Since our last newsletter, APSA and its members have been extremely busy! We hope that this summer’s edition of the “Phi Psi” gives a brief glimpse into recent APSA activities. One of the most important and most exciting events of the past quarter was the 4th annual meeting of APSA in Chicago, IL. This meeting is an opportunity for members from across the country to get together, share ideas, and develop networks both at the graduate level as well as with professors. We also have regional meetings, held in the fall. In the past these regional meetings have been held in Texas, California, and New York – as our organization grows, it is highly likely that this type of meeting will be expanded to the other regions. The “Annual Meeting Report” in this edition details highlights this year’s meeting. As we end the 4th year of APSA, we have much to look forward to; from a public relations perspective, we are particularly excited about the unveiling of the new and user-friendly APSA webpage. This site will have an improved design as well as current and distributable information regarding APSA membership. Our vision is that this would be a centralized location for all physician scientists to find information regarding APSA as well as networking and other helpful links. We are enthusiastic about the unveiling and eager to hear your feedback. Additionally, we are gearing up for the 5th annual meeting which will be a landmark for our young organization. It is our hope that we will increase APSA membership and the number of meeting attendees. We want to see you there – encourage your friends and colleagues to join us too! We are looking forward to its being the best yet! APSA also has new leadership, which you will find in this edition of the newsletter and on the APSA webpage (www.physicianscientists.org/People.html). A supplemental issue will of the “Phi Psi” will be coming out soon with information from each of the elected officers. Please, feel free to contact any of us with your questions or concerns. Of course, Public Relations always welcomes feedback and contributions to the newsletter. We are here to serve and make our organization better. Thanks!

Building on Our Success: A Message from the New APSA President

By James Pauff
President, American Physician Scientists Association

Like many others, I received an email in the spring of 2006 asking if I would consider serving as the institutional representative (IR) from my institution to the American Physician Scientists Association. I had only recently been elected Vice President of our medical scientist student organization at Ohio State, and was making the move into the graduate training-focused years of my MD/PhD training program. Concurrently, I was involved in the medical-research honor society at Ohio State, a group that focused on highlighting and rewarding research done by medical students. Involvement with a national organization for physician scientist trainees seemed like a great idea at that time, and it was decided that I would be the APSA IR from Ohio State. Since that time, particularly as I became more involved and assumed the role of President-elect, I have been amazed by the amount of time that one can find in the midst of training as a physician scientist, to devote to the many

(Continued on page 6)
Renaissance Doctors: Joint Degrees in Medicine, Social Sciences, and the Humanities

By Na’amah Razon and Scott Stonington
APSA Member-at-Large (Social Sciences/Humanities)

In 2005, the University of California, San Francisco hosted the first conference of MD/PhDs in the Social Sciences and Humanities in over a decade. It was an attempt to coalesce a disparate community of physician-scholars – or “Renaissance Doctors,” as they (half-) jokingly called themselves at the conference. Despite common methods, perspectives, and paths, physician-social-scientists and physician-humanists often forge a lonely way through institutions dominated by labs and clinical trials. Nonetheless, many of these individuals have reshaped the face of medicine. Paul Farmer and Jim Kim, both MD/PhD social science students at Harvard in the 1980s, have advocated for sophisticated social science concepts in medicine and public-health. Since the 1980s, the NIH has increasingly encouraged joint training in these fields, and the number of educational spots available has grown dramatically, particularly in the last ten years.

The conference at UCSF set off a cascade of community-building, including bi-annual conferences, first in Chicago (2007) and next in Philadelphia (2009). This momentum has been inspiring physician-scholars to organize nationally, leading to an alliance with APSA. As the Social Science and Humanities Members-at-Large for APSA, Na’amah Razon and Scott Stonington have begun building tools to help their community organize. The first major project was to construct web-pages summarizing joint SSH training programs in the U.S. Currently, few prospective applicants know that such programs exist, and those interested must independently search for institutions to apply. The project brings together information about eleven national SSH training programs, written by current students in various stages of their training.

The program-summary pages are the first of many tools that Razon and Stonington hope to build to centralize information and create coherence between joint training programs in the social sciences and humanities. Future web-based projects include pages on residencies and postdoctoral training programs, a list-serve and chat forum, job postings, and directories of students and faculty.

On a policy level, Razon and Stonington hope that APSA can serve as a home for national-level advocacy for SSH issues in MD/PhD training and in medicine in general. Razon and Stonington hope that the alliance with APSA will provide social and humanistic depth to APSA’s policies and processes and unite the larger MD/PhD community.

