



Edwin P Devereaux

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Phillip Ebrall

A maker of the profession

It is not possible to consider the development of the chiropractic profession in Australia without saluting Ed Devereaux; upfront he must be warmly acknowledged for his role in refining and promoting an educational institution in NSW, of uniting self-proclaimed chiropractors particularly along Australia's East coast, and for driving legislation in New South Wales (NSW)

that was critical to the overall legalisation of chiropractic in Australia as a nation.

There are many points on which Ed and I disagreed, yet I hold him in the highest regard as I respectfully call him Ed in this tribute on the basis that his friends and indeed 'everyone at large' called him 'Ed'. My fondest memory is of meeting up with Ed and Mrs Ed at Lake St. Clair in Tasmania following a CAA conference in Hobart. Ed and his dear wife were taking time to tour the state, 'my' state, and the serendipity of us chatting about things chiropractic at a spiritual spot close to my heart is not lost on me.

Dr Devereaux was a presence, at times a formidable presence, completely at home in the corridors of the NSW Parliament as he locked horns with left-wing Labor politicians, those of his ilk whom he knew he could meld as he had previously been a Union organiser. His intent was honest and clean, he wanted to ensure appropriate processes were put in place and adhered to in order to advance a profession which ironically Ed was also actively building at the time.

Dr Devereux took the shreds of 'second stream' chiropractic and worked beyond any sunset to bring it credibly into the mainstream of chiropractic in Australia. Of course Ed did not see it this way and I respect his position. He was leading what I would kindly call a rabble, a wild assortment of erstwhile chiropractors who had little if any formal education. Yet under Ed's leadership they were to become united into the profession as we know it today.

He did this on the national scene with the help of Dr Mahinder Lall, a Victorian, who toiled to apply a semblance of academic repute upon three



disparate part-time educational programs (1) producing those who would be called chiropractor, or osteopath, or naturopath, if not all three. Such is the colour of our Australian history.

Together Mahinder and Ed presented a united front to governments, and indeed the chiropractors and others gathered under their wing formed the *United Chiropractors Association of Australia*. This group was kind and supportive to me in my early student days.

My difficulty with this tribute lies in choosing a starting point on which a natural flow of attainments will demonstrate the good which Ed brought to the profession. Perhaps I shall start with my claim published elsewhere that the professional people Ed came to so fiercely (and I love him for this passion) represent were largely 'self-proclaimed' as I have already noted.

I will not demean my tribute by citing my own works, Ed and I are both well beyond that. Suffice it to say I have closely examined Ed and his role in the development of chiropractic in Australia and can only conclude he was a powerful driving force for all we have today.

I also have to conclude he was a divisive force, driving representatives of the Palmerian view of chiropractic in Australia to despair. I could cite countless exchanges between Ed and Stanley (Bolton) (2) but for what purpose now? At the time it was hot stuff, and in an historical context it deserves to be appreciated, but as for any meaning today? Forget it.

These two rampant bulls are now out to pasture, and it would be a gross failing of any Australian chiropractic program to not fully deliver informed lectures examining their roles in the development of chiropractic in Australia.

Our profession moves forward, although it is hard to think the whole profession could move forward as one given the ongoing position of a few rag-tag remnants of Ed's unifying association, now called *Chiropractic Australia*. (3)

These people are perpetuating all that Ed stood against, and perhaps it is time they accepted his position that one association would be the better way to serve all chiropractors in Australia.

Towards a respectful understanding

The best thing about Ed was his ability to call things as he saw them. To make this point I refer to his writings of September 1988. (4) This was at the time the *Australian Chiropractors Association*, under John Sweaney, was courting the lawyer who had done well with the New Zealand Inquiry, David Chapman Smith, with a view to forming a global federation which came to be known as the *World Federation of Chiropractic*.

The justifiable concern of Dr Devereaux was that his organisation, the UCAA, at the time representing more than half all chiropractors in Australia, had been left out of the discussions.

As an historian I align with Ed on this matter. The UCAA Ltd was badly done by yet was expected to jump with joy at this marvellous new global group. It didn't. And the concluding comment by Ed in his piece of September 1988 was prescient. I have already noted his roots in the trade union movement, but here is evidence he had moved well beyond that and into a realm he comfortably inhabited for 30 years or more, that of a senior statesman of chiropractic in Australia.

