



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

Druin Burch

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Over the last 2,000 years doctors have killed patients far more often than they saved them, and patients have colluded because they trusted them—this book is about how little and how much has changed

For years patients have placed their trust in doctors and the drugs they prescribe; yet as this thought-provoking history of medicine demonstrates, this trust has often been misplaced. Whether prescribing opium or thalidomide, aspirin or antidepressants, doctors have consistently failed to test their favorite ideas—often with catastrophic results. Only with the development of antibiotics after World War II did doctors begin to cure more than they killed. Arguing that the real heroes of medicine are the men and women who demonstrated the vital importance of controlled testing over the "intuition" of doctors, this book questions the new breed of wonder drugs and the control of people's medicines—and their lives—by global drug companies. Both alarming and optimistic, this is essential reading for anyone interested in how and why to trust the pills they swallow.

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