
Michael Crichton

Five Patients



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Author: Michael Crichton

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Description

ER is the most successful television series ever. Michael Crichton created the series from his own experiences as a medical doctor in the emergency rooms, operating rooms and wards of Massachusetts General Hospital.

Five Patients is Michael Crichton's true account of the real life dramas so vividly portrayed in *ER*. A construction worker is seriously injured in a scaffold collapse; a middle-aged dispatcher is brought in suffering from a fever that has reduced him to a delirious wreck; a young man nearly severs his hand in an accident; a mother of three is diagnosed with a life threatening disease.

Written with the same honesty, suspense, technological detail and excitement that have made *Jurassic Park* and *Airframe No.1* bestsellers worldwide, *Five Patients* is an unputdownable account of life as it really is in hospital.

Alternate cover for 9780099601111.

Insightful reviews

Book Concierge: From the back cover: A construction worker in his fifties is seriously injured in the collapse of a scaffold. A middle-aged railroad dispatcher develops a high fever that makes him wildly delirious. A young worker nearly severs his hand from his arm in an accident. A woman traveling alone has persistent chest pain and is treated by a doctor on a TV screen. A mother of three is diagnosed with a life-threatening disease.

My reactions

These five patients' cases are used to illustrate the workings of a large academic medical center: Massachusetts General Hospital. Crichton, best known for thrillers and the TV show *E.R.*, wrote this nonfiction explanation of how a hospital works when he was barely out of medical school himself – November 1969. I happened to get a 25th anniversary edition, which includes a “new” Author's Note dated 1994. In that forward he writes: “When I reread the book recently, I was struck by how much in medicine has changed – and also, by how much has *not* changed. Eventually I decided not to revise the text, but to let it stand as a statement of what medical practice was like in the late 1960s, and how issues in health care were perceived at that time.”

Another twenty years have gone by and Crichton's comments still ring true. Much has changed, and much remains the same. The system of training new physicians has changed little, though residents no longer have the grueling long hours that were the norm when Crichton was writing. Technological advances have certainly changed the way in certain services are delivered, but third-party payers (i.e. insurance companies, including government programs such as Medicare) have much more to say about what services the patient receives and how. (A friend recently had a mastectomy as an outpatient procedure!)

So, while this work is obviously dated, I still found it interesting.

Anthony: I love Michael Crichton books. He is one of my favorite authors and many of his books rank among the top couple books on my list. However, this book is not one of them. Upon reading the back cover before buying the book, I believed I picked up a thriller that combines cutting edge science and technology. I quickly found that I would be sorely disappointed.

The name of the book basically is what the plot is entirely about. It focuses on five different cases of patients at the Massachusetts General Hospital. I found that the book isn't really a true story by normal standards. What Crichton has done is use the five different cases to explain current trends in medicine. The cases presented do not provide any sort of anticipation or excitement. They are just random health anomalies or accidents which are used to help transition into different topics of medicine.

The explanations are very in depth and well thought out, but they are not very interesting to read for the common person. Crichton does a good job at breaking down the information that is presented. Much of what he talks about is very specialized to the field of medicine, but he explains it all very clearly (although some parts are just too complex to understand without further research). Crichton also touches on some of the problems facing people and medical costs at the time of publishing. These problems still exist and it was interesting to some degree to read more in depth to some of the problems plaguing the health care system.

For the most part, this book is not your typical Michael Crichton book. It focuses more on factual evidence on the trends in medicine and hospitals rather than actual story and excitement. If you find yourself interested in a medical profession, then this book may be very interesting to you. If you are looking for a good story and excitement, this may not be the best choice.

Josh: This gives you an interesting insight into his medical years. It was interesting.

Kirsten Karlen: past Michael Crichton, an engaging read. regardless of being so pop-culture, i must admit a weak spot for MC simply because he is a technology nerd and so am I. :)

Whitepixels: I anticipated whatever like yr of the Intern via Robin Cook, yet this booklet was once much less engaging. It provides 5 clinical cases, utilizing them to explain the present kingdom of healthcare and scientific knowledge.

Grace Cajote: what a disappointment. i enjoyed Mr Crichton in Airframe, Jurassic Park and others. This booklet s a documentary of the country of health and wellbeing prone within the 70's. It used to be uninteresting to assert it kindly.

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