

The Heirs Of General Practice: John McPhee and the Art of Contemporary Medical Profiles

When you think of medical profiles, what comes to mind? For most people, it's a picture of white lab coats, stethoscopes, and sterile examination rooms. But what if I told you that there is more than meets the eye when it comes to the world of medicine? That behind every doctor's professional facade lies a story waiting to be told? This is where John McPhee, the heir of general practice journalism, steps onto the scene.

With a career spanning over five decades, John McPhee has set the gold standard for medical profiles. His ability to delve beyond the surface of his subjects and unveil their true essence has earned him a well-deserved reputation as one of the greatest nonfiction writers of our time. In this article, we will explore the legacy of John McPhee and how his unique style has shaped the world of medical reporting.

The Birth of General Practice Journalism

Before John McPhee revolutionized medical reporting, the genre was confined to academic journals and textbooks. Doctors were portrayed as infallible beings with an encyclopedic knowledge of diseases and treatments. But McPhee saw beyond this facade and wanted to show the human side of medicine.

Heirs of General Practice by John McPhee (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5


Language : English

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

X-Ray for textbooks : Enabled

 Heirs of
General
Practice

Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 129 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



In his seminal work "Heirs of General Practice," McPhee introduces us to a group of doctors who practice in small towns across America. Through intimate interviews and vivid descriptions, he paints a picture of their daily lives, struggles, and triumphs. He explores the challenges they face, the ethical dilemmas they encounter, and the personal sacrifices they make for the sake of their patients.

As readers, we are transported into their world, where we witness both the mundane and extraordinary aspects of their profession. It is through McPhee's meticulous attention to detail that we gain a deeper understanding of the human experience in the realm of medicine.

The Art of Medical Profiles

What sets McPhee's medical profiles apart from others is his emphasis on the human element. He understands that behind every white coat is a person with dreams, fears, and a lifetime of experiences. He captures these moments with exquisite precision, allowing us to connect on a deeply emotional level with his subjects.

One of McPhee's most famous medical profiles is "The Place of Writing in Medicine," where he shadows Dr. Richard Selzer, a surgeon and writer. Through this profile, we gain insight into the complexities of balancing two seemingly disparate passions – the art of healing and the art of words. McPhee's compelling storytelling unravels the inner turmoil and profound fulfillment that Dr. Selzer experiences as he navigates between the operating room and the writing desk.

McPhee's artistry lies in his ability to transform seemingly ordinary moments into extraordinary narratives. Whether it's a doctor wrestling with the decision to prescribe a placebo, or a family physician grappling with the loss of a patient, McPhee weaves these stories together with elegance and compassion.

McPhee's Legacy and the Modern Landscape of Medical Reporting

As the heir of general practice journalism, John McPhee has paved the way for a new breed of medical writers. His legacy can be seen in the works of current journalists who strive to capture the essence of medicine through storytelling.

One such writer is Atul Gawande, whose bestselling book "Being Mortal" explores the complexities of end-of-life care. Like McPhee, Gawande goes beyond the clinical aspect of medicine and delves into the emotional and ethical dimensions of caring for the terminally ill. His work, like McPhee's, challenges our preconceived notions about the practice of medicine and forces us to confront our own mortality.

The rise of long-form journalism in outlets such as The New York Times, The New Yorker, and The Atlantic has also provided a platform for medical writers to tell tales that go beyond the confines of sterile hospital rooms. These writers, following in McPhee's footsteps, are committed to portraying the human experience in all its complexity and vulnerability.

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John McPhee, the heir of general practice journalism, has undeniably shaped the world of medical reporting. His ability to humanize the medical profession through his poignant storytelling and attention to detail sets him apart from his peers. Through his legacy, a new generation of medical writers has emerged, determined to reveal the true essence of medicine and the remarkable individuals who practice it.

So the next time you hear the words "medical profile," remember the legacy of John McPhee and the stories that lie beneath a doctor's white coat. The art of medical reporting goes beyond facts and figures; it delves into the very heart of what it means to be human.



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Heirs of General Practice is a frieze of glimpses of young doctors with patients of every age—about a dozen physicians in all, who belong to the new medical specialty called family practice. They are people who have addressed themselves to a need for a unifying generalism in a world that has become greatly subdivided by specialization, physicians who work with the "unquantifiable idea that a doctor

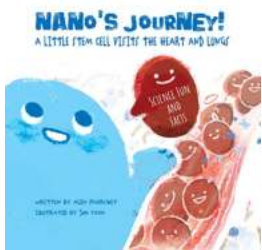
who treats your grandmother, your father, your niece, and your daughter will be more adroit in treating you."

These young men and women are seen in their examining rooms in various rural communities in Maine, but Maine is only the example. Their medical objectives, their successes, the professional obstacles they do and do not overcome are representative of any place family practitioners are working. While essential medical background is provided, McPhee's masterful approach to a trend significant to all of us is replete with affecting, and often amusing, stories about both doctors and their charges.

 Heirs Of
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McPhee

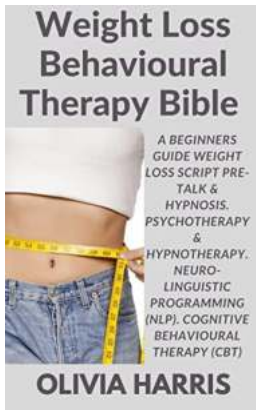
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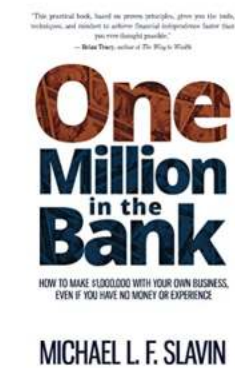
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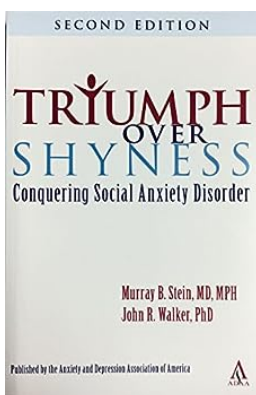
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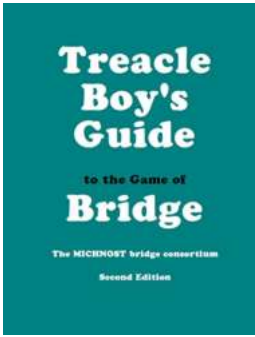
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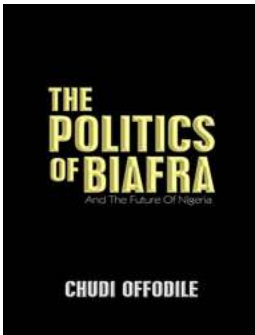
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