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Título: A Hole In The Head: More Tales In The History Of Neuroscience

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Neuroscientist Charles Gross has been interested in the history of his field since his days as an undergraduate. A Hole in the Head is the second collection of essays in which he illuminates the study of the brain with fascinating episodes from the past. This volume's tales range from the history of trepanation (drilling a hole in the skull) to neurosurgery as painted by Hieronymus Bosch to the discovery that bats navigate using echolocation.

The emphasis is on blind alleys and errors as well as triumphs and discoveries, with ancient practices connected to recent developments and controversies. Trepanation, for example, originated in Paleolithic societies and is now promoted on a variety of Web sites as a means of "enhancing" consciousness.

Gross first reaches back into the beginnings of neuroscience, discussing such topics as debates over the role of the brain (as opposed to the heart) in cognition and the relationship of vision to ideas about the "evil eye." He then takes up the interaction of art and neuroscience, exploring, among other things, Rembrandt's "Anatomy Lesson" paintings, one of which prefigured the poses in a famous photograph of the dead Che Guevara. Finally, Gross examines discoveries by scientists whose work was scorned in their own time but proven correct in later eras, including Claude Bernard's argument for the importance of the constancy of the internal environment and Joseph Altman's pioneering (and ignored) discovery of adult neurogenesis.