

PROYECCION SOCIAL DEL MEDICO

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Mexico, Manuel Casas, 1965, 267 pp.

This book is an interesting study about the role of the physician and medicine as a whole in today's society, with continued special reference to the local Mexican situation.

The brief, enthusiastic foreword, full of idealism, is an open invitation for the medical profession and other educators to assume joint responsibility and to participate actively in the process of social change.

The book is presented in a series of short chapters and is written in an easy style. It is obviously directed not only to technical readers, but also to people outside the medical profession. Its simple, but motivating and factual presentation of what medicine is today and how it should be tomorrow makes the book valuable to pre-medical and medical students.

In the first half of the book every chapter has a specific message stressing the role of the physician in society as a whole. The authors describe the anguish of today's physician, confronted with the evolution of his role, and his conflicts, with special reference to the fear of depersonalization. They openly discuss the personal and group tensions that arise because of the need of working as part of a team, sharing common goals with members of other professions. The practical difficulties the physician finds in trying to bring together the preventive and curative phases of medicine are also described.

The principle facts about urban and rural Mexico, its social structure and demographic problems, are profusely documented. Social stratification, migratory movements and all other implications related to health are adequately discussed.

The second half of the book concentrates on the problems of medical education in Mexico, its history, present situation, progress and drawbacks. The need for change in its orientation is stressed, with special reference to the need of stating clear objectives and preparing new curriculums based on Mexican realities. The authors, through a formal presentation of an ideal curriculum, make excellent suggestions for changing a situation that is impressive for being difficult to change. Many of the statements and suggestions are highly applicable to the situation in other Latin-American countries.

This book, perhaps for the very reason that it is so simple in its presentation, is highly recommended to those readers interested in new ideas in medical education and in learning of the practical problems being faced in this field in some of the Latin-American countries.

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