirement for a certain associate degree track I was considering. The class affected my work schedule to a great extent. The class became ridiculous, because the teacher would get tied up with one pair of students on one simple question and most of a 4-5 hour Saturday morning class was spent just waiting for the instructor to turn on the power switch or unlock the cabinet to get a battery to run the circuit we assembled. Since the quarter began on Monday and the last day to get a full refund was Friday, it was a past the refundable drop date by the first day of class. I ceased attending after two wasted Saturdays. Since there was no refund, I did not try to take unpaid time off work to go through the official drop process. Failure to officially drop a course resulted in an Incomplete, which then became an F. Those F’s hit the GPA calculations hard, but I still had a respectable GPA. Of course, I later became much more cautious regarding the nuances of academic bureaucracy in regards to grading schemes.

Those F's also hit hard decades later while applying to medical school, because at one school someone actually asked me about it. I was a bit shocked that a couple F's from junior college around 1982 and 1983 would be an issue in 1998-99 interview season, since even with those 2 F's I still had earned two associate degrees with well above 3.0 GPA while working full-time and was currently a full-time cum laude student in an esteemed engineering program at a well-regarded school. The academic system can be punitive and unforgiving but my dream was not destroyed.

Point is, if I can overcome two F's and still get into professional school, so can you. Please, do not kill yourself over a school grade, because it is not worth it. You are more than an academic number.

The most desirable colleges are competitive, and an academic pedigree has its privileges, but all education is useful. As one guy said to me, "What do they call the lowest ranked graduate in the least regarded medical school? The answer is 'Doctor.'" The point is once you are out practicing your career, you will be evaluated in most part by your personal performance, not your academic pedigree. Hence, although academic pedigree can help open some doors, it is not the only factor in success. Also, academic pedigree can be obtained anywhere along the way, be it undergraduate education, professional school training, residency programs, research programs, certificate programs and even honorary degrees. Thus, do not be crushed if you do not get your most desired program; there is always a side door, back door, window or another day.

Not all school is studying, there is some fun, but there is also plenty of distraction, injustice and tragedy to go around. After all, real life things such as lying, cheating,

stealing, racial slurs, suicide and even rape happen in the best of places.

The hardest compromise of having been a working adult and subsequently going back into the education system full-time was the complete forfeiture of civil rights. You should not have to compromise your civil rights in the U.S. to obtain college education. In fact, as Americans we are, or at least we were, conditioned to never compromise on your civil rights, unfortunately things have changed since my high school American Government/Civics class in the late 1970's. Apparently each professor is given god-like status over his or her academic sphere of influence and as a student you have no right to contest. I had issues with one godhead professor, but complaints to the dean were fruitless. In my situation, I had taken an interesting graduate-level class while an undergraduate student. Many of the professor's own graduate students were in the class, and the overt preference he gave them was occasionally sickening. Some of them could not speak comprehensible English and often rambled close to an hour on a "20-minute presentation" yet were praised greatly by this obviously-biased professor. Some of his graduate students read their presentation verbatim from a paper they copied and placed on the overhead projector and if asked a question, went directly back to iterating the sentence or paragraph verbatim and never actually answered the question. Never mind the paper they were reading was directly from an article the presenter never properly cited or was evidently completely done by someone else because the person doing the presentation seemed to have no clue as to what they were reciting. Yes, many of those people likely have become U.S. college professors and are probably the ones American students complain they cannot understand. The person(s) complaining about the incomprehensible professor often end up labeled a bigot or racist for expecting U.S. college

professors to be able to communicate to American students. I realize that desiring teachers in the United States to actually speak comprehensibly in English now makes me a bigot, a hater, and many other insults hurled at people who point out the ludicrousness of the situation. Small wonder the United States has such a difficult time educating its youth – no one can understand half of what many of the professors are saying. Education requires communication, and if the professor cannot speak the language, an interpreter should be provided.

