

# Review of the Guide to Future of Medicine

Arindam Basu

September 21, 2014

## 1 Introduction

A common phenomenon in the early days of a discipline is generation of a state of the art documentation, one that contains the key readings and key information sources relevant for the discipline. In our time, medical technology and innovation in technologies and their implementation in medicine and public health is such a phenomenon. There is a need for detailed documentation of the existing technologies that are either becoming main stream (then again not). A thorough survey is much needed. Dr Bertalan Mesko has written such a text that will be a necessary reading for anyone who is interested in the field of medical innovation. In this review, I'd like to highlight some of these issues.

Dr. Bertalan Mesko describes himself as a medical futurist, a professional who studies existing and upcoming technologies for medical care, both at the time of their invention and at some point down the time. He has written a large compendium of key technologies that have the power to transform medical care. In that sense, being a first ever book on the broad brush overview of the existing technology, this qualifies as a classic, near encyclopaedic treatise on the technologies as of 2014 that either have or have potential to shape the future of medical practice, but also patient physician relationships and how health care might move across the world. This book is a very definite reference and a map of the technology that are at work but also trends and

ideas that have mattered.

In the book, Dr Mesko has surveyed 22 trends in technology starting with e-Patients (patients who are knowledgeable and well conversant with the current medical treatments and diagnostic technologies and are quite Internet or database savvy but also those who are willing to engage with their providers), and ending with individuals who use life size dolls - synthetiks - as their companions. In between, he has covered fields as diverse as telehealth, three dimensional printing, genomics, personalised medicine, robotic surgery, exoskeleton, virtual reality, brain computer interface and other technological advancements that are transforming the face of diagnostics and medical care the worldwide. He has also touched very briefly issues around health policy making and how policy makers can use and take to these technologies.

The style of the book is based on a superficial survey of what the technology does, a few photographs, or graphics of the main principle of the technology, interviews with the key leaders who are working in the field, and personal anecdotes that are relevant for the technology from Bertalan's own experience. Each chapter also contains a short list of essential readings, applications that are already available, lists of books and articles (very brief list), and some resources.

Speaking of gamification, Cugelman (2013) wrote about goal setting, capacity to overcome challenges, providing feedback, reinforcement, compare progress, social connectivity, fun and playfulness [1]. A very similar comment was made by King (2013) where he wrote about the importance of gamification [2]

## References

- [1] Brian Cugelman. Gamification: What it is and why it matters to digital health behavior change developers. *JMIR Serious Games*, 1(1):e3, 2013.
- [2] Dominic King, Felix Greaves, Christopher Exeter, and Ara Darzi. ‘gamification’: Influencing health behaviours with games. *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, 106(3):76–78, 2013.