



CRISTIAN SABORIDO, *Filosofía de la Medicina*, Madrid: Tecnos, 2020

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Cristian Saborido's book is presented as an introductory text on the philosophy of medicine, and as a handbook for students of both humanities and biomedical sciences. Indeed, that is what the reader will find. *Filosofía de la medicina* can be read by anyone with an interest in the subject. Throughout the book, we can appreciate the author's effort to connect with the general public through cultural references, such as television series, as well as works of art and literature. Nevertheless, Saborido also manages to accurately address some of the central topics in philosophy of medicine, which also makes this book useful for philosophers who want to have a broad picture of the issues discussed in this field.

Saborido offers, as he says, a pluralistic and inclusive perspective. Often, after presenting opposing positions, he highlights the virtues and defects of each, and places himself in a middle ground, displaying the *phronesis* which he advocates as necessary in medicine. This perspective is especially valuable in a field of acrimonious debates which frequently involve highly polarized views.

The author proceeds by employing the tools of analytical philosophy, focusing on the definition of concepts and the analysis of the assumptions of medical theory and practice. He conceives of philosophy of medicine as a branch of the philosophy of science. However, this does not mean that he neglects the individual or social aspects of medicine, which he emphatically characterizes as an institutionalized social practice.

Filosofía de la medicina contains a preface, eight chapters, and a glossary. The glossary is especially useful for those unfamiliar with philosophical jargon. The book is also full of useful bibliographical references, making it easy to go deeper into different topics.

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The seventh chapter is devoted to mental illness. Saborido begins by addressing the criticisms of antipsychiatry. Although he acknowledges the existence of regrettable episodes in the history of psychiatry, he argues that it is possible to articulate a psychiatric classification which serves the best interest of the individual. He then examines the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and addresses the problems of overdiagnosis that have arisen in some diagnostic categories. Saborido takes a stand against the reification of mental illnesses and in favor of a biopsychosocial approach. Through the triad of disease, illness, and sickness, Saborido introduces the particular problems posed by mental illness. For example, one can be classified as mentally ill without feeling ill at all. Finally, he again argues for *phronesis* as a guide to psychiatric classification and practice, claiming once more that determining which symptoms should be treated medically is not a matter that depends solely on biological factors.

The last chapter of *Filosofía de la medicina* gathers together the conclusions of the book, emphasizing the pluralism, integration, and pragmatism that, according to the author, should characterize medicine: “medicine always moves between the ambition of naturalist objectivity and the constructionist recognition of the relevance of subjectivities, and it is in this territory where *phronesis*, medical prudence, plays a major role” (p. 249).

In conclusion, *Filosofía de la medicina* is a good introductory book to some of the central debates in philosophy of medicine, especially in the analytic tradition. Precisely because of its introductory nature, it sometimes appears that the author is preventing himself from delving too deeply into the many problems surrounding medical theory and practice. However, Saborido does manage to offer a rich and broad picture of the philosophical issues raised by medicine. Undoubtedly, a balanced perspective such as his is a very appropriate approach for a work of this nature.

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