1. Lall, M. (Undated, c. 1974). Australian Federation of Chiropractors. Submission on behalf of Australian Association of Chiropractors, Chiropractic Association of Queensland, Chiropractic and Osteopathic Institute, United Chiropractors Association, Western Australian Chiropractors Association. Representing the Chiropractic College of Australasia, Chiropractic and Osteopathic College of South Australia, Sydney College of Chiropractic. East Brighton, self-published (Lall).

2. Bolton, S.P. (2001). Controlling unregistered practitioners: Chiropractic and osteopathy unzipped. *Chiropractic Journal of Australia*. 31(4):122-32.

3. Chiropractic Australia. Board. URL <https://chiropracticaustralia.org.au/our-board/>.

4. Devereaux E. Comment. *Chiropractic Australia*. 1988;8(3):12, 13.

He stated, with regard to the structural organisation of the WFC, that *'It would be tragic to see the chiropractic profession adopt the Trade Union's system, and for the rank and file to be lost in a maelstrom of pyramidal leadership'*. Ed's words were as true at the time he recorded them as they are with our reading of them today.

The *'rank and file'* chiropractor has no meaning within the WFC today and it has become an expensive, self-perpetuating political exercise, the benefits of which remain unclear. For example, Australia's representative of the region is not determined on talent and skills, rather politics, and seems to be whomever it is at the time who is favoured by one or two influential directors of the *Australian Chiropractors Association*, a process that not only excludes *'rank and file'* members of the ACA but also all members of the association that Ed fought for, now *Chiropractic Australia*. There is no open nomination process, no presenting of argument, no agenda for what will be represented, and no say at all by any registered Australian chiropractor.

Ed's words of caution were revelatory and less than embraced by the executive of the ACA at the time. To their credit, the editors of the *Chiropractic Journal of Australia* ensured fair and transparent reporting on this and other issues. (5, 6, 7, 2)

The Teece Report

The joy of reading history prepared by the person who wrote it is softened a little by appreciating the truism that history is written by the victors. Ergo, there is always some bias towards the victor's point of view. As a writer of history myself I certainly can not be critical of the personal flourishes which surface in any piece of historiography and am guilty of my fair share.

To understand how *The Teece Report* (8) came about we must appreciate that the party in power in NSW was the Labor Party, and the Minister for Health was a good friend of Dr Devereaux's. The Labor Party's history with chiropractic was confused at that time: On 29 June 1963 *The Bulletin*, a national news magazine in Australia, (9) published a piece *'From a Melbourne Correspondent'* under the heading *'Medicine'* titled *'The Chiropractors' Lobby. The spine manipulators and the ALP.'* (10)

The gist of the story was that something went wrong with chiropractors on the basis that *'three years ago'* (1960) the Annual Conference of the *Victorian ALP* recommended *'that it be a plank of Labor's platform that the Chiropractors' Association of Victoria be recognised.'* Then, in June 1963 the Executive *'presented to the 1963 conference a report which completely reversed the original recommendation and even proposed that the Chiropractors' Association of Victoria be not recognised "in the interests of the welfare and health of the community."*

Devereaux was influential for having the New South Wales Labor Party, in office at the time, establish the Committee to inquire into the registration of chiropractors. This point is kept in mind when interpreting Devereaux's favourable endorsement of the Teece findings. (11) Ed was a strong and admired leader of Australian trained chiropractors through their associations, the

5. Bolton SP. Report on chiropractic. *Journal of the Australian Chiropractors' Association*. 1970;Aug- Oct:11-4.

6. Devereaux EP. History of chiropractic from a New South Wales perspective (1969-1982) (personal memoir). *Australas Chiropr Osteopat*. 1998;7(2):68-79 <http://www.coca.com.au/journal/article/details.asp?ID=75>

7. Devereaux EP. Controlling registered practitioners: Another view. *Chiropr J Aust*. 2002;32(4):151-6.

8. Teece JC. Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the Question of the Registration of Chiropractors. Parliament of New South Wales. 1975.

9. National Museum Australia. Defining Moments: The Bulletin. URL <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/the-bulletin>

10. A Melbourne correspondent. The chiropractors lobby. *The Bulletin*. 1964;85(4350) 29 June:10 retrieved at trove.nla.gov.au URL <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-684934773/view?partId=nla.obj-685083616#page/n9/mode/1up>

11. Devereaux EP. History of the Sydney College of Chiropractic. [Letters]. *Chiropr J Aust*. 2006;36(3):116.

Australian Association of Osteopaths and Chiropractors, United Chiropractors' Association Australasia in Melbourne (UCAA), and the *The Australian Federation of Chiropractors* (AFC).

