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Intern: A Doctor's Initiation

By Sandeep Jauhar



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"In Jauhar's wise memoir of his two-year ordeal of doubt and sleep deprivation at a New York hospital, he takes readers to the heart of every young physician's hardest test: to become a doctor yet remain a human being." ? Time

Intern is Dr. Sandeep Jauhar's story of his days and nights in residency at a busy hospital in New York City, a trial that led him to question his every assumption about medical care today.

Residency—and especially its first year, the internship—is legendary for its brutality, and Jauhar's experience was even more harrowing than most. He switched from physics to medicine in order to follow a more humane calling—only to find that his new profession often had little regard for patients' concerns. He struggled to find a place among squadrons of cocky residents and doctors. He challenged the practices of the internship in *The New York Times*, attracting the suspicions of the medical bureaucracy. Then, suddenly stricken, he became a patient himself—and came to see that today's high-tech, high-pressure medicine can be a humane science after all.

Jauhar's beautifully written memoir explains the inner workings of modern medicine with rare candor and insight.



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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Jauhar, a cardiologist who directs the Heart Failure Program at Long Island Jewish Medical Center, completed his internship a decade ago, but still remembers his confusing, tumultuous medical apprenticeship at the prestigious New York Hospital the way soldiers remember war. The son of an embittered immigrant plant geneticist who found the American university tenure system racist, Jauhar dithered over career choices and completed a doctorate in physics before embarking on medicine. Jauhar feels responsible when he botches the blood pressure check on a patient who later dies during an aortic dissection and when he misses the high blood sodium level of a man who then suffers irreversible brain damage. He wonders if he and his colleagues have discriminated against a cardiac patient because of his weight, and helps an advanced cancer patient's wife decide against the futile insertion of a breathing tube. As his internship progresses, he romances his future wife (an affair he describes with the passion of one buying a used car); cracks under self-doubt and the expectations of his traditional Indian family, and suffers a serious depression. He regrets that as a doctor he is sometimes impatient, emotionless and paternalistic. Although Jauhar carefully elucidates complex medical terminology for lay readers, his thoughtful, valuable memoir will be most relevant to medical students and interns experiencing similar crises. (Jan.)

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Review

"In Jauhar's wise memoir of his two-year ordeal of doubt and sleep deprivation at a New York hospital, he takes readers to the heart of every young physician's hardest test: to become a doctor yet remain a human being." ?*Time*

"Brutally frank . . . The inside look at the workings of the medical internship system is fascinating." ?*William Grimes, The New York Times*

"Jauhar's stories are timeless [and] interesting." ?*Barron H. Lerner, The Washington Post*

"A vivid portrait of the culture of a New York City hospital, with its demanding hierarchy and sometimes indifferent cruelty." ?*Vincent Lam, The New York Times Book Review*

"Very few books can make you laugh and cry at the same time. This is one of them. Sandeep reveals himself in this book as he takes us on a wondrous journey through one of the most difficult years of his life. It is mandatory reading for anyone who has been even the slightest bit curious about how a doctor gets trained, and for physicians, it is a valuable record of our initiation." ?*Sanjay Gupta, CNN medical correspondent and author of Chasing Life*

"*Intern* will resonate not only with doctors, but with anyone who has struggled with the grand question: 'what should I do with my life?' In a voice of profound honesty and intelligence, Sandeep Jauhar gives us an insider's look at the medical profession, and also a dramatic account of the psychological challenges of early adulthood." ?*Akhil Sharma, author of An Obedient Father*

"Told of here is a time of travail and testing--a doctor's initiation into the trials of a demanding yet hauntingly affirming profession--all conveyed by a skilled, knowing writer whose words summon memories of his two great predecessors, Dr. Anton Chekhov and Dr. William Carlos Williams: a noble lineage to which this young doctor's mind, heart, and soul entitle him to belong." ?*Robert Coles*

“*Intern* is not just a gripping tale of becoming a doctor. It's also a courageous critique, a saga of an immigrant family living (at times a little uneasily) the American dream, and even a love story. A great read and a valuable addition to the literature--and I use the word advisedly--of medical training.” ?*Melvin Konner, M.D. Ph.D., author of Becoming a Doctor*

