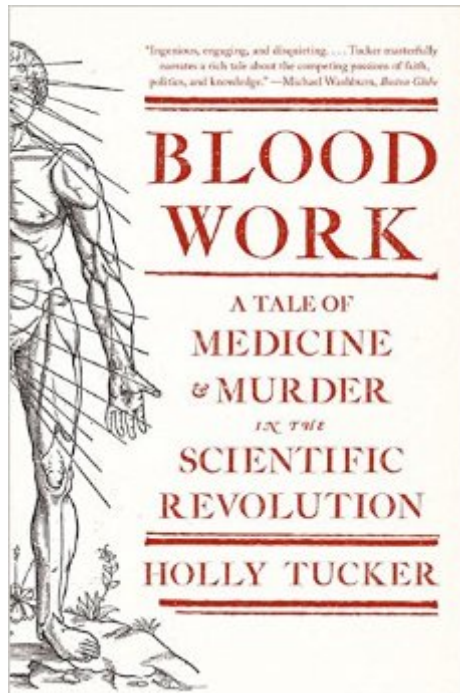


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Blood Work: A Tale Of Medicine And Murder In The Scientific Revolution



Synopsis

â œExcellent. . . . Tuckerâ™s chronicle of the world of 17th-century science in London and Paris is fascinating.â •â •The Economist In December 1667, maverick physician Jean Denis transfused calfâ™s blood into one of Parisâ™s most notorious madmen. Days later, the madman was dead and Denis was framed for murder. A riveting exposÃ© of the fierce debates, deadly politics, and cutthroat rivalries behind the first transfusion experiments, Blood Work takes us from dissection rooms in palaces to the streets of Paris, providing an unforgettable portrait of an era that wrestled with the same questions about morality and experimentation that haunt medical science today. 33 illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Blood Work tells the true story of the first animal-to-human blood transfusions, performed in the 1660s in England and Europe. These culminated in 1667 in Paris with a series of experiments performed by the rogue physician Jean-Baptiste Denis; the subject of the experiments was an infamous madman who was plucked from the streets against his will. Though the transfusions initially seemed successful, within days the madman had died, and the ensuing political fallout resulted in the suspension of all such studies for some 200 years. Most surprising, at the heart of the story is a conspiracy -- and Denis' opponents had no scruples against committing murder for the "greater good". The book is delightfully written and painstakingly researched. Professor Tucker does an excellent job making the world of 17th century England and France come alive, and pulls back

the curtain on the inner workings of the machinations of the elite politicians, scientists and nobles of the era. There were strong religious and scientific concerns about the safety of transfusions, and these concerns rather ironically mirror the modern fears about "human-animal hybrids" created by genetic engineering. Denis ended up bucking the medical establishment (some of whose members were planning their own experiments) and made powerful enemies in the process; his stubbornness would quickly catch up with him. The earlier chapters of Blood Work will possibly be a bit slow-going to some readers. There is a lot of history behind the critical events of the book, primarily the medical studies that preceded said events. This background material is essential to the narrative, but is not quite as compelling as the latter parts of the book.

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