The Five Books that Changed Medicine

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This 1-hour presentation will revisit our professional identity, a crucial issue in times when physicians seem to have been increasingly debased to mere technicians -- or even worse ‘providers of medical services’, with patients in turn reduced to ‘consumers’. Hence, this talk will revisit the 5 books that gave us our professional identity, the first three of which are actually linked to the old medical school of Padua: Vesalius' Fabrica, Harvey' De Motu Cordis, Morgagni's De Sedibus, Laennec's Auscultation Médiate and Virchow's Cell Pathology. These 5 books not only provided us with anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, physical exam, and pathology -- i.e. the foundations of the first three years of medical education in Europe -- but also taught us skepticism, the scientific method, clinico-pathologic correlation, bedside diagnosis, and the need to always challenge authority and remain both culturally eclectic and socially active.

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