Visit: http://www.physicianscientists.org/Training_Programs/SSH/ for more information.

Announcing Your 2008-2009 APSA National Leadership

By Freddy Nguyen
Chairman—Board of Directors, Past President, American Physician Scientists Association

Dear APSA Members, I would like to take this opportunity to announce your 2008-2009 APSA National Leadership:

President
James Pauff, The Ohio State University

President-Elect
David Braun, Mount Sinai School of Medicine

Past President
Freddy Nguyen, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Vice-President
Christopher Alvarez-Breckenridge, The Ohio State University

Annual Meeting Committee Chair
June Yowtak, University of Texas Medical Branch

Annual Meeting Committee Vice-Chair
Jarish Cohen, University of Virginia

Finance Committee Chair
Kimberly Rathbun, Medical College of Georgia

Finance Committee Vice-Chair
Rematta Knox, University of California at San Francisco

Membership Committee Chair
Jonathan Kleen, Dartmouth Medical School

Membership Committee Vice-Chair
Stacie Demel, Michigan State University

Policy Committee Chair
Rebecca Sadun, University of Southern California

Policy Committee Vice-Chair
Kenneth Yu, University of Southern California

Public Relations Committee Chair
Kimberly Gannon, University of Mississippi

Public Relations Committee Vice-Chair
Kofi Mensah, University of Rochester

Member-At-Large (MD, DO)
Brandt Whitehurst, Southern Illinois University

Member-At-Large (MD-PhD, DO-PhD)
Chirag Patel, University of Texas - Houston

Member-At-Large (Social Sciences & Humanities)
Scott Stonington, University of California at San Francisco

The Executive Council is elected by the Institutional Representatives during the APSA Annual Meeting in April.

Please, join me in congratulating the new Executive Council.

For more info, visit: http://www.physicianscientists.org/About_EC.html
Dear Members of the APSA,

It has been with deep pleasure to have served as your President during the past four years. However, as I write my last President’s Column, I am taking this opportunity to look back over some of APSA’s major accomplishments during this formative period. What initially began as an idea between four MD-PhD students in late 2003 has now grown into an a full-fledged professional organization made up of over 1100 members from nearly 200 medical institutions, hospitals, and universities in the United States and Canada. APSA also holds active representation from over 120 medical schools that make up the Institutional Representatives of the APSA. As the organization continued to grow in membership, APSA also grew the number and depth of projects that surrounded the themes of Mentoring, Networking, Outreach, and Resources. I hope these few examples of what we have been able to accomplish through the APSA to date will inspire you as a future physician-scientist to become more proactive about your own training, your own career, and your individual role in the physician-scientist community. In the same spirit, I hope that it will further encourage you to engage your APSA leadership at every level (local, regional, and national) in helping us help you address your needs and issues and to help empower you as a physician-scientist trainee.

As we enter our 5th year as an organization, I am delighted to announce that we will now be hosting three regional meetings in California, New York, and Texas in November of 2008 and our Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL in April of 2009. These live face-to-face opportunities have allowed us to expand our ability to provide horizontal (peer) and vertical mentoring and networking opportunities. The 2008 Annual Meeting marked our first major international efforts by becoming the leading organization on the international landscape by bringing together representatives from our Canadian and Swiss sister organizations building upon our previous efforts by sending APSA representatives to Canada, France, and Switzerland. The 2008 Annual Meeting has also become the most diverse congregation (in terms of institutional representation, geographic diversity, training pathway, and training stage) of physician-scientist trainees in a single meeting in the United States and perhaps even in the world. In the past year alone, nearly 500 individuals have attended our regional and annual meetings. As we move forward in this milestone year, we are anticipating nearly 750 physician-scientist trainees from across the country to attend our three regional meetings and annual meeting which by far will become the largest and continue to be the most diverse group of physician-scientist trainees assembled. Through our regional meetings, we have been able to focus on our efforts to outreach to undergraduate students and non dual degree medical students who may have little or no funding support to attend our Annual Meeting.

