

Evidence and simplicity: Why we should reject homeopathy

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Section 1. Introduction

Homeopathy is intensely controversial. While millions of consumers and practitioners subscribe to it, [1,2] homeopathy is held in considerable disrepute by much

left unexplained by Aristotelian physics. This increase in explanatory power is a strong

can reject the five minute theory; everyone rejects the five minute theory; therefore,

can have dramatic powers, why don't we see anything of the sort wityeTj ETq Q q 0.0600

When homeopaths make a more serious effort to answer questions like those raised above, they offer two sorts of approaches. First, following Hahnemann himself, proponents sometimes claim that homeopathic medications cure by affecting something in the human person that goes beyond what science can quantify or explain. This special feature of persons is sometimes referred to as “vital force”, and it is given various different descriptions by homeopaths:

“life energy itself...difficult to quantify, but it is the very real difference that occurs between life and death.” [9]

memory of an initial configuration is lost almost instantly. Why would things change with homeopathic preparations?

If we still denied its effectiveness, we would have the massive unexplained mystery of the positive clinical evidence. On the other hand, if we accepted the effectiveness of homeopathy, we would have the massive mysteries outlined above: how something chemically indistinguishable from water can have dramatic effects, etc. Neither stance would look remotely acceptable, and we would be well advised to have our best scientists start analyzing the mechanism behind homeopathy, for we would surmise that our

weaker evidence consisting of anecdotal and observational reports from practitioners and consumers alike; on the other hand, those who claim that homeopathy is effective have enormous unexplained mysteries, and answering those mysteries would appear to require

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