



A History of Medicine in 50 Objects

Gill Paul

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Praise for *A History of Music in 50 Instruments*, also in this series:

"Wilkinson's history unfolds like a symphonic work with instrument makers, composers and virtuosic performers picking up these incredible creations and exposing their beauty and capability. To open it up is to be instantly hooked." -- Publishers Weekly

A History of Medicine in 50 Objects takes readers on a 12,000-year journey to explore significant items that have advanced medical knowledge and practice. The fifty objects range from the everyday (a bottle of Aspirin) to singular medical advances (heart transplant pioneer Christian Bernard on the cover of *TIME* magazine).

The objects are presented chronologically and described in two to four pages with illustrations, 150 beautiful archive images in all. Fact boxes note Location, Date, and Field, for example, epidemiology. Engaging text describes the artifacts in their social and cultural context, as well as their role in disease treatment and prevention.

Centuries of invention and risk-taking have saved lives and advanced life expectancy. The first object is a Neolithic skull (ca 10,000 BCE) showing evidence of trephination, a hole deliberately cut into the skull of a living person and likely the first surgical practice. It was done widely well into the Renaissance, with surprising success, and is still done today, though rarely. The last object, like many others, was borne of tragedy. It is the protective gear designed for medical workers during the 2014 Ebola virus outbreak.

The objects come in all shapes and sizes -- an X-ray diffraction image of a DNA molecule; the first tuberculosis sanatorium. They are the everyday and the extraordinary -- a thermometer; a thought-controlled prosthetic limb. They are of society and of controversy -- cigarette package health warnings; Sigmund Freud's couch. All have a fascinating and entertaining story to tell about medicine as it unfolded over millennia.

A History of Medicine in 50 Objects is an essential choice for general and specialty collections. Like the other titles in The History of... series, it is an exceptional selection for reluctant readers.

A History of Medicine in 50 Objects Details

Date : Published October 1st 2016 by Firefly Books

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Author : Gill Paul

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From Reader Review A History of Medicine in 50 Objects for online ebook

Vivian Wiltshire says

This was a very interesting read with great photos and drawings. To learn of some of the things they used and things they believed in are truly amazing. I was particular interested in the use of herbs and plant life for remedies and potions. I was also amazed by how some people were so naive when it came to the body and its function and others were very early scientists and inventors of medical equipment and techniques in medicine. All around a pretty descent book. I gave this book a 3.5 out of 5 stars.

Kara says

This is a very good 'history of medicine' but not exactly a good 'history of medicine in 50 objects'. I suspect Gill Paul started a book on the general history of medicine, and then she decided – or her publisher decided for her – to tailor it to fit the new trend of 'history of X in Y objects.'

The history itself is presented well, covering quite a lot of ground in a succinct but well detailed manner. However, she isn't always able to tie each subject to a particular object, which is where the book falters. These type of history books do so well *because* the audience gets to see an actual object that real humans made and used at some point and we can still see it today, acting as a bridge across time. It brings to life and makes real the often abstract themes of history to see the actual bullet / teapot / hat / shoe / plow / whatever that was used and makes us see this really happened.

Here we get lots and lots on the history of medicine, the people who pushed things forward and the different schools of thought, but tying it to objects often comes down to a drawing of an object or place, or a quote form a book, without anything concrete to tie to that chapter. So, good history, but without that tie in to artifacts that makes this *type* of history book shine.

Kate Forner says

I think Gill Paul did a great job over viewing the history of medicine through these specific objects, an all together fun read. Lindsey Johns, the designer, really helped to make the book look beautiful.

Blue H. says

I have read one book like this before, so some informations are familiar. Yet I love how Gill Paul connected it to modern informations. It also introduced me to more ideas, in a much detailed way. :) Oh I also love the quotes, which I'll list down heHE.

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" Choose only one master-Nature." -REMBRANDT VAN RIJIN

" I attribute my success to this- I never gave nor took any excuse." - FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

"Medicine is so broad a field, so closely interwoven with general interests, dealing as it does with all ages, sexes, and classes, and yet of so personal a character in its individual appreciations. that it must be regarded as one of those great departments of work in which the cooperation of men and women is needed to fulfill all its requirements." -ELIZABETH BLACKWELL, PIONEER WORK IN OPENING THE MEDICAL PROFESSION TO WOMEN, 1895

"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less." - MARIE CURIE, RADIOACTIVE SUBSTANCES, 1903

"A large number of people react in negative way to anything that is new, anything they have not heard about before, that is not what they were taught in school or in the university. I decided early that I would never be negative when I hear of something new until I have heard the full story, and have had the time to look at it." - DR. WILLEM KOLFF, 1991 INTERVIEW WITH THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ACHIEVEMENT

Eric says

I enjoyed the way the author tied together the development of medical practice from historical practices to current situations/illnesses. It was also interesting to read about how societal rules hampered medical knowledge for so long ranging from autopsy restrictions to accusations of "witchcraft."

Kelly Martin says

I don't know what I expected from this book, but I found it boring? It didn't seem to be well organised either by time of recovery or medical use. Just confusing.
