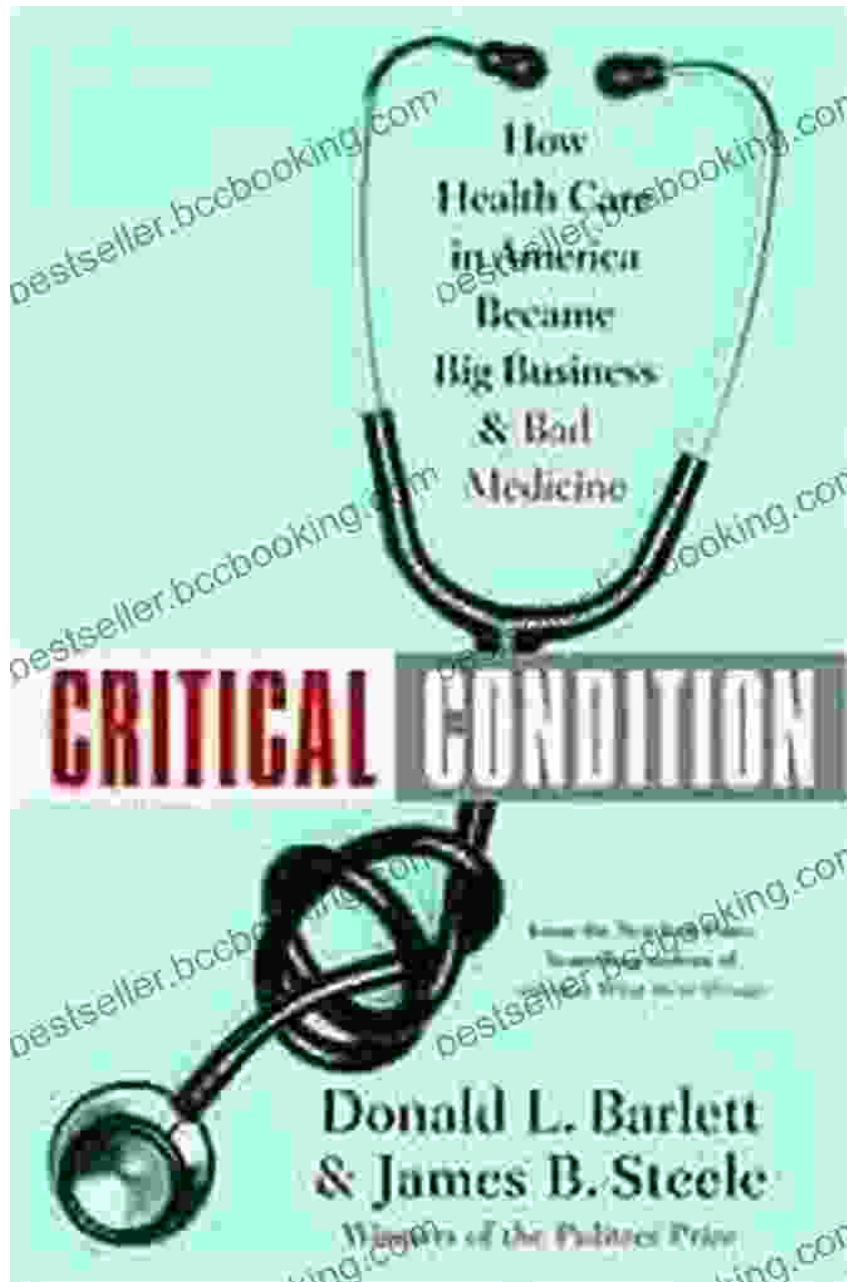
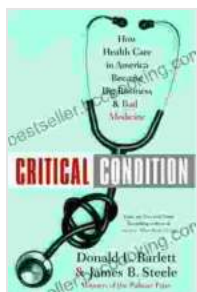


# The Bitter Pill: How Health Care in America Became Big Business and Bad Medicine



In the United States, health care is a trillion-dollar industry. It's one of the largest and most important sectors of the economy, and it has a profound

impact on the lives of all Americans. But how did health care become so big and so expensive? And why is it so often bad medicine?



## Critical Condition: How Health Care in America Became Big Business--and Bad Medicine by Donald L. Barlett

★★★★☆ 4.1 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 701 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 288 pages



In his new book, *How Health Care In America Became Big Business And Bad Medicine*, journalist Steven Brill delves into the history of the American health care system to answer these questions. He shows how the system has been shaped by a complex interplay of politics, economics, and technology. And he argues that the result is a system that is both unaffordable and ineffective.

### The History of American Health Care

The American health care system has its roots in the early 19th century, when doctors were mostly self-employed and patients paid them directly for their services. In the late 19th century, the rise of insurance companies began to change the way health care was financed. Insurance companies offered to pay for a portion of the cost of medical care in exchange for a monthly premium. This made health care more affordable for many people,

but it also gave insurance companies a powerful voice in the health care system.

In the 20th century, the government began to play a larger role in health care. In 1965, the Medicare and Medicaid programs were created to provide health insurance to the elderly and the poor. These programs have been expanded over the years, and they now cover a large portion of the American population.

## **The Problems with the American Health Care System**

The American health care system is facing a number of challenges. The cost of health care is rising faster than inflation, and many people are struggling to afford the care they need. The system is also inefficient, and it often fails to provide patients with the care they need.

There are a number of factors that have contributed to these problems. One factor is the rising cost of medical technology. New drugs and treatments are constantly being developed, and these new technologies are often very expensive. Another factor is the aging population. As people get older, they are more likely to need medical care. This is putting a strain on the health care system, and it is driving up costs.

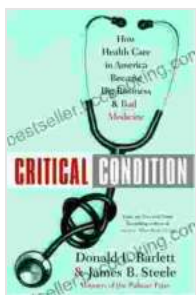
The American health care system is also very fragmented. There are a number of different types of health insurance plans, and each plan has its own rules and regulations. This can make it difficult for patients to find the right insurance plan for their needs. It can also make it difficult for doctors to coordinate care for their patients.

## **The Future of American Health Care**

The future of American health care is uncertain. The system is facing a number of challenges, and it is unclear how these challenges will be resolved. One possibility is that the government will play a larger role in the health care system. The government could create a single-payer health care system, or it could regulate the health insurance industry more closely. Another possibility is that the private sector will find a way to make health care more affordable and efficient. New technologies could help to lower the cost of medical care, and new ways of organizing health care could help to improve the quality of care.

It is also possible that the American health care system will continue to muddle along as it has for the past several decades. The system is complex and there is no easy solution to its problems. However, it is clear that the system is not sustainable in its current form. The cost of health care is rising too fast, and the system is too inefficient. Something has to change.

The American health care system is a complex and controversial topic. There is no easy solution to the system's problems. However, it is important to understand the history of the system and the challenges it faces. Only then can we begin to find ways to improve the system and make it work better for all Americans.



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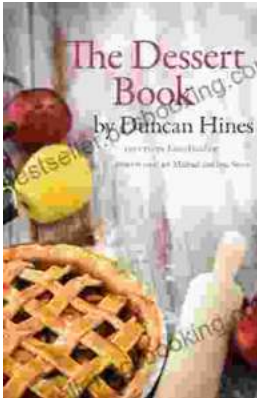
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