The Importance of Reading

Read. Read. Read! Reading skills and habits are among the most important for the premedical student. Many student shortcomings relate to the quality and quantity of time spent on reading. He is what some medical school interviewers expect: "During interviews, I always ask applicants to list the names of the last ten books they have read and to comment on what they have learned from each of them. A book of non-required reading every one to two months is reasonable to expect from a full time student" (an interviewer at a medical school). "I have a list of 100 individuals who have made significant contributions to humanity in recent years. I give out a name and ask the student who they are and what is their contribution. I would not give a strong recommendation to a student who did not know the contributions of at least 50% of the names." (an interviewer at another medical school). There is a good correlation between the reading habits and attitudes of applicants and their scores on the verbal or reading comprehension part of the MCAT. Unfortunately, you cannot cram in reading skills in a few months of preparation for the MCAT.

Suggested Readings For Premedical Students

Full bibliographic information was not always available for the following listings, but enough information is given for you to look up availability and cost on such web sites such as Barnes and Noble (www.bn.com), Amazon.com (www.amazon.com), or the listed publisher. Several books are out-of-print, but may be found in local libraries or through interlibrary loan. Always check to see if the original "out of print hard copy edition" is now available in paperback form. Other books may be in the personal libraries of your premedical advisor and you may be able to borrow from them.

I. ABSOLUTE “MUST READ” FOR ALL PREMEDICAL STUDENTS:

* Savett, Laurence A. 2002. The human side of medicine: learning what it’s like to be a patient and what it’s like to be a physician, Auburn House, Westport, CT. Dr. Savett is a former physician who is now a well-known premedical advisor. He shares his own life and his experiences in medicine and academia. He is a strong advocate for “humanistic medicine”. His example points out that physicians are human beings engaged in the care of other human beings. He employs case histories, quoting individuals, posing questions, and providing opinions and answers that define the responsibilities of physicians in their care of patients.

II. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED BY PREMED ADVISORS, BUT NOT CATEGORIZED:

The following were still relatively available and in print as of June 2006.

* Bursztajn, Harold, and others. 1990. Medical choices, medical changes. How patients, families, and physicians can cope with uncertainty. Routledge. (Out of print?)
*Coles, Robert. 1989. The call of stories: teaching and moral imagination, Houghton Mifflin Co. Dr. Coles, a psychiatrist, teaches Harvard undergraduates, medical students, and other graduate students the lessons we learn from listening to each other’s stories.


*Fox, S. and Fox, K. 2000. What can I say—a guide to visiting friends and family who are ill. (A 40-page booklet published by Adventures in Caring. The booklet can be ordered for $7.95 by calling 800-833-5678.


*Hashemi, Zia. 1995. Mastering medicine: the most current, concise, and comprehensive guide to medical education in the 90’s, A.R.C. Publishing, Raleigh, NC (copy many be borrowed from A. Gordon, BMS)


**III. TRAINING**

*Becker, Howard S. and others. 1991. Boys in White: Student Culture in Medical School

*Duncan, David Ewing. Residents: The Perils and Promise of Educating Young Doctors

*Galanti, Geri-Ann. Caring for Patients from Different Cultures: Case Studies from American Hospitals

*Gershenow, R., Ed. The Education of the Osteopathic Physician

*Jones, Bob E. 1978. The difference a D.O. makes: Osteopathic medicine in the twentieth century


*Klass, Perri. 1988. A Not Entirely Benign Procedure

*Konner, Melvin. Becoming a Doctor: A Journey of Initiation in Medical School


*LeBaron, Charles. Gentle Vengeance


*Lyden, F., Geiger, H., and Peterson, O. The Training of Good Physicians
Suggested Reading List For Premedical Students at SMSU


*Marion, Robert. The Intern Blues

*Marion, Robert. 1991. Learning to Play God: The Coming of Age of a Young Doctor


*Rothman, Ellen Lerner. 1999. White Coat: Becoming a Doctor at Harvard Medical

*Schwitzer, Albert. Out of My Life and Thought

*Svahn, David and Kozak, Alan., Eds. 2002. Let me listen to your heart: Writings by medical students. Basset Healthcare. The challenges, frustrations, and rewards that third year medical students discover when they put aside their textbooks and learn to share intimate moments in their patient’s lives.

IV. PRACTICE

*Adams, Patch and Jacobs, Pamela. Housecalls How We Can All Heal The World One Visit at a Time

*Adams, Patch (with Maureen Mylander). Gesundheit (out of print check your libraries)

*Bickel, Janet. Women in Medicine: Getting in, Growing, and Advancing

*Breedlove, Charlene, Ed. Uncharted Lines: Poems from the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)


*Carson, Ben. 1990. Gifted Hands, the Ben Carson Story

*Colgrove, Melba, Bloomfield,, Harold & McWilliams, Peter. How to Survive the Loss of a Love.
   Insights into loss, for patients and those involved in their care. Written by a physician, psychologist, and poet.