The last straw in that class was regarding a term paper, which was a considerable portion of the class grade. I tried several times to contact the professor for input to my document preparation, all to no avail. I emailed him the document, but he did not look at it. Attempted to schedule an appointment, but he had no time. I tried to talk after class, but again no time for me. I gave him a printed hard copy to review at his discretion, yet again no feedback from the professor. To me, it seems very discriminatory to isolate a single student or student population in your class and refuse to advise him or them, while at the same time overtly providing all sorts of access to another student population. So, I did the entire term paper without any input from the professor. In the end, he gave me a relatively average grade for what I thought was exceptional work. The term paper result lowered my overall class grade considerably, and the only comments he made on the term paper was, “too many quotes.” He evidently had no other negative comments about the term paper, because “too many quotes” was the only markings on the entire document.

I complained about the plagiarism, extra time for his students on presentations and the fact that the professor refused my many attempts by several methods to communicate in preparation for my term paper, then

seemed to take off an inordinate amount of grading for using “too many quotes.” My complaints fell on deaf ears, as the dean informed me, “The professors can run their classes anyway they like.” Afterwards, I had written a rather scathing email and in one part indicated the school should be ashamed as it had perpetually driven a student to suicide almost every semester, but that one day the school administration would cause someone to go the other way (implying, not suicide, but homicide). History has too often proven me correct, not just at my school, but at too many schools.

As an example of how few rights a student has, I offer this story. I saw a graduate student, who mentored one of our lab sessions, walking across the campus on a summer day. I said “hello” but then noticed he seemed infuriated. He informed me his professor came in that morning and stated, “Why do I have you here, I don’t need you anymore.” Just like that, several years of Ph.D. research efforts taken away, his career ended. He already had a Master’s degree and was working toward a Ph.D. A fact that made the sting even worse was that during a previous conversation this graduate student mentioned to me he was lured away from a different department to work with this professor – yes, this guy who just fired him. When he saw me, he was walking to an administrative office to apply for a “Plan B” Master’s degree, his second Master’s degree. He did not go on a violent killing spree, but one Ph.D. candidate, Wlodzimierz Dedecjus, did kill his professor in 1998 for allegedly blocking Mr. Wlodzimierz’s graduation. In 1978, Ted Stresleski was 19 years into his mathematics doctorate and killed a professor, considering his actions a political statement regarding the poor treatment of graduate students.

A few years after I had graduated, a terrible situation occurred at my former college. A person somehow

chronically related to the university claimed his computer website was being maliciously hacked into with derogatory ethnic and religious insults. This was before such activity was formally classified as a hate crime. This self-proclaimed victim of a computer hacking made his accusations and felt the school did nothing to address the issue and may have even considered the school officials covered for the alleged perpetrator (It would not surprise me if his assumptions were entirely correct.). He is reported to have subsequently sued the school for an enormous amount. Based on the ludicrous amount of the damages claimed in the lawsuit, the judge threw the case out of court. I later read an online blog stating that man even wrote a personal note to the judge requesting that the case be reinstated or the insulted party would have to take matters into his own hands. On May 9, 2003, Mr. Biswanath Holder did flip out, for lack of a better description, and took a gun into a building and started shooting. An innocent person was killed and two others were injured. I do not know if the man had a history of mental illness, but I do know that school administration can push people to the limits and that can end in tragedy, usually with totally innocent persons becoming the victims. Since that time, we have had plenty more examples of such violence, yet at no time have the school officials been called to task for the hostile environment they create, which fosters such tragedies and abuses.

