

First, I'd like to say what an honor it has been to be associated with this project. Daniel and Ajay, and all the editors, have done something truly amazing by bringing this book to fruition so quickly and so professionally. The contributors too deserve huge acknowledgment for the authenticity, heartbreak, and humor of the stories they generously shared.

Second, I want to say a word about medical education. Unlike much of graduate education, medical education too often still relies on a hierarchical system of instruction. Students still spend far too long in large lecture halls, passively absorbing information that they are then expected to regurgitate in exam after exam. As a result, the voices of brilliant, dedicated, idealistic, and creative students are insufficiently heard. Our next generation of doctors increasingly finds they are losing their unique and wonderful voices behind a mask of conformity and passivity. One of the things a project like *Diary of a Med Student* does is restore those voices by providing a platform where they can speak truths, share insights, and describe for us, their teachers, parents, classmates, and aspiring medical students, the multiplicity of experiences, highs and lows, joys and sorrows, that comprise being a medical student.

Finally, I'd like to say a word about medical education in the time of COVID-19. Despite some tentative efforts at re-opening, and despite students in their clinical years being back on rotations, this is a time of isolation and therefore to some extent a time of alienation. Because of this it is also a time when it is more important than ever to find ways to meaningfully connect with each other. *Diary* is one very moving and precious way of maintaining and deepening connection.