

Do No Harm: A Painful History of Medicine

Nick Arnold

Steph von Reiswitz, Illustrator

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Nick Arnold's enthralling illustrated history of medicine presents the facts in a fun, informative way.

The book starts out with the basics, running through organs, cells, and the chemicals that form human anatomy. It also looks back to ancient times, to explore what the early civilizations thought about the human body, as well as their early medical breakthroughs and misconceptions. It chronicles centuries' worth of good and bad ideas from the medical field, with Steph von Reiswitz's incredible illustrations complementing its informal and enjoyable tone.

Although brief, the volume is packed with information that's suitable for both the target audience and for curious adults. In a casual and amusing manner, it covers medicine's greatest hits well, alongside the basic anatomical knowledge needed to understand what motivated each medical decision—at least, those that didn't involve torture or murder. And the book's Mad Medicine sections center the most bizarre treatments and experiments in history; these additions are equal parts fascinating and horrifying.

How-to sections augment each chapter, covering experiments that are within the audience's reach, and some that can be executed on one's own. Some of these entries are designed to pique scientific interest, as with instructions on taking impressions of one's own fingerprints; other procedures are more useful as curiosities, as with a how-to on mummifying bodies, à la ancient Egypt. Throughout, the book takes inspiration from Hippocrates's maxim "to do good or to do no harm."

Diving into all the ways that medicine has been used to do harm throughout the centuries, *Do No Harm* is a delightful history of medicine for young readers, full of entertaining writing and educational illustrations.

CAROLINA CIUCCI (November / December 2021)

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