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Psychiatric screening of kids is a real threat

Mar. 25, 2006 12:00 AM

First, I want to thank *The Republic* for devoting space to the critical issue of the psychiatric drugging of our children.

But in its March 15 editorial "All that glitters is not good policy," *The Republic* commits one cardinal editorial sin: it believes its own story.

The Republic ignores the fact that the Citizens Commission on Human Rights' co-founder was eminent psychiatrist Dr. Thomas Szasz, professor emeritus of psychiatry at New York State University.

In 1969, Szasz and a minister from the Church of Scientology heard about an involuntary psychiatric patient being given shock treatments and heavy doses of psychiatric drugs. Why? Because psychiatrists could not understand him and assumed he was crazy. The man actually spoke a European dialect that Szasz himself spoke. The man was quickly rescued. Thus began the years-long investigation and exposure of psychiatric violations of human rights.

Believe me, if there is any group that is well represented at the Legislature it is the mental-health industry. Ask anyone.

And, since the editorial talks about affiliations, look at the one between the Mental Health Association of Arizona and its parent, the National Mental Health Association which, in its 2001 annual report, lists nearly \$2 million from pharmaceutical contributions.

The "chemical imbalance" theory pushed by psychiatry as justification for their wholesale drugging has no science in it. In fact, the president of the American Psychiatric Association admitted last year that "we (psychiatry) do not have a clean-cut lab test" to determine a chemical imbalance.

Senate Bill 1414 was drafted to protect parental rights against an Orwellian federal plan to screen all healthy American schoolchildren for mental illness, using programs like TeenScreen currently in Arizona schools (see www.teenscreentruth.com).

The psychiatric slippery slope begins with screening. Strong evidence suggests that the intended treatment is psychiatric drugging. Parents should know what may lie ahead for their child before consenting to any screening.

The Food and Drug Administration's Web site has information on the "Black Box" suicide warnings for these antidepressant and ADHD drugs.

Psychiatry's intent is to expand their patient base through mental-health screening. That is why legislation like SB 1414 (now SB 1324) and SB 1477 continue to receive support in the legislatures of numerous states and why CCHR and other like-minded groups will be around until psychiatric reform is a fact. - **Richard Haworth, Phoenix**

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The writer is with the Citizens Commission on Human Rights, Phoenix Chapter (cchr.org).

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