In contrast, the following observations are from an article with no given author published in the *Journal of the Australian Chiropractors Association*, the journal of the American-trained chiropractors association, the ACA. (12) At this time the *Australian Physiotherapy Association* (APA) had moved beyond its 1925 iteration where self-declared, local chiropractors were the majority of members, to a position that opposed the 'registration of chiropractors "on medical grounds"'. (12 p. 7). This position seems to reflect the changed view of the Victorian ALP, reported above.

The APA also contended that '*the theory on which chiropractic is based is false and the education standards and methods of diagnosis are inadequate ...*'. This is a strong indication of a separation between physiotherapy and chiropractic, the position then in place in WA where the *Physiotherapists Act* had been introduced in 1950 and excluded chiropractors and osteopaths. (13 p. 6)

The preferred 'sound-bite' from *The Teece Report* used by proponents of the NSW-based *Sydney College of Chiropractic* (SCC) is that '*In general, persons applying for registration as chiropractors should have completed a tertiary course of at least four years considered to be equivalent of the diploma course offered by the Sydney College of Chiropractic (Ashfield)*'. (13) On the face of it this would appear to be an endorsement of the SCC, however elsewhere in the Report it is stated '*the Diploma of Chiropractic is conducted as an evening and weekend course and covers 4½ years*' (13 p. 7 and '*it is an evening and weekend course, spread over four years*'. (p. 8). In mid-1975 it was noted that there had been a change in the Minister for Health in the NSW Government and the new Minister advised he would be travelling overseas and would look at some chiropractic colleges to compare standards. The comment was published '*This is good news for New South Wales, as the Report of the Committee of Inquiry has left it open for the Sydney College of Chiropractic to make exaggerated claims of their standard being satisfactory for New South Wales Chiropractic Legislation*.' (14)

Section 8.3.6 of *The Teece Report* (8) noted the SCC as then having:

1. inadequate facilities;
2. inadequate tuition;
3. inadequate library; and
4. inadequate access to clinical material for tuition.

In general, the ACA, its members being trained in full-time programs in well-established North American colleges of chiropractic, was dismayed to think the standard offered by the SCC could become the de facto Australian standard which would be made '*more dangerous by the implementation of the "Grandfather Clause"*'. (12 p. 8)

It was this disagreement about 'standards' that became the thorn between Dr Stanley Bolton, a stickler second-generation chiropractor trained in the Palmer manner, and Dr Devereaux, representing Australian chiropractors not trained in that manner.

12. Excerpts from the Report of Committee of Inquiry into the questions of the registration of chiropractors. J Aust Chiropr Assoc. 1975;January-March:6-8.

13. Excerpts from the Report of Committee of Inquiry into the questions of the registration of chiropractors. J Aust Chiropr Assoc. 1975;January-March:6-8.

14. Cashmere MM. State Reports. New South Wales. J Aust Chiropr Assoc. 1975;April-June. 9(2):21.

Nonetheless, SCC was formalised and eventually became the first chiropractic program in Australia to be within a university, (15, 16) paradoxically the goal of the ACA's Doug Winter, (17) although the Melbourne program at Phillip Institute was actually the first chiropractic program in Australia's Higher Education sector with its students becoming eligible for government funding around 1981 and 2. (18)



The Sydney College of Chiropractic

Ed's defining work is his outstanding and incomparable 400+ page 'History of the Sydney College of Chiropractic.' (19) Our profession must be grateful that a man who played such a vital role in shaping the profession in Australia took the time and with two trusted, diligent assistants, captured an enthralling, entertaining, and most thoroughly-documented history peculiar to Australia. I can think of only one or two others who have made the effort to write the profession's history in such detail, my dear friend Rolf Peters being one. (20)

