



Taking the Medicine: A Short History of Medicine's Beautiful Idea, and our Difficulty Swallowing It

Druin Burch

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Doctors and patients alike trust the medical profession and its therapeutic powers; yet this trust has often been misplaced. Whether prescribing opium or thalidomide, aspirin or antidepressants, doctors have persistently failed to test their favourite ideas - often with catastrophic results. From revolutionary America to Nazi Germany and modern big-pharmaceuticals, this is the unexpected story of just how bad medicine has been, and of its remarkably recent effort to improve.

It is the history of well-meaning doctors misled by intuition, of the startling human cost of their mistakes and of the exceptional individuals who have helped make things better. Alarming and optimistic, *Taking the Medicine* is essential reading for anyone interested in how and why to trust the pills they swallow.

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