2012

Educating for Professionalism: Creating a Culture of Humanism in Medical Education' Delise Wear and Janet Bickel (Eds.) 2000

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BOOK REVIEW
Article 990364

'Educating for Professionalism: Creating a Culture of Humanism in Medical Education'
Delise Wear and Janet Bickel (Eds.)
University of Iowa Press, 2000,
Iowa City. ISBN 0-87745-741-7

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Delise Wear and Janet Bickel (eds.) 'Educating for Professionalism: Creating a Culture of Humanism in Medical Education', 2000, University of Iowa Press, Iowa City.
ISBN 0-87745-741-7

'Educating For Professionalism: Creating a Culture of Humanism in Medical Education' provides a timely review of medical professionalism, as the paramedic profession considers its own identity and reflects on its position within the health professions.

The opening four chapters of the book examine what it means to be a medical professional, and how this meaning is informed by ethical, social, political and personal factors. As we review these narratives, it is useful to reflect on similar influences present within the context of our relevant health profession. For example, as we consider the value of reciprocal interactions and moral character within medical schools as examined by Stanley Joel Reiser, we can align this to our understanding of such issues within our own areas of health professional education.

Similarly, the question posed by Frederic Hafferty '…where within the medical curriculum are we to find pedagogical efforts directed toward what medicine so emphatically proclaims to be its end product, the "caring and competent professional"?' can be equally directed at the curriculum of a range of health professions. As Hafferty challenges medical educators to explicate the real values of the profession within mission statements and curricula documents, it is timely for the all health professions to ask the same of their education institutions.

Richard Martinez continues this theme as he critically reviews the emerging conflict between professional values and medical institution priorities. He calls for an 'ethics of authenticity' whereby individuals are supported in voicing their personal and professional beliefs. Professionals are open to discuss and critique institutional policies and processes, rather than compromise their personal integrity.

It is perhaps the final chapter of part one that is most thought-provoking, not only because it addresses the very personal impact of educational issues, but it also challenges the very nature of the professional culture and how this can so strongly influence professional values and

behaviours, and how the '…conflict between tacit and explicit values distorts medical professionalism'. As educators and professionals, we are asked to reflect on the role we play in shaping and developing our own profession.

The second part of the book describes various programs designed to enhance the professional development of medical trainees. The nine groups of authors in this section present a variety of formal and informal education strategies designed to nurture the development of professional behaviours in medical students. The opening chapters review a range of initiatives including: the development of a mentor-mentee program; integration of humanities courses into the medical curriculum; embedding projects involving professional behaviour across the four curriculum; and student initiated projects that draw on professional attributes.

The final four chapters in the book address the common theme of community-based programs, where various authors reflect on the professional learning experiences provided to medical students through interactions with the community.

Janet Bickel provides an afterword to conclude the book, and whilst she is referring to the medical context, many of the issues she identifies can be just as relevant to other health professions. She identifies the overarching theme of the book as the '…disconnect between what medical educators profess and what students experience…', and discusses factors contributing to this condition, and some possible opportunities to move beyond this situation.

This book will prove important in informing anyone involved in the initial and ongoing education and training of health professionals. It provides a rich collection of pathways travelled and lessons learned and, in considering these in terms of shaping a future direction for medical education, can provide a valuable resource for all health educators and professionals alike as they attempt to address many similar issues.