For a racism incident brushed under the rug by school administrators, I offer Monkeys and Squirrels. A black student was running for student council, and in many places he and his supporters posted his name in chalk (aka "chalking," where temporary student notices/announcements are written on sidewalks and sides of objects in chalk). All the other candidates had their names in chalk, too. Well, some of the black guy's chalkings had his name crossed out and the word

“monkey” written next to his name. This incident was in the late 1990s in Ohio at a renowned university, not stereotypical pre-1960s Ku Klux Klan territory. Obviously, it was improper behavior and could certainly be construed as racially-motivated, racially-insensitive, potentially racially-hostile, and even overt racism. When the offenders of some fraternity were caught, they offered up the explanation that they were simply playing a game called “Monkeys and Squirrels” – except, there were no squirrels. No other people’s names had their name crossed out and the word “squirrel” or “monkey” placed next to it. Well, that was good enough for school administration, no racism here, just a little misunderstanding. We, the students did subsequently have a meeting about racism, which for some students was more revealing regarding administrative lying. The university president was not at this meeting, and when other administrators were questioned if the president did not think a meeting about racism was important enough to attend, the ensuing defense of the president’s absence was absolutely refuted by physical facts pointed out by one very astute graduate student and a hush fell over the crowd, except for whispers of young students in front of me stating, “Oh my God, he’s lying.” When a perception of justice, of right and wrong, is so warped and no one in power does the right thing, people lose faith and feel the need to take matters into their own hands; as indicated before, the unaddressed injustice can often turn tragic under vigilante justice. None of these atrocities surprise me in a situation where students and other underlings have no civil rights and administrators and professors are like unaccountable gods and demigods.

As a student, all you can do is realize you are powerless to change the academic juggernaut, and so you continue on your pathway. Sure, you may need to speak up for what is right and condemn what is wrong, knowing full well your

integrity will be used against you. The best thing I can advise is to make your complaints in writing through proper channels; it may not accomplish anything in your academic lifetime but may help others later, and it will leave a record that something was in fact said, so the administrators cannot hide under the veil of feigned ignorance, as is most often the case.

Not everyone has bad experiences, and almost no one has all bad experiences, but you may as well know at least a small bit of the truth about higher education. Regardless, keep focused on your dreams, goals and callings, and adjust as necessary. I did not say it was easy, but you can succeed.

Part 2:

Medical School

Chapter 7

Tainting the Evidence in Evidence Based Medicine

Of note, the content in this chapter is from the first edition of this book self-published under the label Collimator Press in 2015 and is before open allegations about ‘fake news’ or the debate over scientific literature during the Covid-19 pandemic.

I learned how politically and financially motivated the concept of evidence-based medicine and medical research in America had become. Like most political propaganda, there was a nice name, but no real substance, so the opposite of the actual name was often true. The problem is that the concept of “evidence-based medicine” seems innately good and is now such Gospel that it has become public policy mantra and nests itself into the compliance and medico-legal/malpractice realm. This situation is a problem because much of the “evidence” in evidence-based medicine is based upon special interests, and some of the so called “evidence” had been outright fraud, like the rigged data provided to the FDA for a certain lipid lowering agent.

For example, over time a lot of propaganda and marketing was used to convince women in America that only barbarian and heathen native women breastfed their children. So at least an entire generation or more has been raised on bottle-feeding, instead of breastfeeding, which later in time is implicated to may have caused untold psychological stress upon said generation. It took a lot of fighting during several decades to even get the medical community to publicly acknowledge that breastfeeding was OK. Eventually, the medical community even became

convinced breastfeeding was actually good – it worked for many thousands of generations of human existence ‘til bottle-feeding came about, after all. Hence, breastfeeding became acceptable again, even recommended, for women in developed nations.

