



Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine

Roy Porter

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"Chock-full of astonishing facts and fascinating illustrations."—*Booklist*

An eminently readable, entertaining romp through the history of our vain and valiant efforts to heal ourselves. Mankind's battle to stay alive and healthy for as long as possible is our oldest, most universal struggle. With his characteristic wit and vastly informed historical scope, Roy Porter examines the war fought between disease and doctors on the battleground of the flesh from ancient times to the present. He explores the many ingenious ways in which we have attempted to overcome disease through the ages: the changing role of doctors, from ancient healers, apothecaries, and blood-letters to today's professionals; the array of drugs, from Ayurvedic remedies to the launch of Viagra; the advances in surgery, from amputations performed by barbers without anesthetic to today's sophisticated transplants; and the transformation of hospitals from Christian places of convalescence to modern medical powerhouses. Cleverly illustrated with historic line drawings, the chronic ailments of humanity provide vivid anecdotes for Porter's enlightening story of medicine's efforts to prevail over a formidable and ever-changing adversary.

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