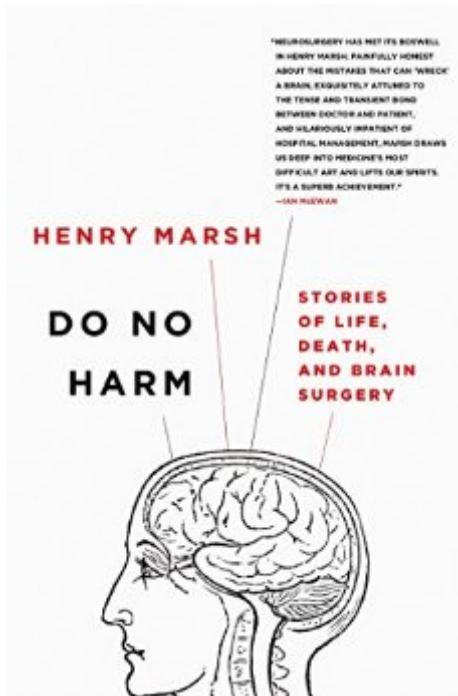


The book was found

Do No Harm: Stories Of Life, Death, And Brain Surgery



Synopsis

Shortlisted for both the Guardian First Book Prize and the Costa Book Award
Longlisted for the Samuel Johnson Prize for Non-Fiction
A Finalist for the Pol Roger Duff Cooper Prize
A Finalist for the Wellcome Book Prize
A Financial Times Best Book of the Year
An Economist Best Book of the Year
A Washington Post Notable Book of the Year
What is it like to be a brain surgeon? How does it feel to hold someone's life in your hands, to cut into the stuff that creates thought, feeling, and reason? How do you live with the consequences of performing a potentially lifesaving operation when it all goes wrong? In neurosurgery, more than in any other branch of medicine, the doctor's oath to "do no harm" holds a bitter irony. Operations on the brain carry grave risks. Every day, leading neurosurgeon Henry Marsh must make agonizing decisions, often in the face of great urgency and uncertainty. If you believe that brain surgery is a precise and exquisite craft, practiced by calm and detached doctors, this gripping, brutally honest account will make you think again. With astonishing compassion and candor, Marsh reveals the fierce joy of operating, the profoundly moving triumphs, the harrowing disasters, the haunting regrets, and the moments of black humor that characterize a brain surgeon's life. *Do No Harm* provides unforgettable insight into the countless human dramas that take place in a busy modern hospital. Above all, it is a lesson in the need for hope when faced with life's most difficult decisions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is well written, gripping, and fascinating. Sometimes it is sad or gruesome. It is accurate in the descriptions of medical details, surgical procedures, and the life of brain surgeons. If you like to think of your physician as a demi-god you should not read this book. If you can handle the truth, read on. As an anesthesiologist, I read with a mix of amusement and rueful resignation. Dr. Marsh is a true representative of his species, the neurosurgeon. They are by turns kind, irritating, cocky, courageous, arrogant, brilliant, obsessive, awe-inspiring, and lonely. They usually graduated at the top of their medical school class. Their residency did not end until they were well into their 30s. Many hospitals have lots of pediatricians, intensivists, internists, and hospitalists, but they only have one neurosurgeon. Even in a field of doctors, a collection of brainy nerds, they stand alone. Their arrogance is undeniable. Henry Marsh relates how he was stuck in a line of shoppers at the grocery store and thinks with irritation that none of them could do what he just did today, so why does he have to wait behind them? Like fighter pilots or Special Forces, society is not comfortable with such people, but when we need them, we need them desperately. And we always need them. There is a moment before every invasive medical procedure when you could pause and contemplate the enormous consequences of failure. If you spend too much time doing that, you will end up paralyzed, and the patient will suffer. If you spend too much time thinking about the appalling human carnage that will result from surgery gone wrong, you will never take up the knife. No matter how skillful, knowledgeable, and careful you are, there will be carnage.

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