The pharmaceutical and baby food industries needed to do something to remain relevant in the baby nutrition supplement market. What better way to stay relevant than to create some “evidence”? During pediatrics rotation, we were given an article to read and discuss. The article was regarding iron supplementation in the setting of Physiologic Anemia of Infancy. The propaganda of the article was “ah-ha,” breastfeeding is now OK, but not good enough. The idea was that for some reason it was necessary to have a pharmacologic battle against a normal physiologic process. Normal physiology of a developing child has a phase of growth imbalance whereby relative to body size and fluid volume the developing child is relatively anemic. Apparently, humanity throughout history has passed through this normal physiologic phase unscathed. No, this was not giving mom an iron supplement or a multivitamin to ensure she had adequate nutrients for herself and child, it was giving a supplement directly to the baby: essentially the situation was to market a solution to a nonexistent problem. Evidently, now modern pharmacy must fight normal physiology. Our professor seemed brainwashed by the mantra that this article was “evidence-based medicine,” and thus as holy as the Word of God. Even when several astute students pointed out the fact that disclosures indicated the entire study was sponsored by a pharmaceutical company that provided iron nutrition supplement formula for babies and had a significant financial interest in the outcome, the professor was unwavering in his belief that this was legitimate evidence: Gospel. The article even overtly denied a well-known, well-documented fact that high medicinal

doses of iron in the human gastrointestinal (GI) tract causes constipation in many, if not most people. The fact that almost everyone ever taking an iron supplement has often complained of associated constipation was completely ignored. The professor even acknowledged many of the parents of the infants given the iron supplementation complained the child developed constipation, but he believed that those parents must have been lying or imagining there was a problem, because this article said it was not a problem. So, if an article says something directly contrary to your own life experience, then you evidently did not experience it? Believe the article and deny reality. The issue of constipation was a statistically significant finding in the data “Results” of the article but was dismissed as insignificant in the “Discussion” component of the study and ignored in the “Conclusion” of the article. Sounds like the Amerasia scandal coverage described in “Blacklisted by History” – consider any objectionable findings as incidental, dismiss the objections as insignificant, and ignore everything not related to what you want known – also sounds like the more recent politics of Covid “science”.

What to do when the “evidence” in evidence-based medicine is biased? What is worse is that an actual thinking physician practicing according to real world biology and physiology, instead of embracing propaganda presented as “evidence,” is ridiculed by colleagues and open to persecution and malpractice litigation for not following the manipulated, financially-motivated propaganda as if it is Gospel. Seriously, long after medical school, a friend recently showed me an article forwarded from an MD Ph.D. friend of his regarding the fact that one of the cholesterol lowering drugs used fake data sent to the FDA for approval. A decade later, that data was proven as fraud.

Under President George W. Bush, Congress passed a law forbidding Americans from purchasing medications for a lower price in Canada, under the now proven false premise “those drugs are not FDA regulated, thus may not be safe.” Yet we now see a regulated, very popular cholesterol-lowering medication given FDA approval based on fraud. Also, that inquisitive friend of mine showed me the countries of origin where his FDA-approved blood thinner medication came from, and it was not the United States. So, you cannot go buy a medication yourself from outside the United States, but the U.S. pharmacies can have your medication made overseas, shipped in, and given a hefty price mark-up and that is legal. My inquisitive friend’s blood thinner medication was mostly made by compounding pharmacies in China and India. There were a couple places outside China and India making his medication, but none were in the United States. Ask yourself and ask your so-called ‘representatives’ in Congress and the Senate and White House, how can U.S. politicians forbid Americans from purchasing the same medication in Canada at a much lower price than the same medication in the United States, when none, or few, of the medications are even made in the Western hemisphere, let alone not made in the United States?

So, in this background of real science and medicine and trying to do the right thing, there are a lot of lies and deception. How do you know what is true or not? Fact is, in school you are tested on memorizing so-called knowledge, regardless if most of the “knowledge” you memorize is a lie. It sounds like the Weird Al Yankovic song “Everything You Know is Wrong.”

Part 5:

The Philosophical, Medicolegal-Psychosocial- Regulatory Practice Environment

Chapter 35

The Failures of the Affordable Care Act

Within the aforementioned background information: Enter political discussions and the Affordable Care Act.

The Affordable Care Act is a long document of thousands of pages, whereby the only persons who actually read the legislation were those opposed to it and may take generations to work out all the nuances.