Since the APSA website, another cornerstone of our organization, was first launched in September of 2004 (nearly four years ago), our website has steadily grown to be the central portal for training and career development information for physician scientist trainees. To date we have received nearly 150,000 hits to our website by over 70,000 unique visitors and based on current growth we are projecting to receive nearly 100,000 hits in the 2008 year alone. In light of the increasing demands for the APSA website, we have been spending the last year planning for the implementation of the new APSA site. I am pleased to announce that through our Public Relations Committee we have been diligently working towards this goal. Much of the work is already underway to redesign the APSA website including a restructuring of the current information, and the expansion of current resources. Much of the focus has been spent on how to better integrate the online interactions between you as a member and the APSA website such as your membership information, event registration, access to newsletters, and many more other resources to come. With the implementation of the new site, you as a member will have a much more dynamic and user-friendly experience. We have redesigned the new site with you the individual member and your individual user experience in mind throughout the whole process. The new website is also intended to help expand and build upon the live meeting mentorship and networking experiences. Likewise, it will continue to be the leading resource clearinghouse for training and career information for physician-scientist trainees.

In step with the organization’s growth on several fronts, we are pleased to announce that APSA has continued to healthily meet its financial obligations. However as the impact of APSA continues to grow and as new initiatives under APSA’s umbrella are undertaken, APSA’s financial need will likewise increase. Thus far, we have been fortunate and grateful to continually and successfully raise independent funds to meet our financial obligations in the form of both direct and in-kind contributions through our wealth of partnerships including existing organizations such as the American Society for Clinical Investigation, the Association of American Physicians, the Sigma Xi Research Society, the Student Doctor Network as well as the institutional support we have received over the years in support of our meetings (regional and national) and through independent unrestricted educational grants from a number of sources. Through these means we have been able to provide our meetings to you our members at a highly accessible price point. Not only have we

(Continued on page 4)
been able to keep our meetings highly affordable, but it was my deep pleasure this year to announce the availability of the Inaugural APSA Poster Awards that were presented during the 2008 APSA Annual Meeting. Three APSA awards in the amounts of $1,000 each were added to the three awards traditionally given by the ASCI and AAP at the ASCI/AAP Poster Session. This year’s recipients of the APSA Poster Award during the Annual Meeting included Joan Beckman (MD-PhD student from the University of Minnesota), Dylan Dodd (MD-PhD student from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), and Eric Schauberger (DO-PhD student from Michigan State University).

As APSA matures and enters into its landmark 5th year, APSA will be transitioning into a dues paying membership over the next few months. We hope that you have come to appreciate the resources and experiences that your hard-working APSA leaders have brought into existence and have continued to innovate over the past few years. Several factors have catapulted our decision to institute a dues-paying membership but in particular the need for APSA to shift its revenue model to a more reliable and sustainable long term financial model to support its projects and initiatives. These include the vast number of projects that APSA will continue to support and expand such as our annual meeting, regional meetings, newsletters, electronic resources, and those that APSA is on the cusp of undertaking such as our website and our need to support our growing policy and advocacy efforts both in the medical education and physician-scientist community. Lastly, through these means we hope to increase the availability of funding support for local and regional APSA initiatives as well as to initiate and expand funding opportunities to our individual members such as travel awards and scholarships. As we move through this process, I cannot stress the importance of having you as our members. Without our members as the driving motivational force in everything we do in APSA, and without a dedicated cohort of our members who serve as APSA leaders on the national, regional, and local level, APSA would not be where it is today. With a dedicated membership of over 1,100 members today and growing, we have become and are the voice for physician-scientist trainees. So I call upon you to help strengthen our voice in the medical, scientific, and physician-scientist communities by supporting us in the fall of 2008 as a dues-paying member.

On an ending note, I am also pleased to announce that as I step down as President of the APSA I will be able to take a more active role on our Board of Directors which serves in an advisory capacity to our Executive Council and by providing the means to enable our APSA leadership to best serve you the physician-scientist trainee population. Please see page 2 of the newsletter to meet your new leadership.

Freddy Nguyen
President (2004-2008), Founder Chairman, Board of Directors American Physician Scientists Association

"Without our members as the driving motivational force in everything we do in APSA, and without a dedicated cohort of our members who serve as APSA leaders on the national, regional, and local level, APSA would not be where it is today."
“It was great to get a vision for what our futures might be.” That is how Brian Fuehrlein, one of the four founding members of APSA and institutional representative from the University of Florida described the recently concluded APSA Fourth Annual Meeting. As has become tradition, the meeting was held in Chicago at the end of April in conjunction with the annual joint meeting of the American Association of Physicians (AAP) and the American Society for Clinical Investigation (ASCI), which celebrated its centennial anniversary. This year, there were over 200 attendees, and 60-70% of them attended for the first time. This compares with about 140 attendees last year—a testament to the rapid and wide-spread growth of APSA since its inception in 2004.

