

# Pills-a-go-go

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## RU 486

As we go to press the hottest pill news is New Hampshire's demand for the "abortion pill" from France. Voting 13-9 the state legislature demanded the drug be permitted into the state to be used for any purpose — including abortion. Made by Roussel-Uclaf and already in use in France and China the drug promises to solve some of the abortion "problems" women have by letting them effectively do it themselves.

All she has to do is swallow a couple of the pills and, presto, she starts shedding the uterine lining just like having a period. Of course any embryos imbedded in the stuff will come out, too. Hence the "abortion".

It has already been used some 65,000 times in France with one woman dying as a result. Nevertheless, the FDA does not deem it safe enough to use in this country where aspirin, too, can kill you (Reye's Syndrome, remeber?). Anyway, with AP writers like Jim Van Dongen (his real name) "reporting" that the law would make New Hampshire women into "guinea pigs" don't look for much rational discourse on this one.

In addition to causing menstruation the pill is also thought to be useful in treating certain types of breast, brain, neck and lung cancers.

## Prozac suits dying off

A Butler, PA real estate developer shot himself in the head after leading cops on a high-speed chase. His wife, unable to accept the idea that her husband was a kook said it was because he had stopped taking Prozac. She's filed suit. Despite this, things are looking up for Lilly. Three cases filed against Lilly have been dismissed against Lilly because of claims its anti-depressant Prozac made people go berserk, kill themselves, have bad thoughts, or pee their pants. Only about 50 more to go.

## Malaria strikes back

The most deadly form of malaria has put half the world's population in danger as the bug becomes resistant to normal medications.

Plasmodium falciparum, the most virulent kind of malaria has already killed some 10,000 adults working on the development projects in the Amazon basin

## Take thys Pille

### The pill in History Part I

By Steven A. Dore, SPP

The origins of the modern pill stretch back beyond ancient Egypt when various concoctions were mashed up with bread or clay for easier ingestion. But this article chronicles the birth of the pharmacy — prime locale of pills.

The first pharmacy as we would recognize it today probably lies beneath several tons of fresh rubble since the first apothecary appeared in Baghdad in around the ninth century. While the master race was busy worshipping trees, the Arabs were already training, licensing and inspecting pharmacists and pharmacies. Medicinal preparations were manufactured in the great cities of the middle east and shipped out in caravans as far as sub-saharan Africa. A hospital in Damascus was built in 1160, remaining in operation for hundreds of years.

Perhaps the surest sign that Europe had emerged from the Dark Ages was the appearance of the apothecary. Looking to Damian, the patron saint of drugstores, nuns and priests who had saved the Arab's knowledge through Greek translations, abandoned their fear of heathen science and began to make and dispense medicines.

Soon, even more information began to stream into Europe from the middle east, adding to the existing pharmacopia and spawning even the codified study of medicine. Encyclopedias of drugs began to appear and by the twelve century, the government of Venice started to "supervise" the drug trade — a sure sign that it was also profitable.

Medieval drugstores were not much differ-



in Brazil. Epidemics have broken out in Botswana, and Zambia after prolonged rains helped increase the number of mosquitos to carry the disease. All told more than 100 million cases of malaria occur each year in Africa.

Quinine won't do it anymore, neither will chloroquine (the cheapest). And, recently the disease has been proving resistant to the combination of sulfadoxine and pyramethamine. A new drug, mefloquine, has been used in Thailand but only about half the cases are responding.

## Tylenol goes to court

Lawyers for the families of seven unfortunates who were killed by cyanide-laced capsules in 1982 are getting ready to take their cases to court in Chicago.

Since the guy who did it hasn't been caught, the only one to get mad at is McNeil. The pill company (owned by Johnson & Johnson) is going to have to defend itself against claims that it could have foreseen and prevented the tampering.

The company says since the crime was unprecedented there's no way they could have known. The lawyers say a child could have done it, since there were no safeguards at all.

## Japanese Pills!!

A loyal pill-fan sent PaGG a package of Japanese pills and liquid concoctions sold OTC in that country. So far we haven't test-driven them yet but we intend to devote a chunk of the next issue to a review of these guys. In the meantime, we'd love to have samples of OTC drugs from around the world. No cyanide, please!

## Drug o' the Month

A relatively new class of drugs called fluoroquinolones they include MSD's Noroxin (Norfloxacin) and Miles' Ciprofloxacin hydrochloride (Cipro) and are mofa antibiotics. Cipro can even get in there and kill off infections deep in the bones but neither one can kill mycoplasma so there's still use for erythromycin et al.

P.S. Gals, Noroxin kills off STDs without causing itchy yeast infections!

## Bush-Quayle CIA & Pills

Here are the facts — you figure it out.

George Bush was CIA director in '75-'76, he also used to be president of Zapata Oil, which was really a CIA front operation. So he allegedly quits being a spy in 1976 and has to get a regular job so where does he get his job?

### Did You Know ... ???

Astronaut Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin (2nd man on the moon) was treated for depression with Ritalin upon his return to Earth. One day Mr. Aldrin did two hits before an appearance on the Today show and felt great, but suddenly burst into tears on the air.

ent than any other type of store at the time.

Like other businesses, medieval pharmacies were storefront operations that opened up directly onto the streets. Horizontal doors were fastened with hooks and pegs to form both a roof and a counter from which the pharmacist could sell his wares. Behind him, the apprentice was mixing and grinding or doing whatever other work the master decided he should do, including washing clothes. Doing double-duty as a doctor, the pharmacist spent some of his time listening to complaints, peering down throats or inspecting a person's urine or feces for tell-tale signs of disease.

Emperor Federico II of Sicily was the first to recognize a conflict of interest between the two professions and, in the 1230's forbade physicians to either own or operate pharmacies. He further ordered druggists to follow a doctor's instructions exactly and not play around with the prescription.

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## Bush continued

Eli Lilly of course.

George Bush had and has no connection with the Indianapolis or pharmaceuticals. He never lived in Indiana even when he was pulling down his six figure salary from his Board of Directors job. There is no reason to believe George Bush ever did anything at Lilly but get paid.

George Bush has no special drug or business expertise except as head of Zapata Oil. But, Lilly, like Zapata, has extensive operations around the world, notably in the Caribbean and Latin America. The Quayles also owned a large chunk of Lilly stock. Dan Quayle was senator at the time, fielding calls from Central America. Dan's uncle was head of Lilly's public relations department for 30 years, and held the job while Bush was there.

After Bush became vice president he lobbied congress so hard for a bill that would reduce taxes on drug companies doing business in Central America by 26% that he received a court order to stop it.

Neither Lilly, nor anyone in Indianapolis mentions Bush's Indiana connection (a state that goes out of its way to claim Abe Lincoln and Charles Manson because they both spent some time there).

So did Quayle come from nowhere?

## Vitarine nabbed by FDA

Steven Colton entered three guilty pleas to rigging tests for his company, Vitarine. Facing 15 years and three quarters of a million dollars fine, Colton admitted tht he had been submitting brand name drugs for his company's generics thus getting FDA approval for at least six drugs. Pills-a-go-go hasn't been able to learn which drugs the Baltimore company managed to pass with the bogus tests.