



## The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association

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### A View From the Inside: A Collection of Medically Oriented Short Stories

by Augustine L. Perrotta, DO.

Gilbert, AZ:

Keith Publications LLC; 2015.

246 pp. ISBN: 978-1628820935.

*A View From the Inside: A Collection of Medically Oriented Short Stories* comprises 15 stories that are loaded with medical history and are entertaining and instructive in the context of the world we live in. Dr Perrotta, a hematologist and oncologist, uses his expertise as a clinician and teacher to weave each story in a personal way.

As I read the book, I thought about my experiences in medicine, and I began to appreciate my own journey. As a medical resident at Detroit Osteopathic Hospital in Highland Park, Michigan, I knew Dr Perrotta for always wearing a bow tie and a smile. I wasn't at all surprised that one of the stories in this collection is about bow ties. In this chapter, he offers an answer to the question, "Who wears bow ties?" and discusses his love for this fashion statement. I confess that I bought a few back then and wore them because of him.

Each chapter is compelling, but certain ones are especially so. I love baseball and

was captured by the first story, about Babe Ruth, whose physicians assumed that he had laryngeal carcinoma because of his hoarse voice and drug and alcohol use. However, his autopsy revealed that he did not have laryngeal carcinoma. Another chapter of particular interest to me is "Wombmates" because I have twins in my family. In this chapter, Dr Perrotta discusses the moral and ethical challenges that surface with modern reproductive technology.

Two chapters that enhanced my medical knowledge in a practical manner involved bone marrow transplantation and the issue of blood transfusion in patients of Jehovah's Witness faith. The chapters "Snakebites" and "The Deadly Dentist" also intrigued me. I'm glad that I don't come across patients with snakebites often, but the chapter taught me what I need to know if I did. The story about the dentist portrayed a gunfighter who had tuberculosis at a time when little was known about the disease and when most people who developed it did not survive. Dr Perrotta's story offers the natural history of this infectious disease. Another important story, "Separate but Equal," outlines the US military's decision to enlist both osteopathic and allo-

pathic physicians to serve in the Army Medical Department in June 1968 during the Vietnam War.

My favorite story was "Humor as Medicine." Dr Perrotta explains how a humorous outlook on life can maintain a positive perspective as a way to fight stress. I laughed my way through it. The final chapter, "The Oldest Man in the World," was particularly interesting to me because of the unique way in which Dr Perrotta discusses longevity. This chapter inspires me to have a glass of wine every evening. One way or another, this soon-to-be habit should pay off.

What can I say? I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. It's a quick and fun thought-provoking journey written in a unique way by a talented educator. I recommend it to people within and outside the health care profession alike. (doi:10.7556/jaoa.2016.072)

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