The fourth annual meeting was marked by several firsts for APSA as well as milestones in our burgeoning organization. This year's business meeting is an example as it took on a more formal nature with the executive council presiding over a congress-style setup of institutional representatives (IRs) whose orange ID badge tags signified their voting privileges. In addition to an agenda encompassing annual reports from the committees and official position statements on key policy issues, there were also presentations from organizations that will partner with APSA, like the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). APSA and AAAS are in talks to establish a cooperation for a social networking website. The business meeting, which opened with a continental breakfast provided by the exclusive Union League Club of Chicago, also included break-out sessions for the first time. In these sessions, attendees were able to talk about issues affecting future physician-scientists. The group discussions ranged in topic from what APSA means to the individual student to how to address the retention of women in physician-scientist career paths. From these sessions arose goals for the organization for the coming year. After a buffet-style lunch and presentations from our Swiss and Canadian counterpart physician-scientist student organizations, the meeting moved to the Fairmont Hotel, just a few blocks from the famous Navy Pier and Millenium Park.

At the Fairmont, APSA attendees got a chance to mingle with their role models. Such notable speakers included Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, who provided insight with her talk on “The Physician-Scientist: A Value Proposition.” Attendees also had the pleasure of hearing from ASCI President Charles Sawyer, MD, and AAP president Judith Swain, MD. There was a negotiation skills workshop for the students where professional advice was given through interactive group exercises. The workshop covered how to handle conflicts with research team members to how to make sure your needs as a student are known and appreciated by your research mentor. Students were able to get up close and pick the brains of the ASCI and AAP members in attendance during the mentorship breakfasts held on Saturday and Sunday mornings where a group of about 6-8 students gathered around a table for breakfast with a leading physician-scientist to hear about career planning and professional opportunities. At the residents and fellows panel discussion, students got a chance to hear from those who have recently moved onto the next stage in our career path. They provided tips on being competitive candidates for residency programs and described how enthusiasm for clinical responsibility is just as important as research experiences and publications. Academics aside, they also stressed the importance of finding a residency program that provides balance with one’s personal/family life and how crucial it is to determine this during interviews. The post-graduate opportunities panel included Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Dr. Joe Garcia, Chairman of the Department of Medicine at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, Dr. Donna Hansel, a professor at Taussig Cancer Center of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Dr. Juanita L. Merchant, a professor of Medicine and of Physiology at University of Michigan Medical School, among others. These physician-scientists with illustrious career paths gave advice on special programs open to dual-degree recipients as well as students pursuing a medical degree with an interest in research. They explained the different NIH awards and their merits as well as when to apply for them. They also pointed out non-standard career tracks which might be of interest to some.

The interactions between the APSA students and the ASCI/AAP members were not all unidirectional. While the APSA students learned a great deal from the workshops and panels, they also had a chance to show off some of their knowledge during the poster sessions. This provided students with an environment in which they could interact with the scientists they may have cited in the references section of the poster and get advice from the leaders in their fields. It also provided a chance to practice presentation skills and receive feedback. Five APSA students also won awards for their poster presentations and were honored in front of the ASCI/AAP crowd at a session on Sunday morning by the leadership of those organizations. Stacie Demel, the new Membership Committee Vice-Chairperson commented that “the seminars and career development workshops are invaluable to [her] success as a future physician-scientist.” She further added, “the ability to join together with the ASCI/AAP meeting provides exposure to the work of the top physician researchers in the US, and, in turn, we have an opportunity to present our research to them.”

In addition to the talks and posters, APSA students had a chance to socialize and enjoy what Chicago has to offer as well. The APSA Annual Meeting Committee put on a much-enjoyed social program to complement the business of
Annual Meeting (cont.)

the 3 day conference. The first night started off with dinner and social activities at various sites around Chicago suggested by the APSA Annual Meeting Committee for students to choose from. Students buddied up in groups and used the time to get to know each other and learn about each others programs and individual career plans. After dinner, there was the APSA welcome reception and final presidential address from Freddy Nguyen. Some APSA members were able to attend the ASCI Annual Dinner where they had a chance to mingle with the ASCI members and congratulate the new ASCI inductees. The following evening, another set of APSA members had the pleasure of dining with the AAP members at their annual black-tie dinner. There was also an APSA leadership dinner where those interested in pursuing APSA institutional representative or standing committee positions had a chance to hear how to get more involved in the organization.