The reason most workers lost healthcare benefits was due to a law called The McDonald's Law, during the Reagan era. This law was designed so companies like The McDonald's Corporation and others who hired a lot of part-time minor aged workers did not have to pay for healthcare benefits, especially since those minor aged persons usually already had health insurance under their parents' policies. Well, the fallout was that all part-time workers were excluded from any requirements for employers to supply health insurance or any other benefits. Hence, for the retail industry, the impact of the law led to a reshuffling so most the retail workforce would become "part-time" and healthcare benefits would be removed. The manufacturing adaptation was to provide the benefits, but hire fewer workers and have them work more hours. Obviously, the simple fix would be to repeal or amend such legislation to correct any flaws. After all, Democrats readily blame the Republicans for harming the American worker, yet neither under Mr. Clinton nor Mr. Obama's presidencies while also having majorities in Congress and Senate, did Democrats ever reverse one of those "oppressive Republican schemes."

The only facts we really know about the Affordable Care Act is that it is really expensive (not so affordable) and

that a lot of political wheeling and dealing was done by Democrat politicians to get other Democrat politicians to buy into it – or rather getting other Democrat politicians sold into it. We know tens of millions of dollars to billions of dollars for influence changed political hands; in this case, it was an entirely Democrat political exchange of money and influence, because the Republicans essentially sat it out. Supposedly there were healthcare plan proposals from Republican politicians, which were insulted or ignored, much like politicians ignore letters from their constituency on the subject.

In the 2008 Democrat primaries, there was a question regarding healthcare. It was the time where candidate Obama mocked candidate Hillary Clinton’s “mandate for all-in the program,” yet President Obama pushed for the very “mandate” candidate Obama previously mocked. Dennis Kucinich had the most straightforward answer, which made it the totally unacceptable answer: “Medicare for everyone.” While I admittedly prefer market-centered approach indicated by the sample letter I sent to many politicians I can respect Mr. Kucinich’s model to achieve the same outcome. I am admittedly suspect of a “one-party payer” system where that payer is an unaccountable government bureaucracy. Seems like a set-up for a Third World political health model. Some politicians try to liken the Affordable Care Act to successful First World socialized medicine in other countries, while simultaneously openly denying the obvious socialism/communism inherent in the plan. Those nations’ healthcare plans were not thousands of pages long. In other words, a socialized medicine model may work in a socialist nation, where everything else is socialized, but having a socialized healthcare system while the rest of the country is capitalist has inherent inefficiencies and costs. Healthcare workers pay a capitalist tuition for medical training and capitalist room

and board, utilities, transportation and groceries during education years. Doctors training in socialist nations do not have hundreds of thousands of dollars in student loan debt accruing interest while in training. Hospitals have utility bills and labor expenses. The idea that doctors, nurses and hospitals should have capitalist expenses, but socialist reimbursement, is unfair. Thus, making a hybrid system whereby the components and goals are diametrically opposed is not a good idea. Ironically, we saw the obverse of the healthcare situation in how the U.S. banking and auto industry are capitalist with regards to making money, but socialist/communist requiring taxpayer bailouts when they lose money. Although many developed countries have socialized medicine, they generally have much greater waiting times to see a physician or to obtain a given surgery than Americans are accustomed. Finally, some of those socialist nations have been struggling on the verge of bankruptcy and austerity measures, which makes them a questionable model to follow.

Unfortunately, neither my plan nor Mr. Kucinich's idea had the requisite amount of graft, political posturing, favors and kickback to be politically feasible, even if making reasonable economic sense. Neither Mr. Kucinich's views nor my views required several thousands of pages in which to hide information and bury future systemic time bombs.

A good healthcare plan would not punish people for being productive members of society and reward people for being leeches. A good healthcare plan would not punish companies who do society a great good by providing healthcare for their workers and would not punish workers for receiving a benefit they will rarely use most of their lives by enacting extra systematic taxation. I am not

sure the Affordable Care Act was a success by any of those measures.

