



Healing the Brain

Curt Freed, Simon LeVay

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In May 1995, neurologist Curt Freed began one of the most dramatic experiments in the history of medicine: the attempt to treat sufferers of Parkinson's disease by grafting human stem cells into their brains.

Of the forty patients who volunteered for Freed's new treatment, half underwent authentic surgery. The other half, who had received placebo surgery, felt their last hope dissolve into bitter frustration. But the hardest road lay ahead for those who had been given the highly experimental procedure. *Healing the Brain* captures the emotional events that unfolded in the months afterward as Freed, his researchers, and their courageous, desperate patients awaited the outcome and witnessed a moral debate unfolding across the nation over embryonic stem-cell medicine. Would the brain regenerate itself or reject the new cells? This pioneering team was willing to take perilous risks to find out.

Healing the Brain is a moving, fascinating narrative about discovery and disillusionment, conflict and compassion, suffering and -- for some -- amazing success.

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