*Gerber, Lane. 1983. Married to their Careers: Career and Family Dilemmas in Doctors' Lives


*Hilfiker, David. 1988. Healing the Wounds: A Physician Looks at his Work

*Lapierre, Dominique. Beyond Love

*Laster, Leonard. Life After Medical School, Thirty-two Doctors Describe How They Shaped Their Medical Careers


*Nuland, Sherwin B. Doctors

*Nuland, Sherwin B. How We Die

*Nuland, Sherwin B. The Biography of Medicine

*Oz, Mehmet, and others. 1998. Healing from the Heart, The Power of Complementary Medicine


*Rosenberg, C. The Care of Strangers.


*Savett, Laurence A. 2002. The human side of medicine: learning what it’s like to be a patient and what it’s like to be a physician, Auburn House, Westport, CT (An author-signed copy may be borrowed from A. Gordon, BMS)


*Spiro, Howard and others, Eds. 1993. Empathy and the Practice of Medicine, Beyond the Pill and Scalpel


*Williams, Carlos. 1984. The Doctor Stories

*Zazove, Philip. 1993.When the Phone Rings, My Bed Shakes: Memoirs of a Deaf Doctor

V. PATIENTS
*Albom, Mitch. 1997. Tuesdays with Morrie; An old man, a young man, and life’s greatest lesson. Random House. A story about how a person, his family and friends cope with a serious illness. The writer recounts the final months of his college mentor’s life during which he dealt with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (“Lou Gehrig’s disease”).
*Belli, Angela and Coulehan, Jack, Ed. Blood and Bone
*Heymann, Jody. 1995. Equal Partners
*Hilfiker, David. 1994. Not all of us are Saints, Hill and Wang
*Kaysen, Susanna. 1993 Girl Interrupted
*Lacombe, Michael, Ed. On Being a Doctor (poems and essays)
*Lightman, Alan. 2000. The Diagnosis
*McCrum, Robert. 1998. My Year Off, Recovering Life After a Stroke
*Miller, J. The Body in Question
*Muksan, Jon, Ed. Articulations
*Price, Reynolds. 1994. A Whole New Life
*Radner, Gilda. 1990. It's Always Something
*Rosenbaum, Edward. 1998. A Taste of My Own Medicine (=The Doctor)
*Sacks, Oliver. 1984. A Leg to Stand On

VI. HOSPITALS
*Brody, Howard. Stories of Sickness
*Chekhov, Anton. Ward Six and Other Stories
*Crichton, Michael. 1989. Five Patients: The Hospital Explained,
*Garrett, Susan. 1995. Taking Care of Our Own: A Year in the Life of a Small Hospital
*Gibbs, Harlan Gibbs and Ross, Alan Duncan. 1996. The Medicine of ER, or How We Almost Die, Basic Books

VII. TOUGH DECISIONS
*Belkin, Lisa. 1993. First Do No Harm
*Elders, Joycelyn. From Sharecropper's Daughter to Surgeon General of the USA

VIII. AGING
*Malcom, Andrew. 1992. Someday: The Story of a Mother and her Son

IX. OTHER PERSPECTIVES
*Brody, Howard. 1988. Stories of Sickness
*Coles, Robert. 1993. A Robert Coles Omnibus
*Coles, Robert. 1994. The Call of Service: A Witness to Idealism Reprint
*Hunter, Kathryn. 1991. Doctor as Stories: The Narrative Structure of Medical Knowledge
*Martin, Emily. 1994. Flexible Bodies: Tracking Immunity in American Culture from the Days of Polio to the Age of AIDS

X. MEDICAL ETHICS

*Bandman, E. and Bandman, B., Eds. Bioethics and Human Rights
*Bosk, Charles L. Forgive and Remember: Managing Medical Failure
*Brody, H. Ethical Decisions in Medicine
*Gorovitz, Samuel. Doctors' Dilemmas
*Gorovitz, Samuel. 1991. Drawing The Line, Life, Death, and Ethical Choices in an American Hospital
*Nechas, Eileen and Foley, Denise. Unequal Treatment, What You Don't Know About How Women are Treated by the Medical Community
*Pence, Gregory E. Classic Cases in Medical Ethics: Accounts of Cases that Have Shaped Medical Ethics with Philosophical, Legal, and Historical Background
*Quill, Timothy E. 1994. Death and Dignity/ Norton, W.W. and Company. Dr. Quill, an internist, discusses in depth the events leading to the death of one of his patients, the ethical issues involved, and important aspects of the doctor-patient relationship. The case he discusses became the basis for a United States Supreme Court case involving physician-assisted suicide.
*Salmon, J. Warren, Ed. The Corporate Transformation of Health Care: Perspectives and Implications
*Star, Paul. The Social Transformation of American Medicine

XI. HEALTH CARE ISSUES

*Orient, J. Your Doctor Is Not In.

