



A CONSULTANT'S REFLECTIONS

'When I began training in Psychiatry I went to a formal dinner, where I met the then president of the student section of the British Medical Association. He asked me what I did and when I told him he said "So you're not a doctor then". There was an audible gasp around the table...

So, why do people look down on Psychiatry? At least part of it seems to be the lack of understanding that Psychiatrists are actually brain doctors as well as skilled communicators, analysts and empathisers. I wonder if it is also because there is surprisingly little brain science in Psychiatric training.

When I see my doctor about whatever new sporting injury I have, I expect to be told what has gone wrong, why I have pain and how it can be fixed. I would like to be able to explain to my own patients what the problem is, why it has happened to them and to give them hope for an effective treatment. In Psychiatry, we need to equip trainees to be able to understand the developments yet to come, and there will be many. Neuroscience needs to become just as much something Psychiatrists do as our training cases in Psychotherapy.'

Lindsey Sinclair