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Book: **Where Have We Failed? A Systemic Analysis of US Health Care**

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Reviewer:

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The US health care system has been described by a number of individuals as complex, over regulated, over specialized and pluralistic among many other characteristics but never as a failed system. This book title implies just that but from a very unique and convincing perspective. The perspective of a provider turned administrator.

This book is not like other books on the US health care system. It is not written as a textbook nor it is written like a training book but as a document that provides synopsis of the different key players of the system and an analysis of the factors and mechanisms of interaction between them. It describes each health care player in plain but decisive terms with a practical perspective.

The book is segmented into fifteen chapters starting with an interesting introduction and a unique bio on the author that is neither traditional nor formal. Written in subjective terms, the book introduces each chapter to the different player of the health care system; the fiscal intermediaries, the government, hospitals, legal system, the physicians, the media, pharmaceuticals, the purchasers, and the public. One of the chapters outlines the origins of the system's waste while another is on how it is financed and how its parts interact with one another. These chapters are "gelled" together in a chapter entitled "The System" while the author concludes his outgoing remarks with some proposed solutions for reform and improvements of The System.

Each chapter tackles a segment or a component of the system and is written in short synopsis of the main points to be made regarding each component. As the authors describes the "players" of the system, he leaves a subjective flavor to his remarks and augments them at the end of each chapter with an "endnotes" section that I found to be very valuable to add to the remarks and to related information concerning that "player".

Several pieces of information and facts are embedded in these endnotes and are presented with figures and references along with analogies and comparisons to other industries.

I believe that the book provides a medium for excellent debate on the System's organization, administration and delivery. Even if you do not agree with the author's opinion on some the issues in the book, the way these issues are raised and presented give ample opportunity for discussion and further reflections. This book could be used by experienced professionals as a re-fresher on the US health care system infrastructure but even by a novice as a document for thought stimulation and additional research.

This book is written in an easy style and makes a good reading companion to both students and professionals in the health care field. It is a "fast reader" and can provide the reader quick reference to the main issues at hand in dealing with the US health care system. It certainly simplifies the complexities of the system and its convoluted structuring mechanisms. The reader will enjoy reading it. I recommend it for our AAMA professionals.

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