XII. HISTORY

*Fister, Jeffrey. 1994. The Plaque Makers
*Gevitz, Norman. 1988. Other Healers: Unorthodox Medicine in America
*Haeger, K. History of Surgery
*Harvey, James. Young American Health Quackery: Collected Essays
*Loudon, Irvine, Ed. 1997, Western Medicine, An Illustrated History, Oxford Univ. Press
*Ludmerer, Kenneth. 1999. Time to heal: American medical education from the turn of the century to the era of managed care. Oxford University Press. 514p. The development of medicine and medical education in the U.S. Part III discusses the changes in medicine since the 1960s with the advent of Medicare and Medicaid and Managed Care.
*Starr, Paul. The Social Transformation of American Medicine

Updated by A. Gordon, Biomedical Sciences Department, June 2006
*Young, Harvey. 1967. The Medical Messiahs, A Social History of Health Quackery in Twentieth-Century America

XIII. ADMISSIONS AND “GETTING IN”

*Brown, Sanford J. 1985. You can get into medical school: letters from premeds, Mendocino Foundation for Health Education (Free copies are available to SMSU premeds from A. Gordon, BMS, until the stash is gone)
*Goldstein, Mark Allen and Goldstein, Myrna Chandler. 1996. Medical school admission, Font and Center Press, Weston, MA
*Maguire, Mary Ann. 1999. PreMed: Who makes it and why? Teachers College Press, Columbia University. Reviews on the usefulness of this book to current applicants were cool with respect to the changes that have occurred recently.

XIV. TEXTBOOKS RECOMMENDED FOR MCAT PREPARATION AND REVIEW:

*These are just recommendations --- Other reference texts with similar detail and coverage are suitable. These books may be too lengthy to read and study by themselves. It is advisable to use these texts to clarify and provide more detail when reviewing the MCAT Study Guides.*

Cell and Molecular Biology:

Organismal Biology:

Inorganic Chemistry:
*Purcell, Keith F. and Kotz, John C. An Introduction to Inorganic Chemistry (not currently in print)*
*Brown, T.L., LeMay, H.E., Bursten, B.E. Chemistry: The central science. Prentice-Hall*

Physics:
*Young, Huge D. and others. 1999. Sears and Zemansky’s. University Physics*
*Cutnell, J.D., Johnson, K.W. Physics. John Wiley and Sons*

Organic Chemistry:

XV. IMPORTANT JOURNALS OF INTEREST TO PRE-MEDICAL STUDENTS AND PHYSICIANS:

*These help keep physicians and the student interested in medicine abreast of issues and developments in medicine.*
*Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA). Highlights of each issue are found online at the JAMA home page (http://jama.ama-assn.org/) The most widely read of all medical journals. Gives the premedical student insight as to issues of concern to physicians and how physicians think and feel.

*New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM). Online abstracts of the current articles in the NEJM are available at their web site (content.nejm.org). Full text articles are available to subscribers. After 6 months, full text articles are available to all online. The writing style in this medical journal should be noted by the premedical student. Reading the topic reviews offers practice in preparing for the VR section of the MCAT.

XVI. MCAT PREPARATION:

A number of books have been published over the years and there are a number of good web sites that provide downloadable study materials using such search words as “MCAT Preparation”. With a little effort most of the useful sites can be located. Many of the items listed below may be difficult to find because they are older and out of print.

*ARCO MCAT Supercourse, Edited by Stefan Bosworth
*The Best Test Preparation for the MCAT, The Research and Education Association
*The Betz Guide: A Complete Preparation for the MCAT, Edited by Aftab Hussain
*Columbia Review: Intensive Preparation for the MCAT, by Stephen Bresnick
*Jump Start MCAT, by Amin, Bhush and Le
*Kaplan MCAT, by Kaplan Test Prep.
*Princeton Review: Flowers and Silver MCAT, by Flowers and Silver
*MCAT Student Manual, by the AAMC
*MCAT Science Sampler, by Kaplan Test Prep. (Excerpts from MCAT Prep Course Review Notes- various years.
*MCAT Practice Tests I, II, and III, by AAMC (downloadable from several web sites)

XVII. OTHER PREPARATION MATERIALS FOR APPLICANTS TO MEDICAL SCHOOL

*Jackson, Evelyn W. and Bardo, Harold R. Write For Success, by the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions.
*Kozoll, Charles E. Plan for Success: Time management for the pre-med student, by the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions.