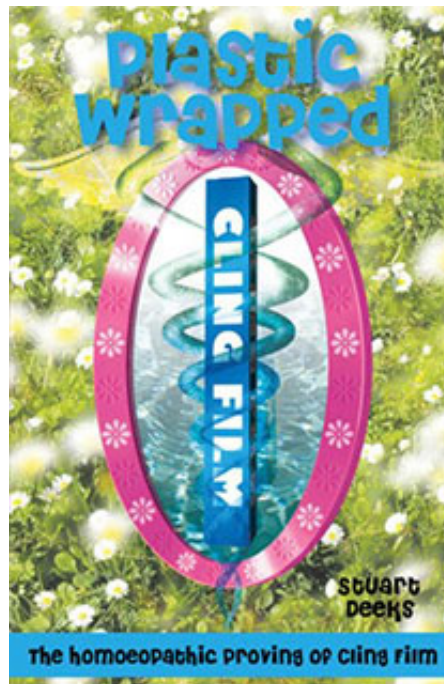


# Deeks S. Plastic Wrapped: The Homoeopathic Proving of Cling Film

Reading excerpt

[Plastic Wrapped: The Homoeopathic Proving of Cling Film](#)  
of [Deeks S.](#)

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# Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> and Explanation of Terms.	<b>i</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE:</b> The Story of the Proving.	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO:</b> The Text of the Proving begins. <i>Mind: states of mind and emotional responses.</i>	<b>5</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE:</b> Physical Symptoms. <i>Various parts of the body. Modalities.</i>	<b>33</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR:</b> Dreams.	<b>60</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE:</b> Additional Notes. End of proving text.	<b>65</b>
<i>Supervisors' and co-ordinators' experiences.</i>	<b>78</b>
<b>CHAPTER SIX:</b> Materia Medico, Chakras and Related Remedies. A comparison with the remedy Polystyrene.	<b>85</b>
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN:</b> Sixteen Cases.	<b>91</b>
<b>CHAPTER EIGHT:</b> Meditative 'Provings'.	<b>175</b>
<b>CHAPTER NINE:</b> The Cinderella Connection.	<b>180</b>
<b>CHAPTER TEN:</b> The Plastic Era.	<b>193</b>
<b>APPENDIX:</b> The Clinging Film. <i>Invention, Chemistry and Manufacture.</i>	<b>199</b>

# INTRODUCTION

My intention for this book is that it is widely read. I have attempted to present the material in a clear and comprehensible way; firstly for homoeopaths\*, so that the remedy\* can be prescribed for the benefit of those who need it and then for the interested general *reader* to find here an insight into what may seem to be an improbable medicine\*; also to *engender* appreciation and understanding of the method used by homoeopaths (for some two hundred years now) to test or 'prove'\* medicinal substances, in order to bring them into reliable service. For all readers the case examples are instances of use of the medicine and illustrate and confirm some of its potential.

**Directions into and around the text.** The order of the book, apart from these introductions, follows the sequence of events, through from the initial preparation of the medicine, then the trial or 'proving'\* period, and ending with case examples. The *experience* of the provers forms the basis of a Materia Medica\* of symptoms. These *derive* almost entirely from the proving text, and are mostly confirmed now from clinical *experience*. As time passed, we added retrospective reviews from those provers who had marked reactions, and editorial comments linking cases with the proving text etc. These are indicated in italics.

Gradually, we have become more aware of the territory of this remedy, and connections with Cinderella type stories have proved relevant. However, this chronological order of presentation may not be your best route through the text.

To dip in to the cases might be a way to start, to get straight to the point and purpose of it all. Cases 1 to 4 would provide a concise and illustrative introduction. Or the Cinderella essay might be the section to whet your appetite. I suggest you consider the whole like a mobile, with its several diverse features, all *dependent on* a central thread. This is *reflected* in that each provers *experience* reveals certain facets of the whole. The same applies to the cases: each person's symptoms highlight one or more of the various aspects. The whole book can be considered as a field or open space where you spend time, having a look around; so it doesn't matter which entrance you use!

There is here a rich and lively well of information. Draw on it.

**An explanation of asterisked terms used, combined with an outline of the main part of the book.**

*Homoeopaths* are people who prescribe medicines according to the principles of homoeopathy. This word was coined by Samuel Hahnemann, early on in the nineteenth century. He was a German chemist and physician. Here are two examples of the homoeopathic principle\* :

1. Something heavy, a brick maybe, falls on your foot, or you stub your toe. As first reaction you might well shout OUCH! loudly, or some other more vigorous expression, then press hard on the place of impact, for relief of the pain.

2. Eating something poisonous will bring on symptoms; if its a lethal poison, you will die. However, the symptoms in their sequence of stages will vary considerably depending on the nature of the poison. For example the toxicity of the common foxglove (*digitalis*) includes certain effects on heart function. The homoeopathic principle is seen in useful action when much smaller doses of that same dangerous poison relieve particular kinds of heart conditions. It is generally acknowledged, and not just by homoeopaths, that poisons are an essential medical resource. Hence the symbol on the cover, known as a Caduceus. This symbolises the dual aspects of a poison: what can kill or harm as poison can relieve or 'cure' as medicine.

