

BOOK REVIEW

Beyond The White Coat: Doctors Share Their Personal Journeys

by Kannan Pasamanickam, Madhav Kudva, Zainal Hamid, (editors)
2024; Pp 371; Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Press, Kajang, Selangor, Malaysia; ISBN 978 967 2477 174



This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited

I came across this volume while browsing in a Tawau bookstore recently and it turned out to be an inspiring read. This book brings together the life stories of twenty-one doctors from the University of Malaya's Class of 1973/1978.

The contributors represent a wide range of specialties: paediatrics (Zaidah Ahmad, Yogeswery Sithamparanathan, Kwan Poh Who and Bibiana Teo Siew Eng); internal medicine (Madhav Kudva – gastroenterology, Dewi Rammasamy, Kannan Pasamanickam and Zainal Hamid – cardiology); surgery (Tan Kai Chah – liver transplantation, Thambiraj Joshua Rajaram – orthopaedics, Pathmanathan Vaithilingam – hand and microsurgery, Ding Chek Lang – urology and Lim Kok Hoo – cardiothoracic surgery); pathology (Peh Suat Cheng and Tan Puay Eng); occupational health (Abed Onn and Loh Yunn Hua); social and preventive medicine (Atiya Abd Salam); obstetrics and gynaecology (Neoh Hock Sun); radiology (Vincent Chong) and general practice (Sulaiman Abdul Talib).

The breadth of these specialisations ensures diversity in the narratives. The stories explore themes of professional achievement and personal growth, interwoven with reflections on family and community. The quality of the narratives vary - some are deeply reflective, while others are primarily descriptive.

Notable narratives include:

- Dr Thambiraj's management of complex musculoskeletal deformities at rural hospitals in Gabon and Angola.
- Dr Pathmanathan's neonatal arm transplant at Selayang Hospital.
- Dr Zainal's in-flight emergency treatment of a patient with pneumothorax and surgical emphysema.
- Dr Bibiana's emergency tracheostomy on a child with diphtheria in Sarikei Hospital.
- Dr Tan's contributions to liver transplant surgery across the United Kingdom, Singapore and Malaysia.

This book is a testament to the rapport and shared humanity of their graduating class. The narrative is tinged with sadness, particularly in memory of their three colleagues who have passed away: Dr Atiya Abd Salam (2017), Dr Kwan Poh Who (2018) and Dr Tan Kai Chah (2021).

This volume is more than a collection of professional anecdotes. It is a record of a generation of Malaysian doctors who have contributed significantly to the advancement of medicine both nationally and internationally.

Sharaf Ibrahim

Specialist Children's Hospital
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
Kuala Lumpur