The meeting closed with the passing of the torch from the old APSA Executive Council to the new. Freddy Nguyen stepped down as president of APSA after seeing it through from its inception to this point where it is ready to take off to new and uncharted heights. Many students who attended the APSA Annual Meeting for the first time were very impressed with what they saw. David Terrano the current IR from the University of Arkansas attended for the first time and liked the poster presentations and meeting like-minded students. David also attended the APSA leadership dinner and hopes to bring more Arkansas students to the next APSA Annual Meeting. Hope Karnes Nicely the new IR from the University of Kansas was the first from her school to attend and she liked seeing the student-run nature of APSA. Like David, she plans to recruit more people from her school to attend in future and feels “it can only get better.”

President’s message (cont.)

projects and goals of an organization that is representing those in such training. However, as the years have progressed and my own research interests have developed, I have been more amazed by the impact that this organization can have. From insightful discussions of what it means to be a physician scientist, to the many career pathways that are available to physician researchers, and even as far as bringing the voice of trainees to bear on critical policy issues in medical education, the APSA affords a vehicle by which those training to be physician scientists can develop and advance their own training and careers.

Proactive career development from the training stages on to an established career is paramount to being a successful physician researcher. Gaining insight into one’s own methodology and interactions with others, the way in which we conduct ourselves in the greater world of biomedical research, is certainly something that we must understand to gain full advantage of our strengths. This organization of which we are all a part is one that provides countless opportunities for interaction with our peers and colleagues, interaction with our known and many previously impersonal mentors from across the country, and forums in which to engage in defining our careers, ourselves, and our interactions in the world of medical science.

To these ends, I must express my enjoyment of and excitement for the APSA Annual Meeting. Held in conjunction with the Joint Meeting of the American Society for Clinical Investigation and the Association of American Physicians, this event consistently brings together 200+ physician scientist trainees from across the country, and we hope to increase this number to 300 for our 5th Annual Meeting in April of 2009. The meeting not only brings us together for our own objectives, but also provides the opportunity to integrate and interact with many of the most successful physician scientists from across the United States. Such opportunities are a refreshing and exciting experience away from our laboratories and medical schools, and give a nice context in which to place the careers for which we train. This autumn of 2008, we will also be having three APSA regional meetings in California, Texas, and New York, providing regional microcosms of our national gathering.

As I enter my term as President of this organization and as the newly minted executive council and standing committee members take over their tasks in accomplishing the missions and goals of the APSA, we all look forward to an exciting year that will build upon the successes of the past five years. With all of our excitement though, we realize that the mission of the APSA as the representative organization for physician scientist trainees cannot be fulfilled without an active and enthusiastic body of institutional representatives. We also realize that we need to continue to bring together those training to be physician scientists; MD, DO, MD/MPH, DO/MPH, MD/PhD, and DO/PhD trainees. We need to encourage physicians-in-training and practicing physicians to engage in research, and we need to continue the dialog within our own membership as well as with those prospective members.

The physician scientist is uniquely positioned to conduct much of the most meaningful biomedical research, from vantage points that can identify the most efficient means by which this research can make a difference in the lives of patients. We as physician scientists in training should continue to work as a group in developing our training and careers for such pursuits. I look forward to this year as President of the APSA, to working with our executive council and institutional representatives as we accomplish our goals as an organization, and to seeing and meeting everyone at this year’s regional meetings and at the 5th Annual Meeting.
APSA Annual Meeting 2008 in pictures

APSA members presenting their work to CITAC President, Michael Ward (above) and to leading physician-scientists at the ASCI/AAP poster session (below).

APSA Board of Directors Members (from L. Dr. Joseph Bast and Dr. M. Kerry O’Banion) with National Association of MD-PhD Programs President Dr. David Engman at the Business Meeting (right).

APSA President James Pauff listens attentively to APSA members and leaders as he shares his vision for the future of APSA.

This group of students (above) attended for the first time, and each has since applied for an institutional representative or standing committee position.

“APSA members continue to be attracted to the speaker lineup year after year and also to the ASCI and AAP members in attendance.” — J. Clin. Invest. 118:1237–1240 (2008)

APSA Founder and Past President Freddy Nguyen blows out candles on his birthday cake during his outgoing presidency reception at the APSA Meeting.

Q&A Session at the Post-Graduate Opportunities Panel with leading physician-scientists: Dr. Juanita Merchant, MD, PhD (Univ. of Michigan), Dr. Donna Hansel, MD, PhD (Cleveland Clinic Foundation), Dr. Joe Garcia, MD (Univ. of Chicago), Dr. Anthony Fauci, MD (NIH), and Dr. Andrew Krivoshik, MD, PhD (Abbot Laboratories).

