

# THE FLYING UNICORN AWARD 2015 - WINNERS

## *Context:*

The Flying Unicorn Award - a fortunate prize for unfortunate ideas - is a satirical award created by COMCEPT, the Portuguese Skeptic Community. During 2015, our readers and followers suggested personalities and organizations that contributed to the propagation of pseudoscience, superstition and other disinformation damaging to the society.

In the creation of this award, we were inspired by JREF's Pigasus Award.

---

## *2015 Winners:*

### **Gramophone** (*media*)

**i** (national newspaper)

In 2015, this national newspaper published a series of "news reports" about a) exorcisms and b) homeopathy. In the case of homeopathy, we read the typical pro-homeopathy arguments: "I know it works because of my own experience", "it works in animals", and "there are doctors who prescribe it". Topped by an editorial written by the main editor praising homeopathy.

A well deserved prize indeed.

### **Shooting Star** (*famous personalities*)

#### **Simone de Oliveira**

Simone is a very famous and respected actress and singer with a career that spans into the 60's.

Now she is lending (selling?) her image to the promotion of Calcitrin, a calcium supplement touted to do all sorts of miracles to your bones and health. The College of Pharmacists and the College of Physicians have both stepped forward in condemning the dangerous publicity - still running in major TV channels.

The problem is not having an actress do publicity. The problem is that, when questioned about it by the press, she actually defended the supplement claiming that the Colleges were only complaining because this was a natural solution that Big Pharma didn't like. \*sigh\*

### **The Emperor's New Clothes** (*other personalities/organizations*)

#### **Higher Education Institutions launching degrees in alternative therapies**

Due to new legislation, now “unconventional therapists” (as they seem to like to call themselves here) need to have a higher degree in the field they promote. At least eight Higher Education institutions, both private and public, have jumped on the opportunity and will be offering courses in naturopathy, acupuncture and other quackeries. Among them, is the Red Cross!

So, now this unfounded practices are legitimized, not only by a terrible law, but by higher education degrees!

These awards were published [here](#) (in Portuguese) on April 1<sup>st</sup>.