

Part 17:
Ill and disabled stripped of credibility

Denied scientific testing and diagnoses for serious tick/flea-borne diseases, people who are growing increasingly sick are routinely stripped of their credibility when they persist in reporting illness, severe pain, and disability.

Those who persist in seeking diagnoses and treatment find themselves labeled as "problem patients," rather than as patients with an as-yet-undetermined medical problem.

Journalist, science and environmental reporter Hillary Johnson wrote, "In this troubling, even tragic era, people are sick, disabled, and dying from illnesses that the premier authorities in establishment medicine proclaim do not exist as discrete pathological entities but are, instead, a figment of the patient's overactive imagination." (Foreword, "Cure Unknown," pp. xii-xiii)

Johnson explained, "All sorts of contorted linguistic anomalies have arisen from the field of contested diseases in the last two decades. Phrases like 'medically unexplained symptoms,' shorthanded in medical journal articles to 'MUPS,' 'somatoform disorder,' 'illness attribution,' and 'sickness behavior' are tossed around as if they have a real grounding in medical science by doctors and especially by psychiatrists, who are having a field day in this new era."

Johnson reminded, "These phrases are code for more familiar words like 'hysteria,' 'hypochondria,' and 'mental illness,' phrases doctors prefer not to write in patients' charts."

She added, "When these illnesses occur in children, doctors often train their antennae on the parents, who may then be accused of another equally dubious and damning condition known as Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, said to afflict parents who induce illness in their own children in order to attract attention to themselves."

Polly Murray, one of the two mothers who reported cluster outbreaks in 1975 of what would later turn out to be Lyme disease, sought medical care for a similar decline in her own health in 1965. One Boston physician reportedly opined, "You know, Mrs. Murray, some people subconsciously want to be sick." (New York Times, June 17, 2001)

Next: 'It's all in your head'