An APSA Annual Meeting attendee takes advantage of a networking opportunity during one of the sessions to voice her views on APSA and issues facing physician-scientist trainees to two of the newly elected Executive Council Members.

Pictures courtesy of Leonid Zamdborg, Zheyan Chen, Kim Gannon, Kofi Mensah
By Brenda Marsh
Oregon Health and Sciences University Institutional Representative

Navigating through higher education can be, at times, a painful process. In my case, the tears began just as the process began— with my first acceptance into an MSTP program. Having been out of school for several years by that point, I had no idea there were rules to this game. And so, upon receipt of my first acceptance, the one that should have elicited a sigh of relief, I instead cried and cried on the phone with the admissions officer as I wrestled with the morality of saying “yes” to this program while secretly knowing I would bow out if my dream school came through. Rookie mistake, I now know, and a cringe-worthy story to relate to fellow students at Welcome Back BBQs. But tear-stained cheeks were to appear throughout my training, generally due to more subtle pressures and more complicated issues. Should I begin graduate school after M1, which would set me up for an easier transition back to medicine and the wards, or after M2 or even M3, which would allow me to truly integrate my burgeoning medical knowledge with my research? Should I join the large lab that will push me until I crack, revealing what I hope is the great scientist inside, or the small lab that feels like home, full of warm personalities and a sense of camaraderie? How can I possibly prepare for the wards, after so much time away, no less, when I’m trying to finish up experiments, bang out a couple of papers, and write my thesis all at the same time?

I would like to think that most of the sobbing and the stressed-out-mad-dash-treadmill sessions have not been in vain. As M.D./Ph.D. students, we are asked early on to make thoughtful and savvy decisions about our career paths. Time spent considering these decisions, is well-spent and can reveal underappreciated aspects of our goals and ourselves. That being said, we need not approach these decisions alone. Lucky for all of us, Ben Rosner M.D., Ph.D. and Jayakar Nayak M.D., Ph.D. are two such well-versed people. Not only have they successfully traveled this road, they have written a book about it in hopes of making the journey a little less bumpy for the rest of us.

In “The Complete Guide to the M.D./Ph.D. Degree: The Art and Science of ‘Doing it Twice’” (J&S Publishing Company, Inc, 2004) Rosner and Nayak approach their topic as though they are giving advice to an eager younger sibling - with ease, charm and clarity. They provide the reader with detailed information, handy tips, timelines and advice for getting the most out of our training years with the minimal amount of anxiety. The book is organized sequentially into chapters on applying to schools, MS1/2, the graduate school years, MS3/4, and future career options. This particular organization may not be ideal for nontraditional students, but the principles and most of the timelines will still apply. Rosner and Nayak write in a conversational tone, and this, coupled with Brandon Minnery’s too-true cartoons, makes the book a fun and relatively quick read. But don’t be fooled by the jokes and the mellow delivery- the book is packed with useful insights and links to more detailed information.

One of the overriding themes of “The Complete Guide” is that good planning and thoughtfulness will take us further than ulcers will. The authors encourage us to plan ahead, work hard, and to enjoy this time, both in school and out. Just between you and me, as I read through the first chapters on applying to schools and tackling MS1 and MS2, I found myself longing for the opportunity to go back and do it all over again, this time in a cleaner, more organized and incisive way, with Rosner and Nayak as my guides. Now, I’m almost finished with a hard won (remember the tears) PhD. To tell you that these authors led me to wonder about doing the whole thing over again, nay year to, is just about the best review I can offer.

Despite my newfound adoration for the authors, I was disappointed by their consistent differentiation between MSTP and M.D./Ph.D. programs. They make a point to offer NIGMS statistics regarding job placement, publication record, and research funding between the two, but the statistics are rarely significant and a bit outdated (1995). Further, scant attention is paid to one of the most difficult transition periods- that between medical school and graduate school. This can be a surprisingly difficult transition for many students and is often overshadowed in conversation by the seemingly more difficult transition from graduate school back to medical school. Even a few words of advice on this topic would be welcome.

Finally, though many of us have an idealized version of the Physician-Scientist floating around in our heads, more than a few of us wonder, at times, what it is that we are uniquely trained to do? Rosner and Nayak are in the enviable position of viewing this process with the insight and perspective that only experience can give.