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EDITORIAL

When you read in the newspapers the words "According to experts..." or "Experts predict..." have you ever wondered who these experts really are. Where do they come from, what have they actually done to be called "experts"? Why are they always mentioned in the plural and why are they never mentioned by name?

There are very simple answers to these questions.

Firstly there are far too many experts in the world to name them all. In fact, everyone of us professes to be an expert in one field or another and some clever dickies even think they are experts in everything. And secondly, experts are more often than not totally wrong in their predictions, so it pays, in their own interest, not to mention them by name.

Experts have led us up the garden path ever since mankind exists. From religion to astrology, from astronomy to weather forecasting, from human fitness to health foods, from the most complex science to the simplest mundane actions, absolutely nothing has escaped the attention of our experts. This in itself would not be a bad thing if it were not for the fact that for every expert there is also a counter-expert with exactly the opposite views from the first one.

How we have all been misled by experts is shown in the following everyday example. Brushing your teeth is a simple, uncomplicated everyday chore

if it were not for the experts. When your Editor was a kid, we were told by experts to move our toothbrush backwards and forwards over the teeth. Then suddenly this was all wrong. New experts told us to brush from the top of the teeth down or up towards the gums. This procedure was soon to be rubbished by another bunch of experts telling us to brush the other way round, from the gums to the top of the teeth. Now the other day, a young and obviously expert dentist told your Editor: "Forget everything you have ever been told in the past about brushing teeth. The only correct way to do it from now on is to brush backwards and forwards over your teeth" Hey, this is what we had been told some 60 years ago, isn't it? So after 60 years of following advice after advice from oral experts, we are surprisingly back where we started from!

Just as confusing are our experts on food. For thousands of generations, eggs have been a staple food for mankind until experts decided that eggs were unhealthy because they created too much cholesterol which was clogging up the arteries in your body and therefore were the cause of many heart attacks. Immediately, counter-experts claimed that cholesterol had nothing to do with heart attacks and that some of it was actually even vital for your good health. Some experts claim that barbecued meat is better for you than fried meat because the flames from the barbecue seal the goodness inside the meat whilst other experts believe just the opposite, claiming that the meat

touched by the flames could cause cancer. You just can't win.

There is hardly a single food item left that has not been attacked or defended at one stage or the other by some nutrition experts. The same goes for clothing. Tight clothes hamper your blood circulation, loose clothes give you chills, hats make you loose your hair because the scalp is deprived of fresh air and cannot "breathe" and no hat can lead to sun strokes and melanoma. Boots keep you warm in winter but make your feet "sweat" which can cause infections. Too many clothes is considered as unhealthy and too much bare skin is touted as being indecent. And the list goes on. According to the experts, there is just no way for you to dress correctly.

And what about fitness? Here the experts are more divided than ever. There was a time when jogging was hailed as the panacea, the remedy against all illnesses and flabby stomach muscles until some experts claimed that the continuous pounding endured by the joggers was affecting the bones in their feet and the brains in their heads. So jogging should be replaced by walking.

Mark my words. It won't be long before an expert will tell us that walking is dangerous because it grinds down our hip bones and wears out our knee caps. No doubt, every TV expert will agree with that and will try to convince you that any exercise beyond sitting on a couch watching TV and perhaps push the remote control button now and again (but not too often) is detrimental to your health.

Expert will soon emerge to tell you that muscle building programmes and fitness centres with all their gadgetry and torture machines are totally unnatural and do not belong to this world. In this, these experts have powerful allies in the animal world because no animal spends hours of training for fit-

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DEPUTY DELEGATE: Marie-Therese Melville-Schöpfer, P.O. Box 79-294, Royal Heights, Auckland 1230, Phone 833-4029

EDITOR: Henry Sigerist, Travelair, P.O. Box 37-335, Parnell, Auckland, Phone: 377-3285 (bus.) or 473-9011 (home), FAX 302-1099 (bus.)

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AT

TRAVELAIR

347 Parnell Road,
P.O. Box 37-335, Parnell, Auckland
Phone 09-377 3285 (work) or
09-473 9011 (home)
Fax 09-302 1099 (work) or
09-473 2966 (home)