The Affordable Care Act did not repair the fragmented healthcare delivery structure. For example, when I was a child, every working family seemed to have had healthcare. Thus, when a kid fell from a tree and broke his forearm, the child went to the emergency room and got the forearm repaired. Now, there will be a battle where the injured child parent's health insurance refuses to pay. It will require the homeowner's insurance to pay, but the homeowner's insurance will not pay without a fight and will then raise insurance rates on the homeowner. In the interim, there are unpaid bills, threats of legal collections for those bills, and former friends now suing each other, and the victim (kid with the broken arm) being called into question for bad judgment and who is really to blame. What a mess. The same situation happens for car accidents and injuries. In prior days, if you were hurt you got help, but now you get an inquisition: "Was this at home or work?"; "Is it work-related?"; "Will you be filing disability forms?"; "Do you have insurance?"; "Will your homeowners, auto or medical insurance be covering it?" You are supposed to know the answers to all such possible questions in your time of need prior to being treated.

Another aspect of a great – or even good – healthcare plan would be to put the care of the patient first instead of the battle of "Who's going to pay for this?" first. Again, a dismal failure on the part of the Affordable Care Act.

For example, Social Security was supposed to be a retirement plan, not a disability plan or medical plan for politically-selected diseases. Workers Compensation has the nice ideal that if you are injured at work and have no other medical insurance your work-related injuries will be

covered. Various government disability plans also have a component of medical treatment in addition to monies received for not being able to work. All the aforementioned examples were potential huge pools of saving money, not tapped by the Affordable Care Act. After all, if everyone is insured, then there is no need for Workers Compensation, the medical aspect of a Disability Claim, and certain disease conditions could be removed from the Social Security budget. These are all tremendous potential cost savings, none of which were realized by the Affordable Care Act.

Finally, Medicaid needs to be addressed. Medicaid was supposed to be a healthcare program for poor people but has turned into a political mess. Honest, hard-working people in a low-paying job without healthcare benefits are too often better off not working so they can get healthcare. Single mothers and the guys that get them pregnant are economically discouraged from working (get a job and lose your child's healthcare; get married, and the child and girl lose health and welfare benefits), so taxpayers must now support such "families." My wife once talked to a young single mother about plans like "What are you going to do with your life?" to which the young mom stated, "Me and my baby got welfare." Is this the new "American Dream," landing a welfare situation? The "welfare" budget is so bloated that people earning more than \$40,000 a year in New York State may apply for home heating credits and assistance under "welfare." Medicaid is comprised of many people who are discouraged from being productive members of society, those for whom the American Dream is now, welfare. Medicaid budgets have taxpayers shoulder the expensive medical consequences of substance abusers, while hard working persons get nothing. There are very few "just poor" people getting Medicaid; too many people seem to have some sort of scam and a really bad entitled attitude. A lot of young people going to college are

technically “poor” and living on student loans, but do not qualify for Medicaid. Hence, Medicaid is for the “politically poor” classified persons, not actual poor people.

The point is that if everyone is covered on Medicare, then there is no “Us vs. Them” attitude, like Medicaid inherently invokes, and no need for all the duplication of resources by 50 state Medicaid programs that to some degree copy federal Medicare programs anyhow. Then we are truly all one and the same. Medicaid infrastructure could be retained to some extent for the administrative aspects of care locally, but significant savings would have been realized. Instead, the Affordable Care Act robbed the Medicare fund for older retired workers to fill the state Medicaid funds, which re-emphasizes the “Us vs. Them” attitude and leaves American citizens divided and conquered.

Finally, the “all in” mandate clause is a prime example of political hypocrisy at its worst. “All in,” except the unions. “All in,” except the politicians. The politicians have exempted themselves from Social Security as well, not bad for another example of an “all in” policy. Ironically, the same politicians do not demand their pension system or Government Motors pensions be funded 70 years into the future, as they imposed on the U.S. Postal Service. If the policy is really any good, there should be no exemptions. Again, the Affordable Care Act fails to be a fair, reasonable and uniform application of public policy.

