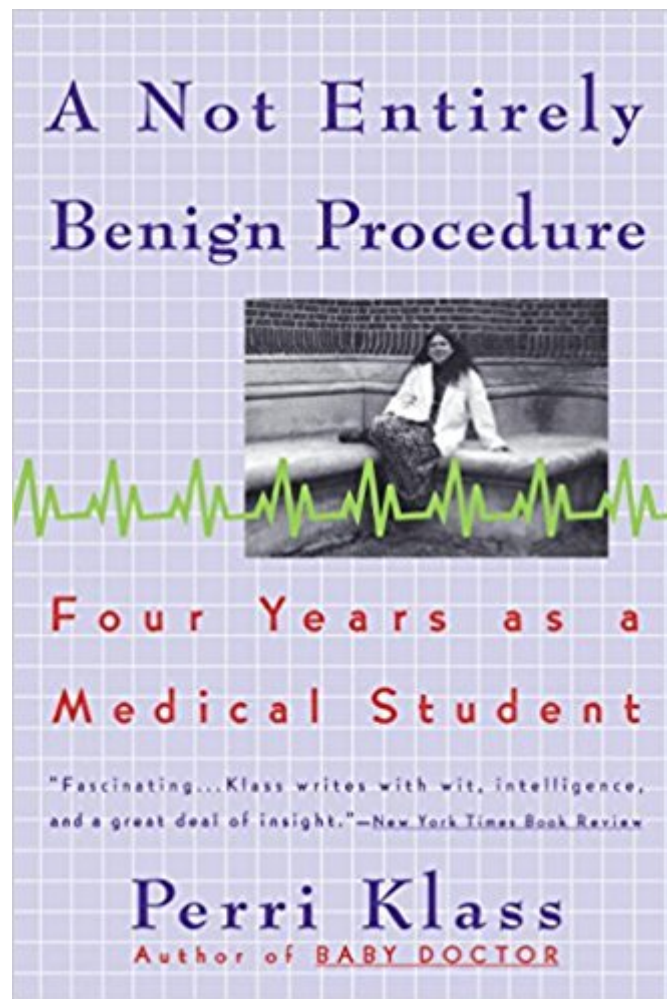




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# A Not Entirely Benign Procedure: Four Years As A Medical Student



## Synopsis

"Fascinating... Klass writes with wit, intelligence, and a great deal of insight."âThe New York Times Book Review

Acclaimed pediatrician, journalist, and novelist Perri Klass offers a provocative look at the ups and downs of medical school from those first exams to the day she became a doctor. In a direct, candid style, Klass shares what it is like to be a first-time mother while attending med school; the unique lingo of the med student; how to deal with every bodily fluid imaginable; and the humor and heartbreak of working with patients. With this collection of essays, Klass established herself as a go-to voice for a generation of med students and doctors, with her frank and witty perspective. Klass also brings a proven ability to make the medical world accessible to the lay reader, through her extensive literary and journalistic experience.

## Book Information

Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Plume (July 1, 1994)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0452272580

ISBN-13: 978-0452272583

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,118,603 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 inÂ Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Medical Procedure #201 inÂ Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > New England #551 inÂ Books > Medical Books > Administration & Medicine Economics > Medical History & Records

## Customer Reviews

As a Harvard medical student in 1982, Klass became a contributor to the New York Times "Hers" column; this is a collection of the author's diary-like essays describing her medical training, her life as a lover, a woman and a mother. The accounts are informed by the artistry Klass displays in her fiction, *Recombinations* and *I Am Having an Adventure*. Writing personally and candidly, she brings the reader into her orbit, into the experiences of a thoughtful person, in situations that are comic, difficult, puzzling and often tragic. There are moving instances of a doctor's mandated objectivity while involved with the dying and with the bereaved. In lighter moments, Klass twits pompous members of the healing profession and offers insights on the status of women doctors; they are

frequently mistaken for nursesmen never are. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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You may remember this author's name if you are a reader of the New York Times weekly "Hers" column, where Klass's series of articles on being a mother going through medical school appeared. Here Klass, who also wrote the novel *Recombinations*, collects and expands upon those columns. This is a chronicle of the medical school experience and of the life and attitude changes that take place both subtly and dramatically. General readers and medical students alike will find this book worth reading. Literary Guild alternate. Linda Morgan Davis, OCLC, Dublin, Ohio Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm thinking about going to medical school, and this book was recommended to me to get a flavor for what life is like as a medical student - particularly a slightly older, female, non-traditional student. The book is frankly scary if you're considering medicine as a career - the overwhelming stress and forced maturation she describes is daunting. On the other hand, it's probably very realistic for someone going through the process while juggling a family. Her writing is accessible and insightful, and at times I found myself identifying completely with her and her thoughts on the field (though, granted, in some ways the book is outdated). A book I will likely re-read. The person who said she was run-of-the-mill clearly didn't identify at all with her, which is not a failure of her writing so much as their imagination, especially given that they recommended Melvin Konner's "Becoming a doctor", which is a far less eloquent/evocative book.

I'm not in medical school, nor will I ever be, and I don't want to become a pediatrician. My feeling is that Klass wrote this book for the lay reader. Although she sometimes spells-out medical terminology as if her readers were in fifth grade, that is the only fault I find in this book. It's a lively, introspective look at a female medical student, one that, having several doctors, I needed to read. The book gives those of us who are not doctors a first-hand look at what an intern goes through. While there are some very funny moments, Klass gives us a very intense look at the fears she encountered, the exhaustion, her failures and successes, and her wonderful look at her fellow medical students. I highly recommend this book.

I bought this book because I am interested in going to medical school. The writer both confirmed and eased my fears about it. It's a hard journey, stressful, but worth it. I feel like I really learned a lot

from the short stories in this book.

I loved the book if planning on going to medical school then I would recommend it, because it's so useful

As a student entering medical school in August, I found this book to be informative while maintaining the feel of a novel. The author does a wonderful job at describing some of the hardships a medical student faces including course overload, moral dilemmas, and the maintenance of personal relationships. For those not in the medical profession, I think this book gives the reader an accurate insight into how doctors become doctors.

I am a biology major/ pre-med student at UCLA, though it is through my English class that I found this book. Simply put, this novel made me think. I continuously wondered, "can I handle 'dog dissection'... will I be able to memorize all of the countless facts about all these rare diseases?" An entire section of the book is devoted to bioethical issues, including one essay entitled, "DNR," (do not resuscitate). I began questioning myself, "is it fair to bring someone back just so that they can suffer longer with the same disease?" If you plan on going to medical school, reading this book is a must, and a joy; it is perfect for pre-meds.

I want to be a pediatrician, so I read this book to have a better understanding of what it takes to go through Medical School. This book gave me a very good idea of what Medical students are put through. The stories are funny, interesting and truthful. I recommend it to anyone who's thinking about a future in medicine.

I bought this book because author Perri Klass has somehow acquired a stellar reputation as a medical author. The operative word in the preceding sentence is "somehow," as I'm sure you noticed. This namby-pamby book is a reasonably accurate but dull rendition of what it is like to be a medical student, but the book is more about Klass' circuitous introspections and exhausting analyses than it is a book of interesting stories. In fact, I was so disappointed by this book that I re-read Klass' submission in "Emergency Room-Lives Saved and Lost: Doctors Tell Their Stories" to see if her book may have been an aberration of her youth, similar to Crichton's "Five Patients." Bottom line: The scorecard? Klass is now 0 for 2.

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