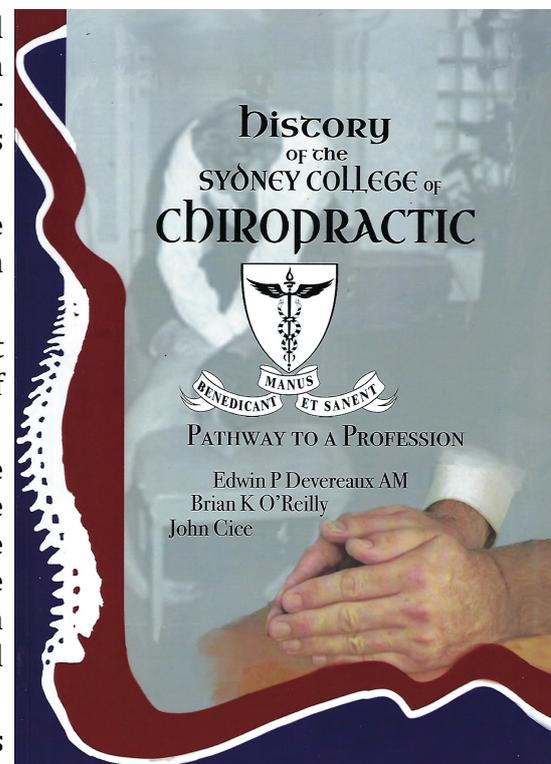
The extent of this history is remarkable in both its breadth and depth. It is not easy to comment on the content, as it is clearly a highly personal recollection. But as to be expected with a perfectionist like Ed, the work is heavily referenced with original documents and images

The beauty of this book is its permanent documentation of the development of a significant arm of today's chiropractic profession in Australia.

A second significant benefit is that once the work has been done, it can lead to strong papers in the literature, such as this history of George Frederick Price. (21)

For me, the story really came together in one magnificent picture on my reading of Lall's work (1) a couple of years ago in which he represented the position of three local training programs, the Melbourne-based *Chiropractic College of Australasia* (CCA), the Sydney-based *Sydney College of Chiropractic* (SCC), both independently dating from 1959, and the Adelaide-based *Chiropractic and Osteopathic College of South Australia* (COCSA).

Lall gave his qualifications as 'MD, DC, DO', and I suspect that as with most locally trained chiropractors of this time his 'DC' was self-proclaimed.



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15. Devereaux EP. Thirty years of chiropractic education at RMIT University: The establishment period 1975 - 1978. [Letter]. *Chiropr J Aust.* 2005;35:117.
 16. Devereaux EP, O'Reilly B, Cice J. Thirty years of chiropractic education at RMIT University: The establishment period 1975 - 1978. [Letter]. *Chiropr J Aust.* 2005;35:117-8.
 17. Ebrall PS. Obituary: In memoriam, Douglas Winter: The father of university-based chiropractic education in Australia. *Chiropr J Aust.* 2018;46(1): 118-9.
 18. Ebrall PS, Molyneux TP. Thirty years of chiropractic education at RMIT University: The establishment period 1975 - 1978. *Chiropr J Aust.* 2005;35:29-38.
 19. Devereaux EP, O'Reilly BK, Cice J. *History of the Sydney College of Chiropractic. Pathway to a profession.* Sydney: Macquarie Lighthouse Press. 2015.
 20. Peters RE. An early history of chiropractic. The Palmers and Australia. Dissertation, RMIT University. Asheville: Integral Altitude. 2014.
 21. Devereaux EP, O'Reilly B, Cice J. Profiles of Australian chiropractic pioneers. Frederick George Price, ND, DC. *Chiropr J Aust.* 2008; 38(1):28-30.

An era has ended

It was with considerable sadness that I wrote the heading for this final element of this *Journal's* tribute to Dr Ed Devereaux. Whilst recognising the immense importance of paying appropriate and loving accolades to those who crafted chiropractic as a profession in Australia, it is not an easy task. Not the least for the knowledge there are many others who could speak more eloquently in the memory of Ed.

There are not only the patients he touched, but also the politicians, and more important perhaps, the members of associations over time which knew they had a giant in their corner, fighting for their place in the emerging profession of chiropractic as it grew to become in Australia.

I am not sure I could presume to speak for Ed and suggest he would be happier with one truly representative association of chiropractors in Australia, but all that he achieved and has left in his considerable wake, is something for which I am personally grateful. And yes, the sooner CA joins with the ACA the better, in my book.

Ed's presence will be missed, perhaps painfully at our various professional gatherings, but his spirit and its effect on the many he touched will keep us moving forward with a gentleman's dignity and eloquence.

Such was the man Edwin P Devereaux, AM.

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