

FM REVIEW 2013 39 COMMENTS

COMMENTS TO EDITOR: Both reviewers agree this is a clever idea. Dr. highlights the rather uninspired writing and overall superficiality. The other review is more positive. I have larger concerns about the relative lack of personal insight, which I think is what would be most helpful to readers. I've tried to address this issue below.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR: Dear Dr., Thank you for this essay. It is a clever formula that will attract readers. However, it will require considerably more work before it is ready for publication.

First, please pay attention to reviewer 2's comments about style. In addition to doing regular medical missions overseas, this reviewer is a former English teacher, so we can all learn something from her tutelage.

More substantively, I was disappointed that the essay is not more reflective in nature. What would be most valuable to readers, in my view, is more insight into how you were affected - as a doctor and a person - by these experiences. How did you change? How did you grow? You touch on this with the cross-cultural issues and the conflict mediation (#s4 and 2), but perhaps you could swap out a couple of your points (#9 might go, as might #6) about structural issues and - still using the same format - share on a more personal level.

As reviewer 2 points out, #7 is not clear. I think you are talking about something like "standard of care" rather than correct approach.

Finally, your culminating point, #1, is a bit of a letdown. Most physicians and certainly all learners are very adept at finding information electronically. Maybe your point is that you had an expectation of internet inaccessibility, whereas in fact the world has become more interconnected than you realized. Or maybe you're saying that flexibility (20 yr old texts in one location, UpToDate in another) and a questing spirit are what's required.

Narrative essays do not use abstracts. However, yours provides a really nice overview of the essay, especially the last sentence. I recommend revising the Introduction with an eye toward incorporating this material.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR II: The author did a really fine job of revising this ms. It is better written, more personal, and overall more interesting. The final point about the deaths of patients is moving, and worth the rest of the entire article. I have recommended a few minor stylistic changes which I hope the author will accept, but otherwise it is ready to be accepted for publication.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR II: Thank you for such an outstanding job of revising this paper. It reads much better, it is definitely more personal (we get to glimpse the doctor behind the Top Ten), and the examples make it more interesting. The final point about patient deaths is very moving and in my view is exactly the right way to end the essay. Bravo.

I have made some very minor stylistic changes to improve the clarity of the writing. Please read through the attached ms to ensure that I have adequately reflected your meaning.

Thank you for an essay that concisely shows us the reality of international medicine in a way that is variously informative, insightful, and humble.

COMMENTS TO EDITOR III: The author has made minor stylistic changes as requested. This essay is ready for publication.

COMMENTS TO AUTHOR III: Thank you for these revisions. This has grown into an informative and insightful essay.