

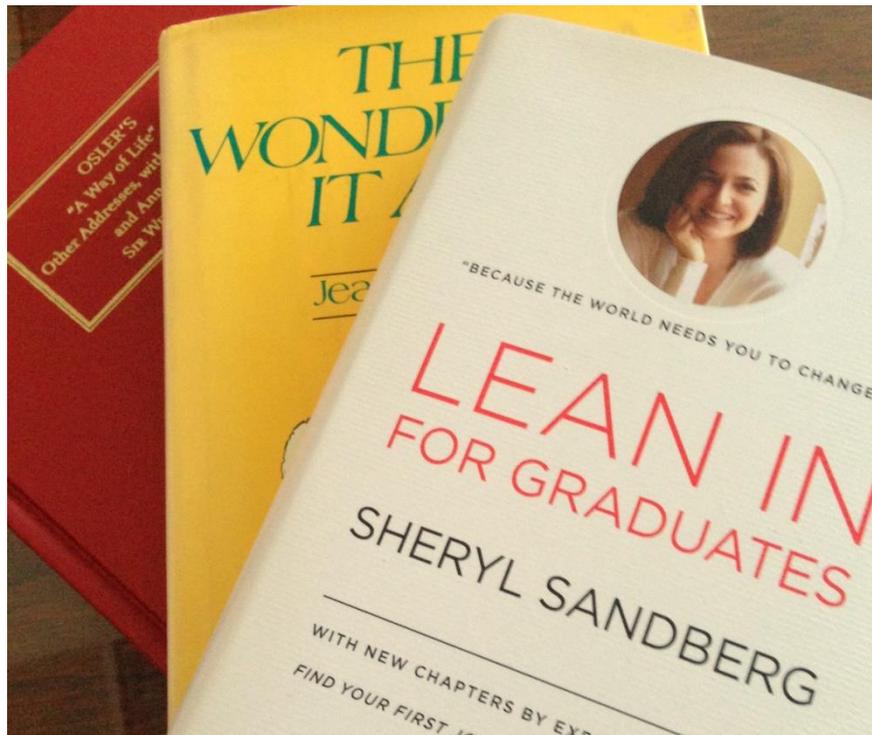
Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine

A Gift of a Book for Your Favorite Veterinary Graduate

By Dr. Donald F. Smith
May 19, 2014

If you have a family member or friend receiving their Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree this spring, why not include a great read among your considerations for a graduation gift? Here are three of my favorites, including one out-of-print gem.

First is from one of today's hottest writers, Sheryl Sandberg. Need I say more? I just purchased her second book, shown in the picture below.¹ Because of the overlap with her previous book, "Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead,"² I'd recommend this later version. HINT: Don't only get it for women graduates. Men need it just as much, perhaps more. Seriously!



Three Great Reads for Your New DVM Graduate
(Photo by the Author, 2014)

My second suggestion was written by recently-deceased veterinarian, Dr. Jeanne N. Logue, called “The Wonder of it All.”³ Though it has been out of print for years, I recently purchased three copies on Amazon for gifts, and they are all in wonderful condition (and at a great price).

In preparation for my recent post on this site about Dr. Logue, I re-read her emotionally-charged and exquisitely-penned chronicle of the middle portion of her veterinary career. Once again, I fell in love with her story.⁴ A 1944 DVM graduate, she writes about what it was like being a veterinarian, mother, and wife in general practice during an era where you could go for months without having a family meal that wasn’t interrupted by a sick dog at your door, or a bovine emergency ten miles away. Admittedly, other veterinarians over the years have chronicled books of this sort and, apart from losing her wedding ring in the womb of a cow while trying to help deliver a calf, their stories are not all that dissimilar.

The Logue difference, however—and this is why I recommend her book to accompany “Lean In”—is that she talks with personal authenticity of the struggles of being a solo-practitioner woman with all the attendant pulls of a busy veterinary practice, while being a mother and wife of a mid-20th century professional man who seems unable to make the requisite accommodations to meet her halfway.