“In this era when medical shows abound on TV, Jauhar demonstrates the power of the written word in the hands of a sensitive, thoughtful observer and an experienced, gifted writer. *Intern* is a compelling, accurate and heartfelt chronicle of what that year is really like. It will be the standard by which future such memoirs will be judged.” ?*Abraham Verghese, author of My Own Country and The Tennis Partner*

“Excellent, well-written... Jauhar captures vividly the uncertainty, fear, and extreme exhaustion that dominates the (residency) experience... As one reads this emotionally powerful story, it becomes clear that the culture in which the interns work is profoundly important to their experience.” ?*Katharine Treadway, The New England Journal of Medicine*

“This insider's account of life on the ward forces us to contemplate our own mortality. And we emerge from it all with a greater respect for medical professionals and their patients.” ?*Peter McDermott, America*

“An exceptional accomplishment... beautifully written and incredibly insightful... by far the best memoir of medical student or resident days yet published.” ?*Kenneth Ludmerer, author of Learning to Heal: The Development of American Medical Education*

“Here Jauhar's skills as both storyteller and compassionate physician are at their best; his encounters illustrate the complexity of real-life clinical decision-making. ...The overall feeling that emerges is that of struggle: patients struggle against the illogical oddities of a broken health care system and less frequently they struggle against their clinicians, but most often they struggle along with their clinicians to reach an acceptable or at least meaningful compromise with the injustices that come with illness. Certainly there are no easy answers, and few writers have conveyed this truth more forcefully than Jauhar. ...Those who enjoy good writing for its own sake will savor the crafted texture of this narrative. ...Jauhar captures the essence of how it feels to be a present-day physician in residency training. ...So long as training to become a physician remains a dynamic process, memoirs like this will continue to serve an important role in exploring and explaining this process to the patients that physicians serve and, perhaps no less, to physicians themselves.” ?*S. Ryan Gregory, MD, The Journal of the American Medical Association*

“Jauhar, like most of us, is neither a saint nor an apostle of medicine. He is a little sarcastic, a little bitter, a little naive, a little smarter, and a little stupider than everyone else; in short, the character he writes for himself is the perfect protagonist for a medical internship. As he flinches from the gauntlet run, the grace of his prose allows us to feel every blow. To this young physician, it brought back visceral feelings, and I hope this is not the last literary gut punch we receive from Jauhar.” ?*Noah Raizman, The Lancet Review*

“This is no made-for-TV sitcom: Dr. House wouldn't last a night in Dr. Jauhar's world.” ?*San Diego Union-Tribune*

“Following in the path paved by doctor-writers like Lewis Thomas and Richard Selzer, Jauhar writes with grace, precision and passion. What makes him such a stimulating companion is his willingness to couple candid insights into the state of modern American medicine with equally revealing glimpses into the soul of a young doctor.” ?*Shelf Awareness*

“Jauhar's candid account of his stressful journey is enlightening, educational and eye-opening. After ten successful years in the profession, the author dolefully admits that he is unfazed by the 'small injustices' in hospitals today. Required reading for anyone seriously considering a career in medicine.” ?*Kirkus Reviews*

“What sets Jauhar's internship story apart from the norm is his candor.” ?*Booklist*

“Honest and vivid... A well-written medical memoir.” ?*Library Journal*

About the Author

Sandeep Jauhar, MD, PhD, is the director of the Heart Failure Program at Long Island Jewish Medical Center. He writes regularly for *The New York Times* and *The New England Journal of Medicine*. He lives with his wife and their son in New York City.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kevin House:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each guide has different aim as well as goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people truly feel enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are reading whatever they acquire because their hobby is reading a book. How about the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, individual feel need book when they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you will want this Intern: A Doctor's Initiation.

Robert Music:

In this period of time globalization it is important to someone to obtain information. The information will make anyone to understand the condition of the world. The healthiness of the world makes the information much easier to share. You can find a lot of referrals to get information example: internet, newspaper, book, and soon. You can view that now, a lot of publisher which print many kinds of book. The particular book that recommended for your requirements is Intern: A Doctor's Initiation this guide consist a lot of the information in the condition of this world now. This particular book was represented how can the world has grown up. The terminology styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. The particular writer made some analysis when he makes this book. That's why this book acceptable all of you.

Kathy Lloyd:

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David Myers:

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