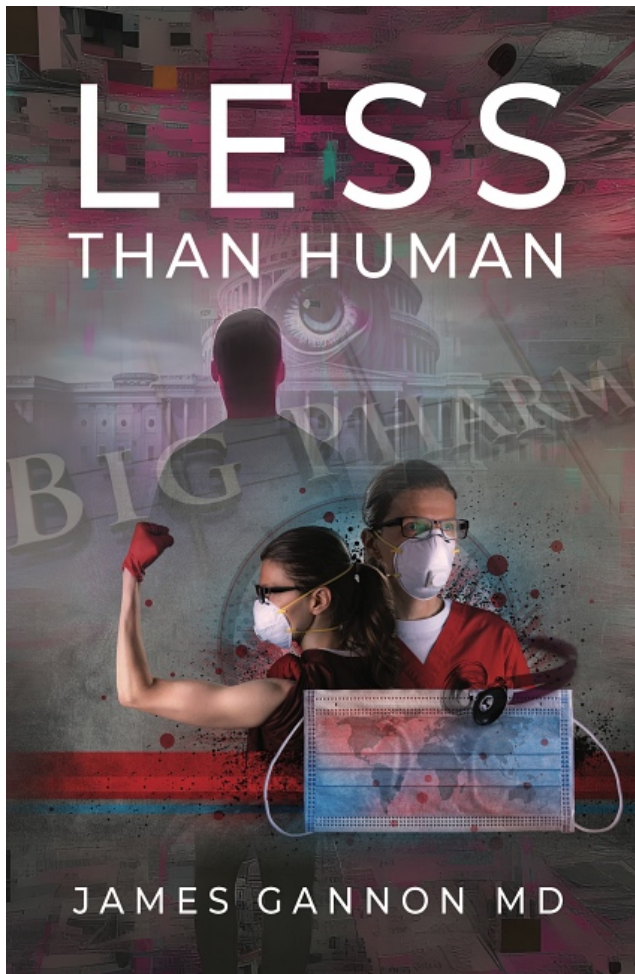
What the Affordable Care Act does accomplish is creating a legal minefield, as it now makes people responsible for actions over which they have no control. For example, if your patients are not happy and satisfied, you can be docked reimbursement for your services. In an era where a lot of people, including polysubstance drug abusers seek opioids and benzodiazepine medications, saying “No” to a

drug addict can result in poor patient satisfaction survey results. Hence, being a very good doctor and not pandering into the drug problem cuts a doctor's pay. The Affordable Care Act has increased drug addiction problems in the United States because the legislation has given drug addicts power to manipulate the healthcare system. The act holds physicians responsible for situations beyond their control. For example, if a doctor has a patient get a chest X-ray and treats the patient for an infection and the patient within 30 days goes to the hospital, the treating doctor, and the outpatient imaging facility will not be paid or will be expected to refund at least a portion of services paid for already. This is nonsense, yet part of the law. How does an outpatient facility even have a right or means to know if a person went to the hospital 29 days later? Fallout will likely be a lot more utilization of emergency services as outpatient physicians will have to be very selective in whom they treat and when to treat or not. Hence, a lot more patient information will be floating around cyberspace, meaning the law just made patient information less secure. Finally, under the ACA, even HIPAA gets more stringent and punitive. Now you do not even need a security breach of patient information to get in trouble, you only need to "appear to have an increased risk" of exposure of patient information. So now a non-event or narrowly avoided event is treated as if it actually happened and is punished even more severely than actual events. Small wonder there is a shortage of almost all healthcare providers in the United States.

The U.S. Supreme Court essentially considered the ACA unconstitutional as healthcare legislation, but acceptable as a taxation schematic.

So, not only does the Affordable Care Act not accomplish any of its publicized goals, it does not accomplish any of

the huge potential savings while creating a more punitive and overregulated system.



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