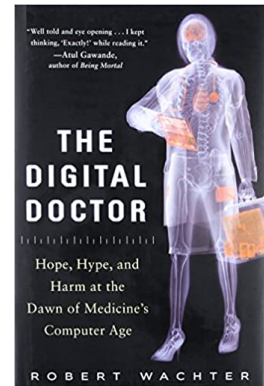


Discussion Guide

The Digital Doctor: Hope, Hype, and Harm at the Dawn of Medicine's Computer Age

By Robert M. Wachter, MD

1. What makes a doctor “good”? Is technology necessary for a good doctor?
2. Can extensive patient history be kept without technology?
3. Looking at the *Radiology Rounds* chapter, why did the radiologist appear annoyed with the doctors visiting? Will other technological additions in healthcare have the same outcome as radiology?
4. What problems did doctors face when using the new electronic medical records? Are there any other careers in a similar situation?
5. What does Wachter refer to as David and Goliath? Why was Isabel such a success? Is this the end of Watson?
6. Between the nurse, pharmacist, computer, and patient, who is responsible for overdosing Pablo? Where would you assign the blame and why?
7. Do you feel that both doctors and patients should co-share patient records?
8. Why can't a universal health record be accomplished? What is needed for it to be successful?
9. Discuss the difference between Epic and Athena. What made Athena successful despite its size? Why does Epic discourage interoperability?
10. According to Wachter, a productivity paradox occurs when financial, environmental, and organizational factors determine the success of a new information technology (IT) tool. Can you think of any other IT tools that depend upon certain worldly factors that determine its success or fail?
11. What technological changes in healthcare do you foresee in the future? Will there be a need for doctors, or will IT tools be trustworthy enough to substitute for them? What role will the government play in healthcare? Will a patient's records be safe in the cloud?
12. What changes are needed to make healthcare and IT work cohesively?
13. After reading the novel, where would you say Wachter's views about the future of healthcare coincide with yours? Are his views more optimistic or pessimistic?



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