I knew both her and her husband during the twilight years of their lives, and in reading her stories describing her work 30 years earlier, it struck me again how devoted and loving she was to her husband and her children. Her reflection on the pre-dawn morning, while returning home from yet another emergency farm call, when she parked in a familiar field overlooking a lake, and quietly and emotionally made the decision to sell her practice is, by itself, worth the trouble of locating and buying the book.⁵

[At my special quiet spot overlooking the lake], Orion was reflected in the lake again, and there being something about this particular constellation from which I would gain strength and regain my equanimity, I studied his stars for a while in an effort to center down, query myself and perhaps organize my harassed emotions and troubled thoughts.

As she contemplated what to do as the collisions of her personal and professional lives grated across each other like a steel-bristled broom on concrete, the personal side took precedence.

I turned my mind to the present. I reevaluated all of the complaints Joe had hurled at me at bedtime [the evening before] and I tried very hard, with both love and understanding, to see his point of view. ...for the first time in my life, I began to feel a bit uncertain about myself.

Of one thing, however, I was still certain. One thing was firm, it was absolute and it was enduring. It was also very simple: I loved the man with all my being.

“A Way of Life”⁶ is my third recommendation. It is about William Osler (1849-1919), the best-known and highly-regarded MD of the time, the man who is often considered the father of modern clinical medicine. Osler had a close connection to veterinary medicine. He was even a member of the Faculty of Comparative Medicine at McGill University’s veterinary college (a subject written about previously on this site).⁷

As a spokesperson for the medical profession, Osler’s words are as fresh today as when he addressed students at Yale in 1913, advising them to stay focused on the present day, and not be overwhelmed by the successes or failures of yesterday, nor the looming concerns of tomorrow.⁸

In his address to the graduating students at the University of Pennsylvania in 1889, Osler talked about the need for imperturbability and equanimity in all their actions. Imperturbability, referring to physical self-control, is necessary to ensure clear judgment, he argued, emphasizing that it must be based on a wide knowledge of disease and of what needs to be done. Equanimity, he explained, is necessary for physicians to maintain presence of mind by being patient and persistent in working with patients.⁹

In my teaching on veterinary history, whether to veterinary students or to national audiences, I always pay tribute to Osler. His legacy in animal medicine and his enduring commitment to One Health are as relevant in the present as they were a century ago.

Whether contemporary or legendary, consider a book as a gift. Perhaps purchase two, and treat yourself to a good read.

¹ Sandberg, Sheryl, *Lean In for Graduates*. (New York. Alfred A. Knopf, 2014)

² Sandberg, Sheryl, *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead*. (New York. Alfred A. Knopf, 2013)

³ Logue, Jeanne. *The Wonder of It All*. (New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London, Sydney: Harper & Row, 1979).

⁴ Smith, Donald F. Jeanne Neubecker Logue: The Veterinarian who Understood the Wonder of it All. *Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine*. May 13, 2014

⁵ Logue, Jeanne. *The Wonder of It All*. 166

⁶ Osler, Sir William. *A Way of Life and other Addresses, with Commentary and Annotations* (Durham and London, Duke University Press 2001)

⁷ Smith, Donald F. A Dual DVM/PhD Program is Established in Montreal, Canada. *Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine*. April 4, 2014

⁸ Osler, Sir William. *A Way of Life and other Addresses, with Commentary and Annotations*, 3-7.

⁹ Ibid. 21-29.

KEYWORDS:

Sheryl Sandberg

William Osler

Jeanne Logue

Lean In For Graduates

The Wonder of it All
One Health

TOPIC:

Gifts for Veterinarians

LEADING QUESTION:

Consider a Gift of a Book for your Graduating Veterinarian

META-SUMMARY:

Three suggestions for good books to give your graduating veterinarian.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. Donald F. Smith, Dean Emeritus of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, had a passion for the value of the history of veterinary medicine as a gateway for understanding the present and the future of the profession.

Throughout his many professional roles from professor of surgery, to Department Chair of Clinical Sciences, Associate Dean of Education and of Academic Programs and Dean, he spearheaded changes in curriculum, clinical services, diagnostic services and more. He was a diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Surgeons and a member of the National Academy of Practices. Most recently he played a major role in increasing the role of women in veterinary leadership.

Perspectives in Veterinary Medicine is one of his projects where he was able to share his vast knowledge of the profession.