*Proving.* The word itself. Homoeopaths' use of this word reflects Hahnemann's pioneering work. In German the word <sup>x</sup>'prüfung' is used for a trial, a test, an investigation into, or examination of something. In English we have the saying <sup>x</sup>'The proof of the pudding is in the eating'. Hahnemann conducted clinical trials of the medicines of his day, and our use as homoeopaths of the word 'proving', as the name used for this method of Investigating medicinal effects, came directly from the German 'prüfung'.

*A Prover.* Someone who takes part in a proving.

## What is a proving? How is a proving done?

Anyone might discover the properties of a potentially medicinal substance on their own. Accidental, as well as deliberate poisoning can be like this. The symptoms provide useful indicators of the field of action of the poison. However, deliberate provings are undertaken as a safe way to provide homoeopaths with a more thorough and detailed understanding.

With this intention tablets are *prepared*, usually, by a homoeopathic pharmacy, from the substance to be tested. This preparation involves sequential dilution and succussion\* of the original. This has to be preceded by trituration\* if the original material is insoluble in water, as is the case with cling film. In a *trituration* an insoluble solid is broken down by pounding/pulverising it with powdered milk sugar in a mortar and pestle. The chemistry of this process is generally known and used, not only in homoeopathic pharmacies. The sequence of dilutions renders an originally poisonous substance by degrees less fiercely toxic, down to the level where it can be employed judiciously as a medicinal agent. This was done by Hahnemann to reduce the intensity of experience when taking a medicine, albeit chosen homoeopathically. Along with the dilution he established the use of succussion, which he realised as essential to retain the characteristic field of action and potency of the medicine. Succussion involves striking the phial with the liquid inside it against a hard surface, originally a leather bound book. The medicine is made and preserved in a high alcohol medium, and this is then used to medicate blank sugar/lactose or sucrose tablets.

All *potencies* used in the proving are centesimal\*. This relates to how the remedies are prepared at the pharmacy: the proportion of dilution is 1 - 99 parts at each stage. This starts with one part of the original to ninety-nine of the liquid ethanol medium. This is succussed a set number of times. One part of this mix is kept for the next stage of adding 99 parts of ethanol, and succussed again. When this is done thirty times, for example, it is known as 30 C, or 30 CH; the thirtieth centesimal potency.

One person can do a proving as a trial or test to learn about a medicine, but usually and more usefully a group will be involved. One could say that there is no such thing as perfect

health, but provers are required to be clear of any obvious illness at the time of the proving. Starting on the same day at an *agreed* time each person takes a tablet by mouth, probably repeating the dose at intervals over a few days, stopping the dosage when they begin to *experience* changes. Their symptoms indicate these changes. These experiences are recorded in detail for as long as *evidence* of the changes continues. Some changes may be immediate, others later on.

Then, after a time, the provers' information is brought together and collated. At this stage comparisons and similarities *emerge*, serving to clarify the scope and territory of the medicine. As can be imagined, each prover reacts to the stimulus, in part, according to their individual sensitivities and susceptibility; for example a person, who may at other times get skin eruptions or cracking, especially in cold weather, in the proving experiences beneficial changes to his cracked finger tips. Such changes relieve an already existing condition. This indicates that the person has *benefited* from testing the medicine, and "*needed*" it in this aspect. More commonly, experiences of change will show as new and possibly uncomfortable sensations or feelings. These stay for a while and then fade away, once the initial stimulus has 'worn off'. As indicated already, tablets are only taken until changes or symptoms are noticed, and in any case only for a few days.

*The group effect.* It has been frequently observed, and is the case with the proving of cling film, that others involved in the process get affected without even taking the tablets; hence the contributions to the text from supervisors.

Once most of the effects have died down, the symptoms can be sorted under headings - states of mind or spirit, emotions, as well as physical symptoms. You will see that the text of the proving in this book is laid out this way.

To match each section Rubrics\* are found. These might already exist in homoeopathic repertories\*, in connection with other remedies, or devised freshly to match symptoms of this proving. A *Rubric* is a means of directing someone to a particular medicine. It derives from the gained knowledge of the medicine; from poisoning, proving and confirmed clinical uses. It serves as a two way signpost - pointing to and from the medicine.

Rubrics of different medicines are brought together in repertories. A *repertory* is a 'store or collection of information,

instances etc.' The word comes from the Latin reperio = I find.

This gathered and collated information tells us of states and symptoms experienced by the provers since taking the tablets. Then the medicine is ready for homoeopathic clinical use.

It goes like this: a patient comes to a homoeopath in a particular state, with symptoms. The homoeopath observes closely and goes into the detail of the symptoms. Then he or she chooses a remedy according to the homoeopathic principle. It will be one that is known from its proving to have produced/induced states and symptoms similar to those presented by the patient. (All this requires skill and enough time.) The chosen medicine is given. If the patients state and symptoms begin to change and improve, it is considered that the medicine was a good one. (The term remedy is now justified!) The choice is confirmed and the workings of the homoeopathic principle are witnessed.

Once we had experience of this remedy in clinical use, we could begin to confirm the *Materia Medica*. In Latin this simply means 'medical material'. It represents a synthesis or distillation from the study of a particular medicine, to indicate and assist its possible uses.

It is worth adding that this whole process of proving a medicine through to *Materia Medica* can be repeated with another group. This has been done with long established remedies like Sulphur, one of those that Hahnemann first proved two hundred years ago. Repeated provings verify and enrich the body of information: similar threads and themes emerge, with each provers individual nature as a colouring factor.



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