



A Modern History of the Stomach: Gastric Illness, Medicine and British Society, 1800-1950 (Studies for the Society for the Social HIST of Medicine)

Ian Miller

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The health of the stomach has always been the subject of intense medical and popular interest. Yet despite this it is an area of medical, social and cultural history that has previously been neglected as a topic of analytical enquiry. This study is the first exploration of the complex relationship between the abdomen and modern British society. It traces the development of the management of gastric conditions by various, often competing, members of the medical profession, detailing conflict between the ideas and values of surgeons, physicians, psychologists and gastroenterologists. Not simply a history of medicine, the work uses material drawn from both the medical profession and popular culture to explain why the myriad experiences of the stomach and its illnesses have regularly occupied prominent positions in British society and cultural thought. Miller demonstrates how the framework of ideas and concepts established in medicine related to gastric illness often reflected wider social issues including industrialization and the impact of wartime anxiety upon the inner body.

"A history of the stomach really does work as a site for understanding how we've come to think about minds, bodies and modernity", Steven Shapin, London Review of Books, June 2011.

"The stomach, it is clear, was territory to be fought for. This conclusion, carefully stated, is generally persuasive, and the book is well and confidently written", Christopher Hamlin, American Historical Review, December 2012.

"A Modern History of the Stomach makes an exemplary contribution to the historical analysis of disease. Miller joins an ongoing effort to use the history of disease to knit together and illuminate diverse aspects of social, environmental, and scientific history", Christopher Crenner, Isis, September 2012.

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